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**BOLSHEVIKS AND RUSSIAN TURKESTAN  
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN 1917-1918**

The documents of 1920s still represent a huge amount of the valuable historical information on extremely significant problems that is waiting new fundamental studies. The period of the 1917 includes not only two Russian revolutions and explosion of the national liberation movement on the territory of the former tsarist empire that pursues academic interest towards issues still acute for the historians. How these historical events affected the international situation for the Turkestan region? What countries were mainly interested in the victory of Moslem political movements? Who supported financially these Moslem organizations? What factors promoted success of Tashkent Soviet to spread its authority up to Baku territories? A comparison of the native Soviet and post-Soviet works with archival documents from Britain's Foreign Office (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain), journal articles had published in 1917-1918 can alter the vision of the geopolitical outcomes of «Great Game» had played by different foreign actors in the region of Turkestan.

**Key words:** Bolsheviks, Moslem autonomy, revolution, federative republic, pan-Turanism.

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**1917–1918 жылдардағы  
Түркістанның саяси дамуы және большевиктер**

1920 жылдар тарих әлеміндегі толық зерттелмеген мәселелердің ірі тақырыптарын қамтиды. 1917 жылғы оқиға екі ресейлік төңкерісті ғана қамтып қойған жоқ, бұрынғы патшалық империяның территориясындағы болып өткен оқиғаларға қатысты кейбір сұрақтар әлі де ғалымдарды қызықтырып отыр. Олардың қатарында: Бұл оқиғалар Түркістанның халықаралық жағдайына қалай әсер етті? Мұсылман саяси қоғамдарына қандай мемлекеттердің қызығушылығы болды? Қаржылық қолдауды кім қолдады? Ташкент қаласындағы Кеңестер бүкіл Түркістанды қалай өз бақылауларында ұстады және Баку аймағына қалай көмек берді? Форин Офис (МИД Великобритания) мұрағатындағы отандық кеңестік және пост-кеңестік еңбектер, 1917-1918 жылдары шыққан журнал мақалалары деректері осы оқиғаларды геосаяси ракурста қарастыруға, 1917-1918 жылдары Түркістан өңірінде жүрген «Үлкен саяси ойын» туралы ой қозғауға мүмкіндік береді.

**Түйін сөздер:** большевиктер, мұсылмандық автономия, революция, федеративтік республика, пан-туранизм.

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**Большевики и политическое развитие русского Туркестана  
в 1917–1918 годы**

1920-е годы все еще представляют огромный пласт неисследованных проблем для исторического сообщества. События 1917 года, которые включали не только две российские

революции и взрыв национальных движений на территории бывшей царской империи, вновь подводят нас к вопросам, до сих пор вызывающим интерес. Каким образом эти события отразились на международной ситуации вокруг Туркестана? Какие страны были заинтересованы в победе мусульманских политических организаций? Кто их поддерживал финансово? Каким образом Советы в Ташкенте оказались в состоянии взять под контроль весь Туркестан и протянуть помощь до территории Баку? Сравнение отечественных советских и постсоветских трудов с архивными данными Форин Офис (МИД Великобритании), журнальными статьями, изданными в период 1917-1918 годов, позволяет представить эти события в геополитическом ракурсе, который заставляет задуматься, о какой «Большой игре» в пределах Туркестана шла речь в 1917-1918 годах.

**Ключевые слова:** большевики, мусульманская автономия, революция, федеративная республика, пан-туранизм.

## Introduction

The victory of the Bolsheviks in October 1917 seemed to have minor effects on the further course of the political events and geopolitical shifts in region of Russian Central Asia. However, the subsequent events had demonstrated the wrongness of the Western political analysts who predicted quick fall of the regime due to absence of resources and support of the population. This article suggests a vision of following political events in the perspectives of international situation. First, what political forces collaborated with Bolsheviks in Central Asia to gain and to keep political control? What role was played by Tashkent Soviet in the course of collaboration or alienation of Moslem population in the region? The interests of what countries were touched by the Bolshevik regime victory in Russian Turkestan? In previous Soviet historiography was widely spread the opinion that Tashkent Soviet which operated as quite independent political body during this period was insisting on the right for political self-determination for Moslem population of the region (Khodjanov, 1928). Khodjanov quoted the leader of Turkestan Bolsheviks I. Tobolin that «autonomy will immediately led to the ...evacuation of Russian troops from the region» though they anyway agreed that Moslems should independently chose their political future (Khodjanov, 1928: 14). Such authors as M. Chokay, G. Safarov and others tried to diversify the vision of the consequences of Bolshevik victory in October 1917 (Chokay, 1986). Unfortunately, they focused mainly on political issues and its negative impact on national development of the region and widening the gap between local population and Russian citizens. However, the documents found by the author in Foreign Office archive contained important information about close collaboration between Tashkent Soviet and local moderate Moslems during 1917-1918 events. Thus, the destiny of Kokand Autonomy and, consequently, political events

