

## **Problems of History of Bugulma of the Republic of Tatarstan in the XX Century in the Regional Historiography**

Oleg Vladimiroich Sinitsyn and Alexey Valeryevich Chetverkin  
Kazan Federal University, 44 Levobulachnaya St., Kazan, 420008,  
Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan, Russia

---

**Abstract:** The relevance of the researched problem is the need for a critical study of regional historiography for the purpose of identifying gaps in the study of the historical events of the twentieth century. This chronological period, for a number of reasons, even to this day is one of the most controversial in the history of science. The purpose of this research is to identify the basic themes of the history of Bugulma in the twentieth century in the regional historiography. The leading approaches to this problem are the comparative and problem-topical approach. The results of the study are to determine the main problems of the period under review in regional historiography for the display of contemporary tasks for their historical study. The article may be useful for historians, ethnographers, teachers, population of Bugulma, as well as for professionals engaged in the study of the history of the provincial cities.

**Key words:** History, Bugulma, Bugulma district, local history, literacy, the first five-year plan, the second five-year plan, historiography

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

In historical science at the present stage of development a turn was marked from the so-called “macro-history” to “microhistory”, i.e., the history of small spaces, social groups and communities. Due to this, the problems on local history and scientific disciplines, including historiography, connected with it, have come back again in the sphere of scientific interest of historians. Provincial historiography in Russia has its own traditions and even established canons but often misses from attention some important and interesting problems. Its local history tradition exists in the town of Bugulma of the Republic of Tatarstan, where during the last decades, the interest to local history has grown considerably. From 2001-2016 in Bugulma there were about a dozen of works on the history of the region as a whole and its separate problems and events.

In this regard, the lighting in the regional historiography of history of the city of Bugulma in the twentieth century is of particular interest to us. Discussions on certain problems of this period are still not completed and some historical processes still cannot be fully explored due to the lack of access to important archival funds. However, data at the disposal of the authors, allow them to reconstruct somehow the events of this period, put accents, comprehend and give their own assessment of the events of that time.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODOS**

In the course of the study it was aimed to identify the most and the least studied periods in the history of Bugulma, to identify facts, events and processes, studied by the authors in the context of the period.

The most important principle of research is the principle of historicism, understood as the analysis of the phenomena of the past in the peculiar social, economic, political and cultural context of their epoch, that is, any historiographical phenomenon (an article, an essay, a review, a collection, a monograph) is considered in the development, in connection with its contributing factors. The paper examines the book editions, issued from 1965 to 2014, dedicated to the history of Bugulma and Bugulminsky district. All these publications are mostly popular science. The publication of most of them was connected with various anniversaries.

Theoretical and methodological basis of research are the conceptual provisions of scientific research in the field of studying the problems of historiography. For the analysis of historiography the methods of historiography and source analysis were used. The most important of them, have become the comparative-historical method which allowed to held the required comparison of different historical-regional studies, to identify their common features, characteristics, identity and extent of borrowing in their content and the method of periodization, aimed on

identifying stages in the development of the problematic historiography in order to detect the change of the methodology of historical thought, revealing new elements in its structure; the quantitative methods allowed us to analyze a significant amount of historical literature and to classify it according to the problems.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first book, devoted to the history of Bugulma is the work of E.V. Grachev, "The Page of history. The struggle for Soviet power in Bugulma and Bugulminsky district in 1917-1920" (Grachev, 1965), published in 1965, The researcher the chief editor of the local newspaper "Lenin's banner" was a participant of the events described and therefore, despite the small volume of the edition, was able to elaborate chronicle of events of the civil war in the County, starting from peasant uprisings in February and October of 1917 and ending with the rebellion of the society of "The Black eagle and the farmer" of the late 1920's.

In the year of 198 the 200th anniversary of Bugulma was celebrated. This event was an important milestone in the urban history writing. In 1981 the first summarizing historical essay "The City of good fortune" (Efremov, 1981) was published, prepared by a team under the leadership of the editor of "The Lenin's banner" M.V. Lukashov and candidate of pedagogical Sciences A.V. Efremov. In addition, in 1982 the work of military historian Duryagina (1982) "Through the flames of war" was published, telling about the combat path 352-Orsha Red Banner order of Suvorov rifle division, formed in Bugulma in 1941. After that, the publishing of books on the history of the area temporarily stopped.

