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**R.G. KUZHEYEV'S CONTRIBUTION  
TO THE STUDY OF THE BASHKIR SHEZHERE**

The contribution of the well-known scientist-ethnologist R.G. Kuzeyev to the study of the bashkir genealogical chronicles – shezhere – the peculiar written monuments of XVI-XIX and sometimes even earlier centuries is considered in the article. Of special interest in the plan of our theme are the studies of R.G. Kuzeyev, in whose works hundreds of bashkir stories, legends, and genealogies have been studied. A special place is given to R.G. Kuzeyev's scientific research on the identification of shezhere's handwritten texts, the publication of texts, the creation of shezhere's corps, the concentration of handwritten texts in the archives, the purposeful work to find, collect and study the ancient texts of the genealogical chronicles shezhere. The author notes Kuzeyev's invaluable contribution to the development of a comprehensive approach to ethnogenetic research.

**Key words:** R.G. Kuzeyev, ethnos, ethnogenesis, genealogical chronicle, shezhere, ethnogony, archeography.

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**Р.Г. Кузеевтің башқұрт шежірелерін зерттеуге қосқан үлесі**

Мақалада көрнекті ғалым Р.Г. Кузеевтің XVI-XIX, кейде одан да ерте дәуірге жататын жазба ескерткіштер шежірелерді зерттеу ісіне, шежіретану ғылымының қалыптасуына айрықша үлес қосуына басты назар аударды. Башқұрт халқының қалыптасуында басқа деректермен қатар шежіренің дерек ретінде алатын орнына ерекше мән беріледі. Мақалада шежірелерді жинақтау, аудару, транскрипциясын жасау, оларды ғылыми айналымға түсірудегі Р.Г. Кузеевтің сіңірген еңбегіне ерекше тоқталады. Шежіредегі башқұрт халқының этникалық тарихы, ру-тайпалық құрылымына байланысты материалдарды басқа деректермен бірге қолдану мәселелері қарастырылған. Автор шежіретану ғылымының бастауында тұрған, ғылыми негіздерін қалауға ерекше үлес қосқан Р.Г. Кузеевтің ғылыми еңбектеріне, шежіре саласын зерттеу жұмыстарына, қолжазбаларды ғылыми айналымға енгізу мәселелерінде алатын орнын көрсетеді.

**Түйін сөздер:** Р.Г. Кузеев, этнос, этногенез, генеалогиялық жылнама, шежіре, этногония, археография.

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**Вклад Р.Г. Кузеева в изучение башкирских шежере**

В статье рассматривается вклад известного ученого-этнолога Р.Г. Кузеева в изучение башкирских генеалогических летописей – шежере – своеобразных письменных памятников XVI-XIX веков, а иногда и более ранних. Особый интерес в плане нашей темы представляют исследования Р.Г. Кузеева, в работах которого исследованы сотни башкирских преданий, легенд, родословных. Особое место уделяется научным исследованиям Р.Г. Кузеева по выявлению рукописных текстов шежере, публикации текстов, созданию корпусов шежере, концентрации в

архивах рукописных текстов, целенаправленным работам по поиску, сбору и изучению старинных текстов генеалогических летописей – шежере. Автор констатирует неоценимый вклад Кузеева в разработку комплексного подхода к этногенетическим исследованиям.

**Ключевые слова:** Р.Г. Кузеев, этнос, этногенез, генеалогическая летопись, шежере, этногония, археография.

## Introduction

Bashkir shezheres, being written monuments, are at the same time the continuation of a long-standing oral tradition. The study of many issues of the ethnic history of bashkirs and the expansion of the chronological framework of research became possible due to the introduction of the Bashkir shezheres into the scientific circulation.

One of the researchers who dedicated his work to a holistic understanding of the bashkir shezheres or genealogical chronicles is an outstanding scientist Rail Gumerovich Kuzeyev, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Bashkortostan, Doctor of Historical Sciences, an outstanding ethnologist, founder of the Museum of Archeology and Ethnography in Ufa, the first director of the Center for Ethnological Research (now – the Institute of Ethnological Research named after R.G. Kuzeyev) of the Ufa Science Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences. His student, colleague and ally, who worked with him for many years, Professor N.V. Bikbulatov rightly noted: «The problem of ethnogenesis of the bashkir people occupies a central place in the works of R.G. Kuzeyev» (Bikbulatov, 1994:6). R.G. Kuzeyev's focus of scientific interests was unusually large. He contributed to the development of such areas like historical and traditional ethnography, socio-economic and political history, the history of culture, archeology, anthropology and population genetics, shezherology, museology, ethnodemography, ethnolinguistics, ethnosociology and ethnopolis. This article is dedicated to an analysis of his experience in studying genealogical chronicles or shezhere.

**The object of the study** is R.G. Kuzeyev's contribution in the study of the Bashkir shezhere – genealogical chronicles, which, in addition to pedigrees, contain valuable historical information like synchronous in time recording of texts and for earlier periods.

