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POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF TURAR RISKULOV IN TURKESTAN (1920 – 1935)

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article analyzes the role of the national question in the state governance system, its connection with political processes in historical periods, and the characteristics of the national policy pursued in Turkestan during the Soviet colonial era. The article also highlights some aspects of the measures implemented by the central government regarding the localization policy in our country. The role and importance of the local personnel policy in the fate of the people, as well as the social-political activity of Turar Risqulov, are discussed to some extent.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of modern development, the role of history in studying the national aspects of the history of multi-ethnic states is becoming increasingly evident. This is understandable, of course, because historical experience shows that national relations are an inseparable part of societal development, and of its social-political, economic, and spiritual life, both historically and in the present. The people, as a particular historical community, do not remain passive at turning points in historical processes, no matter how difficult they may be. Moreover, the nation continuously experiences the impact of political and governmental structures (whether positive or negative—this is a different question). For example, during the period of bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Europe, the rising bourgeois class is well known for how it politically utilized national slogans. Bolsheviks also actively used national sentiments in preparing and carrying out the socialist revolution, during the civil war and military interventions, in the restoration of the national economy and socialist construction, and during the Great Patriotic War. Communists appealed to the national feelings of the people, trying to mobilize them

under the banner of protecting the interests of nations in accordance with the principles of Marxist doctrine.

During the period of Soviet colonialism in Turkestan, local communists tried to ease the economic-social situation, as emphasized by historians from Western Europe and America[1]. Under the conditions of the Russian Empire's colonization, which governed the region with the help of the occupying army and its spears, certain strata of the incoming population lived privileged lives, while the local population's political disenfranchisement and economic backwardness only intensified. It is evident from the above that the study of this topic remains relevant even today.

METHODOLOGY

This article outlines the national personnel policy pursued by the Soviet government in Uzbekistan during the 1920s and 1930s, and the impact of the activities of prominent state figure Turor Risqulov, based on generally accepted methods such as historical analysis, comparative analysis, and the principles of chronological sequence.

Analysis of Relevant Literature. In the years following independence, several works were published regarding Turor Risqulov's activities in Turkestan and his place in the history of the peoples of Turkestan. Scholars such as O.M. Koniratbaev, S. Beysembaev, S. Kulboev, A. Koshanov, O. Sabden, A. Dogalov, and A.V. Ustinov[2] have written scientific works, articles, and reports on this subject. Additionally, textbooks, educational manuals, and monographs created by K.Rajabov, D.Alimova, D.Ziyoeva, Q.Inoyatov, Sh.Karimov, R.Shamsutdinov, and others also contain brief information on Turor Risqulov's activities, along with an overview of the social-political processes that took place during the establishment of Soviet rule in Turkestan[3].

DISCUSSION

With the arrival of the Bolsheviks to power, fundamental changes began in the country. While implementing these changes, the Bolshevik government was also forced to address the national question, which was reflected in all of its programs. However, there was no well-thought-out concept of national policy in the Soviet government. In the early years of Soviet rule, the priority of the government of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Republic and the ruling administration of the Turkestan Communist Party was to prevent the indigenous population from approaching the power structures. It is no coincidence that in 1918-1919, the proportion of local nationals in the leadership positions of the party and Soviet apparatus in Turkestan was only 5%[4]. The majority of leaders were

people who had come from other regions of the country, primarily from Russia. The lack of knowledge of the local languages, traditions, customs, and culture by the political elements and newcomers who took control of the government led to the legitimate discontent of the intellectuals of Turkestan. The externally imposed process of modernization in the field of culture posed a threat to the destruction of national cultural heritage and the elimination of the people's viable traditional values.

