

## Mutual Representations of Russia and the Middle East Made by Eastern and Russian Scientists, Politicians, Travelers and Men of Letters

Associate Professor Elena Shelestyuk (Ph. D.)

Chelyabinsk State University, Russia

[shelestiuk@yandex.ru](mailto:shelestiuk@yandex.ru)

### Abstract

The present research features the method which we call linguohistoric and which is applied to such narratives as documentary prose – memoirs, biographies, pieces of journalese etc. It purports to collect background information and meaningful facts from real life narrations, observations, descriptions, judgements, opinions, which inescapably contain human-interest, emotive-evaluative tinges, epithets, metaphoric images. Facts accentuated by the observer can only be human-interest: if he were not interested, he would not have placed emphasis on these facts. We believe this background information helps determine the essence of historical phenomena, as well as their causal relationships and interdependencies. For the linguohistoric method of narrative study we borrow procedures from textology and conceptology (conceptual linguistics), viz. textological and conceptological analyses.

**Keywords:** documentary prose, real life narrative, linguohistoric method, textological analysis, conceptological analysis.

تمثيلات متبادلة لروسيا والشرق الأوسط قدمها علماء وسياسيون ورجال معرفة في روسيا

### الخلاصة

تميز البحث الحالي بالطريقة التي نسميها لغوية تاريخية والتي يتم تطبيقها على روايات مثل النثر الوثائقي – مذكرات وسير ذاتية ومقالات من الصحفيين وما إلى ذلك. وتهدف الدراسة إلى جمع معلومات أساسية وحقائق ذات مغزى من روايات واقعية وملحوظات وأوصاف وأحكام الآراء ، التي حتما تحتوي على مصلحة الإنسان ، والصبغات التقييمية العاطفية ، والصفات ، والصور المجازية. الحقائق التي يشدد عليها المراقب يمكن أن تكون فقط مصلحة بشرية: إذا لم يكن مهتما ، لما كان قد

ركز على هذه الحقائق. نعتقد أن هذه المعلومات الأساسية تساعد في تحديد جوهر الظواهر التاريخية ، وكذلك علاقتها السببية والترابط. بالنسبة للطريقة اللغوية للدراسة السردية ، فقد استعرضنا الإجراءات من علم تحليل النصوص والمفاهيم (اللغويات المفاهيمية) ، بمعنى التحليلات النصية والمفاهيمية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** النثر الوثائقي ، الحياة الواقعية السردية ، الطريقة اللغوية ، التحليل النصي ، التحليل المفاهيمي

The present article seeks to study mutual representations of Russia and the Middle East made by Eastern and Russian scientists, politicians, travelers and men of letters. The material of our analysis includes narratives of writers of the Arab East and Russia – scholars, travelers, statesmen, emissaries, men of letters – leaving reciprocal observations on the cultures of Russia and Arab East, their pieces of writing are what we call documentary prose – memoirs, notes, letters, essays, travel logs etc. The writers may be immediate observers of events – Ibn Khordadbeh, al-Masoudi, Athanasius Nikitin, Fedor Dorokhin, Alexander Griboyedov, Osip Senkovsky etc., or post factum narrators – political analysts, commentators, bibliographers of the acting subjects of their time.

We apply to these pieces of writing the method which we call linguohistoric that aims at gleaning background information and meaningful facts from real life narrations – observations, descriptions, judgements, opinions. Such narratives inescapably contain human-interest, emotive-evaluative tinges, as well as imagery, sometimes metaphoric. Let us reiterate that such narratives are invariably human-interest: if a fact or feature had not caught the observer's attention, he would not have selected them and placed emphasis on them.

The verifying procedures of the linguohistoric analysis include textological and conceptological ones. The former are related to the philological branch of textology that traces the fate of works of writing through such procedures as authorship attribution, establishing the time, locus, circumstances and reasons of text creation etc. The latter are related to conceptology (conceptual linguistics) that deduces concepts from subjectively represented empirical data through such procedures as “grasping” the meanings of historical events

during the narrative study and reconstruction of notions and ideas in the minds of the people of that period. We can judge by the material we command, that textological procedures have been already applied to the major part of it and further textological study would be redundant. Therefore we simply adduce the main facts about this or that text and then focus on the conceptological (conceptual linguistic) procedures.

We would like to begin with the ancient reference to Russians as representatives of the Slavic ethnic group in Arabic literature. Because of the archaic character of these texts we can mostly make but tentative conclusions about the historical meanings of the information presented there. One of the first such mention is found in the work “Kitab al-masalik wa-l-mamalik”

(Book of Ways and Countries), the earliest surviving Arab geographical treatise compiled by the 9th century geographer Ibn Khordadbeh, chief of post offices of northern Persia.



In the middle of the 9th century (842) Russian soldiers visited the southern coast of the Black Sea, in Amastrid (Amasra). In the 860–70s, Ibn Khordadbeh, wrote: “Russians from the Slavic tribe export beaver and silver fox furs from the most remote regions of the Slavic land and sell them on the shores of the Rumian (Mediterranean) Sea; here the king of Rum (Byzantine) takes tithe from them. When they wish, they go to the Slavic river (Volga) and come to the bay of the city of Khazar Itil, near the mouth of the Volga; here they give tithe to the ruler of this country. Then they go to the Jurjan (Gurgan, Caspian) Sea and there they can land on any coast ... Sometimes it happens that they carry their goods from Jurjan via Itil to Baghdad”. Acad. I. Yu. Krachkovsky, considering the general geographical works of the 9th century belonging to Arab authors, believes that the route of Russian merchants, traced by Ibn Khordadbeh, along the Don and Volga through the Caspian Sea to the south, is accurate [Krachkovsky; Rosen]. Importantly, Ibn Khordadbeh wrote down the words of Muslim merchants



who had time to study their contractors well. His attributing Rus (Russians) to the Slavic kin, as well as accentuating their trade relations with Byzantians, Khazars and Arabs along the sea and river trade routes, their staple goods and entrepreneurship, is noteworthy.

