

The “New” Economic History of Colonial Turkestan or a New Interpretation on the “Old” Methodology?

Alimjanov Bakhtiyor

Institute of History Under AS Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

The paper considers the methodological problems related to the writing of history of the colonial period. The paper also examines the current state of historical science in Uzbekistan in the last 20 years for this sphere. Author tries to show an example of modern colonial historiography that she is defeated by the influence of the Soviet historiography on the subject. Unfortunately, the modern science of history of Uzbekistan is unable to answer fundamental questions about the colonial history as well as in Uzbekistan does not have specialists in colonial history, and those who are engaged in this sphere too defeated pseudo soviet ideology. The main conclusion of the paper is to modernize the study of history of Uzbekistan, and it is only by virtue of new generation of historians, buyout learned new methodology imperiology.

Keywords: imperiology, Soviet historiography, methodology, economic history

Introduction

The former Soviet Union is in the process of rethinking the historical past from different perspectives and methodologies. Some historians again restore and reconstruct the country's past based on the needs of our time. Historical science is experiencing a crisis of its formation, when the old way of thinking has not been eliminated, and the new is not yet born. In the light of certain periods of history, especially, the history of the colonial period is clearly an influence of the ideas of Soviet historiography and methodology. The coverage of the economic history of colonial Turkestan domestic history in the last few years has not moved one iota. Although in recent years, there have been several papers and studies on the issue (Potapova, 2011; Tayronov, 2011). Unfortunately, these works do not provide a holistic image of the imperial policy in the province and are fragmentary and one-sided.

In this paper, we investigate the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs and traders, intellectuals, and other new population, which allegedly formed the new structure of the colonial society. To our surprise, many historians oppose colonial society with the imperial administration, finding a contradiction in the colonial society. On this methodology of built structures and schemes that explain the history of the colonial society. One of the achievements of the methodology is creating positive image of the local bourgeoisie. In many studies, the imperial administration outlines negative and emphasizes the opposition of the local bourgeoisie and the colonial administration. Thus, the content comes off the form, and researchers lose the feeling of

Alimjanov Bakhtiyor, senior researcher, Department of “History of Uzbekistan in the second half of the XIX—at the beginning of the XX centuries”, Institute of History under AS Uzbekistan.

historicity in the explanation of socio-economic processes taking place in the province. It should be noted that the imperial economic policy spawned the colonial social structure, i.e., any colonial society should be considered as a whole, as well as the historical identity of a product of this era. Researchers using the method of dialectics to study the socio-economic processes may lead back to the Soviet methodology worst of the sample.

Analysis of the Ideas of Tayronov and Potapova

Let's look at the example of our arguments on Tayronov (2011) and Potapova (2011). An example is a quote from the abstract of Tayronov (2011):

With the colonization of the region formed a layer of local entrepreneurs, who, along with Jadids (?), took an active part in the socio-economic, political, cultural, spiritual, and educational life of the community. However, the imperial administration and conservatives (of the reactionary clergy and others) in different ways to let their activities. However, despite these obstacles, local entrepreneurs have acted on the basis of the requirements of the time, fought in the interests of the people. (pp. 20-21)

A striking example of the application of the Soviet methodology in explaining economic life boils down to the following conclusion: Entrepreneurship in Turkestan developed in spite of all the conditions and hardships. Entrepreneurs almost equal to the fighters for freedom and democracy.

The opposite of the opinion of entrepreneurs Turkestan expresses Potapova (2011):

The peculiarity of the business world in Turkestan in the colonial period was his hierarchy: on the upper floors—acted entrepreneurs metropolis, encouraged by the tsarist government, which had close ties with the bankers, government officials, with the experience of revolution in the modern business world and owning more extensive information, and on the lower floors—entrepreneurs colony, acquired a new level of innovation, but the situation which was totally dependent on the tsarist and the laws of the Russian bourgeoisie, Russian, and foreign bankers. They could not participate equally in the process of capitalization and build business relationships on mutuality of interests. (p. 129)

