

**THE CONGRESSES OF THE TATAR TEACHERS IN 1917-1918**

***OS CONGRESSOS DOS PROFESSORES TÁRTAROS EM 1917-1918***

***LOS CONGRESOS DE MAESTROS TATAR EN 1917-1918***

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**ABSTRACT:** The urgency of this problem is conditioned by several factors. The need to comprehend the historical continuity and comprehensive presentation of the Tatar social and political movement's efforts after the February Revolution to modernize the traditional Muslim society. Weak development of the problem of teachers' organized movement during the period between the February bourgeois-democratic revolution and the first months of the Bolsheviks' power in Kazan. The need to refer to the origins and experience of Russian education organization to focus on teachers' social role in education quality improvement. The 100th anniversary of the TASSR also makes the topic especially relevant. The purpose of this article is an attempt to elucidate the role and significance of teachers' congresses in the fate of public education of the Muslim Tatars of the Volga-Ural region after the Revolution of February of 1917. The leading method for the study of this problem is a systematic approach and system analysis, which allow considering the teachers' congresses as one of the manifestations of the social development of Tatar society in regional and national events. The article traced the main stages of the movement of Tatar teachers. It concluded that the socio-cultural modernization of the national school, the elimination of national discrimination in school construction and the inclusion of Tatar schools in the state network should be perceived as the result of the social and political movement of the intellectually advanced part of Tatar society.

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**KEYWORDS:** Muslim teachers. The congresses of tatar teachers. National school. School education. Social and political movement of the tatars at the beginning of the twentieth century.

**RESUMO:** *A urgência desse problema é condicionada por vários fatores. A necessidade de compreender a continuidade histórica e a apresentação abrangente dos esforços do movimento social e político tártaro após a Revolução de fevereiro, visando modernizar a sociedade muçulmana tradicional. Fraco desenvolvimento do problema do movimento organizado dos professores durante o período entre a revolução democrático-burguesa de fevereiro e os primeiros meses do poder dos bolcheviques em Kazan. A necessidade de se referir às origens e experiência da organização educacional russa para enfocar o papel social dos professores na melhoria da qualidade da educação. O 100º aniversário do TASSR também torna o tópico especialmente relevante. O objetivo deste artigo é uma tentativa de elucidar o papel e a importância dos congressos de professores no destino da educação pública dos tártaros muçulmanos da região do Volga-Ural após a Revolução de fevereiro de 1917. O método principal para o estudo desse problema é uma abordagem sistemática e análise do sistema, que permite considerar os congressos de professores como uma das manifestações do desenvolvimento social da sociedade tártara em eventos regionais e nacionais. O artigo traçou as principais etapas do movimento dos professores tártaros. Concluiu que a modernização sociocultural da escola nacional, a eliminação da discriminação nacional na construção de escolas e a inclusão das escolas tártaras na rede estadual devem ser percebidas como fruto do movimento social e político da parte intelectual avançada da sociedade tártara.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Professores muçulmanos. Os congressos de professores de tartar. Escola nacional. Educação escolar. Movimento social e político dos tártaros no início do século XX.*

**RESUMEN:** *La urgencia de este problema está condicionada por varios factores. La necesidad de comprender la continuidad histórica y la presentación integral de los esfuerzos del movimiento social y político tártaro después de la Revolución de febrero para modernizar la sociedad musulmana tradicional. Débil desarrollo del problema del movimiento organizado de los profesores durante el período comprendido entre la revolución democrático-burguesa de febrero y los primeros meses del poder de los bolcheviques en Kazán. La necesidad de hacer referencia a los orígenes y la experiencia de la organización educativa rusa para centrarse en el papel social de los profesores en la mejora de la calidad de la educación. El centenario de la TASSR también hace que el tema sea especialmente relevante. El propósito de este artículo es un intento de dilucidar el papel y la importancia de los congresos de maestros en el destino de la educación pública de los tártaros musulmanes de la región del Volga-Ural después de la Revolución de febrero de 1917. El método principal para el estudio de este problema es un enfoque sistemático y de análisis de sistemas, que permiten considerar los congresos de profesores como una de las manifestaciones del desarrollo social de la sociedad tártara en los eventos regionales y nacionales. El artículo trazó las principales etapas del movimiento de maestros tártaros. Concluyó que la modernización sociocultural de la escuela nacional, la eliminación de la discriminación nacional en la construcción de escuelas y la inclusión de las escuelas tártaras en la red estatal deben ser percibidas como el resultado del movimiento social y político de la parte intelectual avanzada de Tatar. sociedad.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Maestros musulmanes. Los congresos de maestros de tartar. Escuela nacional. Educación escolar. Movimiento social y político de los tártaros a principios del siglo XX.*

