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A. I. Dobriansky as a Historian

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During the revolutionary events of 1848-1849, leaders residing in the dominions of the Habsburg Rusinian asked the government the question of unification of all the lands of the Austrian Empire, inhabited by the descendants of the Eastern Slavs, especially Galicia and Carpathian Rus', into a single autonomous region. This raised the question of the border between ethnic Hungarians, western and eastern Slavs in the Carpathian region, which was first raised in D. I. Zubritsky's pamphlet, Published in in 1849 in the Polish and German languages, and more extensively – by A. I. Dobriansky, who published an article entitled “On the Western Borders of Carpathian Ruthenia, since St. Vladimir's Time” in the “Journal of the Ministry of education” in 1880.

In this work, Dobriansky is not limited to the European and Russian chronicles, he also attracts Polish sources of the late 10th century, called Dagome iudex, and other numerous sources of evidence of the 11th – 18th centuries, up to the documents of the era of Maria Theresa, designed to reinforce her rights as the Hungarian queen, to all former possessions of Arpad. The historian present this information quite chaotically, without classification of sources and without source-criticism. The most qualified is Dobriansky's analysis of the medieval Hungarian charters' material, but it gives little to establish the limits of the settlement of the Eastern Slavs in the Carpathian region.

To justify the localization of the ethnic border between Western and Eastern Slavs in the Early Middle Ages, Dobriansky not only uses toponym data, but also refers to the modern picture of the Russian-speaking population settlement in the lands to the south and east of Krakow. This Dobriansky's argument that 90,000 people could not populate the area for many centuries is not convincing.

A serious error of the historian is his attempt to justify the extension of the authority of the Kievan princes up to the land of modern Eastern Slovakia (the region Spiš), based on vague information of the Wielkopolska Chronicle, as well as on a speculation that the named area was originally given as a dowry for the daughter of Polish Duke Boleslaw III from his Russian wife, who married a Hungarian prince, and then through the exchange was a part of the Hungarian kingdom. Dobriansky's argument was criticized by I. Linnichenko, who pointed out that the very procedure for the transfer of land holdings in ancient Russia as a dowry is unknown.

While the science of the textual chronicle was still at the initial stage of its development, Dobriansky can only be blamed for ignorance of the latest (for its time), research in this area, especially the works of K. N. Bestuzhev-Rumin. At the same time, the localization of the western limits of the settlement of the Eastern Slavs, proposed by Dobriansky, was supported by the most prominent pre-revolutionary Russian experts on the historical geography of ancient Rus' – N. P. Barsov and S. M. Seredonin.

Keywords

A. I. Dobriansky, Carpathian Rus', Rusins.