



The Political Situation in Fergana Before and After the Overthrow of Turkestan Autonomy

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Article History	Abstract
<p>Received: 19 October 2023 Revised: 28 November 2023 Accepted: 23 December 2023</p> <p>CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0</p>	<p>The article reflects the political situation in Ferghana in January-March 1918, that is, on the eve and after the overthrow of the government of the Turkestan Autonomy by the Bolsheviks. This period is characterized by the polarization of political forces and organizations throughout Turkestan, including the Fergana region. This was due to the dual power that arose here: the existence of the Soviets (Councils) of Soldiers, Workers and Muslim Deputies, on the one hand, and the government of the Turkestan Autonomy, on the other, each of which claimed state power in the region. The hidden or open struggle between the supporters of these two political institutions was the core of the political process in Ferghana and throughout Turkestan during the period under review.</p> <p>The author emphasizes that at this historical turning point, it was the national democrats – the Jadids, who led the autonomist movement, who put forward the most optimal model for the state development of Turkestan. And this model, which was based on the ideas of freedom, private property, democracy, parliamentarism and self-determination of peoples, was a real and reasonable alternative to the extremist and expropriatory course of Bolshevism. However, democratic institutions in Turkestan and Fergana were divided both politically and confessionally-ethnically. They could not consolidate even in the face of the Bolshevik dictatorship, which was increasingly acquiring sinister features.</p> <p>The Bolsheviks skillfully took advantage of the disunity of their political opponents, and overthrew the government of the Turkestan Autonomy by force of arms, usurped power and turned Turkestan and all of Russia into</p>

	<p>a platform for their social experiments. The suppression of the autonomist movement was accompanied by the violence of the Red Guards and Dashnaks against the native population of Fergana, the murders and robbery of civilians, which prompted the latter to start an armed struggle against the Soviet regime. Consequently, the peaceful struggle for the autonomy of the region grew into an armed movement for the independence of Turkestan.</p> <p>The article provides material extracted from archival documents, which testifies to the difficult economic situation of Ferghana during the existence of the Turkestan Autonomy, which undoubtedly created an unfavorable background for its activities. In addition, for the first time, many documents stored in the funds of the Ferghana Regional State Archives are introduced into scientific circulation. Based on these materials, the author completes the plot of the events that took place, makes some corrections to their chronology.</p> <p>Keywords: Turkestan Autonomy, Fergana, Kokand, Jadids, Soviets, negotiations, Abdul Majid Makhmudov, famine, Irgash, ultimatum, siege, Red Guards, Dashnaks, refugees, amnesty, Madaminbek, Turkestan ASSR.</p>
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1. Introduction

The proclamation of the Turkestan Autonomy at the IV regional congress of Muslims, held in the city of Kokand on November 26-28, 1917, became a bright page in the struggle of the peoples of Turkestan, led by the Jadids, for the restoration of their national democratic statehood. However, the Turkestan Autonomy lasted only 72 days: in February 1918, it was overthrown by armed detachments of the Red Guards and Dashnaks. In the article, based on archival documents, some circumstances of the suppression of the Turkestan Autonomy and its consequences in the Fergana region are considered.

2. Literature and methods

The history of the Turkestan Autonomy, largely falsified by Soviet historians, was studied anew during the years of independence on the basis of new methodological approaches. Thanks to the efforts of such scientists as Khasanov M. [44; 45], Norkulov N. [40] and Doniyorov Sh. [37], the foundation was laid for the creation of its new concept, which was most clearly reflected in the monographic works of Agzamkhodzhaev S.S. [31; 32]. The last author, based on a wide range of sources – materials of periodicals, memoirs and archival documents, in detail and objectively revealed many facets of its history. At present, the study of the history of the Turkestan Autonomy has risen to a new level, the distinguishing feature of which is a more detailed study of the biography of its most prominent figures [39; 41; 42].

It is known that the government of the Turkestan Autonomy was formed and functioned on the territory of the Fergana region, which geographically covered the entire Fergana Valley at that time. It is no coincidence that it is in the funds of the Fergana Regional State Archive that many documents are kept that shed light on many aspects of its activities. At one time, these documents were discovered by us and partly published [33; 34]. We used them partly in some of our publications [35; 36].

In this article, the task is to reveal in more detail the political situation in the Fergana Valley on the eve and after the fall of the Turkestan Autonomy.