## Introduction

The relevance of the problem under study is conditioned by a set of interrelated and interdependent reasons. First, the need to recreate a holistic picture of traditional Tatar society modernization, which provided for the solution of the issues of statehood, the organization of power, gaining equality in education, determining the main stages of Tatar teacher movement for the creation of a system of secular education (not only in Russia, but also abroad) and the process of embedding the education system of Muslim peoples into the all-Russian one. The need to study the topic is also dictated by the absence of a generalizing study of Tatar teacher movement in historiography during 1917-1918. Finally, the formulation of the topic is also determined by the recently aggravated question of the social role of a teacher in the upbringing of the younger generation, in the training of experts necessary for the national economy. The consequences of the democratic changes that have befallen the education system in recent decades make us think about continuity in this area and the need to consider the many years of experience accumulated by the Russian education system.

The purpose of this article is an attempt to highlight the organized form of nationwide social and political activity of the Tatar teachers of the Volga-Ural region in 1917-1918. The research work is aimed at accomplishing two interrelated tasks: 1) identify the main issues that worried Tatars teachers and 2) identify changes in the concept of teaching at Muslim schools.

## Methods

Written sources in the Tatar language published in thematic collections of documents and materials of arabographic Tatar newspapers were involved in the study of the problem (KOYASH, 1917; RUSSIA, 2005; RUSSIA, 2017; UKYTUCHI, 1918; YOLDIZ, 1917). The set of sources is mainly office-work materials of three types: 1) organizational and administrative (minutes of congresses and meetings of the Pedagogical Council of the Kazan Tatar Teachers' Seminary); 2) current correspondence in the form of letters of demand to state and public bodies; 3) administrative (resolution-demands addressed to the All-Russian Muslim Congress). Newspaper materials are presented by notes, informational and analytical correspondence, the articles of a practical and analytical nature. Also, the studies were attracted

to represent the socio-political situation in the country, the development of the socio-political movement, and the cultural development of Russia in the early twentieth century (AMIRKHANOV, 2001; BADCOCK, 2010; BURBANK, 1989; DULMUKHAMETOVA *et al.*, 2019; KHABUTDINOV, 2017; KURBANOV, 1967; MAKHMUTOVA, 2013; MOFFAT, 2015; RALEIGH, 1986; SMITH, 2017; VALIAKHMETOV *et al.*, 2019).

The methodological basis of the article is a systematic approach combined with the principle of historicism. The general scientific system approach predetermined the use of socio-historical, general scientific and interdisciplinary methods for the transmission and analysis of historical material: problem-chronological, comparative-historical, retrospective, etc. The principle of historicism allowed us to consider the evolution of the teacher requirements and the peculiarities of their position in 1917-1918. The temporal sequence of the teachers' congresses predetermined the essential-meaningful analysis of their materials according to the chronological principle. A systematic approach to the problem and a systematic analysis of source material made it possible to identify the stages of the socio-political movement for the socio-political modernization of the national school.

## **Results and Discussion**

Awareness of teachers about the importance of unity and professional cohesion, regardless of gender and national differences. The emergence of pre-party associations - unions and societies of teachers - predetermined the transformation of teachers into one of the main pillars of the socialist movement in 1917 and the emergence of their autonomous organizations (KHABUTDINOV, 2017; KURBANOV, 1967).

The emergence of the "Kazan Society of Tatar Teachers" in early March 1917, which had a charter, structure and leadership, marked the onset of the second stage in the struggle of Muslim teachers for their social and political rights (RUSSIA, 2017; YOLDIZ, 1917).

