

The Development of the Literatures of the People of the Volga region in Multi-ethnic Russia

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Abstract. The article reveals the literary works and events of the XX - XXI centuries in which the interaction and the dialogue of cultures and literatures of the people of the Volga region in Russia are pronounced. The Russian Federation has a lot of large regions in which many nations for centuries lived in the vicinity, interacting and enriching material and spiritual values. One of these regions is the Volga region, where Russian, Tatar, Chuvash, Mari people understand each other perfectly, and on weekdays, and holidays are always together and maintain friendly relations. Such Tatar poets as G.Tukay , Kh.Taktash , Kh.Tufan , R.Kharis, Chuvash writers as I.Ya.Yakovlev , Tikhon Pederki , Michael Sespel , I. Maximov , A. Alga, B.Uhli, S. Timbay, Peder Huzangay, M. Fedorov , Vasley Mitta , Mari writers as Vladimir Vasiliev, S. Chavayn, N.Mukhin, G. Evayn, V. Ipatov and the others demonstrate the ways of harmonizing the relationship in the sphere of functioning and development of the literatures of the Volga region. True literature and art have always been so high,

served universal and humane purposes of the people rapprochement with the help of the artistic means, harmony and beauty.

Keywords: dialogue of the literature, dialogue of cultures, Russian literature, Tatar literature, Chuvash literature, Mari literature, interaction literatures, translation.

Introduction. Russia is inherently a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional country. Multiethnic composition of the population of our country is an objective phenomenon. Thus, Dagestan from the point of view of the national composition is the most multi-ethnic republic within the Russian Federation. The people of the Volga region inhabiting the Republics of Tatarstan, Chuvashia, Mordovia, Mariy-El, in this sense are of no exception, too. Tatars, Russians, Chuvashians, Udmurtians, Mordovians and many other nations have been living here for a long time.

It so happened that these people knew each other's' languages, and almost all of them knew the Tatar language. The Russian language has become a window for them to return to the scale of the whole of Russia. Jadidas are the supporters of the education reform. One of their demands was the study of the Russian language. The People who live here were polyglots to some extent. Knowing the Tatar language, they could communicate with the other Turkic people, the knowledge of the Mordovian, the Marian and the Udmurtian languages opens the way to communicate with the Finno-Ugric tribes. For the development of language or ethnicity of the people it is very important to have a developed written literature. A particular language is estimated with the help of this measure. We are proud to say "the language of Pushkin", "the language of Turgenev" meaning our common Russian language. Such phrases as "the language of Tukay", "the language of Huzangay" and "the language of Chavayn" are sounded not less proudly. The poets' brilliancy is primarily manifested in the degree of their use of the rich possibilities of the native language.

In connection with the native multi-ethnicity of Russia and the Volga region the Russian literary critics, cultural historians are actively studying ancient history of literary and cultural interaction between the people of the Volga region, traditionally

living in the same area and at the same time belonging to different ethnic groups, different religions (Christianity, Islam, paganism) developing in different socio-political conditions.

In the last two decades in the works of literary critics there was a tendency of considering the main stages of the development of Russian and Tatar literatures and individual writers in a broad historical and literary context. Such a similarity, according to G. Nigmatullina “enriches both literatures throughout the long history of interaction and gives a wide field for the emergence of the intertextual interpretations” [1: 10]. Dialogue of cultures is considered by the researchers as a meeting of the ethno-religious communities of the equal and sociocultural origin. However, comparative analysis of the literatures of the people of the Volga region on the diachronic and synchronic levels in a broad historical and cultural context of the development of the Russian and world literary process has not become the subject of a scientific research. This determines the relevance and novelty of our study.

Methodology. The problem of the relation of the national literatures, including the interliterary reception of the Volga region people is traditionally regarded by the Comparative Literary studies, the founder of which was A.N. Veselovsky. Several forms of the comparative literary studies (historical genetic, comparative historical, historical and typological, etc.) allow us to trace the continuity of the processes of artistic values of different national literatures, typological similarities to determine the relationship and influence of literature. The writings of M.P.Alekseev, V.M.Zhirmunsky, N.I.Konrad, I.G.Neupokoeva developed the basic theoretical propositions of the domestic comparative literary studies [2 - 3].