The Arab historian, geographer and traveler al-Masoudi, who created his works in the 920s-950s, wrote in his "Muruj adh-dhabab wa ma'adin al-jawahir" (Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems) about the Old Russian State and Khazaria: "We mentioned while we (described) the mountains of the Caucasus that in the country of Khazaria (there are) people from the Slavs and Rus, and they burn themselves on fire. These are the variety of Slavs, and others of them adjoin the east and (extend) from the west". During his travels, al-Masoudi was in the south of the Caspian Sea and in the Caucasus, where he personally asked captains of ships and merchants about the northern countries, whom they happened to visit. Asking people who knew anything about the Rus, Masudi concluded that they were one of the Slavic varieties [Mikulsky]. We can suppose that the Slavs and Rus who burnt themselves had been captured by the Khazars (such cases were frequent) and possibly preferred self-martyrdom to the life in servitude or repudiation of their faith.

Now we pass over to the analysis of the descriptions of the Middle Eastern realia in the Russian literature. The Russian traveler of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. Tver merchant Athanasius Nikitin was one of the first Europeans to reach India (30 years before the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama) and left inspired travel notes known as "Walking Over Three Seas". His travel along the Volga, the Caspian, Persia, the Arabian Sea, India, Turkey and the Black Sea continued from mid-1471 to the beginning of 1474. He traveled through the areas of Iran, Iraq and Syria, setting off down the Volga accompanied by the ambassador Shirvan Shah, ruler of Shemakha. Near Astrakhan the merchants were robbed, but Nikitin persevered in his journey and went further east. For 3 years he stayed in the first Muslim state of Bahmani in India. Nikitin died in 1447 near Smolensk (on the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) on

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his way back from travel [Semenov]. In his notes he described the beauty of Eastern nature, the wealth of landowners, the poverty of the rural population, the appearance, morals and mores of the indigenes. Being mercenary by vocation, he appraised the Eastern silk, sandalwood, pearls, diamonds, which gives an idea that the East before its Western colonization was seen as the land of riches.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the “The Description of the Turkish Empire” was compiled by a Russian, supposedly the boyar’s son Fedor Dorokhin, a native of Yelets, a Reitar (equestrian soldier). He was sold into captivity, served in the Turkish troops and returned to Russia in 1674, after travelling across Turkey for 5 years, 2 months and 20 days. In his pedestrian wandering he visited the remotest parts of the Ottoman Empire, all its European, Asian and African possessions and described many cities and towns including Mosul, Kirkuk, Babylon. The terse notes give away an observant and matter-of-fact man and are a remarkable sample of the narrative of the military of the time: “...And that place Mosul is a large city; it stands on the western side of the river; and houses in that place are sparse buildings. And as for people, this place is not populous; and the citizens in it are the people of Arabia of the Chaldean language; and they are bad in warfare. And the people of the county beginning from here are different: they are called Kurt (Kurds); their villages reach even the Persian land, and they live in small villages scattered all over the fields. All their dwellings are in the earth, and they are dashing people and great robbers. ... And Nineveh is destroyed, now there is only one small village in it. ... The city of new Babylon is not big in the outline of the foundation of its walls... New Babylon stands well in a flat place on the banks of the river of Babylon, it is a stone city; and it is firm and strong by fortress, and there are a lot of guns in it, great and small. And it is crowded with people; and the citizens in it are Arabian Turks and the servicemen, infantry Janissaries. ... And from that city of new Babylon, directly to the east of the sun, it is a 4 hours’ drive to the place of the Babel crowding. And then, the city of Babylon is the exit and the end of that Turkish land.” According to the Russian historian, literary critic and linguist Polychrony Syrku: “None of the Europeans of the time traveled so many territories of the Turkish Empire, saw so many corners of it, and noted so many features of

them as our author (Dorokhin) does" [Syrku]. Being at once detailed and matter of fact, the notes contain military-geographical and partly ethnographic information, give ideas of the locations of mountains, rivers or the sea, city walls, fortifications, settlement of people, buildings and architecture, presence or absence of guns, warcraft of the people described.

A documented journey was made in 1808 by the peasant of the Ryazan province Dementiy Ivanov Tsikulin, who, having gone on business to Persia, decided to bow to the Holy places in Palestine and underwent many adventures on his way. Tsikulin tells how, on the way from Persia to Baghdad, he was first captured by the Kermanshah Khan, and then by Kurdish robbers. With these adventures, he reached Baghdad, then he was brought to the court of the governor of Medina Dawud Pasha (1767-1851), the last Mamluk ruler of the Baghdad Pashalyk of the Ottoman Empire, a Georgian by birth, and then to Basra. He noted important things, such as artificial irrigation, and accurately described food, clothes, and the types of buildings of the people. Then Tsikulin visited Jerusalem and, having met an English captain in Palestine, with his ship traveled in Egypt, India, England and returned to Russia after thirteen years of wandering. These adventures kindled the interest of the Russian ambassador to Iran, Alexander Griboyedov, who did not doubt their reliability and made notes regarding the outstanding figure of Dawud Pasha mentioned by Tsikulin [The unusual adventures...].

