

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET POWER IN THE QASHQADARYO OASIS

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Keywords: Qashqadaryo Oasis, Soviet power, Bolsheviks, revolution, civil war, political processes, local administration, Sovietization policy, national resistance movement, socio-economic changes, Red Army, Turkestan ASSR.

Annotation: This article analyzes the process of the establishment of Soviet power in the Qashqadaryo Oasis, as well as its political, social, and economic factors on the basis of historical sources. The study highlights the policy of the Bolsheviks in seizing power in the region, the resistance of the local population, the situation during the Civil War, and the stages of the formation of the Soviet administrative system. Furthermore, the article scientifically examines the impact of Sovietization policies implemented in the oasis on the life of local society, the transformation of the traditional governance system, and the restructuring of social relations. The results of the research are of significant importance for a deeper understanding of the processes connected with the establishment of Soviet power in the history of the Qashqadaryo Oasis.

The first quarter of the twentieth century was a period of sharp political transformations in the history of Uzbekistan, and these processes manifested themselves in a distinctive way in the Qashqadaryo Oasis as well. Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, the establishment of Soviet power in the territory of Turkestan proceeded in a complex and contradictory manner. Particularly in regions distant from the center, where traditional social structures and a strong religious and cultural environment prevailed, this process encountered strong resistance[1].

The Qashqadaryo Oasis was one of the regions that maintained a relatively independent socio-economic life, where local beks, qazis, and religious leaders possessed considerable influence. Therefore, the establishment of Soviet power in this territory gave rise not only to political conflicts but also to socio-cultural confrontations[2].

This process was not merely a change of political authority, but also involved profound transformations in economic, legal, and cultural life. This article analyzes step by step the introduction of the Soviet administrative system in the Qashqadaryo Oasis. The main purpose of the article is to provide a scientific analysis, based on historical sources, of the process of establishing Soviet rule in the Qashqadaryo Oasis and the initial perceptions of the local population toward it.

The conditions for the arrival of Soviet power in the Qashqadaryo Oasis were rather complex. Although Soviet authority was established relatively quickly in the central regions of Turkestan during 1918–1920, this process was considerably delayed in the Qashqadaryo Oasis. This was mainly due to the geographical location of the region, the local social structure, and the population's loyalty to traditional systems of governance[3].

The abolition of the Bukhara Emirate in 1920 significantly intensified the political situation in the Qashqadaryo Oasis. The deployment of Red Army units around Qarshi and Shahrisabz led to the establishment of Soviet power through force. This process was often accompanied by military violence, forced mobilization, and economic pressure[4].

During the 1920s and 1930s, the regional administrative system was completely reorganized. The territory of Qashqadaryo was divided into new administrative units and placed under strict



central control. Executive committees were established, party supervision was strengthened, and local self-governance was gradually eliminated. This process ultimately contributed to the consolidation of the Soviet centralized system.

After fully consolidating their authority, the Soviets paid particular attention to кадровая policy and the transformation of the elite structure. The Soviet government removed the old local elites from the political arena and replaced them with a new Soviet cadre system. As a result of this policy, traditional religious and local leaders were marginalized, a new Soviet intelligentsia emerged, and governance came entirely under party control.

Economic Reforms and Collectivization: One of the most significant stages of the Soviet period was the transformation of the economic system. Land and water reforms, as well as collectivization, were widely implemented in the Qashqadaryo Oasis. Consequently, all land was declared state property, collective farms (kolkhozes) and state farms (sovkhozes) were established, and private property was severely restricted. Although this process aimed to create economic stability, it also generated serious social tensions.

The Soviet authorities strengthened not only economic control but also ideological supervision. A new judicial system was introduced, while traditional legal norms were restricted. As a result, Soviet legislation was imposed, religious rights were limited, and the dominance of state ideology was firmly established. The Soviets also paid great attention to education and culture, radically transforming the educational system. Campaigns against illiteracy were carried out, new schools were opened, and first the Latin script and later the Cyrillic script were introduced. The main objective of these reforms was to instill Soviet ideology through education.

Another major transformation was the development of infrastructure aimed at linking the Qashqadaryo Oasis more closely with the Soviet center. Railway lines and road networks were expanded, which strengthened economic integration, facilitated military control, and tied the region more firmly to the center. According to researchers who have studied this subject, the Soviet government initially operated on the basis of directives sent from the center without taking into account the interests of the local population. This became one of the main factors contributing to growing public dissatisfaction [5].

In the Qashqadaryo Oasis, resistance against Soviet authority was mainly expressed in the form of armed struggle. Although these movements were interpreted in Soviet historiography as the “Basmachi movement,” modern studies increasingly evaluate them as national liberation movements [6].

Representatives of the local population regarded Soviet authority as a foreign and imposed system. In particular, land and tax policies, restrictions on religious institutions, and compulsory military service became major causes of public discontent. Armed clashes became frequent in the regions of Qarshi, Kitob, and Yakkabog’.

Although the military superiority of Soviet troops temporarily weakened the resistance movements, internal dissatisfaction among the population persisted for a long time. This situation became a serious obstacle to the consolidation of Soviet authority in the oasis. Initially, the people of the Qashqadaryo Oasis accepted Soviet rule through slogans of equality and social justice; however, practical policies quickly undermined these perceptions. Decisions that contradicted local traditions and religious values significantly weakened public trust in the Soviet system.

Thus, according to the information presented above, during its early years Soviet authority prioritized repressive measures rather than establishing dialogue with the population. As a result, Soviet rule came to be perceived as a “repressive regime.” Consequently, a negative social memory toward Soviet authority developed in the Qashqadaryo Oasis, and in the following years this evolved into more serious forms of resistance.

The main resistance movements against the authoritarian regime in the Qashqadaryo Oasis, as emphasized by Yepifanov, a responsible officer of the regional branch of the Main Political



Directorate, had already begun to emerge during 1919–1920. The inhabitants of the oasis organized various forms of resistance against Soviet policies, and in some areas armed struggles also took place.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the period of Soviet administration remained in the history of Qashqadaryo as an era of profound transformation, the effects of which significantly influenced later historical stages. Ideologically, the Soviet system exerted a strong influence on public consciousness. Soviet ideology was widely promoted through education, culture, and mass media, playing an important role in shaping the worldview of the new generation.

Overall, the introduction of the Soviet administrative system in the Qashqadaryo Oasis can be viewed as a historical process with a dual character. On the one hand, it created conditions for modernization, infrastructure development, and the emergence of new social institutions. On the other hand, through coercive policies, economic pressure, and cultural restrictions, it left deep social and psychological scars on society.

Therefore, when evaluating this period, it is impossible to limit its assessment solely to positive or negative aspects. Rather, the Soviet era in the history of Qashqadaryo should be studied objectively as a complex, contradictory, and multilayered historical process.

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