Colonialism not only damaged the traditional structure of the economy of the Turkestan region, but also deprived it of the opportunity to independently change its situation along national and capitalist lines. It condemned the region to stagnation, crisis, and backwardness. This contributed to the growth of unemployment in Turkestan and the decline in the standard of living of the people. The representatives of the central government explained their distrust by saying that the indigenous population had not yet "formed class organizations", that a large part of the population had not "gone through revolutionary struggle", and that the people were "influenced by the religion of Islam". The errors reflected in national policy were exacerbated when members of the Turkestan Commission arrived from Moscow. During this period, the situation remained as tense as ever. All of this increased the social unrest and conflicts in Turkestan. The political instability intensified the antagonism between the various forces. "The numerous uprisings that the people started in an uncontrolled manner could be seen as evidence of this; such uprisings constantly shook the region"[5].

During his time in various high-ranking party and state positions, Turor Risqulov was responsible for issues such as industrial cooperation, promoting exports, ensuring the fulfillment of the country's export plans, overseeing municipal utilities, and managing mass catering for the working population. The industrialization of the Turkestan region, the collectivization of agriculture, and the cultural revolution - these were not just major tasks for Turor Risqulov, but part of his daily work, his destiny, and his biography.

Turor Risqulov's leadership activities were extensive and multifaceted:

- From organizing and developing political and socio-economic solutions to the full collectivization of agriculture, to overseeing the development of municipal utilities, home industry, and industrial cooperation, particularly expanding these areas within the Russian Federation;
- From drafting government decisions and setting tasks in the fields of the national economy and public education, to developing state regulations related to the People's Commissariat of Health of the Russian Federation;

- Including the development of the Volga-Don Canal project, to organizing public catering[6].

In addressing these issues, Turor Risqulov paid special attention to material and technical support, the selection and placement of personnel in key sectors, creating living conditions and work environments for workers, and ensuring they were properly provided for. Care for the working people was always at the center of Turor Risqulov's focus. At the same time, in addition to fighting criminal and hostile elements, it was essential to select the most capable and skilled workers in industrial enterprises and the key sectors of the national economy, and to engage experienced, knowledgeable individuals, as well as progressive workers and peasants.

RESULT

The process of promoting workers from local nationalities to managerial positions in enterprises in the Turkestan region had its own distinctive characteristics, which were influenced by the established traditions and social structure of the population. At this time, the Uzbek national technical intelligentsia was just beginning to take shape. As a result, the shortage of specialists was largely filled by Russian intellectuals. Russian engineers and technical staff contributed to the formation of the national technical intelligentsia.

During this period, Turor Risqulov implemented principles of labor stability, led a systematic struggle against mismanagement and crime, and advocated for the recognition and encouragement of those who succeeded in their work. He demanded significant improvements in the economy of Turkestan. This situation required the activities of the Economic Councils to be subordinated to ensure that their systematic work would facilitate the execution of tasks assigned to economic bodies and the working masses.

He placed great emphasis on training pedagogical personnel from the local population. Considering that the existing staff was insufficient to cover even a small portion of the local population, he took the initiative to transfer all existing pedagogical institutes and technical schools to the state budget[7]. Moreover, students of Turkish Republic universities and educational institutions who received state scholarships were required to fulfill all academic requirements on time during their courses. After graduating from universities and educational institutions, scholarship holders were required to serve for at least one year in Soviet institutions related to their specialties, using their scholarship. A scholarship holder could only transfer to another university if the one they were attending had been closed or was officially insufficient[8].

Turor Risqulov paid special attention to the youth. He saw the future of the socialist state, and the hope and foundation of the Soviet social and state system, in the younger generation. In this context, he demonstrated a sense of composure, politeness, and a readiness to do everything in his power to assist the young generation that would replace the older one. In a speech at a meeting with students of the State University in Moscow, Turor Risqulov emphasized the following:

“You, the future engineers, technicians, agronomists, and educators, are the cadres who will lay the foundation for the future development of Kazakhstan. Without cadres like you, much work remains to be done in using the vast mountain resources of Kazakhstan and improving livestock farming. All of this primarily requires personnel. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the training and education of cadres for Kazakhstan”[9].

