

## **Historic significance of a decree to centralize of archives in Kazakhstan**

In September 1919 the first authorised Head of archives began his activity in the city of Orenburg, the future capital of the Kazakh ASSR. He arrived to implement the Lenin Decree dated 1 June 1918 on centralization of archives. During the difficult period of the Civil War, in 1919-1920 collection of materials for the future Central Archive of the October Revolution in the Kazakh SSR had begun.

The main task of the authorised body was to save materials of pre-revolutionary period stored in Orenburg, which was the centre of colonization. The mission was very important as all commanders of the White army tried every way to destroy the archive. At the same time, the collection of materials related to revolutionary time had been started. On August 4, 1919, i.e. at the very tense period for our country, the Main Archive ordered all provincial executive committees and committees of the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks to send documents dated from 1917 to the Main Archive. Later, on October 29, 1919 among reports from the Civil War fronts and Directives on measures to cope with typhoid fever the Orenburg newspaper "Kommunar" published an article entitled "At the Orenburg Archives". The author requested all state and public institutions, as well as private individuals, to store and send to the archives all manuscripts and new print materials. The aim of this procedure was to concentrate the materials which "characterise various phenomena of the present Great Revolution and the Civil War" in the hands of a future historian.

Archivists were not limited to this address. They collected all new materials: brochures, newspapers, leaflets, posters, and to name but a few. Systematically they walked through state institutions to lay a foundation for collection documents of the revolutionary period.

During the difficult years of the Civil War the main task of archival bodies was to save huge archives of the country. However, from the very beginning the central government used archives as an important mean of political struggle – it published documents denouncing the policy of the Tsarist Government. In regions such as Kazakhstan the activity of archivists was focused on collection of documents.

After the Civil War our country entered the period of relatively long respite. All institutions of the Soviet Government restructured their work in accordance with new conditions. The mission of archival institutions changed and expanded. The primary aim was to collect the great number of documents which were in hands of private individuals or governmental bodies. The task was complicated by the fact that most significant archives were kept by scientific institutions, including those acting against the Soviet Government. Former members of the Tsarist Government, bourgeoisie and nobles also owned many important materials.

To solve this problem, state archives had to gain enough power and authority. Under these circumstances, on January 30, 1922 the government of the Republic issued a decree on reorganisation of the Main Archive into the Central Archive of the Soviet Russian Federation under the auspices of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

The Decree was a basis for reorganisation of archives in Kazakhstan. By the early 1928 a provision on the Central Archive of the republic was developed. According to it, the Archive was a part of the Central Archive of the Soviet Russian Federation. Simultaneously, a provision of provincial archival bureaus was adopted. Their role in the republic was very important as until 1920 Kazakhstan didn't have its political centre. Thus, materials of republican significance were stored in different parts of the Soviet Union.

The Central Archive in Kazakhstan started collecting materials related to pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary history of Kazakhstan. All funds of provincial significance were transported to one place. A special commission for centralisation of archives of the Red Army was established. This process faced great difficulties. Valuable documents were stored in cities and, sometimes, villages. However, the conditions were unacceptable (sometimes documents were placed in sheds or open spaces. Most of them were destroyed by dampness or fire (the same situation occurred in 1927 in the city of Semipalatinsk), some materials were stolen. It was necessary to salvage everything what can be saved.

In 1922-1924 the Central Archive included the most important funds of the period of the October revolution and the Civil War. Primarily, archivists received fund of liquidated Soviet governmental bodies which worked during the early years of the revolution, for example, administrations and departments of the Provincial Council of National Economy, department of military storing. All documents were sent to the archive in a chaotic condition. There was nobody to put them in order as the administrative bodies didn't exist anymore. Archives of operating Soviet institutions also passed registration, in accordance with an instruction on registration of archives and paper work.

Archivists started sorting received materials. In fact, it was made primitively. Archival staff was small and accounted 10-14 low-skilled people. In 1924 an important procedure initiated with the aim to strengthen the apparatus: organisation of political sections in archives. Political sections were aimed at supporting archives by political staff. However, in Kazakhstan this organisational measure was broke up by hostile leadership of the archive.

A whole period in the history of our country (period of reconstruction of national economy) had been finished by 1925. In the sphere of archival work significant results had been achieved. This is evidenced by the fact that the Unified State Archival Fund of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was established in 1925. A provision of the Unified State Archival Fund classified all materials as pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary. All the materials formed Historic Archive and Archive of the October Revolution.