During the period from 1982-2000 only one book on local history was published it was the work of "Aiaaey hyi aiaaeiyeaeyd", dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic war, celebrated in 1995. Another surge of interest to local history was recorded in 2000-2001, on the eve of the 220th anniversary of the city. In this period just three interesting regional editions were

released. In 2000, the book by a local journalist, local Amateur historian Vladimir Salmikov "Bugulma Zemstvo: business, anxiety and dreams" (Salmikov, 2000) was published, then it was republished with additions in 2005 (Salmikov, 2000); in 2001, the publishing house "Ideal-press" published a second major work on the history of Bugulma "On a high spot", written by the authors of "Bugulma newspaper"; in 2002 a detailed essay by Mulyukov (2002), entitled "It will be hard, my heart will hit: Bugulma, Bugulma, Aiaaeiy!" was published on the history of oil production in the area.

After 2002, the literature, devoted to specific aspects of the city's history, began to appear almost every year. The most successful authors were F. Mulyukov (the books "Oil Explorers in 2003"; "It was recently, it was a long time ago in 2005"; "Geophysics on the fronts of war and labor" (2005), M. Gusev (The local History. From the history of Bugulma in 2004), V. Salmikov (Bugulminsky monasteries: pages of history of Orthodoxy of the region (Mulyukov, 2002) and V. Grachev, I. Sherstnev, etc. In 2010 "Bugulma newspaper" initiated the project "Bugulma chronicle" which has already published several books: "Bugulma. The year of 1917 in 2012", "Bugulma citizens in the police, the CID, the SMERSH in 2014", etc. Finally, you need to remember outstanding, from the above mentioned list, the work of E.M. Gibadullina the "Tatar community in Bugulma in the XVIII beginning of XX century", published in Kazan in 2010.

Thus, the historiography of the history of Bugulma and Bugulma district, is represented by a large number of works, most of which are publicistic in nature. Presents amount of works allows us to represent the chronology of the city's history in the twentieth century and to analyze what topics and chronological periods are most of all interesting for the authors. Table 1 shows the results of quantitative analysis of works, devoted to the different chronological periods or problems of these periods in the history of Bugulma:

According to the Table 1, the periods of the Great Patriotic war and the Civil war are of the greatest interest. In the opinion it is possible to offer several explanations

**Table 1: The number of works, devoted to each particular period in the history of Bugulma**

Period	The number of books, published on the subject of the relevant period (taking into account the thematic chapters of summarizing works)		
	Soviet historiography (1965-1991)	Post-soviet historiography (1991)	Total
The pre-revolutionary period (1900-1917)	1	3	4
Revolution and civil war (1917-1920)	2	3	5
Economic recovery and the first 5 year plans (1921-1941)	1	1	2
The Great Patriotic war and post-war reconstruction of the economy (1941-1951)	3	5	8
The development of oil production in the area (1951-1981)	1	3	4
The celebration of the 200th anniversary of Bugulma, perestroika and post-perestroika period (1982-2000)	0	1	1

for this fact. First, as it becomes clear from the presented historiographical review, thanks to the hard work of historians and local historians considerable material have been accumulated in the area, allowing to carry out a deep and comprehensive study of the problems of these periods and the role of local residents in the events of those years. Second, the history of the great Patriotic war and the Civil war is relevant to the readers, first of all, the inhabitants of Bugulma and Bugulma district, as the memory of these events is recorded in the urban space of Bugulma. So, in memory of the 352-Orsha infantry division, a monument was created in the city at the expense of local peasants the plane "Bugulma farmer" which took part in the air battles in 1944-1945; in memory of the victims of the "pitchfork rebellion" of 1920, a monument has also been created in the city.

As we can see, the events of the 1920-1930-s in the historiography of Bugulma do not cause the keen interest of the authors. In the presented historiography of the events a special place is given for two works: summarizing ones "The City of good fortune in 1981", "On a high spot in 2001"; some aspects on the history of the region during this period are contained in the work of V. Salmikov "Bugulma monasteries: from the history of Orthodoxy of the region in 2010". In all three cases, the researchers are journalists, summarizing works were published for anniversaries, that could not influence the content of the texts under consideration. The works, written for a broad audience, the text is written in a journalistic style with accessible literary language.

In the essay "The City of good fortune" the history of the period discussed, is presented in the chapter "By steep steps of the five-year plans". The Chapter is from ten pages, it contains two sections: "If it is necessary, it means – necessary!" and "Work is given to us as a reward". The text is written in easy language, with characteristic for the Soviet journalism abundance of ideological cliches. The research of the text was V.M. Lukashov, chief editor of the newspaper "Lenin's banner" the main printed publication of Bugulma 1980's.