At the I Congress of Teachers, held in Kazan from 20 to 27 April 1917, the issues were discussed about the state of affairs in the educational sphere, the contribution of teachers to the cause of public education, about the approval of the charter, about the political platform, the form of government, attitude to the war, and about participation of teachers at the Muslim Congress in Moscow. The most significant achievement of the congress was the creation of a new institute - the Union of Russian Muslim Teachers, which also had its own structure, leadership (Central Bureau) and charter. Among the decisions of the congress concerning the preservation and inseparability of confessional schools from religion, the return of teachers

from the front, the establishment of federal extraterritorial autonomy, the remuneration of employees of the "Bureau", special attention is paid to resolution with a list of requirements and proposals for the upcoming congress of Muslims in Moscow. Requirements of the all-Russian Congress of Muslim teachers for the upcoming General Congress of Muslims in Moscow (RUSSIA, 1917; YOLDIZ, 1917). The requirements provided for the maintenance of all Tatar schools during the academic year 1917-18 at the expense of the state budget, the unification of the program and the introduction of 6-year education, the creation of institutions to train teachers for women and men teaching seminaries. The congress showed the real strength of the movement of Tatar teachers and the active civic position taken by the delegates, their desire to expand the scope of the potential audience outside of Russia (RUSSIA, 2017; YOLDIZ, 1917; KOYASH, 1917).

During the All-Russian Muslim Congress, held from 1 to 11 May 1917 in Moscow, several resolutions were passed on the main issues of political life. Among other things, a resolution was adopted on the right to education, on the transformation of schools open for Muslims into national schools, on the language of instruction and teaching Russian as a separate subject, on the training of national teachers and the teachers for preschool and out-of-school education, on the equation the rights and remuneration of teachers of national schools with teachers of Russian schools, on the rules admitting teachers to teach in Muslim schools, on the exemption of teachers from military service, etc. (RUSSIA, 2017). However, the victory of the supporters of the federal structure of Russia at the I All-Russian Muslim Congress in May 1917 "destroyed" the concept of the all-Russian religious and national-cultural autonomy of Muslims, and thereby narrowed the spatial area of the Congress decision distribution and implementation. Thus, both the issue of power and the issues of a cultural and educational nature moved from the all-Russian plane to the level of individual ethnic groups (KHABUTDINOV, 2017). Nevertheless, the Central Bureau made efforts to implement the demands made at the Congress of Teachers to postpone the recruitment of teachers into military service and at the same time began to prepare the next All-Russian Congress of Teachers (RUSSIA, 2017).

However, the rise of the national liberals and moderate socialists to supremacy introduced adjustments to the Bureau's plans. At a joint meeting of the II All-Russian Muslim, I All-Russian Muslim Military Congress and the All-Russian Congress of Muslim Clergy on 22 of July, the national-cultural autonomy of the Muslims of the Turko-Tatars of Inner Russia and Siberia was proclaimed, which meant the victory of the unitary structure of Russia. In the context of the emerging process of developing autonomy of the governing body, the national movement of Tatar teachers entered the third stage: from 1 to 8 August 1917, the II Congress

of Tatar teachers was held in Kazan (RUSSIA, 2017). The activities of this meeting are associated with the creation of a commission, which, in cooperation with a similar Russian commission, drew up a program for a unified labor school, defining a range of religious and secular subjects for a 6-year primary education program, considering the issues of preschool education and out-of-school education and socio-economic rights of teachers (RUSSIA, 1986; TUTAEV, 1975). The discussion of the first issue ended with a proposal for measures aimed at secular knowledge spreading: the creation of a network of libraries, houses of peoples, preschool institutions (nurseries, kindergartens), clubs, organization of evening classes for adults, reading evenings, Friday lessons, lectures, etc. The second congress ended with the drafting and sending of a telegraphic notice to the Provisional Government about equal rights and remuneration for Tatar and Russian teachers, the measures to protect teachers' health, conditions for retirement, benefits and the right of inheritance (RUSSIA, 2017).

The second event of August 1917 concerning the education system was the decision of the Pedagogical Council of the Kazan Tatar Teachers' School (23 August 1917) to refrain from implementing the resolutions of the Provisional Government (14 June 1917) and the teachers' council of the Kazan Teachers' Non-Russian Seminary (20 July 1917) concerning the transformation of a school into a seminary and the boarding school closure (RUSSIA, 2005). The Pedagogical Council took a wait-and-see attitude and, as the subsequent course of history showed, the reorganization would not make sense, because the events of October 1917 were accompanied by cardinal changes in the sphere of public education (KABIROVA; KABIROV, 2011).