**The subject of the research** is the main content of the scientific activity of R.G. Kuzeyev to attract one of the vast circles of sources of data genealogical records of tribes, clans and villages – shezhere, folk stories and legends, tribal names, tamgas.

**The overall goal of the study** is to reflect the contribution of R.G. Kuzeyev in the study of the origin and formation of the Bashkir people in general, and Bashkir genealogical chronicles – shezhere in particular.

**The goal of this article** is to show the role and significance of the multifaceted scientific activity of R.G. Kuzeyev in the study of genealogical chronicles-shezhere of the bashkir people, an analysis of his experience of researches in this area.

## Main part

At the present time, there are still a number of poorly studied and debatable questions on the study of genealogical traditions-shezhere, the compilation of which was distributed among many Turkic peoples. Along with the problems of deep and extensive study of genealogical records in the researches of scientists R.G. Kuzeyev occupies a special place, in whose scientific researches on ethnic history of bashkirs and the expansion of the chronological framework of research became possible due to the introduction of the bashkir genealogical chronicles – shezhere into the scientific circulation (Kuzeyev, 1960).

As his student, professor R.I. Yakupov, rightly points out, the formation of R.G. Kuzeyev as an ethnographer is associated with the names of researchers like S.P. Tolstov, N.N. Cheboksarov, S.A. Tokarev, I.M. Potekhin, S.M. Abramzon and others, i.e. with the classical school that developed in the Institute of Ethnography named after N.N. Miklukho-Maclay of Academy of Sciences of the USSR in the first half of the last century. R.G. Kuzeyev gained the experience of field ethnographic work in the large-scale Central Asian expedition of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the training unit of which under the leadership of S.M. Abramzon worked in the Tien Shan (Yakupov, 2010: 112).

The study of the origin and formation of the bashkir people in the 1950-1970 years of the XX century became the main content of R.G. Kuzeyev's scientific activity. He attracted a wide range of sources to the development of the problem. For the first time, genealogical records of tribes of clans and villages, tribal names, tamgas were widely used

and evidences of medieval written monuments were carefully studied.

To do this R.G. Kuzeyev carried out a special analysis of the bashkir genealogical chronicles – shezhere together with his colleagues.

The work takes systematic character to identify, collect and study written monuments from the middle of 1950-s. In a short period of time, it was found during a field work of scientific expeditions in the regions of Bashkortostan, in the hand-written funds of the Institute of Histories, Language and Literature of the Bashkir Scientific Center of the Ural Academy of Sciences of the USSR a considerable number of sources.

An important result of scientific research was the book by R.G. Kuzeyev «Bashkir shezhere» (1960), where photocopies, transcriptions and translations into Russian of 25 shezheres were given for the first time. Bashkir shezheres, based on genealogical legends, was originally spoken orally. However, as R.G. Kuzeyev writes, «in the 15th-16th centuries, in connection with the development of the productive forces and progress in the public life of the bashkirs, the need was born to create an official edition of the most popular shezheres and thus create written versions of the shezheres which subsequently, when removing from them numerous copies, less than usual were subjected to changes». (Kuzeyev, 1960:13)

By structure and content, the bashkir shezheres can be divided into three groups: 1) the genealogical tree in the form of a scheme where the male names of the members of the clan are numerically listed; 2) the genealogical scheme with textual explanatory expressions; 3) shezhere-text, in form and content resembling the chronicle, the annals, the legend (Fattahutdinova, 1985: 30-37).

In the collection «Bashkir shezheres» R.G. Kuzeyev published 25 shezheres. Manuscripts for publication were selected in such a way that, perhaps, the Bashkir tribes and clans were more widely represented. The collection includes the shezheres of the tribes like Yurmats, Ming, Burzyan, Kipchak, Usergan, Tamyar, Tabyn and Ayle, i.e. the largest tribal organizations of Eastern Bashkortostan. At the same time, the collection includes those shezheres, that are of considerable interest from the point of view of history and ethnography of Bashkiria. The reliability of the texts was of great importance in the selection for the collection.

The collection contains photocopies of shezhere, transcriptions and translations of texts into Russian.

Stylistic and linguistic features of the sources are preserved when transcribing.

The collection is supplied with commentaries, mainly of historical and ethnographic character (Kuzeyev, 1960: 21-22).

In another monograph «The Origin of the Bashkir people» R.G. Kuzeyev not only builds his conclusions on narrative and documentary sources and synchronous field observations, but also checks them on the materials of ethnonyms (pedigrees, folk legends, epic works). The author himself expresses this idea as follows: «The study of many issues of the ethnic history of the bashkirs and the expansion of the chronological framework of research became possible due to the introduction of the bashkir shezheres into the scientific revolution.» (Kuzeyev, 1974:33) In the opinion of N.V. Bikbulatov, «The work «The Origin of the bashkir people» became the basis for the development of studies on the histories of peoples, their languages and cultures in the Ural-Volga region, the North Caucasus, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Western Siberia. At present, not only in Bashkiria, but also in the scientific centers of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Siberia, the Caucasus, the Volga region, Moscow and St. Petersburg there are hardly any publications on the problems of ethnogenesis of ethnic history, folklore, dialectology and the history of languages peoples of Eurasia, in which would not have been used the results of R.G. Kuzeyev's researches» (Bikbulatov, 1996: 3-11).