The above-mentioned travelers Nikitin, Dorokhin and Tsikulin were ordinary people, worldly-minded and not very well educated. It is also interesting how Russian educated people – statesmen, diplomats, scientists, literary men – described the East. Thus Mikhail Lomonosov, Russian scientist of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. was curious of Abd al Latif, an Arabian scientist, doctor, biologist and geographer, particularly of the "History of Egypt" by this author [Belyakovskiy]. The interest in the East was galvanized by Empress Catherine II of Russia (1762-1796), who took measures to organize the teaching of Oriental languages in educational institutions located in areas with populations professing Islam. The implementation of these ambitious plans began with the start of the Kazan Gymnasium, founded in 1759. In 1769, a class of the Tatar language was set up in the Kazan Gymnasium,

which became the core of the future Eastern Branch, at first at the Gymnasium and at Kazan University (founded 1804). A special decree of Catherine II addressed to the Kazan governor Peter Kvashnin-Samarin noted the need for skilled translators of the Tatar language who were supposed to be trained at the Gymnasium. The interpreter of the Kazan Admiralty Office Sagit Khalfin was appointed head teacher of this language, his son and grandson extended the Khalfin dynasty of Tatar teachers [Review of the progress and success...: 50-51]. In 1771, the teaching of the Tatar language was introduced at the Academic Gymnasium of Moscow University [Shevyrev: 19].

Since 1783, the teaching of the Tatar, Mordovian and Chuvash languages was introduced in the Nizhny Novgorod Seminary. The 1782 decree of Catherine



II titled "The Commission on the Establishment of Public Schools" prescribed to introduce Arabic language lessons in the public schools of those provinces that lie "to the side of Tartary, Persia and Bukhara (modern Uzbekistan)..." [cit. in Bartold 1910: 21]. As for the Turkish language, it was least studied, despite the political importance of the Ottoman Empire for Russia.

One of the supporters of the development of oriental studies in Russia was Sergei Semenovich Uvarov (1786–1855) [Danzig]. Count S. S. Uvarov in 1808-

1811 was at diplomatic work abroad. In 1811, he was appointed trustee of the St. Petersburg Educational District and held this post until 1821. From 1818 until the end of his life, he was president of the Academy of Sciences, and from 1833 to 1849, he was the minister of public education. His enlightenment policy for Russians was based on three principles: Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. In 1810, Uvarov presented the project of the Asian Academy, which he envisaged to be a kind of mediator between the East and West, where all the forces of scientists studying Asia should be united and the languages and literature of the peoples of the East should be taught. In addition to languages, literature and philosophy, Uvarov proposed the study of the history and statistics of Asia. Uvarov's project was discussed by contemporaries – Peter Pletnev, Pavel Saveliev, Vasily Zhukovsky, Vasily Bartold, Ignatius Krachkovsky (translator of the Quran) etc. Napoleon was



interested in it, Sylvester de Sacy, Goethe [Durylin], Joseph de Mestre [Stepanov] sympathetically reacted to it. Uvarov's project and his thoughts on the desirability of developing Oriental studies in Russia had given a great impetus to the activities of Russian orientalists. Being Trustee of the St. Petersburg Educational District, Uvarov participated in setting up the Main Pedagogical Institute in St. Petersburg (1816), where in 1818 the Department of Oriental Languages was formed. At the initiative of Uvarov, the French Orientalists Sylvester de Sacy and Louis Langlès were elected members of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, and de Sacy's students, Demange and Charmois, were invited to St. Petersburg to teach Oriental languages. The creation of the Asian Museum at the Academy of Sciences and the presidency of Uvarov in it also shows how zealously he sought to develop oriental studies in Russia.

Less than twenty years later, a new project came out of the pen of the largest Russian writer and diplomat Alexander Griboyedov, who pursued completely different – quite pragmatic – goals. We are talking about the project of establishing the Russian Transcaucasian Company, submitted by A. S. Griboyedov on September 7, 1828 to Ivan Paskevich, commander of the Separate Caucasian Corps, for approval and rejected by the latter. It is impossible to say with certainty whether A. S. Griboyedov, who soon left for Persia and died there, knew about the fate of his project. The note was first published (partially) in the "Tiflis Provincial Gazette" in 1831 (No. 1818–20), and then in the "Russian Herald" in September 1891 under the name "Unreleased Note by Griboyedov" [Griboyedov, pp. 634-636]. The "Note" was signed by Griboyedov and Zavileysky, the civil governor of Tiflis. It outlines a wide range of development of trade and industry in the Caucasus, the organization of trade with Iran and other countries of the East. Without going into the discussion on the merits of the project, we only note that the organization of the company was thought to be modeled on the Russian-American and East India ones, that the project provided for the creation of the state of the Armenians who moved to Russia from Iran, as well as "an



increment of Georgia from the side of Asian Turkey... ”. It must be emphasized that the project also envisaged wide-ranging cultural and national developments and the involvement of Transcaucasia in broad economic and cultural ties with Russia. Murdered in the 1829 Teheran Massacre of the Russian Embassy instigated by the adversaries of Russia, Griboyedov did not live to see his project come true.

