

THE IMPACT OF THE COLONIAL POLICY OF TSARIST RUSSIA ON LAND AND WATER RELATIONS OF THE PEOPLES OF TURKESTAN

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Abstract: This article shows the negative consequences of the colonial policy of Tsarist Russia on the fate of the peoples of Turkestan, and in particular, the issues of its impact on land-water relations are scientifically analyzed.

Keywords: Tsarist Russia, land-water, economic life, taxes, social life, colonialism, cotton, state treasury, Turkestan, migration.

The occupation of the Turkestan region by Tsarist Russia in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century had a dramatic impact not only on political and economic life, but also on the land and water relations of the local peoples. The main goal of colonial policy was to use the natural resources and economic potential of the region in the interests of the Russian Empire. In particular, the policy of making the local population economically dependent through control of land and water resources was implemented. Since Turkestan was a region based on irrigated agriculture, the issue of land and water played an important role in the life of the people. The tsarist administration tried to strengthen its rule by changing this system. As a result, the traditional land ownership system was disrupted, many fertile lands were given to Russian settlers, and the interests of the local population in the distribution of water were limited.

Based on the long-term goal, Russia pursued the following policy in land and water relations in Turkestan:

1. All lands in the country were declared state property. The settled local population was given collective use for an unlimited period of time.
2. In settled areas, land was assigned to those who actually use it. According to this regulation, the judicial authorities were instructed not to rely on the documents of land ownership issued by the judges - certificates - when resolving controversial issues related to land and water, but rather to act based on who actually uses the land. The lands that landowners had leased to peasants before the conquest of Central Asia by Russia were now transferred to tenants for hereditary use. The reason for such "sparsity" of tsarism in the land and water sector was, firstly, the fact that in the early years of Russia there was no need for the necessary land fund for resettlement needs, and secondly, the neutralization of the broad masses of working people in the struggle with the local nobility, which was its rival in this area.
3. In most cases, endowments were left in their previous form, but in some cases it was determined that endowment lands could be taken over by the state.
4. Formerly privileged private property lands were taxed, among others. They were no longer called private property, but state lands, and it was announced that they would be transferred to the peasants for hereditary ownership and use.
5. The allocation of land to the Russian population outside the city was also prohibited.
6. The purchase of land belonging to the local population by Europeans, in particular Russians, was absolutely prohibited. This ban remained in force until the end of the 90s.

The 1886 "Regulations" did not provide a clear definition of whether the local population was the legal owner of the land or not, while the local population's ownership was defined as

“customary”, and did not include a clear definition of whether it was the legal owner or not. Russian laws formalized the rights of the khanates in relation to the tsarist era, but they attached the lands of the majority of the indigenous population to them as personal property. A study of documents on land ownership during the tsarist period of 1867-1916 showed that two different points of view prevailed among Russian officials on the issue of land ownership in Turkestan. First, the landowners who assimilated Turkestan as a Russian colony (in the position of working Russian serfs), that is, the Russian nobles wanted to reduce the Turkestan peasants to the position of the Russian serfs who worked as state peasants, that is, as peasants without rights, until the reform of 1861. Second, the Russian bourgeoisie wanted to declare the Turkestan peasants free landowners, to allow them to use their land as private property, and thus open the way for capitalist relations in the Turkestan agriculture.

The conflict of interests of these two powerful classes was reflected in the laws drawn up and introduced by Russian officials. In the laws issued for Russian Turkestan, Russian colonial slavery was cunningly disguised, and their articles were even more absurd and unstable than each other. In fact, the Russian nobility and the bourgeoisie were unanimous in the oppression and plunder of Turkestan. But there were strong differences in its ways, forms and methods.

The real secret adviser to the emperor, Girs, who conducted an inspection of the country in 1882-1884, expressed the interests of the Russian bourgeoisie in his report and the draft law submitted to the tsar. He advocated that the peasants of Turkestan, being full owners of their lands, should have the conditions for growing raw materials for the imperial industry. In the draft law prepared by Girs, he emphasized that all lands and pastures should be “attached to each of them separately and as complete private property, according to the existing custom” to the peasants and villagers.

