

The Historical Science Of Karakalpakstan: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

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Abstract

The article deals with the development of the historical science of Karakalpakstan at the turn of two centuries. Tribute is paid to the efforts of national and foreign historians to study the history of the province. Two stages in the historical science of Karakalpakstan are stated in the 1950s-1990s and the period of independence. The state of historical science at the present stage is analyzed and the crucial problems of national historiography are identified.

Keywords: *historical science, Karakalpakstan, the concepts of historians, influence of ideology and politics, ethnogenesis, statehood, training of personnel, achievements of historians, search of study, current problems.*

Introduction

The need for an objective view of the history of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan during the period of independence is becoming more and more pressing for all people. At a turning point, history should best fulfil its primary function - the role of the social memory of society.

A large collective of historians, philologists, lawyers, medical doctors, economists of the Republic of Karakalpakstan under the guidance of academician S.K.Kamalov developed in 1997-2000 «New History of Karakalpakstan», where the third section was devoted to the period of independence [1].

Literature Review

It is noteworthy that in preparation of the third section «New History of Karakalpakstan» both scientists academicians S.K.Kamalov, J.Bazarbaev, T.Ishenov, Professor B.Shamambetov, A.Kurbanyazov, N.Aimbetov, B.Bazarbaev, and scientists of middle generation T.Madreimov, Mr. Sagyndykov, J.Aitmurov and R.Bazarbaev took part. Therefore, conservatism, skepticism and common sense of elder generation, the presentism of the younger generation helped to create such a capital work on history and pointed out current problems of studying the recent history of Karakalpakstan.

Results and Discussions

The book highlighted many conceptual issues of the new history of Karakalpakstan. A deep historical analysis of the key problems of the country's history of the second half of the 19th century – beginning of the 21st century was made. This helped to reconcile the initial ideas and methodological positions, to demonstrate a virtuous mastery of historiographic concepts and factual material, to assess the quality and depth of understanding of domestic history at the stage of the proclamation of the sovereignty of the republic.

The publication of the book by Academician S.K.Kamalov [2] shows that the origin of the Karakalpak ethnic group and the establishment of its statehood are clearly among the fundamental problems of paramount importance. At present, the latest research of national historians makes it possible to deepen in chronological terms of the roots of this process. It should be firmly understood that if the history of Karakalpakstan is not to be a clump of unsolvable contradictions, it is necessary to investigate its main

problems with the above-mentioned factor in mind. Inclusion in Turkic history should be the main priority in all crucial issues.

In 1995-2012, the Specialized Council for the Defence of Candidate's Dissertations at the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography of the Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan functioned. Fifty-five Candidate's Dissertations were defended, of which 15 Candidate's Dissertations contain actual data on recent history. Young scholars attempted to compare Soviet history and the period of independence.

Thus, the efforts of a large group of historians began the study of the recent history of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Within the framework of official historiography, new facts were accumulated, the complexes of current archival documents were introduced, original ideas were expressed, non-traditional approaches were identified, and ancillary historical disciplines were developed.

The years of independence and sovereignty have brought about a surge in genuine popular interest in their history. Taking into account the true value of each period of national history, it can be stated that a powerful stream of interest is concentrated in a period of new history. The phenomenon of the people's consciousness keeps in memory the names and events of precisely this epoch, on which large masses of well-preserved and still waiting for their researchers archival materials placed in archives of Karakalpakstan, near and far abroad [3].

One of the less studied problems of the recent history of Karakalpakstan is political history. A full-scale study of this kind is hardly possible without studying the memoirs of the statesmen of Karakalpakstan of the last decades of the 20th century [4]. Only then, it might be possible to understand and explain the case, actions and thoughts of the people of their time, when they had to live and act. The emergence and evolution of the modern elite of the State are among the problems that have not been learned. It can be stated that in the historical science of Karakalpakstan there are no traditions or skills of studying it.

The recent history of Karakalpakstan is a tangle of complex problems, each of which requires its own theoretical and methodological thinking, adequate solution of a number of source-oriented questions [5].

The problems of the history of the economy of Karakalpakstan during the period of independence are very acute. Most young historians, unfortunately, do not know the categories and methods of economic analysis and cannot appreciate the quality of the economic indicators contained in the sources.

The problems of creating a true scientific social history of Karakalpakstan during the period of independence are no less actual. Today, new groups with special status and interests are constantly emerging in society.

The importance of the study of recent history lies in the fact that it seeks to reflect on events that have a direct impact on modern life. At the present stage of development of historiography, modern history acts as a scientific discipline. The concept and features of modern history are being developed: content, distinctive features and basic approaches.

