

Activities of Professor N.V. Nikolsky, founder of first Chuvash newspaper "Khypar"

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Abstract—The article reveals the features of activities of the founder of the first Chuvash newspaper "Khypar" by Professor N.V. Nikolsky who developed historical and ethnographic sciences, folklore, and lexicography in Chuvashia. N.V. Nikolsky contributed to development of Soviet higher secondary schools, professional training. In 1903, he graduated from the Theological Academy. Since 1903, he worked in the Translation Commission of the Orthodox society which published brochures and books in many languages. A significant event in the history of Chuvashia was foundation of the first Chuvash newspaper "Khypar" ("News") in 1906 by N.V. Nikolsky. Due to the initiative of N.V. Nikolsky, representatives of the Volga region peoples formed an association of small nations of the Volga region. N.V. Nikolsky was elected as its president.

Keywords—N.V. Nikolsky; first Chuvash newspaper; journalism; history

I. INTRODUCTION

A significant event in the history of Chuvashia was foundation of the first Chuvash newspaper "Khypar" ("News") in 1906. This event was due to the bourgeois-democratic revolution and N.V. Nikolsky. In the second half of December 1905, he appealed to the Governor of Kazan with a request to allow publication of the weekly Chuvash newspaper. On January 5, 1906, he received a certificate for publication. However, it was difficult to establish the newspaper. N.V. Nikolsky belonged to that part of the Chuvash intelligentsia that chose a scientific and cultural rather than a revolutionary path. Science and Chuvash culture were more important for him than politics. He used his higher spiritual education for the benefit of his native Chuvash people [1].

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The founder of the first Chuvash newspaper "Khypar" Professor N.V. Nikolsky was born on the 7 (19) May 1878 in Morgaush district, the Chuvash Republic in the family of a peasant. His father was sent to the corps of land surveyors, then he served in Vyatka and Kurland provinces. Due to his illness, he returned home and married a Russian girl (a daughter of a priest). Over the years, the family became large.

After graduating from the Shumatov rural school, Nikolsky entered Cheboksary religious school. In 1893, he entered Kazan Theological Seminary which he graduated six years later. After passing his exams, he became a student of the Theological Academy. Among other lectures, Nikolsky willingly attended the lectures of Professor N.F. Katanov (a Khakas by nationality, he was a democratically minded teacher, one of the best Nikolsky's best teacher, senior friends and associates for a long time). Under the influence of his teachers, Nikolay became an admirer and a follower of N.I. Ilminsky, the author of the education system of "foreigners" in their native language. Among Nikolsky's teachers was Professor of Russian Church history I. M. Pokrovsky. On his advice, Nikolsky chose the subject of his course paper "Christianity among the Chuvash".

During these years, Nikolsky got acquainted with N.I. Ashmarin who arrived to Kazan after graduating the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages in 1894. Their collaboration lasted for more than 30 years.

V.G. Magnitsky who recommended him to use archival sources helped Nikolsky in his research orientation. In 1903, N.V. Nikolsky graduated from the Academy with a degree of candidate of theology and a master's degree. The Board acknowledged his candidate dissertation on "Christianity

among the Chuvash” as one of the best essays on the history of the Russian Church. It was awarded a prize in the amount of 100 rubles [2].

Nikolsky regularly attended lectures of Professor N.F. Kachanov who taught Turkish, Persian, and Arabic languages. He had a great influence on Nikolsky and remained his teacher, like-minded colleague until his death (1862-1922).

Since 1903, N.V. Nikolsky worked in the Translation Commission of the Orthodox Society, which published works in many languages. He headed the Chuvash department of the Commission.

The first Chuvash newspaper “Khypar” published laws on working people, modern events in foreign countries, news about Russian and other peoples, agriculture, economy, trade, public affairs, schools and books, correspondence of Chuvash, Russian and other peoples. N.V. Nikolsky considered the newspaper as liberal democratic.

According to Nikolsky, the government authorities immediately put a ban on publication of political materials. The censor was Ashmarin Nikolay Ivanovich. Political materials were published as a separate brochure [3].

All articles were approved by N.V. Nikolsky and distributed among permanent and temporary employees. For the first issue, topics were distributed topics for articles on various issues permanent employees and temporary.