In its preparing, we used such research methods as historicism, comparative analysis, problematically-chronological and problematically-territorial approaches.

3. Analysis and results

From the first days of the proclamation of the Turkestan Autonomy, the question of attitude towards it has become the most relevant in the political life of the region. Depending on the answer to the question: to recognize the autonomous government, or not, political and public organizations, the entire population of Turkestan and the Fergana region was divided into two opposite poles – supporters and opponents of autonomy. This was especially evident in the city of Kokand, where there was a clear political confrontation between the Kokand Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies stationed in the new city, on the one hand, and the autonomists who controlled the old city, on the other. This confrontation sharply escalated as a result of armed raids into the new city undertaken by the head of the militia of the autonomous government, Irgash, accompanied by violence against the European population. Reports of these raids, published in the pages of Tashkent newspapers, stirred up public opinion and increased anti-autonomist sentiments among part of the population of the Turkestan region.

Under these conditions, the Fergana Regional Soviet of Soldiers, Workers and Peasants' Deputies, which, like the Regional Council, occupied a hostile position towards the Turkestan Autonomy, at its expanded meeting on January 29, 1918, where the regional commissar, the head of the garrison, the head of the city parliament and representatives of the railway committee, decided to send an armed detachment of 250 people with machine guns and cannons to reinforce the Kokand garrison stationed in the city fortress. The command of the detachment was entrusted to Osipov [1; p. 51].

However, this decision provoked protest among some groups of the population, who feared that this step could lead to a further escalation of the armed confrontation in the region. Fund 121 of the Fergana Regional State Archive contains a small note dated February 1 (13), 1918, which states, that “in order to avoid aggravation [of relations] between the Muslim and Russian populations and a repetition of the Tashkent horrors, we demand the immediate return of the detachment”. Further, the note states that the refusal to fulfill this requirement “will be considered by the citizens of the city of Skobelev as a provocative attack, [to] which the heads of expeditions are striving in order to create civil and national civil strife” [2; p. 49]. This document gives grounds to assert that there were sane people in the regional center who realized the importance of a peaceful solution to the political conflict. Nevertheless, an armed detachment under the command of Osipov was sent to Kokand. However, it included not 250, as previously planned, but 150 people.

In connection with the current situation, the Fergana Regional Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies declared a state of siege in the city of Skobelev, as evidenced by a document stored in the archive – an announcement dated January 31, 1918. The announcement was made public on behalf of the commander of the troops of the Fergana region Chizhikov and the chairman of the Fergana Regional Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of Krutikov. It was printed and propagated in the form of a leaflet and was apparently intended to be hung in busy places and distributed among the population.

The document says that from February 1, 1918, all citizens of the city of Skobelev from 18 to 45 years old, capable of carrying weapons (except for students of secondary and lower educational institutions), are mobilized to protect the city. The city was divided into 3 districts. The mobilized citizens who lived in these areas were obliged to report daily from 10 to 12 o'clock to the designated assembly points for military training. From among the

mobilized citizens, it was planned to create night patrols daily to protect the city. The announcement said that citizens who evaded to appear at assembly points would be prosecuted by a revolutionary military court. Citizens after 9 pm were forbidden to appear in the street. Local soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies were instructed to take similar measures also in the cities of Kokand, Namangan, Andijan and Osh [3; p. 19].

The supporters of the Turkestan Provisional Government did not sit idly by either. At the call of some of its radical leaders, the population of the villages located to the east of Kokand began to disassemble the railway tracks and telegraph poles, thus cutting off the regional center from the whole country. This adversely affected the economic situation of Fergana, in particular, the provision of the population with grain, which was mainly brought from Russia.

There was an acute shortage of food in the region. In this regard, some state and public organizations took the initiative to start negotiations with the autonomists on the issue of stabilizing the situation and restoring railway communication. On February 18/5, 1918, the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies of the city of Skobelev adopted a resolution to send a mixed peace delegation from the native and Russian population to the city of Kokand. The commission, along its route, had to explain to the population that its goal was to restore peaceful relations between the natives and Europeans. The delegates had to convince the local population to refrain from damaging the railroad, explaining that the failure of the railroad would only cause starvation, from which both Russians and natives would suffer. The Regional Military Headquarters was asked to organize a working group of Russians and natives to restore the railway and to ensure reliable protection of the workers by volunteers from among the soldiers transferred to the reserve, and horsemen-militiamen from the detachment created in Old Margelan by Madaminbek [4; p. 31].