The world of classical Asia, the origin and cradle of its peoples, attracted the curiosity of the orientalist and philologist Osip Senkovsky. Classes given by Polish historian Joachim Lelewel led Senkovsky to the closest study of the East in the original, to the study of oriental languages, writing, and everyday life [Saveliev: XIX]. He studied Arabic, Jewish and other Eastern languages on his own. While still a student, he translated Luqman al-Hakeem's Fables from Arabic and published them in Polish translation in 1818 [Saveliev: XXI]. This work attracted the attention of scientists who decided to help him improve in Oriental languages. With the money collected by subscription in Vilna in 1819, Senkovsky, then a nineteen-year-old newspaper correspondent, went to the East. He visited Constantinople and some cities of Asia Minor, reached Syria. Here he settled in Ain-Tur, one of the 85 Maronite monasteries north of Beirut, where a theological seminary was located. Senkovsky spent seven months in Syria, then lived for three months in Cairo, and in February 1821 set off up the Nile and almost the first of the Europeans entered Nubia at Dar Mahan. “In a turban and oriental clothes, speaking the Syriac dialect of Arabic, hawaja Yusuf ... could safely make observations of the mores and ways of life of the inhabitants of the Nile Valley” [Saveliev: XXXI]. He eagerly studied the Arabic language, manuscripts, geography, ethnography and antiquities of Syria and Egypt – and then wandered from place to place with books behind him and with the firm conviction that one cannot understand the East system, not having learned to think first in the languages spoken by the people there. Senkovsky's journey lasted about two years. “Science, history, politics, geography, trade and industry were studied by Senkovsky as if he were a diplomatic representative of Russia who went on a journey with special



political tasks. This knowledge could not be overlooked and left without application in Russia of the 1820s, for which the Eastern question was the key issue of all foreign policy" [Kaverin: 299]. At the age of 22, Senkovsky was appointed ordinary professor at Petersburg University and began his readings at the University in 1822.

Worthy of note are the eastern novels ("Oriental Tales") by Senkovsky. The novel "Bedouin", featured in the top of the anthology "Polar Star" in 1823, laid the foundation for the cycle of Oriental Tales, the popularity of which among its current readers was explained not only by Senkovsky's talent, but also by his sensitivity to the widening requests for the "oriental style". In 1824 he published the Arab Qasida "The Knight of the Bay Horse" and other Arabian fairy tales, which Alexander Pushkin admired so much. His "Oriental Tales" represented translations of the relevant sources, but these translations often turned into fantasies about the original [Senkovsky: 227].



In the well-known journal "Library for Reading", published by Alexander Smirdin and edited by Osip Senkovsky, the Middle East was given a great place. It featured works of art, descriptions of travels in the East, ethnographic notes, articles on the history of art, translations, critical articles and reviews of Oriental works: "Memoirs of Syria", "Ebsambul. Nubian scenes", "Desert Poetry, or the Poetry of the Arabians before Mohammed", "Sappy Attractions. Notes by Ahmed Resmî Efendi", "Travel from Egypt to Nubia" by A. Norov, "Travel to Inner Africa" by E. Kovalevsky and "Traveling in Lower Egypt" by A. Rafalovich etc.

Our next story concerns the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829 he made his famous journey from Tiflis to Erzurum (Arzrum) [Pushkin, vol. VI, pp. 637-699], the route of which was made by Delvig's hand. On his visit to Kars, Pushkin wrote: "While



examining the fortifications and the citadel built on an impregnable rock, I did not understand how we could take control of Kars ..." [ibid.: 630].

From Kars Pushkin "rode to the camp located on the banks of the Karschay, along the land sown with wheat everywhere, villages were visible all around, but they were empty; residents fled. The road was beautiful and paved in marshy places, stone bridges were built across streams. The land was noticeably towering, the advanced hills of the Saganlu ridge (ancient Taurus) appeared..." [ibid.: 674].

Pushkin heeded the peoples of the Transcaucasia in the Russian troops. Describing hostilities, he noted: "our Tatar regiments" (i.e. Azerbaijanis) were the first in the persecution of the Turks. Pushkin was curious of the Yezidis, who were known as devil worshipers (he noted 300 Yezidi families living at the foot of Ararat). Pushkin talked to their leader, trying to find out the truth about their religion.



On the way to Erzurum, 15 miles from Hasan-Kale, Pushkin noticed a bridge over Arake. The description of Erzurum itself is given in detail: "We drove into the city that presented an amazing picture. The Turks looked at us gloomily from their flat roofs. Armenians crowded noisily in narrow streets ... The

streets of the city are crowded and crooked. The houses are pretty tall. There are many people. ... Arzrum is revered as the main city in Asian Turkey. It was said to count up to 100,000 inhabitants, but it seems that this number is too exaggerated. The houses in it are stone, the roofs are covered with turf, which gives the city an extremely strange look, if you look at it from above. The main land trade between Europe and the East is through Arzrum, but very few goods are laid out here..." [ibid. Pp. 690–693]. In his famous poem, "Giaurs today glorify Istanbul," Pushkin calls Erzurum "our highland, high-road Arzrum." Pushkin published an edition "Travel to Arzrum", including "Notes on the Jezidis", "Description of Baghdad Pashalyk".

One cannot ignore the interest shown in the East by Nikolay Gogol, who paid great attention to both domestic and general history, cf. his article “The Teaching of General History”, in which he wrote, among other things: “I have to portray the East with its ancient patriarchal kingdoms, with religions clad in deep mystery, incomprehensible to the common people... Whole Europe, moving from its places, assaults Asia, the East clashes with the West, and two formidable forces, Christianity with Mohammedanism” [Gogol: 30–33].



In the article “Al Mamun” Gogol gives a characteristic of the Arab Caliph of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and his reign: “Terrible caliphate majestically towered on the classical land of the ancient world. In the east it embraced whole flowering southwestern Asia, closed by India, in the west it stretched along the shores of Africa to Gibraltar. A strong fleet covered the Mediterranean Sea; Baghdad, the capital of this new wonderful world, saw its commands fulfilled in the remote provinces. ... Damascus could dress all

voluptuous people with expensive fabrics and supply the whole of Europe with steel swords. And the Arabs were already thinking about how to implement Mohammed’s paradise on earth, created water pipes, palaces, whole forests of palm trees, where fountains sweetly beat and the incense of the East smoked” [Gogol: 76].