The first issue was perceived as a significant national holiday of the Chuvash people. The second issue and brochure manuscripts were published in mid-January 1906. At the same time, topics for independent work were assigned, and some employees were provided with books and brochures.

During the first five months, the work was productive. Further, there appeared groups of employees. Graduates of Simbirsk Chuvash Teacher's School, Kazan Teacher's Institute wanted to write political and socio-economic articles. Students of Kazan universities and secondary schools supported the former area of “Khypar”. The controversy was quite hot, but until June, the newspaper did not the subject. In June 1906, N.V. Nikolsky had to go to Yadrinsky, Tsvilsky, Kozmodemyansky districts for ethnographic purposes. Sergey Kirillovich Kirillov was appointed a temporary editor.

When the editor was in Yadrinsky district, he was informed of a big trouble. S. K. Kirillov could not withstand the persistent onslaught of graduates of Simbirsk School and published a political article. Censors suspended the issue. Nikolsky ordered to reprint the issue and send it to the subscribers. Since then, many subscribers ceased to receive issues as far as the government authorities ordered not to send the newspaper to the subscribers. Nikolsky wrote that Kirillov refused to be an editor [4], after which, according to Nikolsky, he wrote an application to the governor stating that he was passing on the editorial staff “Khypar” to P.A. Alekseev [4].

It is necessary to give some information about P.A. Alekseev, characterizing his activity. In 1884, from the beginning of the navigation on the Volga river, Pavel Alekseevich, a seventeen-year-old boy from the village Kudemer, goes with his brother to Petersburg. Then he enters

the factory, producing writing paper. In 1894, on Sundays, he began to attend technical school. Then he began to visit the “National Salon” on Vasilyevsky Island. From 7 am to 7 pm he worked in a factory; after the work he stopped by the store to buy something to eat and hurried further. Lectures began at 9 pm. At 11 o'clock the lectures ended. In 1900, resigning from the factory, he began working in the electrotechnical industry. In 1903-1905 being an assembler, in the evenings he attended classes in the electromechanical school. In 1903-1905, having become already an electrician of the Pipe Plant, together with his comrades, he attended meetings.

In 1906, when the First State Duma gathered, he returned from St. Petersburg to Kudemary. I was acquainted there with the revolutionary-minded youth, participated in gatherings, became acquainted with T.N. Nikolayev (Khuri). In August, in Ismeliakh, in the market days he participated in the revolutionary unrests of young peasants. But the vice-governor himself arrived there with a hundred of Cossacks. He ordered to open fire on the demonstrators. As a result, a resident of the village of Ityakovo was killed. 13 people were arrested.

In the manuscript Fund of the Chuvash National Museum, information about Alekseev has been stored since the 1920s. “Folder No 3b” contains biographical data of 119 participants of the revolution of 1905-1907. It says that Alexeev took an active part in the revolutionary movement and was the editor of the newspaper “Khypar”. For these activities, he was brought to justice. There is also his autobiography written in Chuvash and some other documents.

In the personality cult era, censors did not allow to provide information about “enemies of the people”. But time cures such ailments. P. V. Denisov and Petr Osipov were the first who provided teachers of the Chuvash diaspora with data about the fate of Pavel Alexeev. The work by Osipov is an autobiographical trilogy “The Elgeevs”. It was published in 1973, 1977, 1984. Meanwhile, Konstantin Petrov carefully studied development of the newspaper “Khypar” [5]. In his work “History of Chuvash journalism” he concluded that under the third editor S.I. Ignatieva (from the beginning of August to October 1906), the editorial office became one of the best exponents of revolutionary-democratic ideas. The same situation was under the editors P. A. Alekseev and V. I. Ivanov [6].

On arrival to their native places, Pavel Alekseev often visited Kazan. He met with an editor of the newspaper “Khypar” Sidor Ignatiev and Gavriil Fedorov (Aliunov). He lived there for three months. He spent winter months in the village. Then he worked in the central power plant of Kazan as an electrician. He lived together with Ignatiev in the editorial office, as before, he lived together with like-minded Sidor Ignatiev. The latter knew a lot about revolutionary events, worked hard. He said that instead of the tsar, it is necessary to elect a president and ministers, relevant newspaper editorials, topical articles, sharp notes in full view of the electrician [7].