Application of the comparative method to literary relationships of the Volga region people involves identifying of the nature of the interliterary communication, which by definition of D.Dyurishina, is subdivided into two types: genetically contact literary connections (direct and indirect, external and internal influences and borrowings) and typological convergence, manifesting the genre properties and the specifics of the national existence in a particular environment at the level of literary method [4 : 100 - 101]. In a study of the literary connections of the Volga region people

the typological approach to the study, based on the concepts of “general typological series” and “literary era” introduced into scientific circulation by I.G.Neupokoeva is dominated [3 : 155 , 296].

Typological study suggests, first of all, determining the conditions of occurrence and development of the homogeneous literary phenomena and processes. This type of research has allowed Kazan literary critics, linguists and cultural researchers as V.R.Amineva, A.M.Galieva, F.G.Galimullin, A.F.Galimullina, R.K.Ganieva, L.S.Karabulatova, O.N.Korshunova, S.M.Mikhailova, H.Yu.Minnegulov, R.F.Mukhametshina, E.F.Nagumanova, Yu.G.Nigmatullina, R.R.Zamaletdinov, A.M.Sayapova, F.S.Safiullina, M.M.Khabutdinova, A.Sh.Yusupova, consider the language and literary relationship in the context of the system-integrated study of languages, literature and art, in the frame of the integration of studies of humanities and social sciences, in the context of interaction with the conceptual studies, methodologies and research techniques peculiar to various fields of social science [1, 5 - 13].

Thus, the basis of our research of the literary interaction of the people of the Volga region became comparative-historical, comparative-typological, comparative and functional, subjective and mythological methods that allow us to do a comparative analysis of the works belonging to different periods of the development of the literatures of the Volga region people, do a qualitative analysis of the artistic text itself and reveal its intercultural (interliterary) relationships taking into account time verticals to determine the typological similarity with other pieces of literary fiction. The problem of the dialogue, which is perceived in modern research as one of the dominant, allows us to identify specifics of the interaction of the literatures. We focus on M.M.Bakhtin’s theory of the dialogue between cultures as a form of their existence in the big time, during which the culture and literature of every nation , ethnic group becomes one of the participants in the dialogue with other cultures, as a result of which new meanings and forms are being formed [14].

The main body. Tatars in their numbers occupy a privileged position in the Volga region. They comprise more than two million only in the Republic of Tatarstan. There are hundreds of thousands of Tatars in the neighboring republics (over a million people

in Bashkortostan). Kazan was the capital of a large province for several centuries. That is where one of the first Universities in Russia was opened. It has turned this city not only into a large administrative, but also a cultural and scientific center. Each of these people the art developed on their own, because they have different special historical conditions.

There is one unbreakable law: the more national are works of a poet or a writer, with the more interest they are perceived by the readers of the other nations. For national is the fruit of a kind of the development process of the people, of their spiritual world. For example, the creative works of G.Tukay as the whole culture and literature of the Tatar people for many centuries has been having a beneficial effect on the other nations, including on the Chuvashians, Marians, Udmurtians and Mordovians. For Tatars have had their own writings (runic, Uyghur, Arabic) and written literature since the ancient times. Therefore Kazan played a major role in improving the level of the general culture, the development of literature of the neighboring nations.

Tatar literature until the early twentieth century was, of course, focused on the eastern literatures. Translations of the Russian authors in the XIX century were isolated facts. However, since 1905 the situation has changed drastically. More than 140 works of Russian writers have been translated into the Tatar language and published as separate books by the Kazan publishers only until 1916 (during 10 years). For example, there were 14 books by A.S.Pushkin with a total circulation of over 40,000 copies among them. L.N.Tolstoy, in turn, became one of the most popular writers among the Tatar readers. A lot of prominent followers of the wordsmiths of Russian literature appeared among the Tatar authors. If A.S.Pushkin, M.Yu.Lermontov became idols for G.Tukay, the G.Ishaki establishes direct communication with M.Gorky. Kh.Taktash is considered being closer to S.Yesenin's creative works. Sh. Kamal translated the works of Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Sholokhov into Tatar, and as a result of it he considered them being his mentors while creating his original works, especially the novel "When the perfection is born". Such examples have been reported at a later time. We can state that through the translation of A.Absalyamov the characters of A.Fadeev's the novel

“Young Guard” were talking Tartar. Then A.Absalyamov has created his “Young Guard” in the novel called “Eaglets”.

