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SCIENTIFIC, THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH OF KHOREZM-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE SOVIET ERA (XIX CENTURY AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE XX CENTURY)

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to studying the scientific-theoretical and methodological aspects of bilateral relations during the historical period from the early 19th century to the first quarter of the 20th century between the Khiva Khanate and the Russian Empire (1806-1917), the Provisional Government (March-October 1917), the Soviet state (1917-1920), and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (1920-1924) in the historiography of the Soviet period. The author attempts to illuminate the scientific-theoretical and methodological aspects of studies conducted during the Soviet era on international relations and foreign policy, based on the "class" approach and commissioned historical research.

Keywords Khanate of Khiva, Russian Empire, Soviet state, "class approach", "commissioned history", October Revolution, "people's democratic revolution", "world revolution", theoretical views, methodology, diplomatic relations.

INTRODUCTION

The essence, objectives, and consequences of relationships among the world's nations have always been directly linked to the position, military potential, geostrategic goals, and foreign policy actions of powerful states across different eras. History shows that the competition and struggles among major powers for regional and global dominance have served as significant factors in international relations. The main task of

this article is to evaluate the scientific-theoretical and methodological aspects of the bilateral relations between the Khanate of Khiva and the Russian Empire (1806-1917), the Provisional Government (March-October 1917), the Soviet state (1917-1920), and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the Soviet Union (USSR) (1920-1924) during the

historical period from the early 19th century to the first quarter of the 20th century in Soviet historiography. Furthermore, it is evident that Soviet-era studies have predominantly featured a "class approach," "ideological viewpoint," and the principles of "commissioned history" in interpreting the content, nature, and outcomes of these bilateral relations.

METHODS

The research object is the study of the scientific-theoretical and methodological aspects of bilateral relations between the Khanate of Khiva and the Russian Empire (1806-1917), the Provisional Government (March-October 1917), the Soviet state (1917-1920), and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (1920-1924) during the historical period from the early 19th century to the first quarter of the 20th century in the historiography of the Soviet period. The research utilized scientific-analytical, theoretical-comparative, historical-chronological analysis, systematic analysis, comparison, and generalization methods. In previous studies, historical data were merely reported without any analysis.

RESULTS

This article for the first time attempts to analyze the scientific-theoretical and methodological approaches in Soviet historiography regarding the bilateral relations between the Khanate of Khiva and the Russian Empire (1806-1917), the Provisional Government (March-October 1917), the Soviet state (1917-1920), and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (1920-1924) during the historical period from the early 19th century to the first quarter of the 20th century. It has been revealed that these bilateral

relations were not conducted on the basis of existing norms, but rather from the perspective of the "world revolution" theory, which the Bolsheviks adopted as the foundation for their foreign policy and international relations.

DISCUSSION

Since ancient times, the peoples of the world have established economic, political, cultural, and diplomatic relations. As states formed and developed, their mutual relationships accordingly grew. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the competition and struggles among powerful world empires for dominance at regional and global levels also served as important factors in international relations. In this regard, the Central Asian region, including the Khanate of Khiva, became a competitive arena for empires such as China, Great Britain, and Russia. Russia's active foreign policy in the region was a decisive factor in determining the fate of the Turkestan khanates. Therefore, examining the scientific-theoretical and methodological aspects of the Khanate of Khiva's relations with the Russian Empire, the Provisional Government, and the Soviet state, as well as the relations of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic—established in place of the Khanate of Khiva—with the Soviet state, has been one of the important tasks of the historiography of science. The approach to the problem in Soviet-era research significantly differs from the perspectives of researchers from the Russian Empire era, international scholars, and those from the period of Uzbekistan's independence. The main reason for this difference is that the Soviet state's political system and social structure were ideologically based on a "class approach," and historical processes were written on a "commissioned" basis.

This perspective was clearly evident in the foreign policy of the Soviet state towards the peoples of Central Asia throughout the 20th century. It is particularly noteworthy that from the early years

of the Soviet state's formation, a strategy was adopted to condemn the colonial system of the Russian Empire and the Provisional Government during the period of the Khanate of Khiva, aiming to gain the trust of "Eastern people", including the people of Turkestan. The fundamental nature of the discriminatory policies and inequalities in the relations between the Russian Empire and the Khanate of Khiva were exposed in the works of Bolshevik leaders V. I. Lenin (1) and I. V. Stalin (2), in the documents of the Soviet government and the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (3), and in the writings of certain Soviet state figures.