Oriental motifs in Russian literature of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were found in the form of direct translations from Arabic or Persian along with translations from French. They were found in A. Boldyrev’s anthology, in the journal Asian Bulletin, published from 1825 to 1827 by Grigori Spassky, which collaborated with Ivan Botyanov (the first translator of Muallaki by Lebid), Dmitry Oznobishin, Vasily Zhukovsky [Eberman: 108-125].

From the above we see that the East, both ancient and contemporary bore no small attraction to Russian writers. However, despite long-term contacts with the Orient, Russian-Eastern relationships were still rather low-scale. Russia had too large expanses and severe climate, it took time and effort to cater for its own peoples and infrastructure. For their part, the countries of the East felt quite self-sufficient and developed on their own, most of them were

prosperous not to solicit trade relations with the West (or North-West, in the case of Russia). The late 18<sup>th</sup> c. – 19<sup>th</sup> c. heralded the epoch of Western colonization of the East, the capitalist conquest and pillage of colonies. The imperialist competition also invoked the exploration of the East, the study of its languages and cultures. Russia, basically – if not exclusively – identifying itself with the Western civilization, followed in the leeway of the Western trends and fashions. However, Russia's interests and those of the West in the Eastern countries were different: while the West led by pragmatic Britain saw as its ends colonization of the East and profiting by it, Russia with its usual contemplativeness and sluggishness, preferred to admire and study the East for the joy of it.



Not only Orthodox Christian Russians displayed interest in the east and eagerness to study it, but Muslim scholars, teachers, religious philosophers, emissaries and statesmen. Azerbaijani and Russian scientist-orientalist Mirza Kazembek (1802-1870) was fluent in Turkish, Tatar, Arabic, Persian, Russian and English. The scientific interests of Mirza Kazembek were truly diverse. He wrote works on the history of the Caucasus, Persia, Central Asia, Crimea and the history of Islam. Numerous works of Kazembek are devoted to socio-political and philosophical movements of the East. Of great importance was his work "Mukhteser ul-Wigkay" ("The Course of Muslim Law"), written in Arabic which withstood three editions. Kazembek translated into Russian "Gulistan" by Saadi [Shofman, Shamov; Sreznevsky].

In 1847, the learned Arab Sheikh Mohammed Ayad Tantawi was invited to the empty Arabic language department at the University of St. Petersburg, and from 1840 he taught Arabic in the Department of Oriental Studies at the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Sheikh Tantawi, a native of the city of Tanta in Egypt (born about 1810), was known as one of the experts in Arabic literature. His name was well known in Europe. He was invited to Russia on the recommendation of Christian Frähn. He taught at Petersburg University until 1861, until his death.



In a special study, "Sheikh Tantawi, Professor of St. Petersburg University", I. Yu. Krachkovsky wrote that Tantawi was not only a serious teacher or scholar of scholastic science close to him, but also an outstanding representative of new Arabic literature, still struggling to make its way. I. Yu. Krachkovsky believed that for people well-trained, with independent requests Tantawi was an indispensable mentor and quickly became a true friend [Krachkovsky 1957, 1958]

There is written evidence of numerous visits to Mecca and Medina given by Muslims of Russia. Thus a Muslim, an employee of the Russian consulate in Jeddah, Shakiryan Ishaev traveled from Jeddah to Mecca in April 1895. Ishaev describes in detail Kaaba (Beitulla, the house of God), the main shrine of Mecca: "In the eastern corner, the famous black stone Hajaralasvat, the main shrine of Beitulla, is embedded in the wall. It is embedded in the wall at such a height that you can kiss it ... The stone is lined with silver on top and sides; only a part is left in sight for the pilgrims to kiss; its value cannot be determined ... The whole building is covered with a thick black silk material. This veil is all covered with Arabic words of the main dogma of Islam ... there is no god but a single god, and Muhammad is his prophet ... The veil is prepared annually by the order of the Turkish Sultan..." [Ishaev: 55-56]. Ishaev also visited the market: "In the center of the main bazaar, near Beitulla, there is a special market for the slave trade. It consists of two small compartments. Women slaves and their children usually sit on benches, men are placed directly on the floor. These unfortunate people belong to the black and yellow races; I don't know exactly where they come from. The prices of slaves are generally inexpensive" [Ishaev: 47].

In 1898, Hijaz was visited by headquarters captain Abdulaziz Davletshin. Subsequently, he published a report on his trip, in which he brought a lot of interesting information. He, for example, notes that "the power of the Turkish government both earlier and now relies solely on the armed forces and manifests itself only in those places where the troops are located. In other words, the Turks own only the cities and the roads between Mecca and Jeddah, guarded by frequent posts ... For four centuries of holding Hijaz, the Turks could not calm down the natives and had no cultural influence on them.

The relations between those and others remain incredulous and hostile ... Administrative authorities are distinguished in most cases by extortion and injustice, while the actions of the armed forces are always extremely indecisive and inconsistent, therefore the Bedouins do not have proper fear and respect for them” [Davletshin: 11-12]. In his opinion, the life of the inhabitants of Mecca can be summed up in two words: “they live as pilgrims” [Davletshin: 42]. On the slave trade, he writes: “Slaves sold in Hijaz belong exclusively to two nationalities: Sudanese and Abyssinians ... There is not a single house in Mecca and Medina where there is no slave or slave who does all the housework ...” [Davletshin: 45–47]. Regarding the Hajj, after a thorough study of the issue, Davletshin came to the conclusion that it had practically no political significance for the rapprochement of Muslims of different nationalities.