Sidor Ignatiev was not a trustworthy person for the police. The police were informed that he attended meetings of social revolutionaries who planned to carry out terrorist acts. This editor should be “isolated”. The reason for his isolation was

withdrawal of the 43rd issue of the newspaper (October 29) which contained the feuilleton "Parasites".

On October 31, Sidor Ignatiev was arrested by gendarmes in the city theater. According to researchers, he had predicted his arrest and prepared for it. He had talked to Pavel Alekseev who wrote about the conversation with Fedorov (Aliunov) and Sidor Ignatiev about difficulties in the work of the newspaper, possible shutdown and need for appointing another editor. Aliunov and Ignatiev convinced Alekseev to write a letter to the Governor. On the same day, Alekseev addressed a letter to the Governor with a request to appoint him an editor. However, the police checked his reliability for a long time.

Having agreed to take over the duties of the editor, Pavel Alekseev prepared for the worst. He wanted to get a permit for issuing another newspaper "Samana" ("Era") and applied to the Governor. On December 4, the certificate was received. But the need for it disappeared on November 26 when the 44th issue of "Khypar" was released.

The new editor, who did not have sufficient journalistic skills, found himself in an unenviable position. The members of the editorial board Aliunov and Ignatiev were in prison. Pavel Alekseev could rely only on his employees. Aliunov and Ignatiev insisted on the arrival of Vasily Ivanov and Dmitry Petrov from Simbirsk to work with Khypar and Russian newspapers in Kazan.

V.I. Ivanov had a large experience as a teacher, regularly published his notes, conversations and articles in "Khypar". Having become a staff member of the editorial board, he showed two more important qualities - creativity and high efficiency. Pavel Alekseev remembered about a student of Kazan University, Semyon Nikolaev, who was trained to become a lawyer. He wrote articles which had several parts.

In general, the editor adhered to traditions and subjects developed under the previous editor: land shortage and famine in the countryside, revolutionary events, State Duma elections, education, etc.

In August, a group of peasants was arrested in the Cheboksary district. Some were taken to the Cheboksary prison, others - to Kazan. Then those people were exiled to distant provinces for two or three years. In the places, they arrived in, the winters were long, the summer was short, the weather was cold, people lived in poverty. Both the exiled people and their families, if they were not assisted, could face severe sufferings. "Kind people!", "Khypar" appealed, "we must help them. Whoever does not want to help them, a grave sin and a great shame will fall on one".

Another material in the same issue reminds the reader of the unrests in the Cheboksary district. Then only in Kazan "transfer prison", 16 Chuvashes were imprisoned. "The previous Wednesday, the prisoners were sent to the Arkhangelsk region", the newspaper informs. Russian newspapers published in Kazan almost every day wrote about what these prisoners-Chuvashes needed. "Kind people brought bread, tea, sugar, money, clothes, and other things for them to prison.

Now even the most honest and intelligent person is unable to say, "I will not go to jail". Try to figure it out for yourself, while I am writing these lines, there are four newspaper heads (editors-publishers), 3 editorial secretaries, 15 students, 2 officers, 3 teachers are in the Kazan provincial prison. I suppose they turned out to be in prison not as murderers or robbers.

One also needs to know that people are now imprisoned without trial. There are many people in prison who do not even know what their fault is. They say one big warden was asked such question not so long ago (newspapers wrote about it): "Among the people you put in prison there seemed to be quite a few wonderful, very decent people." Having thought a little bit, the warden said, "If Christ returns and wants to live in my district, I would also put him in prison."

The author of this material, Gabriel Aliunov, was not published in "Khypar" before his arrest. He considered journalistic work in the Russian-language newspaper "Volzhsky Vestnik" as his main concern, where he was recommended by the leadership of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Meanwhile, both newspapers were similarly important because of not only their publications, but also the fact that they were used as a cover for the SR militants. Timofey Nikolaev (Khuri) visited the editorial office of "Khypar" only during the day and never in the evening because at night the police made searches there. When on one of the October days of 1906 in Kazan, because of careless handling of pipe bombs, a terrorists' laboratory exploded. The police managed to identify the links of the dead militants with the editorial board "Volzhsky Vestnik". And the editor-publisher and employees of the newspaper, including G.F. Aliunov, were arrested. He was taken away on October 16 at night. He was already two and a half months in prison. He managed to establish contacts with the editorial staff of "Khypar". In the issue of January 7, there was a brief article saying that "it was decided to send a highly educated, true advocate of people, G.F. Fedorov, to Siberia for three years. The following report about Aliunov was published on February 25. It said that G.F. Fedorov (Aliunov) was brought to Siberia from the Kazan prison... Then, at the request of the higher school (Yaroslavl Law Lyceum), he was allowed to be in a foreign country.