On November 3, 1917, the Soviet government issued the "Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia." This document established the equality and independence of the peoples of Russia, affirming their right to freely determine their own destinies, even to the extent of forming independent states (4, 41). On December 3 of the same year, a proclamation signed by Soviet leaders Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin, titled "Address to All the Workers Muslims of Russia and the East" (3), was announced. It stated that the old world was being devoured and a new society of equal rights aiming for the interests of all workers around the world—socialism—was being built: "...Under the blows of the Russian Revolution, the old edifice of slavery and captivity is being destroyed. The world of arbitrariness and oppression is living its last days. A new world—a world of workers and free people—is emerging... From now on, your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are declared free and inviolable. Arrange your national life freely and without any obstruction. You have the right to do so. Know that your rights, like the rights of all peoples in Russia, are protected by the full power of the revolution and its organs - the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies" (3). The address also officially announced the nullification of secret and unequal treaties based

on colonialism that had been signed between the Russian Empire and the peoples of the East, including the Khanate of Khiva (3).

In Soviet-era research, the regime established by the Russian Empire in Turkestan was emphasized as a "colonial order based on oppression and despotism" (5,152), and the policies of inequality and discrimination conducted against "the colonial peoples and oppressed nations of the East" were sharply criticized (6,3). In the history of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) — AUCP(b), it is definitively stated that the Russian Empire acted as a "prison of nations... the executioner and punisher of non-Russian peoples" (7,6). In contrast, the Soviet authority, unlike the Russian Empire, "brought freedom and liberty to the peoples of Turkestan and Khorezm" (3), "the chains of national oppression were broken due to the October Revolution, ending conflicts among the peoples of Russia and establishing true brotherhood and friendship" (8,296). Soviet-era research predominates with the perspective that promotes the monumental achievements accomplished under the leadership of the "great Russian" people. This narrative prominently features the notion that the Bolsheviks and the Soviet state had "forever" rescued the rights-deprived and oppressed peoples of Central Asia from the tyrannical khanates and the imperialistic noose of Tsarist Russia. This idea forms the foundation of the works of researchers in this field.

In 1917 and the subsequent years, the historical events that took place were portrayed as if they were the "revolution" of the Eastern peoples, particularly the working people of Khorezm, in their path to "freely build" their future. The deployment of Soviet troops into the Khanate of Khiva was described as "international, selfless assistance, a legitimate continuation of the October Revolution" (9). The overthrow of the Khanate of Khiva was characterized as a revolution that was

the "legitimate outcome of historical development," and this event was evaluated as "an integral part of the global proletarian revolution," a "people's democratic revolution," and "the expression of the age-old hopes and dreams of the workers" (10, 3).

The idea that "the victory of the Soviet revolution in Khiva is the logical continuation and direct result of the Great October Socialist Revolution" was invented to widely disseminate the ruling communist ideology among the public (11,3). In the context of a totalitarian system, strict regulations, ideological doctrines, and rigorous censorship demands were the primary factors ensuring the solid entrenchment of such fabrications in the discipline of history. The relations between Khiva and Russia were depicted from this perspective, claiming that bilateral relations were based on completely new views never seen before in human history, such as principles of "friendship," "selflessness," and "voluntariness," which were in fact founded on false theories (10,119).

According to Soviet researcher G. Nepesov, "The communists of Khorezm understood that in a small, backward agrarian country like Khorezm, it was impossible to build socialism in a free, independent republic without the fraternal assistance of the Soviet peoples... As a result of the October Revolution, the workers of the Khanate of Khiva were completely freed from colonial oppression" (12, 72).

Another researcher, H. Sh. Inoyatov, described the overthrow of the Khanate of Khiva and the establishment of Soviet power in Khorezm as follows: "...In response to numerous requests from the people of Khiva, the Soviet government provided friendly assistance to the people of Khiva. For the purpose of establishing freedom and liberty, units of the Red Army were deployed into the territory of the Khanate of Khiva. Khorezm was

the first to establish an independent people's Soviet republic in the East. This was carried out based on the will and desire of the people of Khorezm" (9,336, 337). These fabricated statements were used to justify the Red Army's aggressive policies in the Khanate of Khiva.