The process launched by the separation of schools from religious influence, granting the peoples the right to open national schools and to receive education in their native language, was accompanied by the reorganization and establishment of schools, numerous decrees on the state and the tasks of public education of the county councils, the abolition of the Kazan educational district with its institutions, the liquidation directorates and the inspections of public schools, the creation and reorganization of public education management bodies in 1918-1919 and the deployment of the school network in the province (RUSSIA, 1986).

The shortage of teachers forced the Soviet public education authorities to launch a campaign to involve the old teachers in the construction of a new school. But, according to the III Congress of Russian and Tatar teachers of the city of Chistopol and the district, which took place from 13 to 16 March 1918, the overwhelming majority of teachers took a wary position. From the resolution of the congress, it is clear that the decision to separate the school from the church was not supported (RUSSIA, 1986).



The Muslim Commissariat of the People's Commissariat, with the assistance of the Central Bureau, which by that time had taken the path of cooperation with the Soviet authorities, began preparations for the III All-Russian Congress of Muslim Teachers (UKYTUCHI, 1918), the next stage in the socio-political movement of teachers began: it took place in Kazan from 10 to 23 May 1918. G. Ibragimov, who delivered a propaganda report, drew the delegates' attention to the convocation of the Constituent Congress of the Tatar-Bashkir Republic and the need to support the Soviet authorities. True, this did not forestall a heated debate on the issue of attitude to the Soviets (RUSSIA, 1986).

The congress made its contribution to the organization of public education bodies: the education commission of the Central Muslim Commissariat and the Scientific Collegium under the Education Department of the Commissariat for Muslim Affairs of Inner Russia and Siberia of the People's Commissariat of National Education, determined the range of tasks of the Collegium (preparation of new programs and textbooks for Tatar schools, publication of a scientific and pedagogical journal, improvement of the alphabet and spelling of the Tatar writing). The subject of heated discussion was the issue of preschool education and out-of-school education. The decision emphasized the need to focus the attention of Muslims on the importance of preschool education, opening kindergartens with separate groups for Muslim children, providing them with children's literature, organizing the training of educators and teachers for preschool institutions. A wide coverage of out-of-school education of the masses was envisaged by opening a network of libraries, organizing evening courses in reading and writing for adults, beekeeping, gardening and Russian language, lectures, evenings of reading and distribution of books. They recommended the opening of houses for peoples, houses of cinematography, public educational institutions, museums and departments for the sale of books in libraries. To implement the plan, not only the training of instructors and librarians in special courses was envisaged, but also the creation of special management bodies and a committee (RUSSIA, 1986).

The psychological structure of the teacher's syncretic activity has been clarified from the point of view of the requirements for teacher's personality with an explanation of the set of skills that the teacher of a higher education institution should have (DROZDOVA *et al.*, 2021)

## Conclusions

The analysis of the materials of five congresses of teachers (three all-Russian, provincial and district) made it possible to single out four stages in the social and political movement of

Tatar teachers (1917-1918). The congresses took place during an extremely difficult and contradictory period, which incorporated a whole series of events that led to the change in the form of society organization, world outlook and the values of the masses. The teachers' forums were a logical continuation of the Jadids-reformer aspiration to enlighten and familiarize their people with the achievements of other civilizations; they were a kind of milestones in the national socio-political movement of teachers. The attitude of the authorities towards them was different. The Provisional Government, which functioned after the February Revolution, was not inclined to support and encourage the demands and proposals of Muslim teachers who sought to obtain the status for the Tatar school of equal to that of the Russian school, while maintaining its inherent national features. The Soviets perceived these meetings as a tool for integrating Muslim society into a new state system, as a means for creating a new education system necessary to educate a new Soviet person. The materials of the congresses testify to the essential role of the social and political movement of teachers in the modernization of the national school and its inclusion in the network of state schools.

The research results can be useful in clarifying the main stages of the socio-political movement of Tatar teachers. The presented material can become the basis for writing generalizing works on the history of Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. It can be used in the educational process, in the development and teaching of courses or lectures on the history of state building, and the history of secular education system development.

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