These newspaper reports are aligned with the memories of P.A. Alekseev: Sidor Ignatiev and Gabriel Fedorov were taken away from the Kazan prison. P.A. Alekseev together with a typesetter from Chuvash saw them off from prison to the very doors of the station building. Alekseev returned to the editorial office alone.

Later, three years later, in autumn, when Alekseev was walking from the commercial school to the electric power station along Krasnaya Street, he unexpectedly met Sidor Ignatiev. He said that, being in France, he thoroughly mastered the French language and even earned a teacher diploma. But in Russia he was not allowed to work as a teacher. And he entered the Commercial Institute. Alekseev knew that he participated in the First World War, distinguished himself in battles, and was awarded the Saint George's Cross. He died on active service in July 1917.

But let us return to editorial activity of Pavel Alekseev, proceeding from the autumn of 1906 till the beginning of 1907. In his autobiography, Alekseev notes that after the arrest of the journalists, the editorial work continued. There were few subscribers, but they increased their number. Police officers took away printed issues, the editorial office was regularly searched. Alekseev thought that the newspaper was not closed only due to their advocate Ashmarin.

This period was very hard for the newspaper and its employees. Gendarmes of Kazan and Simbirsk provinces were frightened by terrorist acts of militants and propaganda activities of social revolutionaries who supported the newspaper. They intensified repressive and administrative measures. District police officers received an order to prevent unreliable Chuvash teachers and students from being elected to provincial assemblies of electors.

In January 1907, the Kazan judicial chamber initiated a case against Alekseev who was charged in publishing the book "Our era". The editor of the newspaper "Khypar" was also in the list of unreliable persons who was not recommended to be elected as an elector and a deputy [8]. In the first decade of February, the head of the Kazan gendarmerie informed the Governor about the case of the editor of the newspaper "Khypar" initiated by the Cheboksary district police office. On February 13, he reported that the case was transferred to the investigator of the first department of Kazan [9]. When electors were calling candidates for the Duma, the police officer appeared in the room and reported that he is obliged to arrest the editor of the Chuvash newspaper.

On January 14, the police found a reason for the arrest of the second issue of "Khypar" in 1907 (allegedly for the article "New song" by D. Demidov-Yultash) and banned its release. The response of Alekseev is described in his novel. Pavel Alekseevich managed to take 50 copies of the newspaper from the printing house and bring them to the village.

When Alekseev felt a threat, he recommended appointing Vasily Ivanov for the position of the editor. In 1907, the editors addressed the readers with the following message: "The second issue of the newspaper was confiscated by the censor. The criminal case was initiated against the editor. Therefore, it was not possible to publish the newspaper. The court acquitted the editor and we started publishing the newspaper."

The information was inaccurate. The fourth issue of "Khypar" was released on February 18, 1907 when there was no court verdict. The gendarmerie did not have convincing facts and took time to remove Alekseev from the editorial office. The court acquitted Pavel Alekseev. But he was denied access to the editorial office. He began to work as an electrician. In 1912 Alekseev and his sons returned to his native village. His wife Elyuk died in Tyumen.

For a more complete description of scientific, educational, pedagogical and social activities of a prominent worker of culture and education Nikolai Vasilyevich Nikolsky, it should be noted that his activities characterize the development of historical and ethnographic sciences, folklore, and lexicography of Chuvashia.

Nikolsky and his associates welcomed enthusiastically the February revolution of 1917. They hoped that it allowed them to realize their dreams about equality of peoples and national rise of the Volga peoples.

On the initiative of N.V. Nikolsky, representatives of the Volga peoples formed an association of small nationalities of the Volga region. Nikolsky was elected as a chairman. The first congress was greatly influenced by social revolutionaries. In August 1917, Nikolsky was elected to the board of the Chuvash national society headed by social revolutionaries. However, he did not take an active part in its work.