At the end of 1926, the one-year activity of the Central Commission for the Localization of the State Apparatus under the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Uzbek SSR was reviewed at the meeting of the Control Commission. The Commission had a one-year work plan for 1925–1926. During this time, the Commission sent 374 technical staff to various organizations. Of these, 277 were Uzbeks, 27 were representatives of other nationalities, 27 were party members, 74 were Komsomol members, 200 were trade union members, and 73 were not affiliated with any organization[10].

Furthermore, the report presented at the meeting highlighted several aspects of the work carried out by the Commission from September 1925 to October 1926. Among them, it was noted that short-term training courses were organized to prepare Muslim machinists, stenographers, accountants, bookkeepers, conductors, controllers (supervisors), railway workers, responsible secretaries, central organ managers, machinists, and other specialists from among the local population. Naturally, organizing such courses, creating the necessary conditions for them, providing teachers, and covering expenses for accommodation, stipends, and transportation, as well as paying salaries to the three staff members of the Central Commission for Localization, led to various material difficulties. The Central Localization Commission did not have its own financial resources.

The growing attention to the Uzbek language allowed for the expansion of the national cadre layer in the field of administration. In June 1918, Uzbek (Turkic) was granted the status of a state language in the territory of the Turkestan ASSR. Following the decision of the People's Commissars Soviet of Uzbekistan on November 10, 1928, “On the employees of the institutions, enterprises, and organizations of the Uzbek SSR” (Order No. 171), courses and study groups were organized to promote the study of the Uzbek language. All official and regulatory documents began to be published in both

Uzbek and Russian languages. A system and measures for teaching the Uzbek language to representatives of European nationalities were developed. Uzbek language teachers and employees from European nationalities were materially incentivized. For example, from December 1928 to March 16, 1929, Uzbek language teachers were rewarded twice a month with monetary bonuses. This practice continued into 1929[11].

On December 11, 1931, the USSR Central Executive Committee issued a decree on the "Uzbekization of the apparatus of the Uzbek SSR." According to this decree, the activities of the Uzbekization commission for the state apparatus in Uzbekistan were suspended[12].

Thus, the implementation of the Uzbekization policy involved the participation of Soviet, economic, party, cooperative, and public organizations, as well as their leaders, as stipulated in the regulations of the Central Commission. Regional, provincial, city, and district branches of the commission were established. Special decisions were made to organize various training courses and study groups for local nationals and European employees. The commission's regulations, annual and monthly work plans, and activities were developed. A series of measures were defined at commission meetings, including organizing the management of state enterprises in two languages (Uzbek and Russian), mandatory language training for European employees who did not know Uzbek, and the decision not to hire people for leadership positions who could not speak Uzbek.

Turor Risqulov stood out for his deep understanding of the essence of the issues being addressed, whether personally or under his leadership. It is important to note that the various tasks he faced required not only a deep knowledge of Marxism-Leninism theory but also a broad understanding of economics, production organization, and the management of the national economy.

During this period, alongside the extensive development of the network of educational institutions in Uzbekistan, other methods of training cadres were also used, such as the mass promotion of the most qualified workers to engineering, technical, and leadership positions, and organizing their training without separating them from production. Many practitioners in industrial enterprises in Uzbekistan, including Uzbeks, were promoted to engineering, technical, and leadership positions. This was one of the methods of preparing national cadres and, at the same time, addressing the problem of localizing leadership to some extent.

Assistance was also provided in the field of cultural construction. Thus, the entire network of photo-cinema factories, film studios, the state distribution bureau and its local branches, and other enterprises, which were then under the direct administration of the Turkestan Photo-Cinema Center

(TFKO, National Education People's Commissariat), were transferred to the management of Turkgoskino. Under an agreement between regional executive committees and the National Education People's Commissariat, cinema theaters were also transferred to the control of Turkgoskino. Turkgoskino was granted a monopoly on film distribution across all of Turkestan. The opening of new cinema theaters and film enterprises was carried out with the approval of the regional administration, in coordination with the oversight bodies of the People's Commissariat of Education[13].