The telegram sent by the chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the city of Old Margilan Filimonov to the regional Soviet and the commander of the region's troops on February 19/6, 1918 is consonant with the document mentioned above. The telegram says that due to the acute famine, the public organizations of Old Margilan decided to send a peaceful delegation to the station Serovo from among Muslims in order to convince local residents not to interfere with the restoration of the destroyed railway track. Filimonov proposed to include also representatives of Muslims from Skobelev and Andijan in the delegation [6; p. 63].

Soon such a delegation was formed and sent to Kokand. Abdul Majit Makhmudov, a resident of the neighborhood Zargarlik of the Safiltudin part of the city of Old Margilan, who had a mandate signed by the regional commissioner Mayevsky, was also the member of the delegation. The delegation, consisting of 8-10 people, reached the Serovo station, where the train was surrounded by a large crowd of people, who prevented the delegates from moving on, claiming that they were not peaceful delegates, but were leading soldiers to Kokand to support the garrison. Then the Muslim delegates turned to the crowd and asked them to inspect the train and make sure that their assumptions were unfounded. The delegates got out of the carriages, and the crowd, having passed through the carriages and not finding anything suspicious, went downstairs. Meanwhile, the locomotive driver, seeing the excited crowd, reversed and the train departed for Vannovskaya station, leaving Makhmudov and other delegates at Serovo station. With great difficulty, Makhmudov reached Kokand and appeared at the building of the Russian-Asian Bank, the seat of the autonomous government, where some meeting was going on at that time. Upon presentation of the mandate, Makhmudov was asked to sit down. Then he announced that he had been delegated from the city of Skobelev to reconcile the warring parties and asked the Kokand delegates to talk about it with the population. After that, Makhmudov and the Kokand peace delegates went to Irgash, who, after the departure of Mustafa Chokaev from the post of chairman of the government, was at

the head of the autonomist movement. When Irgash found out about their intentions, he flatly refused to talk about peace with them. He said: “You gentlemen delegates tie our hands, and thus give the Russians the opportunity to find reinforcements and then defeat us”. The categoricalness of Irgash left no chance for peace negotiations. In addition, the hostile mood of the crowd against the delegates threatened to turn into lynching of them, as a result of which the delegates had no choice but to hastily leave Kokand [5; p. 3-4].

However, the misadventures of the delegates, or rather Abdul Majit Makhmudov, did not end there. The intrigue lies in the fact that, after the overthrow of the autonomous government, on the denunciation of Yusufjan Akbar Aliyev, who accused him of participating in the activities of the Turkestan Autonomy, he was detained in the city of Old Margilan. The applicant alleged that Makhmudov was a member of the 54 members of the Turkestan People’s Council, “where he was a big figure”. During interrogation, Makhmudov stated that he did not take any part in the affairs of the autonomous government, on the contrary, he was an opponent of the autonomy of Turkestan. He claimed that during the unrest that arose in the city of Kokand, he was delegated there for peace negotiations [7; p. 3-4]. During the search, documents were seized from him, including a certificate dated March 15, 1917, stating that Makhmudov was a member of the Skobelev Committee of Public Organizations. All this gives grounds to assert that Makhmudov was indeed a member of the peaceful delegation sent for negotiations to the city of Kokand, and his story about the ups and downs of negotiations with the autonomists given above is true. This is also confirmed by the fact that the name of Abdul Majit Makhmudov does not appear in the list of members of the Turkestan People’s Council elected at the IV Extraordinary Regional Congress of Muslims [46; p. 62].

Despite the difficulties, the public of the city of Skobelev made efforts to resume peace negotiations. So, on February 18/5, 1918, a meeting of representatives of public organizations of the city was held. It was attended by representatives of trade unions of miners, commercial and industrial employees, postal and telegraph workers; unions of land surveyors, judges, artisans and Muslim workers, teachers; Ferghana Technical Society, Skobelev Women’s Society, Skobelev Union of Young Muslims, Skobelev Union “Khlopmasmylo”, as well as the Chairman of the Regional Council of Muslim Warriors and Farmers, Gubaidulin. At the meeting, the Provisional Committee of Public Organizations of the city of Skobelev was created. The agenda of the meeting also included the issue of electing delegates for peace talks with the government of Turkestan Autonomy. The participants of the meeting decided to include M.M. Platonov and A. Khodzhaev in the delegates. However, the meeting decided that “a peace delegation from the Skobelev Soviet of Soldiers’ and Workers’ Deputies, until further orders are received, does not leave Skobelev for negotiations” [8; p. 6]. This decision of the Provisional Committee of Public Organizations may have been dictated by security considerations for peaceful delegates.