Since May 1917, the Chuvash section of the society of small nations of the Volga region has published the newspaper "Khypar" (Vesti). Then the newspaper has been published by the Chuvash national society headed by the first social revolutionaries.

Nikolsky did not prepare the proletarian stage of the revolution. However, after the end of the October revolution, he observed activities of the new government aimed at developing school, professional, pre-school and out-of-school education, opening new schools, training teachers, learning native languages and using them in the media, school, justice, management, propaganda. Nikolsky began to take an active part in the construction of new schools at various levels.

The provincial government headed by Nikolsky continued to perform its functions. He opened schools, strengthened teachers' seminaries, founded libraries, made reports on the development of schools for the Tatars [10].

In July and early August, the troops formed by the Committee of the constituent assembly and the Czechoslovak corps (formed from prisoners) which the Soviet government agreed to send home through Vladivostok, occupied a significant part of Kazan province and entered Kazan on August 6. Before that event, Nikolsky visited Chistopol, where he gave lectures on pedagogy. Then he went to Yadrin where he delivered lectures.

As a head of the autonomy, D. S. Elmen regularly talked with the population, visited public organizations and workers. However, he did not forget about his journalistic vocation, regularly published articles. He published an article "From words to deeds" devoted to the first steps of the revolutionary committee [11]. He wrote that "all the obstacles will be overcome by hard work and persistent desire to achieve the goals. "Tireless work to strengthen the rear and the front, to improve the life of society help us overcome difficulties" [12].

In one of the issues of "Izvestia", there was a new article by D. S. Elmen "Intelligentsia should response". He noted that creation of the autonomy aroused great interest among workers, but the intelligentsia remained silent. D. S. Elmen warned: "If it does not want to spoil relations with people and wants him to be happy, it should act, take measure to improve the life and education of the Chuvash people. Nikolsky was the first who decided to help [13].

The subject was developed in the next issue of the newspaper. In the note "Waiting for response", he wrote that

Kazan Professor Ashmarin, Kaganov and Nikolsky studied cultural, social, and economic relations of the Chuvash region.

In September 1920, as a delegate of Kazan University, Nikolsky participated in the first congress of Volga region universities held in Samara. He established relations with the revolutionary committee and its chairman D. S. Elmen and was involved in the opening of the University in Cheboksary. He developed its structure including faculties of social sciences and history, mathematics, and medicine. However, the region, and the country were experiencing great difficulties. The civil war, hungry, poor material and technical base, a lack of financial means did not allow him to achieve his goals [14].

Nikolsky did much for the training of highly qualified specialists for Chuvashia while working in the Eastern Pedagogical Institute (Kazan). He worked there from 1922 until the end of the 1930/31 academic year - until the opening of the Chuvash Pedagogical Institute in Cheboksary.

“The Department of Oriental Studies and the Chuvash branch of Pedagogical Institute had close relations with the department of public education of the Chuvash Autonomous Region and the people's commissariat of the Chuvash Republic. Nikolsky developed curricula and programs for Chuvash schools, reviewed textbooks and manuals. In 1926 and 1927, he organized conferences of teachers of pedagogical technical schools, where he presented reports. In June 1929, Nikolsky was a speaker of the meeting of the academic center of the people's commissariat of the Chuvash ASSR. He presented a report on the Chuvash branch of the Pedagogical Institute for the 1928-1929 academic year.” The Academic center recommended the Chuvash branch to pay more attention to science and brought a petition for opening graduate studies in the Chuvash language. Soon, the department introduced a position of assistants [15].

III. CONCLUSIONS

These data allow us to conclude that in the first years of the Soviet era and in the 1920s, Nikolsky contributed to the Soviet higher secondary schools.

But in science there were people who arranged “defeat” of two works by N.V. Nikolsky published in 1929 (“Folk medicine in Chuvash” and “Brief course of Ethnography of Chuvash”). This situation made it difficult for him to find a job in Kazan and Cheboksary. From 1940 to 1950, he was a senior researcher (Mari Research Institute of Language, Literature and History). In 1948-1950, he was a teacher in Mari State Pedagogical Institute.

The name of the founder of the first Chuvash newspaper “Khypar” N.V. Nikolsky will be never forgotten. His creative activities contribute to the society.

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