

Coverage of the History of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-Era Sources: Achievements and Shortcomings)

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources, as well as the scholarly achievements and existing shortcomings of this historiographical process. The relevance of the study is explained by the necessity of reassessing the historiographical legacy of the Soviet period concerning the history of the Kokand Khanate from the perspective of modern historiography. During the research, scholarly works, historical sources, and historiographical literature produced in the Soviet era were examined and evaluated through comparative and source-critical analysis. The literature review revealed that Soviet historians introduced significant information into academic circulation regarding the political system, economic life, social relations, and foreign connections of the Kokand Khanate. At the same time, it was observed that, due to the influence of Marxist-Leninist methodology, historical events were often interpreted primarily through the principle of class struggle. The findings of the study confirm the importance of Soviet-era sources for the study of the history of the Kokand Khanate, while also demonstrating that ideological approaches sometimes led to a one-sided interpretation of certain aspects of historical reality. The discussion section evaluates the scholarly legacy of Soviet historiography and its place in contemporary historical studies. The study concludes that Soviet-era sources on the history of the Kokand Khanate possess considerable academic value; however, their use requires a critical approach and reliance on modern methodological principles. The results of this research contribute to a more objective and comprehensive understanding of the history of the Kokand Khanate.*

Keywords: Kokand Khanate, Soviet historiography, historical sources, Marxist-Leninist methodology, historiography, source studies, political history, social relations, historical research.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Kokand Khanate was one of the most significant states in the history of Central Asia, playing an important role in the political, economic, and cultural development of the Fergana Valley and its surrounding regions from the early eighteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century. Various aspects of the Khanate's history, including its establishment, administrative system, domestic and foreign policies, socio-economic relations, and eventual conquest by the Russian Empire, have been interpreted differently across different periods of historiography. In particular, the study of the Kokand Khanate during the Soviet era possessed distinctive characteristics, as the scholarly literature and research produced during this period were largely shaped by Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Following the establishment of Soviet rule, the principles of class analysis and party-mindedness became fundamental to historical scholarship. Consequently, the history of the Kokand Khanate was examined through the lens of these ideological perspectives. The political system of the Khanate was often characterized as feudal and reactionary, while the activities of its rulers were predominantly portrayed in a negative light. At the same time, considerable attention was devoted to issues such as the condition of the common people, social inequality, taxation policies, and class struggle. Although this approach contributed to a deeper investigation of certain aspects of

historical development, it also led to one-sided interpretations of many historical processes.

Nevertheless, the contributions of Soviet historiography to the study of the Kokand Khanate cannot be disregarded. During this period, numerous archival documents were introduced into academic circulation, historical sources were collected and systematized, and a number of scholarly studies on the political and economic life of the Khanate were produced. The expansion of archaeological and ethnographic research also resulted in important academic conclusions regarding various aspects of the Khanate's history. These studies provided a valuable scholarly foundation for subsequent generations of researchers.

However, ideological restrictions in Soviet-era scholarship often hindered a comprehensive and objective understanding of historical reality. The state-building traditions, national values, cultural heritage, and historical role of local rulers were frequently not evaluated impartially. Likewise, the Russian Empire's conquest of Central Asia was commonly interpreted as a "progressive" process, while the negative consequences of colonial rule received insufficient attention.

Today, the transformations that have taken place in historical scholarship during the years of independence have encouraged new approaches to the study of the Kokand Khanate. Therefore, analyzing the extent to which the history of the Kokand Khanate was represented in Soviet-era sources, as well as identifying both their scholarly achievements and

limitations, remains an important academic task. This article examines the portrayal of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet historiography, evaluates the scientific significance of these studies, and analyzes the constraints that emerged as a result of ideological influence through the examination of historical sources.

2. Literature analysis

The issue of the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources occupies a significant place in historiographical studies. Although scholarly works produced during the Soviet period served as important sources for studying the history of the Khanate, most of them were written under the influence of the dominant ideology of the time. Therefore, analyzing the scholarly significance and methodological characteristics of Soviet-era literature is essential for understanding this subject. Among Soviet scholars who contributed to the study of the Kokand Khanate, the academic legacy of Vasily Vladimirovich Bartold holds particular importance. In his numerous studies on the history of the peoples of Central Asia, Bartold provided valuable information regarding the political development, administrative structure, and regional significance of the Kokand Khanate. His research was distinguished by its reliance on primary historical sources and source-critical methodology, making it an important scholarly foundation for subsequent historians [1, p. 45]. At the same time, some of his interpretations reflected the intellectual and political climate of his era, particularly in relation to the role of the Russian Empire in Central Asia.