The political confrontation between the Soviets and the Turkestan Autonomy aggravated and acquired a national coloring: the majority of the Russian-speaking population of the region supported the Soviet government, and the Muslim population supported the autonomous government. The aggravation of the conflict, the likelihood of its escalating into full-scale hostilities, caused alarm among the European population, especially Russian peasants living in rural areas. Living surrounded by the native population, they, apparently, more than others were afraid of possible ethnic excesses. For this reason, part of the inhabitants of Russian villages, leaving their homes, began to arrive in the city of Skobelev in the hope of finding protection from the troops stationed here. This is confirmed by one of the archival documents - a letter from the Skobelev Soviet of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Muslim Deputies dated February 17/4, 1918, where the Soviet asks all employees of the city escort

team to move to one common room, freeing the rest for the refugees arriving and those who have already arrived in the city [9; p. 44].

Anxious mood reigned in Osh as well. This is evidenced by a telegram received by the regional Soviet on February 20/7, 1918 from the union of Russian workers of the city. It contains a request “due to the lack of a guarantee of the security of the Russian population and the small number of the local garrison, unable to repel the impending danger in connection with the Kokand events at the right time, to distribute firearms to the Russian workers from the available stock for self-defense and assistance to the garrison” [10; p. 100-101].

In the tense situation that had arisen, the Headquarters of the Fergana Region Troops also began to lean toward a peaceful solution to the conflict. The Fergana Regional State Archive keeps a copy of the letter of the Headquarters dated February 20/7, 1918 addressed to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Autonomous Turkestan Mustafa Chokaev, where the latter was invited to Skobelev to negotiate the normalization of the situation in the region [11; p. 63]. However, it is possible that the invitation to the talks was started by the Headquarters of the Armed Forces in order to drag out time and redeploy forces.

There are documents in the archive that give reason to believe that in the end the need for negotiations for a peaceful solution to the issue was also recognized by the then leaders of the Turkestan Autonomy. One of these documents is the agenda, by which the Provisional People's Council of Autonomous Turkestan invites members of the Provisional Regional Public Council of Fergana Vasiliev, Ilyin and Podolyak to a meeting in the premises of Shurai Islamiya at 12 noon on February 8/21, 1918 [12; p. 90].

Another document is a copy of a telegram to Irgash Kurbashi and Mir Adil, sent on February 21/8, 1918 on behalf of the commander of the troops (the last name is illegible), the regional commissar Mayevsky and the chief of staff Krutikov. It says that the peaceful delegation sent earlier to Serovo, having not reached its goal, was forced to return to Skobelev. Further, the telegram says that “Your request and the request of Irgash Kurbashi to send the delegation to Serovo for peace talks is not considered possible by the Headquarters ... since the population failed to treat the delegation with due respect” and there are no guarantees of its safety. “Taking into account the urgent need to urgently restore the disturbed calm in the region, which threatens to aggravate famine, mainly among the Muslim population, due to the destruction of the road, the headquarters suggests that you form a peace delegation ... for negotiations and send [it] to Skobelev”. The headquarters guaranteed the full immunity of the members of the delegation and expressed its readiness to urgently equip a train to deliver the delegates to the city of Skobelev. At the same time, the headquarters asked for all possible assistance in restoring the railway and telegraph communication destroyed by the population [13; p. 85-87].

There is another document in the archive confirming that Irgash Kurbashi asked to resume peace negotiations. This is a copy of the telegram of the commander of the troops of the Fergana region, the chairman of the Regional Council of Deputies and the regional commissar to all Soviets, institutions and organizations of the region. The document does not contain a date, but it can be assumed that it was sent in the very last days of the existence of the Turkestan Autonomy. The following lines testify to this: “... It is reported from Kokand that the fortress is holding up excellently and that the Autonomous Government has been overthrown and ... the commander of the troops of the Autonomous Government summons a peaceful delegation for negotiations. The headquarters of the troops of the Fergana region calls on the population to calm and believe that all measures are being taken to restore the disturbed life” [14; p. 41].