Uncertainty status of the entrepreneur in Turkestan creates methodological problems in the study of the economic life of the region. Potapova (2011) correctly observed the role and status of the entrepreneur in Turkestan, but functionally entrepreneurship plays a negative role in the economic development of the region. His (Potapova, 2011) thesis sums it up as follows:

This restructuring (referring to the restructuring of the regional economy, approx. Ed.) affected, above all, the interests of the dekhkans constituting 82%-85% of the population—the main producer of cotton. It has become a hostage of industrial production, being exposed to violence, new business structures—cotton firms, companies, associations, commercial banks, credit policy, and hostage of middlemen involved in the overall process of robbing the people. (p.129)

From the above, we can draw the following conclusions: (1) according to objectives, the researchers treat the business in two ways: either positively or negatively, and (2) in many cases, the researchers selected the third way objectively to treat the business, which in the end leads to a unilateral understanding of this phenomenon. Existing approaches the study of colonial economic policy suggests a methodological helplessness and uncertainty of the modern historiography on the colonial Turkestan.

The Dispute Between Galizo and Lavrentyev Lines

Unfortunately, the recent history of Turkestan is written like the aforementioned examples. Events in the life of Turkestan studied discrete, and not as a whole phenomenon in the history of the region. Economy, culture, politics, and international relations in colonial Turkestan studied in isolation from each other. The

reader of the perception of the history of Turkestan as a chain of accidental circumstances who created the colonial Turkestan. The culture is contrasted with the economy, politics sociology result is that the history of the colonial Turkestan large error in the development of our history. Juxtaposition and contradictions in the historiography of colonial Turkestan generates willy-nilly look for the enemy or evil force that pushed forward the history of Turkestan. If in the Soviet period were looking for a class enemy, modern historiography dumps all the failures in economic policy in Turkestan by the colonial administration. Justification of colonial history for the sake of objectivity is also inherent in our historiography. This justification brings to life a review of some of the facts in colonial history. We are concerned also the fact that the economic history of Turkestan is studied in isolation from the world economic thought and of the imperial vision of the colonies. Ironically, modern historiography tries to overcome the Soviet historiography of the Soviet methodology. In Marxist historiography, it remains the objectivity of history in favor of a kind of historical structures in the colonial period. Sometimes we think that our historiography of the colonial period returned to the dispute 1920s-1930s between Galuzo (1926) line and Lavrentyev (1930). The first line of the alleged backwardness of capitalism in Turkestan (line Galuzo), while the other side argued about the development of capitalism in Turkestan (line Lavrenteva). In the end, it was chosen the middle way: born in Turkestan rudiments of capitalism that led to the extreme edge of poverty. Immaturity of capitalism in Turkestan led to deterioration in living standards since the edge ran the feudal military bureaucracy. It is the triumph of this line has spawned a new generation of scientists who are actively developing the above-named theory (Aminov, 1959; Vakhabov, 1961; Yuldashev, 1970). In the 1980s-1990s several works criticized the economic policy of the Russian Empire right. An example are the works of and Vekselman (1987) and Yuldashev (1994). According to these authors, the metropolis didn't allocate attention to development of the region and did not stimulate the production processes in the colonial Turkestan. Immaturity of capitalism, according to the authors, is the cause of the failure of economic policy in Turkestan. Soviet historiography of imperial policy in Turkestan suffering methodological uncertainty and universal approach to a problem. Categorical tone of researchers and confidence in the infallibility Marxist methodology led investigators to the vicious circle and narcissism when filmed all the contradictions of the problem or were contradictions in the social structure of colonial society by selecting the relevant facts of the socio-economic life of the region and declared a panacea middle way of explaining the economic problems of the colonial Turkestan.