The works of Aleksei Pavlovich Nalivkin also occupy an important place in the historiography of the Kokand Khanate. His studies provide valuable information about the socio-economic life of the Fergana Valley, local administrative institutions, and the daily life of the population [2, p. 28]. Although these works are highly valuable due to their rich factual content, they occasionally reflect a colonial perspective toward indigenous systems of governance. Within Uzbek historiography, the studies of Bo'riboy Ahmedov, Yahyo G'ulomov, and Asqar Asqarov are also recognized as important contributions to the study of the Kokand Khanate. Their works examined the political and economic development, cultural life, and historical evolution of the Khanate [3, p. 67]. While these studies relied extensively on historical evidence, the principle of class analysis remained a dominant methodological framework. Most Soviet historians interpreted the Kokand Khanate as a feudal state and sought to explain its social relations primarily through the concept of class struggle. In several studies, the activities of the Khanate's rulers were portrayed mainly in connection with exploitative policies [4, p. 112]. Such an approach, however, was often insufficient for reflecting the complexity and diversity of historical processes.

Another important issue addressed in Soviet historiography was the conquest of the Kokand Khanate by the Russian Empire. Many authors interpreted this process as a

development that contributed to the economic and cultural progress of the region [5, p. 84]. Research conducted during the years of independence has demonstrated the limitations of such interpretations and has paid greater attention to the negative consequences of colonial rule. In general, the scholarly literature produced during the Soviet period constitutes an important foundation for the study of the history of the Kokand Khanate. Through these works, numerous historical sources were introduced into academic circulation, and various aspects of the Khanate's history were investigated in considerable depth. Nevertheless, since most of these studies were produced under significant ideological influence, their conclusions require critical evaluation. From this perspective, Soviet historiography represents a complex historical legacy that embodies both substantial scholarly achievements and notable methodological limitations in the study of the Kokand Khanate.

3. Methodology

This study employs several widely used methods in historical research, including the principles of historicism, objectivity, comparative analysis, and source criticism, to examine the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources. These methodological approaches made it possible to investigate the research topic comprehensively and to evaluate existing scholarly interpretations objectively.

First, the principle of historicism was applied to analyze Soviet-era studies on the Kokand Khanate within the context of the period in which they were produced, taking into account the prevailing political environment and ideological conditions. This approach facilitated the identification of the factors that influenced the formation of the ideas and conclusions presented in historical works [18, p. 24].

Source criticism constituted one of the principal methods of the research. Through this approach, monographs, scholarly articles, archival documents, and historical collections published during the Soviet period were systematically examined. Particular attention was paid to the circumstances under which these sources were produced, the scholarly approaches of their authors, and the reliability of the historical information they contained [19, p. 57]. In addition, the comparative-historical method was used to compare interpretations found in Soviet historiography with those developed in studies published during the period of Uzbekistan's independence. This comparison made it possible to identify similarities and differences in the evaluation of the history of the Kokand Khanate and to determine the extent to which ideological influences shaped historical interpretations [20, p. 91]. The principle of objectivity also played a significant role in the research process. Using this method, both the achievements and limitations of Soviet-era scholarship were evaluated in a balanced and comprehensive manner rather than from a one-sided perspective. Historical events and processes were assessed according to the standards and requirements of contemporary historiography [21, p. 36]. Thus, the application

of the principles of historicism, source criticism, comparative-historical analysis, and objectivity enabled a systematic and in-depth examination of the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources and provided a sound basis for drawing scientifically grounded conclusions. This study employs several widely used methods in historical research, including the principles of historicism, objectivity, comparative analysis, and source criticism, to examine the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources. These methodological approaches made it possible to investigate the research topic comprehensively and to evaluate existing scholarly interpretations objectively.

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4. Results

The findings of the study indicate that the investigation of the history of the Kokand Khanate during the Soviet period was characterized by both the advancement of scholarly research and the influence of ideological constraints. During this period, numerous archival documents, statistical materials, and historical sources related to the Kokand Khanate were

introduced into academic circulation. This development provided historians with greater opportunities to examine the political, economic, and social aspects of the Khanate in a more systematic manner.

One of the significant achievements of Soviet historiography was the scholarly examination of the administrative system and governmental structure of the Kokand Khanate. Research conducted during this period provided detailed information regarding the territorial division of the Khanate into administrative units, as well as the functions of key officials such as the Khan, Mingbashi, Qushbegi, and other administrative representatives [6, p. 54]. These findings later became important reference materials for subsequent generations of historians.