In his report summarizing the results of his investigation, Privy Councilor Girs wrote about land and water relations: “Each village in Turkestan is divided into plots, the owners of which, by custom and inheritance or by documents, used it as full masters. Since the people are satisfied with this form of land ownership, this form should be preserved and confirmed by law.

However, the noble landowners, contrary to the opinion of the bourgeoisie, wanted to plunder the lands of Turkestan. This reduced the sources of raw materials for the Russian bourgeoisie and, as a result, limited the scope of the market for Russian goods. The contradiction in the opinions of the nobles and the bourgeoisie found expression within the ruling classes of St. Petersburg, who also invented contradictory provisions in their legal projects. Tsarist Russia tried to bring these two poles closer together and reconcile them. However, the imperial government often The State Council and the Committee of Ministers sided with the nobles.

The tsarist government introduced “circular responsibility” in collecting taxes by assigning the lands of the settled population of the Turkestan region to rural communities and villages. In this case, the tax unit was not a single farmstead, as before, but an entire village or community. Russian officials legalized this custom, knowing that for the poor, their rich relatives or fellow villagers would pay their taxes. Often, the tax collectors themselves paid the taxes of the poor, and then collected them with an excess. Senator Count K.K. Palen, a representative of the St. Petersburg nobility, who inspected the Turkestan region in 1908-1910, expressed his opinion about this custom as follows: “Russian administrative bodies prefer to deal not with the entire population, but with its manaps, sultans and rich people, They are the ones who are able to ensure the smooth running of life and the implementation of government orders.”[3]

At a meeting of district heads (1998), a representative of Kattakurgan expressed how people behaved in collecting taxes: “Taxes fall more on the poor, and less on the rich.”[4]

Such a policy of tsarism hindered the development of local agriculture on a capitalist basis. The procedures that allowed the preservation of old relations, on the other hand, led to widespread usury in the villages of the country and stifled the development of agriculture.

The term "empty state lands", mentioned in the "Nizom" of 1886, which became law in Turkestan, became a lever for the Russians to seize the lands of local peasants.

A sharp turn in the policy of Russification of Turkestan began in 1892. In the same year, it was introduced that thousands of "aliens" who had moved from Russia on their own initiative could enjoy the same rights as those who had arrived under administrative control.

About the crucial role of Turkestan cotton for the textile industry, one of the tsar's ministers, Krivoshin, in his report to the emperor, succinctly stated: "Every pood of Turkestan grain is competitive with Russian and Siberian grain. Turkestan cotton is competitive with American cotton. Therefore, grain must be brought to the country, even if it costs the country dearly." [5]

The idea of establishing a cotton monopoly was supported by the Governor-General of Turkestan, who believed that this measure would allow the government to save 70 million gold rubles a year. In his opinion, "the fact that a multi-million-dollar homeland plays the role of a guarantor protecting the cotton fiber processing industry from ruin is a great economic service that Turkestan provides to Russia."

In order to establish a cotton monopoly, Turkestan cotton sent to Russia was completely exempt from customs duties. Since 1879, the customs duty has been set at 40-50 kopecks per pound of cotton. The Ministry of Finance actively supported the efforts of the Russian bourgeoisie to develop cotton growing in Turkestan. At the request of the center of the Sultanate, in 1905, the "Emigration Department" was established within the Ministry of Agriculture and State Property. In Turkestan, in 1906, the "Syr Darya Emigration District" was established, and the systematic arrangement of local lands for Russian peasants took on a systematic character. If the colonial administration in Turkestan had previously acted independently in this area, now the seizure of local lands was carried out systematically, directly controlled by the center. As a result, by the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Russian emigrants exceeded 175 thousand. Russian colonists, who constituted only 5 percent of the population of Turkestan, were given 60 percent of the fertile land for cultivation. [6]

The colonial policy of Tsarist Russia in Turkestan radically changed the land-water relations of the local peoples. As a result of the agrarian policy aimed at the interests of the empire, the traditional land tenure system was disrupted, irrigation systems began to serve the colonial economy, and the economic situation of the local population worsened. In particular, the forced expansion of cotton cultivation turned Turkestan into a raw material base for Russian industry. This policy had a long-term negative impact on the socio-economic development of the country and created the basis for the formation of the spirit of struggle against colonialism among the masses.

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