In the work of R.G. Kuzeyev and other researchers, the question of careful study of numerous variants of shezhere texts was repeatedly raised, because absolutely identical texts do not exist; each copyist brought his individuality to the text.

In the joint report of R.G. Kuzeyev and R.Kh. Khalikova at the Second All-Union Turkic Conference in Alma-Ata, which was held on September 27-29, 1976, was said about the genealogical records of the bashkirs, the history of their collection, and also about the need to include them in scientific use. The authors of the joint report paid special attention to the use of the bashkir shezheres as a historical source and a monument to the language, the importance of establishing the nature of «genealogical records» and the conditions for their existence, addressing the issues of the accumulation and publication of shezhere texts, their dating, a common source assessment of this source (Kuzeyev, Khalikova, 1980: 355-357).

The value of the research results of R.G. Kuzeyev is also determined by his empirical basis. For decades the researcher has accumulated materials and sources. He always understood the importance of this work, confirming that the search for sources is

the «basic problem» of historiography (Kuzeyev, 1978: 7).

It is not by chance that R.G. Kuzeyev always promoted the development of regional and all-russian archeography, he initiated the creation of the South Ural branch of the archeographic commission of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The commission, whose work he headed, discovered and published thousands of historical documents, including genealogical chronicles-shezheres, the middle ages and the modern times. The activity of this department in this direction was, in many ways, successful and effective, primarily due to the consolidation and coordination of the efforts of archivists, historians, philologists, local historians in the field of archeography and source study, and also through the implementation of a number of activities (conferences, meetings, seminars, publications etc.), aiming to draw the attention of the scientific community to the theoretical and practical issues of archeography. New materials of genealogical records are introduced into historical and historical-philological research. Collecting, processing, recording, storing in historical, philological research of these sources acquires paramount importance.

At the initiative of R.G. Kuzeyev, the implementation of archeographic research began: the description of the shezhere manuscripts for the purpose of dating them, the disclosure of the content for research, the simplification of cataloging and facsimile editions of individual written texts with preliminary and carefully conducted textual training. Various techniques and principles for the description of manuscripts are being developed, which are constantly being improved. «A careful description of the monuments of the Eastern script is the most important precondition for the investigation of the source, its publication, the most important condition and prerequisite for extracting from it all possible source information. It is appropriate to emphasize the interrelationship between archeographical and textual problems: archeographic preparation of documents not only precedes the textual, but also largely predetermines its level, and also the completeness of the historical interpretation of the text,»- noted R.G. Kuzeyev (Kuzeyev, 1985: 8).

R.G. Kuzeyev attached importance to ethnogony. «Ethnogony is the people's knowledge about the origin of the folk, about its migrations, about its ethnic and cultural ties with these or other

peoples» (Kuzeyev, 1984:147). The structure of ethnogony includes genealogy. Rail Gumerovich himself wrote that he created «the corps of the Bashkir people's ethnogony» with hard work on the field in the regions of Bashkiria, in archives, storages and libraries (Kuzeyev, 1989: 233). The publication of the collection «Bashkir shezheres» by R.G. Kuzeyev, as T.M. Garipov notes, marked «the beginning of a new direction of scientific researches – the shezherology» (Garipov, 1989: 8).

R.G. Kuzeyev proposed and developed a complex approach to ethnogenetic researches, implying the use of written sources, archeology, ethnography, anthropology, linguistics, folklore. The ethnographic material was the main thing for R.G. Kuzeyev. The direction that studies ethnic history, in his opinion, is historical ethnography. Of all types of ethnographic sources, R.G. Kuzeyev attached the greatest importance to people's ethnogenetic knowledge and made a great contribution to the study of genealogical chronicles – shezhere.

### Conclusion

Thus, the bashkir genealogical chronicles – shezhere are valuable historical sources. Variety and abundance of material does not allow for a more detailed and thematic grouping the shezhere. So, analyzing the work on the study of the bashkir shezheres, R.G. Kuzeyev persistently draws the attention of researchers to many questions related to the dating the shezheres and the interpretation of the chronologies given in them, to a thorough study of the numerous variants of shezhere texts, because absolutely identical texts do not exist; each copyist brought his individuality to the text. The noted features of the shezhere indicate the need for a careful and critical analysis of the texts and a rigorous source assessment of the information contained in them. Only under this condition, R.G. Kuzeyev noted, genealogical chronicles – shezhere acquire a paramount importance as sources on the history of the middle ages (Kuzeyev, 1974: 37).

The study, along with other sources to address issues of ethnogenesis and ethnic history of the bashkirs, genealogical chronicles – shezhere became the main content of the multifaceted scientific activity of R.G. Kuzeyev and marked the beginning of a new direction of scientific research – shezherology.

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