The mutual relations between the RSFSR and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) have been generally regarded in all Soviet-era research as follows: "The victory of revolutions in Khorezm and Bukhara and the establishment of the people's Soviet republics, their very close friendly relations with the RSFSR, and the selfless assistance of the Russian and other peoples of Soviet Russia led these peoples towards the development of socialism and their flourishing" (13,122). This overarching idea has been universally accepted as a common view in the research of the Soviet period. The researcher from Moscow, P. V. Volobuev, supports the aforementioned views by stating: "The main objective of our research is to demonstrate how the peoples of Bukhara and Khorezm have stepped onto the broad path of development, transforming from backward feudal khanates that were once colonies of Russia into flourishing socialist republics under the leadership of the Communist Party, in a short historical period" (13,122).

U. Tokhtakhanov, who studied the relations between the Khanate of Khiva, the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR), and Soviet Russia, also agrees with these views, arriving at the unscientific conclusion that "the victory of the people's revolution in Khorezm and its development along the path of socialism was a brilliant realization of Lenin's ideas about how backward colonial countries could bypass capitalism and move directly to socialism" (14,5).

I. V. Stalin, a leader among the Bolsheviks, articulated this idea more clearly, stating: "...It becomes evident that the Turkestan region is the

most important area for carrying out the revolution in the East. Present-day Turkestan is the weakest point of Soviet power. Our main task is to transform the Turkestan region into a bastion of the revolution in the East" (2,115). According to Stalin, the establishment of Soviet power in the Turkestan region and the formation of the new state organized by the local peoples—the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR)—was supposed to serve as a model for the Eastern countries that had chosen the path of building a new socialist society, and as a pathway for the "world revolution" (2,115).

However, it soon became evident that the promises of freedom and independence for the peoples and nations of the East made by the Soviet authorities were merely empty rhetoric. D. Madaminova, who has thoroughly studied the history of the formation of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR) and the social, economic, and political processes in the country, supports this view, stating: "The RSFSR did not recognize the independence and inviolability of the Khorezm Republic's rights, constantly interfered in the young republic's internal affairs, maintained a large contingent of Red Army forces in the territory of Khorezm, and through these military forces attempted to control the country" (15,31), thus proving that the bilateral relations between the RSFSR and Khorezm were conducted from a perspective of coercion and imperialist dominance. These researchers further confirmed the views expressed by the Jadid leaders of Khorezm, who were at the forefront of the struggle for independence and formation of the KPSR, that the relations between Soviet Russia and the peoples of the East, including Khorezm, involved subjugating the minority populations, forcibly imposing alien ideas and ideologies, and crudely interfering in their internal affairs.

Thus, the relations between countries, peoples,

and states have always been directly linked to the position, military capability, geostrategic goals, and foreign policy actions of powerful states throughout various eras. In this context, the struggle for dominance in world politics, competition, and economic interests have also served as important factors. From the Middle Ages to the present day, great powers, the empires they have established, alliances of states united by strategic goals, and other global forces have defined and continue to define the spirit of international relations and the fundamental principles of world politics.

CONCLUSION

In the 18th and 19th centuries and the early 20th century, the analysis of relations between the Russian Empire and the Khanate of Khiva, and later between the Soviet state that succeeded the empire with the Khanate of Khiva and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR), demonstrates the validity of these theoretical-methodological perspectives. During this period, Western countries and the Russian Empire, which considered themselves the "civilized world," justified their imperialist policies with the false pretenses of bringing "enlightenment" and "civilization" to the "ignorant," "savage" peoples of Asia. The Soviet state, despite promising the peoples of Turkestan, including those of Khorezm, the right to determine their own destinies, live according to their own religions and values, and build their own states, and despite pledging to treat smaller nations with "equality," in practice continued a new form of colonialism and imperialism. The Bolsheviks, grounding their international relations and foreign policy in the theory of the "World Proletariat Revolution," proceeded to overthrow the Khanate of Khiva using military force and coercively "Sovietize" the KPSR established by the Jadids. As a result of the national-territorial delimitation carried out in

Central Asia in 1924/1925, the region's last ancient states were abolished. The peoples of Turkestan, including Uzbekistan, became entirely dependent territories under the Soviets

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