The master of oriental literature, Ilya Nikolaevich Berezin (1818–1896), a well-known orientalist, linguist, historian and traveler, was also popular as the publisher of the Russian Biographical Dictionary (1873-1879). Having traveled all over Persia from north to south – from Ardabil to Hark Island in the Persian Gulf, he went to Basra, where he worked in mid-1843, then explored Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine, and in early 1844 he went to Egypt, where he lived for several months. In the middle of that year he arrived in Constantinople and stayed there for almost a year, studying the Turkish language. He produced rich, partly completely new materials about the history and geography of the East, copied many ancient inscriptions, up to 40 plans and 300 drawings, and collected a lot of information about the mores, customs and beliefs of the inhabitants of the East. His was the most prolific journey from Russia to foreign lands [Svenske].

During his travels, Berezin collected a lot of factual material. He was keenly interested in geography and topography, ethnography and history. In the essay “Scenes on the Euphrates,” Berezin described the way along the Shatt al-Arab. He talks of the natural beauty of the coastal strip, of countless gardens and date groves. “How free and easy it would be for a man to live here, and yet these flowering forests are empty. ... If there are villages, then they lie far from the coast; occasionally there are small shacks in which Arab guards live; there are no permanent residents here, because the Bedouins prefer the steppe to the luxurious garden and their freedom to the Turkish rule” [Berezin 1848: 85].



After living a month in Basra, Berezin went to Baghdad on an English boat. During his stay in Baghdad, he visited the ruins of Ktesifon and Babylon, the cities of Hill and Karbala. Berezin visited Karbala shortly after the bloody events in early 1843, when the Arab Shia and Persians rebelled against the Turkish authorities.

The uprising was crushed by the troops of Baghdad Pasha. His descriptions of Shi'ite shrines and Shi'ite drape (pilgrimage) are very interesting. According to Berezin, up to 50 thousand pilgrims visited these places every year and up to 3 thousand corpses from other countries were brought here for burial.

In September 1843, Berezin went to Mosul through Kerkuk and Erbil, from where he made trips to the places of pilgrimage of the Jesuits for a month. "Mousul," he wrote, "also has its own peculiarity: it is all gray, because all houses and buildings are built of gray stone with the addition of local marble also grayish in color. Architecture also has its own characteristic: domes of mosques in places are conical, six or octagonal, and the houses inside have open rooms, on the sides of which there are two-story rooms, exactly like Prince Vorontsov's palace in Alupka. The mass of the population here consists of Arabs, townspeople, different from the deserted Bedawis, Ottomans, as usual, are only officials and partly an army ... A significant part of the population is Kurds, and then Christians are Chaldeans, Jacobites, Nestorians ... Jews ... finally, there are Europeans here: French, British and North Americans ... The Arabic language prevailing here unites the mixture of the tribes, all city dwellers speak it ... Turkish is a foreigner here: many citizens speak Kurdish instead" [Berezin 1855: 171-172, 182-183].

From Mosul, through Nisibin and Mardin, Berezin headed to Diyarbakır, which gave him the opportunity to get acquainted closely with the Kurdish population of the region, its life, and then through Soferek, Urfa, Aleppo, Antioch, Lattakia, Tripoli and Beirut he went to Jerusalem and then to Damascus. Berezin spent eight months in Mesopotamia and Syria. At the end of February 1844, he sailed to Alexandria, then visited Cairo. He stayed in

Egypt for four months. In July 1844 he arrived in Istanbul, where he lived for about a year.

Nikolay Chernyshevsky wrote about Berezin's Yezidis essay: "The third volume of the Store of Geography and Travel contains only two small ethnographic articles: the Yezidis of Berezin and Memoirs of Eastern Siberia by Kornilov. They will undoubtedly be read with great interest, although their venerable authors give us only brief sketches of the lands and peoples they have seen" [Chernyshevsky, vol. II, 620]. Ten years after returning from a trip, I. N. Berezin published several more historical articles about Turkey and other eastern countries.

In the article "I. N. Berezin, as a historian" V. V. Bartold wrote: "The orientalist of the generation to which I. N. Berezin belonged could not limit himself to purely philological and linguistic tasks; the subject of his interest was the East as a whole, the present and past of the Eastern peoples, which inevitably led to the consideration of issues that constitute the subject of historical science", and further: "Numerous articles and reviews published by Berezin in the 1840s, -50s and -60s, testify to the breadth of his education and his scientific interests" [Bartold 1927: 51, 57].

Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the activity of the Russian people in the study of the Middle East grew even wider. In 1875 the travel journal (travel log) of E. I. Chirikov [Chirikov] edited by M. A. Gamazov, the former secretary of the mediation commission, began to come out. This travel log presented a direct record of events and impressions. Much space in it was devoted to Persia; the notes on the tribes of the Lur, Bakhtiar, Arabs, and Kurds were of great interest. After reviewing Chirikov's magazine, before its publication, Ieronim Stebnitsky (head of the military topographic department of the Caucasian Division Caucasus Military District) gave it such an assessment: "Both in the completeness and in the certainty of the reported information, this is such an accurate geographical work with respect to the places that it considers, that its matches are absent or very few in the literature" [Notes of the Caucasian Division..., vol. I: 47]. The log contained a number of new geographical data for its time; the most interesting chapters in it are "Baghdad and its environs", "A description of the trip to Babylon, Nejef and Karbala".