The study of the recent history of the Republic of Karakalpakstan was initiated with the efforts of a large group of historians. Within the framework of official historiography, new facts were accumulated, the complexes of current archival documents were introduced, original ideas were expressed, non-traditional approaches were identified, and ancillary historical disciplines were developed.

Negative consequences of the Soviet society, the lack of pluralism of opinions and wide international scientific contacts, long years made it difficult for the historians of Karakalpakstan to apply for the materials of foreign authors. The negative consequences of ignoring the achievements of foreign historiography continue to hinder progress in this field.

At the present stage, historians of the new era have a rich field of activity to reveal and highlight the most diverse manifestations of our society. Therefore, it is on the agenda to continue active efforts to search for, identify and introduce new scientific data relating to the history of Karakalpakstan.

While most of the materials of the works of foreign authors are unique in their content and have no analogies. Many of the foreign scientists view Karakalpakstan from the perspective of the development of the entire Central Asian region.

Account of the achievements of foreign science in the history of Karakalpakstan not only gives an opportunity to rethink many traditional plots, but also allows to see new horizons in the researches of the historical journey, made by the peoples of Karakalpakstan.

The study of the history of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan is an important component of the foreign school of humanities and social sciences. At the end of the twentieth century, a system of post-Soviet studies

with certain traditions, theoretical concepts and methodological approaches emerged in Western States. The countries with the highest priority were those defined as Anglo-American society, i.e. the four largest English-speaking States in Australia, Great Britain and Canada (English-speaking) and the United States, which are usually considered in the categories of comparative sociology as types of the same society and different versions of the same culture.

Foreign scientific publications are now an integral part of world historiography, and many of the works of leading Anglo-American scholars are considered classical. The published monographs, scientific journals, conferences and symposia are the real result of the activities of the scientific community, based on strong traditions and a solid institutional base. An important part of this system is the academic level, and the activities of scientific organizations, universities and centres that are aimed at promoting research of Uzbekistan and preparing scientific publications and practical recommendations for government authorities.

The famous researcher, Professor of History of Carlton College in Minnesota, Adib Khalid (Khalid Adeeb) made a great contribution to the study of the modern history of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan.

In the book "Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR", Adib Khalid chronicles the turbulent history of Central Asia during the Russian Revolution. A difficult period - wars, economic collapse, famine - have transformed local societies and brought new groups to authority in the region, and the new revolutionary state has begun to create new institutions. It was a time of hope and ambition, when local players seized the opportunity provided by the revolution to change their societies. As the revolution was closely intertwined with the aspirations of the people, and as the dreams of the intellectuals of Central Asia took on new dimensions, national republics began to be created in the region, among which Uzbekistan acquired the greatest importance.

Adib Khalid addresses a central question in his book - what is Uzbekistan? Where did it come from? A century ago, the map of Central Asia looked quite different, the emergence of new national governments was not supposed. So, when in the "cold war" era, researchers began to look for an explanation of how the Central Asian republics were formed, it became popular to claim that their emergence was the result of Stalin's arbitrary policy of "divide and conquer". The division of the region along ethnic lines and the arbitrary delimitation were, thus, in the view of the majority, aimed at strengthening the ethnic characteristics of each Republic and at pre-empting the emergence of a strong, united ideology (e.g., Panturkism, Pan Islamism) of a region capable of challenging Soviet power [6].

Adib Khalid argues that such claims focus too much on Soviet national politics and take little account of the role of local, indigenous actors - primarily the pre-revolutionary Muslim intelligentsia (so-called Jadids). The borders of modern Uzbekistan were not drawn by Soviet ethnographers, but by Muslim intellectuals, who came up with the idea of a nation and this idea was entrenched some time before the revolution. If, prior to 1917, they (first and foremost, the representatives of the settled population of Central Asia) identified themselves as "Muslims of Turkestan", then in 1917 there was a real explosion of ethnic consciousness and the rise of Turkism. Now the intelligentsia imagined itself as "Turks of Turkestan", proudly discovering its Turkic roots for themselves. At the same time, the rise of Turkism does not mean the development of "Panturkism": brotherhood with other Turks was recognized, but no political union with them was envisaged - only the imaginary community. Turkism allowed Muslims in Central Asia to enter the world as Turks.