Soviet scholars also devoted considerable attention to the economic life of the Kokand Khanate. Their studies highlighted the development of irrigated agriculture in the Fergana Valley, the cultivation of cotton, grain, and horticultural products, and the expansion of handicrafts and domestic trade networks [7, p. 92]. Furthermore, historical research demonstrated that by the mid-nineteenth century the Kokand Khanate had become one of the major commercial centers of Central Asia, maintaining active economic relations with Bukhara, Khiva, Kashgar, and the Russian Empire [8, p. 117]. These findings continue to hold substantial scholarly value. However, the analysis also reveals several limitations within Soviet-era sources. Most notably, Marxist-Leninist methodology dominated historical interpretation, leading scholars to explain historical developments primarily through the framework of class struggle. Consequently, the rulers and administrative institutions of the Kokand Khanate were frequently portrayed as components of a "feudal system of exploitation" [9, p. 68]. Such interpretations limited the objective assessment of the Khanate's state-building traditions and political legacy. The results further demonstrate that the cultural and intellectual life of the Kokand Khanate received insufficient attention in Soviet historiography. In reality, numerous madrasas, mosques, and centers of learning operated within the Khanate during the nineteenth century, contributing to the development of history, literature, and religious scholarship. Although some studies mentioned these aspects, their broader historical significance was not examined in sufficient depth [10, p. 143]. The issue of the Russian Empire's conquest of the Kokand Khanate was likewise interpreted in a predominantly one-sided manner. Many Soviet historians presented the conquest as a process that contributed to the economic and cultural development of the region [11, p. 205]. In contrast, research conducted during the independence period has emphasized that the conquest led to the dismantling of indigenous state institutions, the subordination of local economic resources to imperial interests, and the restriction of certain national traditions and values [12, p. 88]. The findings also confirm that the factual materials collected by Soviet historians continue to retain their scholarly significance. Studies based on archival documents, statistical records, and historical sources remain an important foundation for

contemporary research on the history of the Kokand Khanate [13, p. 36]. At the same time, there is a clear need to reassess these materials through the lens of modern historiographical approaches and methodologies. Overall, the results demonstrate that the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources was a complex and often contradictory process. On the one hand, a substantial body of historical information was collected, organized, and introduced into academic discourse. On the other hand, ideological restrictions frequently resulted in one-sided interpretations of historical events and personalities. Therefore, while Soviet-era sources remain indispensable for the study of the Kokand Khanate, their use requires careful critical analysis in order to achieve a more balanced and objective understanding of the past.

5. Discussion

The analysis of the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources demonstrates that the historiography of this period embodied both significant scholarly achievements and substantial ideological limitations. Research conducted during the Soviet era contributed to the introduction of a considerable amount of information concerning the political structure, economic life, administrative system, and foreign relations of the Kokand Khanate into academic discourse. As a result, an important source base was established for the further study of the Khanate's history [14, p. 41]. At the same time, the predominance of Marxist-Leninist methodology is clearly evident in Soviet historiography. Historical events and social processes within the Kokand Khanate were generally interpreted through the framework of class struggle, while the state's traditions of governance and its contribution to national development received comparatively limited attention [15, p. 73]. This methodological approach often resulted in one-sided interpretations of historical realities and restricted a more comprehensive understanding of the Khanate's historical significance. The findings of the discussion further indicate that when utilizing Soviet-era sources, it is essential to distinguish between factual information and the ideological perspectives of the authors. Although many studies were based on reliable historical evidence and archival materials, the conclusions drawn from these sources were frequently influenced by the political and ideological requirements of the period [16, p. 129]. This tendency is particularly evident in interpretations of the Russian Empire's conquest of the Kokand Khanate, which were often presented from perspectives consistent with official Soviet historical narratives.

Consequently, Soviet-era sources concerning the history of the Kokand Khanate remain an important scholarly legacy for contemporary historiography. However, their effective use requires reassessment through modern methodological approaches, objective evaluation of historical events, and comparison with newly available sources and research findings. Such efforts remain among the most important tasks

for historians seeking to develop a more balanced and comprehensive understanding of the history of the Kokand Khanate [17, p. 58].

6. Conclusions and suggestions

The study of the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources demonstrates that the historiography of this period was both complex and multifaceted. Scholarly research conducted during the Soviet era contributed significantly to the introduction of numerous historical sources, archival documents, and statistical materials into academic circulation. As a result, substantial information regarding the political system, administrative structure, economic life, social relations, and foreign affairs of the Kokand Khanate was collected, analyzed, and systematized.

The findings indicate that one of the major achievements of Soviet historiography was its extensive work in collecting, describing, and scientifically examining historical sources. In particular, the publication and incorporation of numerous documents related to the history of the Kokand Khanate established an important scholarly foundation for subsequent research. Even today, these materials remain valuable sources for the study of the Khanate's history. At the same time, the predominance of ideological approaches within Soviet scholarship negatively affected the comprehensive and objective interpretation of historical events and processes. The Kokand Khanate was frequently portrayed as a feudal and reactionary state, while its traditions of statehood, political experience, and cultural heritage were often not adequately evaluated. Likewise, the conquest of the Kokand Khanate by the Russian Empire was generally interpreted from the perspective of imperial interests, whereas the negative consequences of colonial rule were often overlooked or insufficiently addressed. The analysis further demonstrates that Soviet-era sources should be approached with careful distinction between their factual information and the ideological viewpoints of their authors. Although these sources provide a rich body of historical data, their conclusions do not always fully reflect historical reality. In conclusion, the representation of the history of the Kokand Khanate in Soviet-era sources was shaped by the interaction of both scholarly and ideological factors. These sources remain highly important for historical research; however, their use requires critical analysis, comparative evaluation, and reliance on the principles of modern historiography. Such an approach will contribute to a more objective, accurate, and comprehensive understanding of the history of the Kokand Khanate.

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