The First Congress of Archivist, which was held on March 14-19, 1925, summarized the results of archival building during the period of reconstruction. The Congress concluded that most funds of pre-revolutionary institutions were included to the Unified State Archival Fund. It defined the primary task for archival institutions located in the centre and provinces. The task was to include materials of Soviet institutions and organisations into the Unified State Archival Fund. In addition, the Congress underlined the need to reinforce scientific and publishing activity of archives.

The end of the period of reconstruction was full of important event for the further history of Kazakhstan. As it is known, ethnic division of Central Asia took place in 1924-1925. It finished the collection of Kazakh lands and territorial integrity of the republic. As a result, the city of Orenburg was included into the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Kazakh ASSR received the area of Semirechye. Very interested materials on colonisation policy of the Tsarist Government were stored there. The most dramatic episodes of the Civil War in Kazakhstan also happened in that territory. In this connection, it would be better to tell a little about archival work in Semirechye before its inclusion into the Kazakh ASSR.

The first data related to this topic dated the early 1921. In January 1921 a Commissioner of the Turkestan Republic arrived to the city of Verniy to organize archival work. According to him, archives of the province were appalling. There was a risk that archives would be stolen. After arrival of the commissioner an archival bureau was established. The main task of new institution

was to provide a place for storage of materials and prevent their looting. The last threat took serious character connected with the lack of writing paper and archives literary were by means of an auction.

In addition, in 1921 archives were damaged by flooding. Despite the adverse circumstances, collection of archival materials, related to both pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary period, began in 1921. The Military Department of the Provincial Archive conducted a great work on collecting materials. It started receiving materials from various units of the Red Army. Staff of the provincial archive travelled across the province with the aim to collect archival materials. As a result, archivists managed to save a great number of documents of historic value. The period of 1923-1924 is characterized by active assigning of cases to the archive. Mainly, it received materials of liquidated institutions as well as some operating organisations. A number of the most important funds were registered.

In connection with removal of the Central Archive from the city of Orenburg to Kyzyl-Orda, all funds of provincial importance were left. As a result, the number of funds decreased rapidly and accounted 22 institutions as of October 1, 1925. In Kyzyl-Orda the Central Archive faced some troubles. Removal of capital to Kyzyl-Orda led to extremely serious housing shortage. Under these circumstances the archive took shelter in an inappropriate placement for one year and a half. Since that time, this problem became the most serious among others. Brought materials were stored in packaged form and used rarely.

Meanwhile, the Central Archive of Kazakhstan had to conduct a serious work on collecting documents of post-revolutionary period. In connection with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great October Socialistic Revolution this issue became actual. On March 3, 1926 the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee decided that all governmental bodies had to prepare all materials related to the period of 1917-1920 and send them to the archive. This work had to be finished by June 1, 1926 in European part of the Soviet Union and by December 31, 1926 – in Asian part of the country. To support this resolution the Kazakh Central Executive Committee issued an instruction on the Kazakh Central Archive which charged all institutions to prepare materials dated 1917-1921 for sending to the archive, no later than December 1926.

Implementation of this decision faced serious obstacles such as absence of appropriate placement and poor condition of archives in operating institutions. In late 1925 the Kazakh Central Archive initiated systematic revision of institutions, located in the city of Kyzyl-Orda. The results of its procedure evidenced about poor condition and great value of materials, which were stored there. The extremely difficult situation in Kazakh archives attracted attention of the Central Archive of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. A commissioner to monitor the situation was sent to Kyzyl-Orda. He ascertained that the former chief of the Kazakh Central Archive had driven the archive to crisis. At the same time, giving false information he consciously misled superior organisations.

On June 5, 1927 the First Conference of Archivists was held in Kyzyl-Orda in the presence of the commissioner. The Conference summarised the results of conducted work and defined the two tasks – organisation of provincial archive of the October Revolution and establishment of historic archive. It was decided to organise a provincial exhibition, dedicated to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution, with the aim to promote archives.

*Khasanaeva L.M.*

*Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associated Professor of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University,*

*Rakhimbekova B.K.*

*Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associated Professor of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University,  
Borsukbaeva A.M.  
Researcher of the Gylym Ordasy Republican State Enterprise*