in Bukhara and Khiva were more complex that it is shown in some of the modern post-soviet historiography with accent on national movement (Kozybayev, 2000; Omarbekov, 2001). In order to answer these questions the author tries to use different historical methods, comparing economic and political development and tendencies in Russian Turkestan region. Also the combination of the local and foreign documents provided a wider historical background to represent geopolitical perspectives upon the possible scenarios of different political forces victory in Russian Turkestan region.

## To the history of Russian occupation

Russian Central Asia was incorporated in Russian empire between the years 1863 and 1885, and then was divided between two systems of administration: a) the Governor-General of Turkestan, consisted of Trans-Caspian, Samarkand, Syr-Darya, Fergana, and Semirechier provinces that were administrated as integral part of empire. The second part b) were autonomous Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara which were in a treaty relations with the suzerain power and administrated their own affairs (subject to the control of a Russian resident at each court and of the government in St. Petersburg), though they had no independence in questions of railways, tariffs, or foreign policy. (Tsarskaya kolonizatsiya v Kazakhstane, 1995).

In 1911 the population of both areas together was about 8,500,000-6,500,000 in the Russian provinces and about 2,000,000 in the autonomous khanates. Around 3,000,000 of the Russian Turkestan inhabitants were nomads and semi-nomads, mainly Kyrgyz in the north and Turkmen in the south-west, 5,000,000 represented settled Moslem peasants and townspeople and Russian population reached 500,000. Less than a million of the settled Moslems were Iranians, kinsmen of Persian and Afghans, the rest were Turkic – speaking strata, de-

posited by successful invasions. The Islamic civilization of all these settled elements was deep-rooted though had got a strong local character, especially during the three centuries preceding Russian conquest. The Russian colonists (who had come to the country at the end of XIX-early XX c.c.) were mainly concentrated in Semirechier province where the Russian government had founded a Cossack community and realized a policy of systematic agricultural colonization – and in the city of Tashkent (234,000 inhabitants in 1911). Tashkent, the administrative center of Turkestan Governor-General as well as the province of Syr-Darya was the most important urban center where the Russian colonists experienced the same social and political influences as the citizens of other large Russian towns. The special conditions at Tashkent had significant effects on the course of events in Central Asia since the outbreak of the February revolution. For the Russian atmosphere Tashkent was exceptionally important place all over Turkestan due to minor effects of other Russian centers along Trans-Caspian railway (FO 141/781).

When the revolution broke out, the Russian conquest though recent, had already revolutionized economic conditions not only in the center of Russian colonization, but also in the whole region by creating security and modern means of communication. Central Asia was linked with the rest of Russia by two great railways- Andijan-Tashkent-Orenburg-Samara line leading to Moscow and Andijan-Samarkand-Bokhara-Merv-Ashkabad-Krasnovods or Trans-Caspian railway connected with the railways of Trans-Caucasia (Istoriya Kazakhstana I Tsentralnoi Azii, 2001).

The eastern destination of both railways was Fergana, a small but densely populated province occupied mainly by Moslem farmers and some nomads and Russian settlers. Fergana valley is a center of cotton and after the building of the railway the demands of Moscow manufactures led to a rapid extension of the area under cotton cultivation at the expense of cereals. Thus, this region came to depend largely for its food supply upon grain imported by rail from European Russia in exchange for its cotton annually exported in the opposite direction.

The economic relations with the rest of Russia had thus become extremely close; but, on the other hand the political jealousy and protectionist policy of Russian government tended to isolate Central Asia from Persia, Afghanistan, India, and Sing-Xian (the western province of Chinese empire, where the people, as in Russian Central Asia, are mainly Turkic-speaking Moslems).