Classical School of Soviet Turkestanology

Unfortunately, in modern historiography in terms of methodology, it remains theoretical methodological principles of Aminov's (1959), Vakhabov's (1961), and Yuldashev's (1970). They interpreted the economic policies pursued in Turkestan, on the basis of the Marxist position of denial of everything that did not fit the socialist economy. The above investigators have found errors in all actions Administration of Turkestan. They based on methodology, which denied any capitalist development of the East. The ideology of these researchers relied on the fact that capitalist development is unacceptable in the root of the countries of the East, in particular, the population of Central Asia. Soviet researchers for the objective truth acknowledged positive influence of Russian rule in Turkestan, manifested in the fact that the country of Turkestan age-old backwardness became part of the world capitalist system. The use of this kind of dialectic to the economic and social history of colonial Turkestan generated a dilemma: the conquest of Russian policy in the region and

expressed the two disparate concepts of good and evil for the peoples of Turkestan. Goodness Russian presence was introduction of Russian culture in the province and communion Russian Turkestan to the vanguard of the revolution and the formation of local working class. And evil Russian rule in Turkestan was ugly Turkestan economic development in the mediocrity of tsarist officials in the robbery of the edge Russian authorities and local entrepreneurs. The result was a vicious circle: If capitalism would develop in agriculture in the region would not appear new proletarian layers mardikerov (hire labors) and chayrikerov (sharecropper) and they are not joined to a revolutionary movement and would not become the vanguard of the October revolution in the province. It turned out that the colonial administration itself helped Stories create the necessary social classes for change in the province. And therefore, the need for indiscriminately vilifying Russian colonial policy in the region in the 1950s-1960s has disappeared. Although the historiography of the 1920s-1930s understood this discrepancy and tried to remove this contradiction, falsely denying the colonial policy of Russian imperialism. It is this gorgeous dialectic has replaced the term conquest to accession.

Soviet historiography of the economic policy of the Russian Empire in Turkestan allowed methodological “error”: You cannot examine and criticize the capitalist economy from the standpoint of understanding the socialist economy. That is, the capitalist economy to criticize the inside, armed with the theory of the market economy. That lack of understanding of this methodological setup leads to incorrect conclusions and attitudes in light of colonial history. The history of imperial policy in Turkestan in the Soviet period is used to justify the establishment of socialism in Central Asia, and in these studies, there was more politics than real science. An interpretation of the colonial economic policies led to the following conclusions:

- (1) the socialist economy—the top of economic thoughts;
- (2) it is under socialism people found political and cultural “freedom”;
- (3) the capitalist system is alien to the interests of the peoples of the Turkestan region;
- (4) thanks to the October “revolution” peoples of Turkestan “jumped” capitalism.

Modern Approaches to the History of Turkestan

After independence, Uzbekistan has chosen the path of development of the market. And in historical scholarship, it also emerged concerning the history of the colonial enterprise in Turkestan. Unfortunately, there were no historical studies that have examined the theory of a market economy in the Russian Empire and its impact on the Turkestan. Many works remain vague methodological principles relating to the dynamics of economic policy in the metropolitan region. Many researchers approach to economic problems in Turkestan, as a consequence of the imperial colonial policy. But we should not forget that the colonial economic policy was largely dependent on world market conditions. The economic policy of Russia in Turkestan is seen in modern historiography in isolation from the world economy and the situation on the stock exchange. Movement of stock prices, commodity prices, and the political situation in the world has acted as significant factors that influenced the development of production in Turkestan (Yuferov, 1925, p. 54). Ignoring the macro-economic factors lead researchers to erroneous conclusions and to the wrong interpretation of the history of the region. The authors of many works on imperial economic policy fit to his subject, not professional, i.e., poor knowledge of the theory of market economy, all processes not investigated in terms of economic interests of the two sides, but from the perspective of winner-loser. Many researchers politicize the economic processes that