Describing the trip of the Russian commission from Baghdad to Babylon, Nejef and Karbala in 1849, Chirikov pays special attention to the sacred Shi'ite cities: "These two cities, Karbala and Nejef, are known among the Shi'ites under the collective name of the highest thresholds (Atabat iamiyat). Here, from all the places inhabited by Shi'ites, continuously come countless caravans of pilgrims (zuvvar), who bring with them money and things to bring to the mosques very often valuable gifts, as well as the bodies of their dead for burial in the sacred land ... Here on the slope days, many rich merchants, disgraced nobles and princes settle in anticipation of death..." [Chirikov: 23]. E. I. Chirikov's travel log, together with M. A. Gamazov's additions, represents a large independent work, saturated with valuable historical and geographic material, and is an important source for studying the Middle East.



Mentioning the name of M. A. Gamazov, we consider it necessary to dwell somewhat on his biography and activities. Matvey Avelevich Gamazov (1811-1893), born into a noble Armenian family, initially studied at St. Petersburg Main Engineering School, then was transferred to the officer classes. In 1831 he was appointed sapper officer in Tiflis and Zagatala. In 1835 he left military service and entered the Training Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he studied Persian, Turkish and Arabic. After graduation, he was sent by an interpreter to the embassy in Constantinople, then in 1842 he was a dragoman in Alexandria and consul in Gilan. As part of the delimitation commission, he went all the way noted above. Later, he was a mediator of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the English commission, who arrived in St. Petersburg to draw up the border map of Persia and Turkey.

In 1872, he was appointed head of the Training Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and stayed in this post for twenty-one years – until his death. He created a lot of literature, as a poet and as a prose writer (translator from Persian and Turkish). He usually wrote under a pseudonym, apparently due to his high official position and the rank (he died in the rank of a real privy councilor) and signed his works not by his own name [see Gregoryan].

Under the editorship of Gamazov and in his own translation (he was fluent in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Modern Greek), in 1877 a Turkish book was published, written by Khurshidefendi, secretary of the Turkish representative in the commission. The book is dedicated to the then Ottoman regions – Basra, Baghdad, Mosul – and contains interesting geographical and ethnographic information about the area between Ararat and the Persian Gulf. Gamazov supplied the book with valuable notes and an alphabetical index, correctly noting that “it contains far from useless and uninteresting data on very little-known places that are part of the border strip between Ararat and the Persian Gulf.”

Remarkably, in 1886, Gamazov published an interesting document (translated from Turkish), compiled in half of the Muharrem of 1238 (early October 1822) by Shakirpasha (at that time Beylice, the great port referendar, later the Minister of Foreign Affairs). This is the address signed by the chief officials of the divan, in which, in the name of God, the prophet and national honor, they called not only their fellow kinsmen, but all co-religionists to take up arms against infidels in general, and especially against unfaithful Muscovites, direct, as he puts it, the perpetrators of the Greek uprising [Russian archive].

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Imperial Society of Oriental Studies was set up, whose goal was the practical study of the East. Under the society, special commissions were created, including the Persian one. The society published works, among which we will name such well-known books as “The rivalry of trade interests in the East” by Mikhail Pavlovich Fedorov, Russian publicist, war correspondent and entrepreneur, member of the II State Duma from St. Petersburg, “India, as the main factor in the Central Asian issue” by A. E. Snesarev and others. In 1909, M. P. Fedorov made a report in the Society of Oriental Studies entitled “The Real Foundations of Modern International Politics,” which he published the same year under the same title. “But regardless of trade rivalry,” he writes, “restless warlike nations have recently stood out among cultural states whose ambition is a real threat to world peace ... This report aims to understand first of all the complex set of interests of the strongest peoples, and then to find out more vivid slogans by which one can judge their political moods and aspirations” [Fedorov: 3]. In addition to the chapter on the characterization of world trade, Russia's foreign trade and its struggle against competitors, the author devotes special chapters to Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and China. In the

final, tenth chapter, the author examines the rivalry between Germany and England, the position of Russia in the impending conflict (the Middle East - Russia and England in Persia, the Baghdad Road), Russian interests in the Persian Gulf, and her relations in Turkey. The second half of the final chapter Fedorov examines the situation in the Far East (Japan, China, the United States in the Pacific).

Paying (and correctly so) special attention to the Anglo-German rivalry (we would say Anglo-German contradictions), he notes: "For us Russians, the danger of Germany prevailing is made even more serious because of its proximity to us both on land and along the sea border" [Fedorov: 106]. From the time distance we can judge that Fedorov's anglophile position was wrong, and Russia's rapprochement with Germany, rather than contention with it, might have changed the disastrous geopolitical events of the 20<sup>th</sup> c.

"The direction in which the spread of pan-Germanism should go has already been determined. Areas already outlined are those where German dominance and influence should prevail – Austria, Constantinople, the Aegean Sea, the Adriatic Sea and Western Asia to the Persian Gulf. This program, therefore, captures the entire Middle East and is in contact with our Russian tasks in these areas" [Fedorov: 109]. "Russia has two specific tasks on the Balkan Peninsula: one common, related to our attitude towards the possible development of pan-Germanism, and the other arising from our relationship with the Slavs." The author recognized the solidarity of the Russian Balkan policy with the interests of England (because of German policy) and even expressed a negative attitude towards the construction of the Baghdad Railway in connection with the growing influence of Germany in Constantinople.

Concerning the issue of Russian politics in the Persian Gulf, Mikhail Fedorov writes that the demand for European goods on the Persian Gulf coast is insignificant and that, therefore, the subsidization of the export of Russian goods to the Persian Gulf was justified as long as it had a character political influence at the address of England – but after the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907 it was inexpedient "[Fedorov: 115]. The Anglophile Fedorov opposed the slogan about "moving Russia to the warm sea", about "protecting Russian interests in the Persian Gulf", believing that "in the Persian Gulf, for example, we have absolutely no interests, besides,

the treasury should make big surcharges to Russian society shipping companies in order to somehow place our goods there, in addition to encouraging the export of the latter by various customs privileges” [ibid.].