In the Fergana regional state archive, we did not find any documents directly reflecting the events associated with the defeat of the Turkestan Autonomy. But in the scientific literature, this issue has been sufficiently studied.

On the night of February 18-19, a train arrived in Kokand under the command of the military commissar of the Turkestan region, E.L.Perfiliev. It contained the Red Guards, armed squads of the Armenian nationalist party "Dashnaktsutyun" and artillery units. They surrounded the city from three sides. The ultimatum on the unconditional surrender of the old city, sent to the name of Irgash Kurbashi on February 19, was rejected by the latter. After that, on the orders of Perfiliev, the old city was subjected to artillery fire from 12 guns from 13:00 p.m. until the evening of that day. On the morning of the next day, Soviet troops went on the offensive. Although the defenders of the city did not have enough militarily trained forces, they steadfastly repelled enemy attacks, defended every house and every street. But the forces were unequal. The old city was destroyed and plundered. According to some sources, about 10 thousand civilians were killed [32; p. 149]. Refugees from Kokand poured into neighboring cities and villages, and their stories about what they saw and experienced terrified people, further aggravating the situation among the population of the Fergana region [46; p. 75]. Turkestan Autonomy was overthrown. Irgash Kurbashi retreated with his horsemen to the suburban village of Bachkir, where he was soon killed in one of the skirmishes with the Red Army.

Archival documents testify that refugees from Kokand began to arrive in the city of Old Margilan. Here, many of them were detained, apparently on suspicion of having links with the autonomists. As is clear from the letter dated February 8/21, 1918, from the prosecutor of the Skobelev District Court, 10 people were detained in Old Margilan without any grounds. The prosecutor wrote that in the "correspondence" sent to him, apart from the testimony of the detainees, there is not even information [about] when, under what circumstances and for what reason [they were] detained" [15; p. 61]. Judicial proceedings began over those arrested. In Skobelev, a special investigative commission was created, where on February 18/5 the Headquarters of the Troops proposed to include two representatives of the Skobelev City Duma. In response to this proposal, the City Duma, which initially stood in the position of recognizing the autonomous government, adopted the following resolution: The autonomy of Turkestan, believes that the investigation of the mentioned persons should be carried out by a judicial investigator on the basis of the laws recognized by the February Revolution, with the participation of representatives of the City Duma and Muslims. The Duma delegated its members Petrov and Podolyak to this commission [16; p. 68].

Other archival documents also testify to the groundlessness of the detention of many refugees. So, on February 13/26, 1918, a man of unknown rank wandering in the bazaar in the Tashlak neighborhood, who, when asked to present documents, identified himself as a resident of Kokand, a Persian citizen Yusuf Farzi-ogly, was brought to the assistant chief of police of the city of Old Margilan A.Semenov. He explained that during the last three years he lived in Kokand, where he earned his living – he had 3 carts and was engaged in private carriage. During the riots in Kokand, he was robbed by the Armenians and had to flee, leaving his passport at home. In the city of Kokand, his brother Abdulla Ali Farzi-ogly and his worker Kuzybai were killed. Assistant to the chief of police A.Semenov, taking into account that the identity of Yusuf Farzi-ogly in the city of Old Margilan is unknown to anyone, and he himself has no acquaintances in the city, and there are no documents proving his identity, decided to subject him to detention and under guard send the escorts to the disposal of the Skobelev Revolutionary Committee [17; p. 2].

Violence against the local population during the suppression of the Turkestan Autonomy led to the highest aggravation of the situation in the region, which alarmed public

organizations that united both the Russian and the native population. Noteworthy in this regard is the telegram of the Turkestan Regional Council of Muslim Deputies sent to the cities of Andijan, Osh, Asaka, Namangan, Khujand, Samarkand, Chardzhou, Askhabad and Tashkent. It reports that the Regional Council of Workers' Warriors and Muslim Dekhkans, whose headquarters was in the city of Kokand, unable to keep in touch with local organizations due to the Kokand events, the destruction of roads, mail and telegraph, moved to the city of Skobelev. The telegram further states that "in view of the situation that has arisen in Fergana, foreseeing all the horrors and terrible results threatening starvation of the entire population [due to] fratricidal war and the destruction of communications, the Regional Council invited all local organizations of Muslim workers [and] soldiers to accept all measures to calm the population by organizing rallies, sending their representatives to villages, distributing appeals in contact with democratic organizations of other nationalities" [18; p. 73].