existed in the province. Any Empire after the capture of the colonies acted on the basis of economic considerations. Economic interests hung over empires and they are the most effective cost-effectively sought to control the economy of the colony. Any economic failure in the colonies experiences acutely in the metropolis, as it gave reason of the rival empire, which she cannot cope with their imperial responsibilities. Britain and Russia kept a sharp lookout for the economic policies of each other in the colonies, and any economic failure has been widely discussed in the press and in scientific circles. And so the empire acted very cautiously in economic policy. We studied the local pre-colonial land relations, law, and customs. The authorities sought to maximize know about the region deeper and act according to the circumstances. Before the colonial administration task was at a minimal cost to strengthen the new government and to create a social layer—sympathized with the new government, imperial authorities (especially the Russian empire), tried not to touch the foundations of the region’s economy through tax and regulation affecting the business processes in the colonies. Imperial power gradually and carefully conducted its policy based on the local their elite and the army. Soviet historians exaggerated the role of exploitation and robbery of colonies by metropolitans. In modern historiography, this method is deprecated. The involvement of the colonies into the world economy expressed in the division of labor within the empire. In the colonies, there were grown cultures, being sold on the world market. Soviet historiography explained one-sided economic development of the colonies, as an act of robbery of national wealth. Specialization of agriculture was an economic necessity, because commoditization reduces the cost of production of the product required. In addition, the division of labor of internal stimulated integration within the empire and the increasing dependence of the colony from the mother country. The colonial periphery through the division of labor was acquiring economic sense, and tried to maintain the metropolis image of the colony. For example, the image of Turkestan represented cotton. The imperial bureaucracy constantly promoted this image. Although Turkestan did not provide the metropolis cotton in sufficient quantity. Basically this idea is exaggerated to justify the possession of colonies to the public. The British also believed that without India’s Britain there is not an empire. Economic policy of empires by its very nature is multifaceted and has many aspects. Imperial policy in the colonies cannot be treated within the same region as the imperial administration to think and act globally. Economic policies of empires cannot be investigated in isolation from the history of the world, i.e., only macro-historical method most accurately reflects the real history of empires. In addition, we believe that the economic policies of empires must be viewed through the lens of economic theory prevailing at the time, because in practice the imperial administration was based on various economic theories. In the XIX century the Russian Empire was based on protectionism in economic policy, and Britain stuck to liberalism and the principle of *laissez-faire*.

The Future of Turkestanology

Researchers in the field of imperial economic history must take into account all aspects of the economic policy of the mother country and to build their designs and patterns on the basis of economic data, that is, imperialists to synthesize the history of the economy by giving priority to economic factors that determine the vector of economic empires. It was purely historical approach to the explanation of the colonial economic policies have created the current situation in historical scholarship. An integrated approach to the study of the economic life of the colonial Turkestan, in our opinion, would have given a positive result. In our literature,

unfortunately, there are not studied the problem of modernization of the Eastern European States companies. And before imperiologists task is to identify the impact of the economic modernization of the Eastern society. And we believe that it is, a new historical trend—imperiology can solve pressing problems in the history of colonial societies, as imperiology combines several historical disciplines.

References

Aminov, A. (1959). *The economic development of Central Asia (Colonial period)*. Tashkent: State Publishing House.

Galuzo, P. (1926). *Turkestan-colony*. Tashkent: SAOGIZ.

Lavrentyev, V. (1930). *Capitalism in Turkestan*. Moscow: Communist Academy.

Potapova, N. (2011). *History of entrepreneurship in Turkestan* (the second half of XIX-early XX century). Tashkent: UWED.

Tayronov, E. (2011). Political activity Turkestan entrepreneurs in the early XX century (Candidate dissertation, Institute of History under AS of Sciences, 2011). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, УДК 94(575.1).

Vakhabov, M. (1961). *Formation of the Uzbek socialist nation*. Tashkent: FAN.

Vekselman, M. (1987). *The Russian monopoly and foreign capital in the Central Asia* (late XIX-early XX century). Tashkent: FAN.

Yuferov, V. (1925). *Cotton production in Turkestan*. Leningrad: State Publishing House.

Yuldashev, A. (1970). *Agrarian relations in Turkestan* (late XIX-early XX centuries). Tashkent: FAN.

Yuldashev, R. (1994). *Formation of a national bourgeoisie in Turkestan* (end XIX-early XX century) (Doctoral dissertation, Institute of History under AS of Sciences, 1994).