The main feature of the latest British historiography is that, like American, German and generally Western historiography, was the study of Central Asia from the standpoint of its geopolitical situation. As a rule, these works hardly include the historical context; in some of them there is internal political analysis, but in general they consider the position of the new independent states among the main external players of the new edition «Big game», the interests of these Powers and the main foreign policy problems. Such publications include «Central Asia: a new crisis arc» by W.Akiner (1993), «New geopolitics in Central Asia and neighbouring countries» edited by A.Banoizizi and M.Uiner (1994), «Formation of new states in Central Asia» by R.Dannroyter (1994), «Political reforms and economic development in Kazakhstan» by A.Dixon (1994), «Changing face of Central Asia: between Marx and Muhammad» by D.Hirow (1994), «Caspian oil pipelines» by J.Roberts (1996) and others [7].

Foreign researchers note with surprise that the population of the Republic of Karakalpakstan regularly visits the holy sites of "Kara-Kum ishan", "Ishan kala", "Sultan-Uveis", "Tohmah-ata". "Shili - Shaykh", "Nazlym khan Sulyyu", "Bagdat", "Aimbet ishan", "Karaojdin bes ishana" and others. [8].

Foreign researchers seem to overlook a very important feature of the people of Central Asia: religious tolerance, the absence of religious fanaticism. None of the ethnographic sources describe such fanaticism. Modern history also confirms this. In Central Asia, where representatives of different religions live, there has never been a religious issue as a cause for conflict. Hence, it is clear why the people of Central Asia had an easy access to world religions. First, they were perceived as developed and religious consciousness. Secondly, there has always been a belief that no religion can defeat the national mentality. Etiquette involves religious consciousness in its sphere of influence, without questioning the authority of religion or the significance of religious rites, but rather acting in harmony with the feelings and sentiments of believers. In the consciousness of the basic mass of the people of Central Asia it is a way of life in the world, granted to the people by the Supreme Will [9].

The Republic of Karakalpakstan has all the characteristics that characterize a subject of a complex state. United with Uzbekistan, it did not disappear in it, but formed an alliance with it as an equal sovereign state. The union is voluntary and not violent [10].

Foreign historians claim that the ethnic-territorial division of Soviet Central Asia was carried out without taking into account the detailed, in-depth study of the past history and ethnography of the people of the region, their compact settlement in the cities and flat territories of Central Asia, comparatively accurate statistics on the number of people living in the country and historical data on their origin and settlement in the region. The disengagement carried out in the 1920s and 1930s and subsequent administrative decisions on the development of the frontier territories have left many points of contradiction that now threaten to degenerate into violent conflicts [11].

Studies of Central Asia, Uzbekistan, and Karakalpakstan in the United States are related to the name Martha Brill Olcott. M. Olcott studied in the United States, France and the Soviet Union and was one of the most talented students of the largest French counsellor A. Bennigsen. Olcott cooperates with the Carnegie Foundation and focuses on Islam in Central Asia. In 2002, her new book was published: «Kazakhstan - an unfinished road», dedicated mostly to independent Kazakhstan [12]. Martha Brill Olcott notes that global climate change and anthropogenic (human, economic, or more accurately mismanagement) activities have jointly caused a number of environmental disasters on a planetary scale. These include the destruction of the Aral Sea, the dehydration and land desertification of its basin.

The tragedy of Aral, the negative consequences of its withering and the search for ways to stabilize the environmental situation in the region became the focus of attention of the international conference in Stockholm [13].

Foreign researchers have determined that at present still does not answer why Aral died. A number of natural and man-made causes caused the disaster. However, two reasons are clearly identified: the first is global change; the second is over-regulation of the runoff in the upper reaches of the Amu Darya, Syr Darya and other rivers of the region; and the excessive disassembly of water for irrigation of cotton, vegetables, orchards and vineyards and other crops [14].

Studies of foreign scientific works have shown that the Aral Sea has undergone significant transformations over the past 50 years. The area of its water table has decreased more than 7 times - from 65 to 9,000 km². The water level in the sea has fallen unbelievably - by 26 m. The banks of the reservoir has receded by 100-120 km. The mineralization of water has increased from 10 to 120 g/l and in the eastern part to 280 g/l. If space images of 1964 show a large body of water, the shape of which is closer to a circle with a diameter of about 250 km, then in 2009 the Aral Sea no longer exists. Instead of the sea, there are 30-40 km narrow waterbodies, which resembles the riverbed of the river.

At the bottom of the former sea there were salt fields, which wind carries by sand. During hurricanes, the salt-sand mixture is lifted into the atmosphere and dispersed around a radius of 500 kilometres or more, polluting the air and planting fertile land. Scientists report that Aral dust has already been detected in the Arctic.