This document is also consonant with the Appeal "To the entire population of the Fergana region", signed by the chairmen of the Regional Council of Muslim Deputies Mir Adil, the Regional Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies Krutikov and the Skobelev City Duma Orlovsky. A comparative analysis of the Uzbek and Russian texts of this appeal shows that it was compiled by the Regional Council of Muslim Deputies represented by its chairman Mir Adil in the Uzbek language, after which, having read the text, Krutikov and Orlovsky also signed it. The appeal was printed in the form of a leaflet in Russian and Uzbek, and was intended for distribution among the population. The appeal reads: "This week, events took place in the city of Kokand that are known to the entire population and this news ... was brought the population into an alarming state and divided into nationalities. In various places, the railway was demolished, the telegraph line was destroyed, which inevitably disrupted the movement of food, threatening famine disasters. Fearing some others, people came into great anxiety. Therefore, it is announced: let the elders over the population, heads of neighborhoods, pentecostals and imams of mosques immediately take upon themselves the duty of spreading among the population a call for calm, restoration of the destroyed railway line and telegraph, and, having united, take upon themselves the duty to come to the aid of the hungry and undressed people. If respected and rich people have provided assistance to the poor up to now, then again I strongly appeal to them to come to the aid of the naked and hungry in the name of God and justice" [19; p. 138].

Indeed, the excesses that took place in Kokand and other cities greatly increased the likelihood of a new wave of interethnic conflict. For example, the chairman of the Chust Soviet of Deputies, Kiselev, telegraphed to the chairman of the Regional Council and the regional commissioner that the bloody events in Kokand caused a negative reaction from the local population. The report said: "The mood among the natives is alarming. In Varzik, the population refused to obey the orders of the authorities. In Gava, the natives attacked the guard Brazhnikov, took away his weapons and [under] the threat of death converted [him] to Islam. The danger of gazavat. Take emergency measures" [20; p. 99].

Meanwhile, local authorities continued to prosecute arrested refugees from Kokand. On March 28, 1918, the Fergana Regional Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Muslim Deputies, after hearing the question of persons detained and in custody in connection with the Kokand events, decided to transfer the consideration of their cases to the Military Revolutionary Tribunal [21; p. 67]. And only at the beginning of May 1918, in connection with the proclamation of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, a complete amnesty was announced for persons who "misunderstood and were attracted for participating in the bourgeois-autonomous movement of Turkestan". Those imprisoned in the above cases in Tashkent were released, which was proposed to be done throughout Turkestan [22; p. 9].

The tragic events in Kokand and other cities of the Fergana Valley did not pass without a trace. Driven to despair by the actions of the new authorities, the local population rose up in arms against the socialist dictatorship. This movement, which received the name “Basmachism” from the light hand of Soviet ideologists, is now called “istiklolchilik harakati”, i.e., the movement for independence. It was headed by such well-known figures as Katta Ergash, Madaminbek and other kurbashi.

In this regard, I would like to draw attention to a noteworthy document that sheds light on the date Madaminbek entered the path of confrontation with the Soviet government, which he supported even during the existence of the Turkestan Autonomy. This is confirmed by an archival document – the minutes of the meeting of the deputies of the Old Margilan City Duma dated March 26/13, 1918. It emphasizes that the Skobelev Soviet of Soldiers’ and Workers’ Deputies expressed confidence in the kurbashi of the city of Old Margilan, Muhammad Amin Akhmatbaev, and no complaints against him to date neither the Duma nor the Commissioner received. “Considering,” the document says further, “that, firstly, he is the elected population for the position of kurbashi, and, secondly, that during the Kokand events Madaminbek showed himself to be a supporter of the existing government, not succumbing to the persuasion of agents of the so-called of the Provisional Government of Autonomous Turkestan, thanks to which it was possible to maintain order and tranquility in the city of Old Margilan, the city Duma sees no obstacles to the continuation of the service of the Acting kurbashi of the city of Old Margilan Madaminbek” [23; p. 10-11]. It follows from this that Madaminbek in the last days of March 1918 was still in the service of the Soviet government. Therefore, even in the latest literature, the assertion that until the end of January 1918 he was in the position of the police chief of the city of Old Margilan, and in early March of the same year, with his horsemen, joined the ranks of the fighters for independence [42; p. 79-80] is refuted by this document, the authenticity of which is beyond doubt.