In supporting and developing vocational education schools, Turor Risqulov aimed to gain assistance from trade unions and economic bodies interested in vocational education. He believed it was necessary to preserve the existing network of vocational schools. He proposed that endowment funds (from Muslim countries, the waqf refers to assets allocated for religious or charitable purposes by the state or individuals) should be used for cultural and educational purposes. His goal was to support public schools fully, and later include them in the network of educational institutions through a process of socialization based on decisions made by local executive committees[14].

Turor Risqulov, addressing the issue of providing pedagogical staff for village and rural schools, proposed “intensifying efforts to train school workers from the local population and send them to specific regions”[15].

He paid special attention to improving the qualifications of local judges by expanding judicial training courses that taught them how to explain the law to their own people. He raised the issue of improving the material condition of staff in people's courts and qazi courts, rejecting additional training that would divert them from their core duties. Furthermore, he proposed organizing legal courses to train qualified judicial staff, particularly for preparing representatives from the local population for positions in the judiciary[14].

During this period, despite the purges, the principles of local governance in the Soviet republics remained in effect. Interest in the issue of local representation had not waned. Lower-level agencies still reported to higher-level authorities. Statistical data on the proportion of indigenous population and engineering-technical staff in various enterprises was still submitted to higher authorities. Reports from the People's Commissars on local governance and providing services in the native language were periodically reviewed at various meetings.

Between 1925 and 1933, many decrees and decisions were passed in Uzbekistan regarding the localization of government bodies and state administration[16]. However, nearly all of these were not fully implemented in practice. This was because “there were no strict rules for localization, only

slogans". The main goal of the Soviet state and the ruling Communist Party was not to fully hand over power to representatives of the local nationalities, but rather to ensure that the control of power remained firmly in the hands of the Center and its representatives.

In the second half of the 1930s, the policy of localization in the Uzbek SSR was completely halted by the Soviet authorities. Attempts to localize the Soviet state and party apparatus and transition administrative work to the Uzbek language ultimately ended in failure. This can partly be explained by the temporary nature of this policy, as the localization and Uzbekification policies of the Uzbek leadership did not align with the broader national policy strategy of the Soviet state. The Soviet authorities and Communists were, in practice, not interested in the localization and Uzbekification of party and Soviet bodies in Uzbekistan. This situation continued throughout the Soviet era.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the prominent statesman Turor Risqulov, during his tenure, provided comprehensive support for the life of scholars in Central Asia. Under his initiative, a Commission was established to improve the living conditions of scientists. As a legal entity, this Commission was responsible for accounting and registering scientific staff in all fields of science in the Turkestan Republic who needed academic and state support and rewards. It also oversaw the use of allocated funding, helped in establishing and developing scientific funds, organized scientific housing and other institutions, supported the development of cooperative organizations, issued relevant certificates and references, and created foundations for academic support and awards. The Commission also issued decisions regarding the awarding of scientific, educational, and popular scientific work, offered conclusions on issues within its competence, compiled lists of scientific staff in need of academic support in coordination with relevant bodies, and developed procedures for placing, relocating, and consolidating scientific staff. It also simplified the procedures for obtaining permits for traveling abroad and receiving scientific publications from abroad, prepared draft decrees and other necessary measures, protected the interests of individual scholars and their teams, and helped create conditions for peaceful and planned scientific work[17].

At that time, the processes of localization in Uzbekistan did not develop uniformly. The decisions made by the state bodies on this issue were not fully implemented. For instance, out of 746 people promoted to leadership positions in production, only 323 were representatives of the local ethnic groups[18]. In many cases, this process was artificially slowed down, largely by a segment of the European leadership with chauvinistic views. Additionally, fearing purges from the Center, the political and state leadership

of the republic at that time did not dare to actively oppose this negative situation. Furthermore, the insufficient number of national technical intellectuals in Uzbekistan also had an impact.

In short, Turor Riskulov, in addressing various issues, primarily focused on material-technical support, the selection and placement of personnel for key positions, the creation of necessary living and working conditions for workers and employees, and organizing their provision.

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