The disappearing sea has caused the aridization of the climate of the Aral Sea region, which is already characterized by excessive heat loads. In the region, the maximum temperature of the air increased by 1-1,5°C, the number of days with a temperature of 40°C increased by 10-12 days, and the temperature of 49°C is recorded.

It is clear that under these circumstances fish have disappeared from the sea. There used to be 20 species of fish and 30,000 tons of fish. Today in the town of Muynak of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, where in the 1980s a large canned fish combine worked, the inhabitants lost their jobs and the factory buildings are being destroyed.

In the Aral Sea region, the environment, flora and fauna, the health and gene pool of the population of the region are threatened now. The Asian cheetah, the Turan tiger, the Ustyurt ram, the Turkmen fist disappeared. The long-holed urchin, the gazelle, Turkmen carakal, yellow heron, pink and curly pelicans, gray varan, other species, some of which are listed in the "Red Book" are endangered. Even Saigas - these horned men of the age of mammoths, the number of which used to reached a peak of 1 million, have now become rare [15].

In fact, at the bottom of the former Aral Sea there a desert, which the foreign countries have already begun to call Aralkum, in the manner of Kizilkum, Karakum, was formed,. The Aral desert area reached 5 million hectares. Truly, the planetary scale of the disaster.

The beautifully illustrated large-format book by David and Sue Richardson introduces the art of Karakalpak people to an English-speaking audience [16]. The book is illustrated by photographs taken by authors, added by a large number of images extracted from the archives of the museums of Karakalpakstan and Russia, which have never been published before.

The English people, David and Sue Richardson, spent fourteen years studying the history and the culture of the Karakalpak people, and wrote numerous articles and lectured extensively on the subject. «The luxurious new book about Karakalpak people, the first comprehensive description of Karakalpak people and their extraordinary folk art published in English ever» - so characterized the release of the book by David and Sue Richardson in the foreign press. [27]

Nick Fielding, a journalist and author, studying the Middle East and Central Asia, a collector of Kyrgyz art, (Oxfordshire) noted that "this book will be standard work on Karakalpaks and is unlikely to be replaced. It is also a model, with which this kind of book should be written. Even if you have no interest in the art itself, you go out and look at yourself. You will hardly ever find the best book on art».

Susan F.Meller, a collector of Central Asian art (New York) emphasized that "the Richardsons wrote an arbitrary, scientific paper and passed on their obvious passion for the subject. The publisher, Prestel, published a very beautiful, high-quality book that will complement the reader's library".

Catherine Mortensen, art critic (Calgary) wrote, "I am absolutely thrilled to have this book in my hands. I would recommend this book to any people of interest with costumes, jewels and housing and ethnography of the Karakalpaks».

Sharon Landal, an art historian (Langley, Seattle), praised the Richardsons as doing a great service in producing their magnificent encyclopedic work on the Karakalpaks and their lives. The combination of the details about the history of this group, about old photographs from the Soviet archives and new photographs, about interviews by the authors themselves during their production practices makes this book exciting to anyone who is interested in any aspect of the life and history of the country of Karakalpakstan. This is the first and only book in English, and it will quickly become an original reference book on this ethnic group for both scientists and textile enthusiasts everywhere».

Foreign scientists, who are familiar with S.P.Tolstov's books, believe that Karakalpakstan is also an archaeological reserve in the open air. A unique tourist product has been created here by fate: the synthesis of ancient culture - more than 300 buildings and fortresses, as well as the ecological crisis created by the will of man, the cemetery of ships and the famous statue of fisherman attract not less tourists than their famous tourist statues "colleagues" in Samarkand and Bukhara [17].

The states of Central Asia are connected in the chain of the global tourist route "Silk Road", which includes at least 20 countries, from Japan to Europe. In this chain, Uzbekistan, a country of azure domes, has an important place. All over the world there are famous beautiful ancient cities of Uzbekistan - Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva - open-air museum city.

Ayazkala, Guldursun, Toprak-kala, Mizdahkan, Chilpak - this is a non-exhaustive list of magnificent, historical and cultural monuments in their original form, capable of impressing the imagination of many travelers.

The head of a tourist group from Japan, Yoheio Saban, visited Karakalpakstan and enthusiastically said: "In Japan we read a lot about the Great Silk Road, its main cities, which shook us. And what we saw in Karakalpakstan - its museums, historical places - is so extraordinary!" [18].