Nowadays the consonance of Russian and Tatar literatures is not uncommon, although in recent years the contacts of the writers from different regions became weakened. Some selected topics, ideas and aesthetic solutions of A.Segen, Yu.Loshits, Yu.Kuznetsov, I.Mashbash, V.Karpov, N.Pereyaslav, V.Shamshurin, V.Rogov, T.Zumakulov, V.Turgay are echoing in the works of the Tatar modern authors such as R.Kharris, M.Malikov, Zulfat, Z.Khakim, A.Bayanov, G.Gatash, L.Shakirzyan.

There are similar examples of the literary dialogue based on the close relationships between authors, representing Chuvash, Mari, Udmurt, Mordovian and Tatar literatures. For example, two major Chuvashia workers of education and literature were born in the village of Koshki-Novotimbaevo (now Tetushsky district). One of them is Ivan Yakovlevich Yakovlev (1848-1930), an outstanding educator, who graduated from the University of Kazan in 1875.

Another prominent son of the Chuvash people of this village is Tikhon Pederki (Peter Petrov), a writer (1903-1976), who wrote a historical and biographical trilogy “The Boy from Koshki” about his great countryman. It reveals not only the panorama of life of the Chuvashia’s Mifodiy, but also quite extensive pictures of the world of this nation.

I.Maksimov, a future playwright, A. Alga, a national poet of the Chuvash Republic, writers B.Uhli, S.Timbay and many other glorious sons and daughters of the Chuvash people were educated in the Koshki-Novotimbaevo school.

Michael Sespel, a classic of the Chuvash poetry (1899-1922) also began his work in Kazan. Peder Khuzangai, a national poet of Chuvashia was born and raised in Tatarstan. His nickname literally means “Kazanets” (“an inhabitant of Kazan”) as Kazan in Chuvashia is Khazan. M.Fedorov, an author of the first ballad in the Chuvash language, completed a one-year course in the Tatar Teachers’ Institute in 1878. He created his work “Arzyuri” (“Shurale”) the same year. That means this mythical figure became a hero of the Chuvash written literature long before 1907 when G.Tukay, a classic of the Tatar poetry made him a hero of his famous poem.

As a result of the events of 1905-1907 the Volga people were able to have their own periodicals. They took advantage of these new conditions immediately. In 1905 “Nur” (“Ray”), the first legitimate newspaper in the Tatar language, was published in St. Petersburg. After that the first issues of “Kazan mohbire” (“The Kazan Herald”), “Azat” (“Free”) and “Yoldyz” (“Star”) were published in Kazan, “Fiker” (“Thought”) and others in Uralsk. At the end of 1905 “Hypar” (“Message”), a newspaper in the Chuvash language, received permission for publication.

As it is known, the Chuvash Autonomous Region was formed in 1920. The first issues of the newspaper “Canash” emerged in connection with this very important and long-awaited event for the Chuvash people. The Chuvash Publishing House, the Chuvash National Theatre moved from Kazan to Cheboksary. However, the connections between writers not only remained, but also developed further. Kh.Taktash, a prominent Tatar poet, in this case was particularly consistent. He wrote: “The works created by the Chuvash writers become food for our souls. And, on the contrary, works of the Tatar authors became a source of inspiration for the Chuvash people [15: 317].

Kh.Tufan, a Tatar poet, contemporary and close associate to Kh.Taktash, also had many friends among the Chuvash writers. Vasley Mitta, a Chuvash poet, in one of his poems called him “a real family man”. After receiving the news of his death, Kh.Tufan could not help but respond to this irreparable loss with the poem, which he called very simply – “Mitta”.

The same can be told about the Mari literature. Up to 1917 the first galaxy of literature of this people, which included Vladimir Vasiliev, S.Chavain, V.Mukhin, G.Evayn, V.Ipatov and some others who lived in Kazan, and, of course, began and continued their work here. Publication of books by the Mari writers in Kazan continued in the twenties of the last century. The Future Mari writers Sh.Osyp, V.Mukhin, A.Tok, A.Eyzenvort, V.Elmar, K.Chetkarev, T.Osyp (Borisov) also studied at the universities of Kazan and made the first literary steps.

