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Original Article

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THE COURAGE OF PUBLIC REASON: SERGEI ALEXANDROVICH TOKAREV AS A HISTORIOGRAPHER

S. A. Tokarev founded the Russian historiographical tradition, laying the conceptual framework for studying the history of Russian ethnography (its pre-Soviet period), and the origins and history of foreign ethnology. Here we regard historiography in its professional sense and not just as a functional appendage of scientific research. In the author's interpretation, historiography is not only (and not so much) a narrative about the past, but rather an internal dialogue of science and its self-reflection, a refined form of research into the past and modernity. S. A. Tokarev's appeal to this genre dates back to the turn of the 1940s–1950s, when a unique constellation of conditions for a successful historiographical search developed. These conditions were rooted both in the internal scientific dynamics (ethnography had acquired a stable status of an independent discipline and a high degree of maturity of professional discourse) and in external circumstances (here the ideological vector coincided with the public sentiment — the struggle against cosmopolitanism on the one hand and the legitimate pride of the victorious people on the other). In this context it was crucial to create a respectable historiographical tradition, which would highlight the significant (and in the Soviet era - the leading) role of Russian science in the global context. The author's interest is not in the analysis of S. A. Tokarev's historiographical concept, but rather in the circumstances and conflicts (interdisciplinary, political and ideological) surrounding the preparation and publication of vast historiographical works. The article touches upon the usually neglected topic about scientific preferences and the specifics of a scientist's research strategy as a projection of his psychotype. Why was it Tokarev who made the historiographical breakthrough? How was the "research laboratory" of a Soviet scientist organized, constrained by the rigid framework of planning, by external (political and ideological) and internal (scientific community) censorship, and under conditions of chronic academic and teaching overload? These issues are of considerable scientific interest.

Keywords: *S. A. Tokarev, historiography, history of Russian ethnography, history of foreign ethnology, "disciplinary authority", Department of Ethnography of Moscow State University, Institute of Ethnography, S. P. Tolstov, M. O. Kosven, N. N. Cheboksarov*

Author Info: **Solovey, Tatyana D.** — Doctor of History, Professor, Department of Ethnology, Faculty of History, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: tsolovei19@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7453-297x>

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