In the development of tourist routes to historical monuments, the value of the object in the number of world cultural monuments is of great importance. For example, among the monuments of the antiquity of Toprakkala, there is a rightful place of honour. This object, like Koisylgang-kala, is included in the UNESCO list. In the 2nd-4th centuries AD, Toprakkala was the residence of the Khorezm rulers. This village has received international recognition thanks to the discovery of the remarkable palace buildings

here: «halls» of kings, «dark-skinned warriors», «dancing masks», «victories». Frescoes, clay sculptures, applied art - thanks to researchers, these elements of the past have become accessible to all.

The unique archaeological architectural object of the republic is the ancient medieval complex Mizdahkan, located three kilometers from the city of Khodzheili. Mizdahkan, the third largest city in medieval Khorezm, was the center of 12,000 feudal castles. Among the necropolis of different ages there are masterpieces of eastern architecture - semi-underground mausoleum of Nazlymkhan-sulu, madrasa of Khalifa Erezepa, mausoleum of Shamun nabi, hill of Jumart Kassab.

The rich remains of the artefacts - fabrics with gold threads, with images of birds, coral beads, shells of kaura from the Indian Ocean, fragments of Chinese selodone utensils, coins and other things speak about Mizdahkan's trade connections on the Silk Road.

A kind of sensation nowadays, the phenomena of archaeology have become well-organized caravan service networks found on the Ustyurt plateau on the Great Silk Road. The caravanserai, wells and other structures are preserved in the vast expanse of sandy and plaster desert. The beautiful monuments of history - the mausoleum of Daukeschen, the caravanserai of Beleuli, the hilltop of Korgansha - are a source of pride and admiration. The waterworks, which were ancient methods of irrigating land using atmospheric moisture, attest to the high capacity of the peoples who once inhabited Ustyurt.

The motorway through Karakalpakstan has already become an inseparable link of transcontinental tourist routes along the Great Silk Road. Several foreign groups on cars and motorcycles have been on this track for the last two to three years. The scientists of Karakalpakstan, together with the professor from UNESCO Australian Guy Peterbridge, worked on the idea of creating an ethnographic park where the now-extinct crafts would be revived. Such ethnographic parks, according to the idea of scientists, will make it possible to establish a living settlement of people's masters who manufacture carpets, jewellery and wooden products. Of course, this picture is possible with the widespread development of international tourism [19].

Many, who know the culture and history of Karakalpakstan and its unique ancient monuments, wonder how underdeveloped our tourist business is, as we know, giving other countries a large inflow of foreign exchange and improving the country's foreign policy image. Together with the mass media, academic historians and museum workers of Karakalpakstan, a large project for the development of tourism in our region has been developed. Nukus is geographically advantageous, it connects the historical sites of the south with the north of the republic, corresponding to natural resources, has economic potential, diverse ethno-social composition, and cultural objects. Moreover, for convenience of reception in the south-west of the capital, a modern car camp has been built. Every day in this campsite, which is situated along the Great Silk Road, automobile tourists from Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan and the Baltic countries take a holiday [20], [25].

As foreign scholars have suggested, for the prospective development of ethnoparks in ancient Karakalpak cities with a rich historical past, it is possible to break up small exotic settlements of 5-10 yurt, with service personnel in national clothes, workshops of unique Karakalpak crafts. Foreign partners including lovers of exotics from Japan, who are engaged in the monuments of Muslim history, which have preserved the pristine layer were interested in us. [21], [26].

According to the experts, the project for the development of international tourism envisages a number of stages that will allow the city to enter the system of world tourist routes. One of them is air services, which must meet international requirements. Under special contracts, we intend to draw the attention of foreign partners to the establishment of a tourism zone and the development of joint international programmes for its effective exploitation. The Khodzheili-Kungrad route is under registration.

Conclusion. It is a shame that the ancient Karakalpak land, which is rich in historical monuments, beautiful museums, has not yet become a center of international tourism. The popularity of the Karakalpakstan Museum of Art might be called, without exaggeration, global.

The Republic of Karakalpakstan is of particular interest for the development of ecotourism. Despite the fact that this is a very complicated region due to the ecological problem of the Aral Sea, many tourists want to see the «cemetery of ships» first-hand, the coast of the drying Aral Sea. Of course, it is not possible to organize mass tours to the Aral Sea, but still part of the obtained revenues can be transferred in order to improve the standard of living of the population of adjacent territories, to install filters for water purification [22], [24].

Environmental awareness in Central Asia is an actual issue at the present stage of development. Awareness is the main element in solving environmental problems [23].

The magnitude and historical significance of the events that have taken place in our country over the past quarter century require systematic reflection.

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