The first paragraph of the Chapter, in general, is about the socio-economic development of the area soon after the Civil war and the passage of the Bugulma Canton from the Samara province to the newly formed TASSR. The author describes in detail the state of affairs in agriculture and almost does not consider the development of the industrial facilities, existing in the district, noting at the beginning, that during the current decades, the district was purely agricultural (Efremov, 1981). Describing the decline of peasant farming, V. M. Lukashov indicates that this is the fault of "the ruin of the Imperialist and Civil wars" that have affected "the weakened by the pitchfork

rebellion" peasants (Efremov, 1981) and then, turning to the set of specific reasons, concludes the lack of specialists, lack of horses and equipment, the small number of cattle and, as a consequence, lack of organic fertilizer, no mineral fertilizer, etc. This situation, according to the text, lasted until the end of World War II and resulted in the 1920's to low yields and regular hungry. Simultaneously, the author narrates about the achievements in the field of eradication of illiteracy, reducing thus the problems in the village.

Describing the processes of the first and second 5 year plans (1928-1937), the author examines the development of the Stakhanov movement in the village and on the railway, showing its often forced nature. The course of collectivization in the district is shown as a voluntary conflict-free process because according to the researcher, the local peasants used to work with cooperatives. The theme of Stalinist repression was touched on; however, it is given one short paragraph and the topic itself is seen as the workers' struggle with the "enemy, kulak outgrowths, saboteurs" (Efremov, 1981). Such approaches to the description of the events of the 1930's are characteristic of the entire regional literature of Tatarstan in 1980's similar interpretation of processes is given by the authors of the books "Zelenodolsk is half of a century in 1982" (Girfanov, 1982), "200 years to old Chistopol in 1982 (10) and others. Developing the theme, the second paragraph of the Chapter under consideration "The Work is given to us as a Reward" is dedicated to the achievements of Bugulma citizens in the development of the national economy. A major achievement is the participation of the delegation of Bugulma in the All-Union agricultural exhibition (1939), the ceremony of opening of the airport (1937), as well as significant growth in standard of living and the mechanization of agriculture which began in the late 1920's. The author constructs a positive perception with the reader of this historical period, through the description of general rejoicing and mass festivities on the occasion of the opening of the airport, as well as describing festive meetings, timed to the anniversary of the October revolution in 1940. Efremov (1981) concludes that the years before the War were "the good years" for the locals. Overall, the author was able to tell or to mention the problems which existed during that years, however, the entire period is presented in the book in a positive light.

Significant changes were made to the presentation of the history of the two prewar decades in the book "On a high spot in 2001. The book is a collection in chronological order of thematic sections which tell about the stages of development of the city and also about the development of urban industry and institutions. It is

interesting that the foundation of the section, dedicated to the 1920-1930-s, was formed by the text of Lukashov from the book "The City of good fortune" and even the title of the section is virtually identical to the name of the corresponding Chapter in the book of 1981 (compare: "By steep steps of the five-year plans" in 1981 and "On the steep steps of five-year plans in 2001). However, with the inclusion into the copied text of the new insertions and a significant change in the structure of the section, the text by M.V. Lukashov has a completely different sound. If in 1981 the thematic Chapter consisted of two complete paragraphs, interrelated with each other, so in 2001 the appropriate section consists not of paragraphs but of some thematic sketches and notes, not connected with each other.

Several changes have been added to the reprinted text. An extract at the end of the first paragraph and the one at the beginning of the second were removed from the original text of the book "On a high spot" this was done in order to combine the two parts of the text. Already mentioned small paragraph about the actions of saboteurs from 1933-1936 was deleted, however in this case it was done with the aim to avoid contradictions between the original author's text and the included additions.

The topic of repressions in the book "On a high spot" is given with a considerable attention. Total volume of the chapter is 18 pages, including the text, reprinted from the "City of good fortune" of 10 pages and the other eight are devoted to various facts of the repressive policy in the 1930's. Among the materials of these eight pages is biographical sketch of Hadi Atlasy, a prominent Tatar public figure, who lived in Bugulma in 1914-1920 and was executed in 1938; the report on the activities of the local branch of the Association of victims of political repressions by F. Kosmacheva; memories of local residents. This group of materials gives the reader a negative attitude towards the policy, pursued by the Bolsheviks, although, as it was already mentioned, the preceding text by M.V. Lukashov in 1981, in contrast, represents the period in a positive light. Thus, the two parts of the section are in contrast to each other which in our opinion may lead to misunderstanding by readers of the essence and contest of the described historical events.