An outstanding, very influential and very knowledgeable diplomat was Ivan Alekseevich Zinoviev. He graduated from the course at the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages, then received a master's degree in oriental literature. In 1851-1859 he was at the embassy in Tehran, in 1860-1862 he was consul in Rasht, in 1862-1863 he was consul general in Tauris, then the first secretary at the embassy in Tehran and in 1876-1883 - envoy in Tehran (in 1880-1881 he participated in an expedition to conquer the Akhal-Teke oasis). From 1883 to 1891 he was the head of the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the head of all eastern politics. In 1897, he took the post of Russian ambassador to Turkey, where he stayed until 1909. Zinoviev published the book "Russia, England and Persia".

Noteworthy is the work of the Russian consul in the Ottoman Empire — especially in Basra and Baghdad — Alexander Alekseevich Adamov. Upon his return to Russia, he published the book “Arab Iraq. The Basra province in its past and present” (St. Petersburg, 1912). The book gives a geographical sketch, describes the administrative structure, details the national composition (population, their occupations). Special sections are devoted to issues of trade and economics. A large historical section of the book is devoted to the ancient history of Iraq, the history under the control of the Turks until the 18th century, the history of the 18th century, and recent history to the 20th century. However, the book was not free from inaccurate and prejudiced representations of the Eastern history. Vasily Bartold wrote about Adamov's book: “On the southern part of Mesopotamia there is an extensive work in Russian by A. Adamov, written on the basis of his long-term acquaintance with the region, but in its historical part it is completely dependent on Western allowances and contains many inaccuracies ”[Bartold 1925: 290].

Of interest are the publications by Evgeny Alexandrovich Adamov (not to be confused with his namesake above) of the documents from the Archive of Russian Foreign Policy: “Division of Asian Turkey” and “Constantinople and the Straits”. Both works are an extremely complete and strictly scientific selection of all diplomatic documents related to these topics.

B. I. Shelkovnikov, who was sent by the Society of Oriental Studies to the Ottoman Empire and Persia, correctly asserts that England succeeded in “establishing long-term and strong ties in the country (Arab part of the Ottoman Empire), to manage it, take economic control of its markets and strengthen the British political prestige among the tribes inhabiting it ... The situation in Mesopotamia is intricately connected with the British actual predominance in the Persian Gulf and South Persia ...” [Shelkovnikov, part III: 4].

Shelkovnikov made a description of the tribes, the current state of land use and land ownership, and the irrigation system of Mesopotamia according to literary sources and personal observations. He also considers the national composition of the three Mesopotamian vilayets, noting that the Turks constitute “a minimal, barely noticeable part of the population” [Shelkovnikov]. He cites data that the population of the three vilayets was 3,400 thousand people, of which about 1100 thousand nomads. A special section of the work is dedicated to the independent nomadic Arab and Kurdish tribes. The final chapter of the book is devoted to the history of the issue of the Baghdad Railway.

The liberal and anti-imperialist sentiment was also present in the writings of Russian travelers to the East. Ivan Nikolaevich Klingen (1851—1922) was one of the outstanding Russian agronomists of his time, a specialist in subtropical cultures. His name is associated with the development of tea growing in the Caucasus. On February 20, 1895, a Russian expedition headed by the inspector of the Caucasus specific estates I. N. Klingen left for the East to study tea business. As a result of his trip to the East, a three-volume essay by I. N. Klingen [Klingen] appeared, written according to personal impressions and literary sources. The first volume on Egypt provides a brief outline of relief, climate, soil, vegetation, and agriculture. A special chapter is devoted to human activities on the transformation of nature in the Nile basin. Of great interest is the chapter on contemporary Egypt, which refers to the economy of fellah, on the role of large land tenure [Klingen, pp. 364–438]. Klingen writes about the plight of the Egyptian fellah: “We can safely say that now, after 3000 years that have passed since the time of the pharaoh sloths, the people did not feel better. All the same, they beat like fish on ice, exhausting themselves in order to win the last piece of daily bread for



themselves and their families from ruthless predators of any color and tribe” [Klingen, pp. 403–404].

“The economic management of the British imperialists,” Klingen notes, “only aggravates the already difficult and hopeless situation of the people. English squadrons and countless steamboats,

English gendarmes on the marinas, English troops in the citadel, English school headmasters, English front ministers ... and most importantly, large English capitalists and money-lenders flooded Egypt, and with the help of the army, which they provide at the expense of the clients themselves, they support invariably and in everything the “English interests”, expanding all the “safeguards measures” and “spheres of influence”, from which the poor barefoot, half-starved fellah will soon feel as if the sky is falling ...” [Klingen: 410]. Klingen believes that “the time will come and all these so humiliated peoples will cease to bow with resignation to the predatory stranger; they will learn to assert their rights, they will gain freedom, they will create a great and glorious Fatherland with common forces ” [Klingen: 411].

In this article we presented the study executed in the paradigm of linguohistoric analysis based on textology and conceptology (conceptual linguistics). The disadvantage of this analysis is subjectivity, sometimes ideological bias, and even political engagement: all too often observers see what they see because of what they think. However, in documentary prose in a diary form, in memoirs and autobiographies, in letters and confessional essays rather than in public interviews authors try to be honest with themselves and reflexive. The obvious advantage of this analysis is the truth of the first-hand experience. The relationship between sense experiences and concepts is entirely intuitive and only later they are rationalized and verbalized. Therefore we strongly believe that textology, conceptology and the linguohistorical analysis of documentary texts based on them have a future.



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