We see the samples of relations between the writers of the two nations in a collaboration of A.Kutuy and A.Tok (Krylov). They both being the students of the

Kazan Eastern Pedagogical Institute, according to Kh.Tufan, were in a creative glow. They were addicted to Russian poetry, translated it into their native languages. For example, on the eve of V.Mayakovsky's arrival in 1928 in Kazan they translated his poem "Left March". Later in the poem "Kazan" V.Mayakovsky wrote: "The Tatar enters: / 'I'll / read / you // "Left March" // in Tatar. // The second one enters. / Diagon in cheek. // And he says, / looking for something in his pockets: // 'I'm / a Mari. / Let / me / read / your / "Left" / in Mari. // Those came out. / The third met / those walked / at the low / door" [16: 524-525].

If this "Tatar" was A.Kutuy, that "Mari" was certainly A.Tok. P.Khuzangay, a Chuvash poet who came on a visit to the Russian poet with his friend M.Shelebi was the "third".

The first steps of the Udmurt periodicals were associated with Tatarstan. The appearance of the newspaper "Gudyri" ("Thunder") in the Udmurt language in Yelabuga has special significance. Such representatives of the Udmurt literature as I.Prokopyev, D.Majorov, I.Dyadyukov, Ashalchi Oki are actively being published there [17: 24]. Tatar and Udmurt literary connections were developed mainly in the thirties of the last century. Many Udmurt writers knew the Tatar language. Among them, for example, M.Petrov and G.Sabitov were great connoisseurs of the Tatar language and culture.

M.Petrov translated M. Jalil's poem "Zaynap" directly from the original into the Udmurt language in the thirties. Guy Sabitov translated M.Jalil's "Moabit Copybook" into his native language in the fifties. They were published in Izhevsk. The poets M.Vinogradov, M.Mozhgin, translating the poetry of M.Gafuri, a classic poet of the Tatar literature, also dealt with the original.

Fruitful cooperation of the literatures maintained and developed in the next decades. S.Khakim, a Tatarstan's national poet, carried a sense of love and respect for Mari people throughout his life. He knew the language of the neighbors. His works as "Ulina, a Marian girl", "An old man Philip", "Kugi" ("The Cuckoo") certify the the author's subtle knowledge of the spiritual world of his characters. If a Tatar Kavi Latypov wrote story "Star Boy" about a Chuvash cosmonaut Andrian Nikolayev, the

Chuvash Michael Yukhma has created an image of the glorious son of the Tatar people Mullanur Vakhitov in his novel “Kungush is a Bird of Happiness”.

In 2008, it was 100 years since creating a poem “Narspi” by K.Ivanov. On this occasion Kazan hosted a literary festival, which was attended by both the Chuvash and Tatar poets, writers, literary critics and readers. It held a presentation of the poem “On the trail of Narspi” written by Renat Kharris, a national poet of Tatarstan. The work was made in three languages: Tatar, Chuvash and Russian. The Chuvash version was recited by an interpreter Porphyry Afanasyev, a national poet of Chuvashia.

In the first decade of the XXI century there were big events that have become milestones on the way to further strengthening of the cooperation and friendship among the people of the Volga region, rallying them around the greatest phenomena in literature and art. The anniversaries of G.Tukay, F.Amirkhan, M.Jalil, A.Klyucharev, S.Sadykova, N.Zhiganov, N.G.Rakhlin, P.Khuzangay, I.Kyrli and other holidays have become true of all the people of the multinational region.

Conclusion. Thus, the tradition of interaction and dialogue of literatures of the Volga region people are actively developed at this stage. Despite the national differences they are united by belonging to the same region, territory, by the common goals and interests, moral, spiritual and cultural values, ethics are making possible the interaction and mutual understanding, establishing close friendly contacts between the literature and culture of the people of the Volga region. However, they share the common problem of them all: to preserve the national identity of language, literature and culture of each nation and the people, on the one hand, and to preserve the unity of the literary space of the multicultural environment across Russia and abroad, as well as to understand a special place in the world literary, and wider – in a cultural process in conditions of globalization.

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