Besides, other fragments of the "City of good fortune" are included to the text of the section of the book "On a high spot". We are talking about the deputies of the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of Bugulminsky district including the legendary polar explorer O. Schmidt and N. Spiridonov and Z. Kharisov. Overall, the section is rather a mixed collection of materials, united only by connection with chronological period.

If you go beyond the frames of thematic chapters of both works, we can see that the other references of the period are associated primarily with the processes of socio-cultural development of the region. 1920-1930's are pointed with the construction of new social infrastructure schools, hospitals, kindergartens, mentioned in both books in the relevant sections on the history of education, healthcare, culture, etc. The similar situation occurs in both books in the description of the development of industrial production, transport etc. Thus, the data of the topic, derived from the point of view of the reader of the thematic sections and chapters and scattered through the pages do not allow you to create a full picture of socio-cultural development of the region and still are not presented in a systematic way.

Another important phenomenon in the historiography of the history of Bugulma, becomes the study of separate aspects of the development of the city and district. One of such aspects is the problem of relations between the state and religious communities in the regions in 1920-1930-s raised by V.G. Salnikov in the book "Bugulma monasteries: from the history of Orthodoxy of the region (Mulyukov, 2002). The researcher has done serious research work, has attracted a significant amount of archival sources, on the basis of which concluded that the blame for the closure of two monasteries in Bugulminsky district in the first half of the 1930's, is mainly with the local authorities, who ignored the decisions of the Central authorities. Of great interest is the reconstructed correspondence between local religious communities and of the Central Executive Committee on the use of the monastic buildings, handed over to local authorities. V. Salnikov is not always consistent in the estimates, given in his books. Thus, in the second edition of his work "Bugulma Zemstvo: business, anxiety and dreams" concludes with harsh criticism of the economic and political activities of the Bolsheviks in 1920-1930's, based on the book by Yu. Vasilyeva and Knushevsky "Red conquistadors". However, in the "Bugulma monasteries" the researcher gives not so negative comments about the Bolsheviks policy, especially of the religious one, paying attention to the attempts of the Central Executive Committee to protect the activities of monastic communities from the encroachments of the local authorities. It is also worth noting that V. G. Salnikov is the only author, mentioned in this paper, who provides a complete bibliography of the research as well as additional reference material in his books.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, this study presents an attempt to analyze the content of the history Bugulma in XX-century in regional historiography. The analysis allows us to draw several conclusions. First, in the historiography of the history of Bugulma different periods and problems are of different degrees of studies. Among the most studied cases are the events of the Civil war in the region and the role of local people in the events of the Great Patriotic war. Second, in the current journalistic literature, until now no effort had been made for a balanced, serious analysis of the whole complex of events and processes which took place in the XX century. The authors, for various reasons, are trying to reduce the representation of this period to a set of clichés and stereotypes that seem to be not well founded. Thus, the authors refuse social history, history of everyday life, the history of the organization of urban space, etc. which are of great interest to readers. Third, key themes and events of the studied period, causing interest among the authors were identified. These include the theme of political repression and the memory of their victims; the problem of local specifics of the all-Russian processes, such as collectivization, industrialization, literacy, etc. Some authors study more narrow problems of local history.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following materials are the first attempt to summarize and analyze the accumulated historical material on the history of Bugulma of the XX century. The article may be useful for subsequent scientific research of the history of small cities of Russia and Tatarstan.

## **REFERENCES**

- Duryagin, G.M., 1982. Through the Flames of War. Tatar Book Publishing House, Kazan, Russia, Pages: 144.
- Efremov, A.V., 1981. City of Good Fortune: A Historical Sketch. Tatar Book Publishing House, Kazan, Russia, Pages: 263.
- Girfanov, F.I., 1982. Zelenodolsk is Half a Century. Tatar Book Publishing House, Kazan, Russia, Pages: 192.
- Grachev, E., 1965. The Struggle for Soviet Power in Bugulma and Bugulminsky District in 1917-1920. Tatar Book Publishing House, Kazan, Russia, .
- Mulyukov, F.N., 2002. It will be Hard, My Heart will Hit. Project Gutenberg Self-Publishing, Bugulma, Russia, Pages: 424.
- Salnikov, V.G., 2000. Bugulma Zemstvo: Cases, Concerns and Dreams. Bugulma Publisher, Bugulma, Russia, Pages: 380.