Archival documents show that the political and social situation in Fergana after the suppression of the Turkestan Autonomy was very difficult. Despite the victory, the Soviet government was greatly concerned about the current situation, the main measure of which was the strong unrest among the native population, caused by the brutal suppression of the autonomist movement and violence against the civilian population. The Russian-speaking population did not feel comfortable either, some of which began to leave the Fergana region. Thus, by the summer of 1918, the European population of the city of Kokand had decreased by almost 25 percent [24; p. 13].

Documents testify that the Soviet government paid travel money to those who took part in the military expedition against the Turkestan Autonomy. Only by a decree of the Council of People’s Commissars of April 18, 1918, the payment of per diem money to participants in the Kokand and Bukhara events was stopped [25; p. 23]. However, the documents show that even after this decision, payments to the participants of the expeditions were still made. So, at an emergency meeting of the Fergana Regional Soviet on September 10, 1918, an application was considered by the volunteers of the First Guard Regiment Belyaev, Sapozhnikov, Konovalov, Sevastyanov and Ilyushkin to give them only 1,125 rubles (225 rubles each) for participation in the Kokand events. The Soviet decided to satisfy the application of the volunteers by writing out the money due to them from the funds allocated by the city of Kokand for the purchase of medicines [26; p. 142 (reverse side)].

As expected, the events in Kokand aggravated the food situation in the region. A particularly difficult situation developed in Old Margilan. The commissar of the city reported that the poorest population and workers “are perishing from starvation en masse” [27; p. 97].

In this regard, the following fact deserves attention. On March 26/13, 1918, the Old Margilan City Duma at its meeting discussed the issue of the amounts collected in favor of

Shurayi Islamia and the Turkestan Autonomy in the amount of about 59,000 rubles. On this issue, the City Council unanimously adopted the following resolution:

“Taking into account that these sums were collected from the population haphazardly, that due to this their return is impossible, that it is important for the starving population to receive bread, and not money collected at different times under plausible pretexts allegedly for the common good of the people, and that the activities of the above-mentioned societies was actually directed to the detriment of the same population and at present these societies no longer exist – to petition the Fergana Regional Soviet of Soldiers’ and Workers’ Deputies for permission to use the indicated amounts for food for the poorest population of the city (canteens)” [28; p. 10-11].

The Turkestan Autonomy was overthrown. But due to the aggravation of the political situation in the region after its suppression, and taking into account the fact that the idea of autonomy was very popular among the local population, on May 1, 1918, the V Regional Congress of Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies proclaimed the creation of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as part of the RSFSR [29; p. 9]. Although the Soviet form of autonomy was far from the model that the Turkestan Jadids dreamed about and aspired to, nevertheless, the very fact of granting the region the status of an autonomous republic was to some extent a concession of Soviet power to the indigenous peoples of Turkestan.

After the suppression of the Turkestan Autonomy, the attitude of the Soviet authorities towards the Dashnaktsutyun party also changed. Thus, in the decision of the joint emergency meeting of the Fergana Regional Soviet of Soldiers, Workers, Peasants and Muslim Deputies of September 10, 1918, it was noted that “the Dashnaktsutyun group is not considered revolutionary at the moment. At one time this party was revolutionary, but now, when the revolution has gone ahead, the party has retained its narrow national views, while the development of national legal consciousness is contrary to the ideas of Soviet power” [30; p. 169].

4. Conclusion.

At the end of 1917 - beginning of 1918, Fergana found itself at the epicenter of the political life of the Turkestan region. This was directly related to the creation of the government of the Turkestan Autonomy in the city of Kokand, which, at a sharp turn in history, offered society the most optimal development model. Private property, democracy, parliamentarism, self-determination of nations – these were the strategic guidelines of the Turkestan Autonomy, which became a real alternative to the extremist and expropriatory course of the Bolsheviks. The events in Fergana that took place during this period were, in fact, a reflection of the collisions associated with the confrontation of these two political forces in the region. Ultimately, the Turkestan Autonomy was suppressed by military means, as a result of which Turkestan, like other Soviet republics, turned into a platform for social experiments of the Bolshevik leadership.

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