Northwards, Central Asia was conterminous with the Russian steppe provinces where the government had carrying out an immense scheme of agricultural colonization since the 1880s. This colonization was at the expense of the Kazakh nomads, and created dangerous friction with them. A zone occupied by Kazakh nomads remained between Turkestan and the colonized area – around 2,500,000 Kazakhs in northern part and the same number in southern territories. Semirechier was the only province of Turkestan affected by the colonization problem, but here the friction between settlers and natives was serious.

### **The rebellion of 1916**

Central Asia was greatly affected by the outbreak of war, for both natives and Russian settlers were exempted (from motives of fear and favor respectively) from compulsory military service. Even the intervention of Turkey seems to have produced no political reaction there (owing no doubt, to isolation of Central Asia from other Moslem countries); but the drain of rolling stock to the European front early created difficulties in the food supply, and the refugees deposited without preparation in Tashkent and elsewhere spread disease. Yet on the whole Central Asia remained quite till the Decree of the 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1916, by which all populations of the Russian empire previously exempt from military service were suddenly called up for non-combatant service behind the front.

In the area in process of colonization this decree seems finally to have exasperated the Kazakhs to the point of rebellion, and led to clashes between Kazakhs and local colonists and Cossacks, supported by the Russian regular troops. Dwellings were destroyed, cattle seized, and men, women and children driven into the hills, where they died of hunger and exposure. Around 500,000 Kazakhs were perished and 1,000,000 became refugees to cross the Chinese borders thus nearly third of Kazakh nation swept away. The land thus vacated was occupied by Russian settlers and later it became an object of discussion between local people and central government (Price, 1917)

The decree also produced disturbances among agricultural population of Turkestan due to decree's promulgation when the cotton season was at its height, and mobilized threatened the peasants with ruin. The drafting of the people gave the Russian officials occasion for bribe-taking and blackmail; and these various causes of discontent produced and outbreak in Jizak, on the railway north-east of Samarkand, which was punished by massacre of the

inhabitants and the burning of the town. There were also massacres at Andijan and Tashkent; and though in the settled districts the disorder seems to have quieted down before the revolution began in Kazakh populated provinces and especially in Semirechier.

### **From the February to October revolutions 1917**

In spite of the rebellions of 1916, the revolution in Central Asia did not start as a racial conflict between natives and Russians. It was simply a response to the events happened in Petrograd and began by following the same course as there. But its settling was different in the different administrative areas.

#### *Russian provinces*

In Turkestan as in European Russia, there was a dual development from the first, Soviets, representing the Russian urban population and the military garrison, were formed both for the city of Tashkent and for the province of Syr-Darya. And these took the initiative against the governor-general Kuropatkin, who had been responsible by the savage treatment of the unrest during the 1916. Kuropatkin and his staff were deposed (like the Grand Duke Nicolas and his staff in the Caucasus); Tashkent Soviets petitioned the Provisional government at Petrograd to rescind the non-combatant service decree, and proposed that, when the next cotton season was over, military service on the normal basis should be introduced in Turkestan for Russians and Moslems alike. The government responded by rescinding the decree, proclaiming an amnesty, and sending home the Turkestan Moslems who had already been called up (Safarov, 1985).

The administration of Turkestan, however, was committed by the Provisional government, not to the Soviets, but to an Administrative Committee of Duma-members or ex-members. There was a Russian chairman and eight other members, four of whom were Moslems, namely: Tynyshbayev, Bukeikhanov (Kazakhs), S.N. Maksudov, and Major-General Davletshin (Tatar). The Moslems also began to form non-official party organizations.

The appointment of provisional administration was followed, as at Petrograd, by a steady encroachment on its powers from the side of Soviets, at the time of the first reconstruction of the government in Petrograd, Tashkent and Syr-Darya Soviets started to force the Turkestan Administrative Committee to retire. But it seemed to have survived in some form till Kornilov's coup in September, when the Tashkent Soviets arrested the Administrative Commit-

tee of Turkestan and constituted itself a permanent committee of public safety.

The Soviets, representing as they did soldiers and urban workers, were naturally composed entirely of Russian, and the Moslems counted their rise to power by strengthening their own organizations. In the municipal elections, which took place in August, they had a sweeping victory, capturing 77 out of 109 seats at Tashkent, 80 out of 102 in Kokand, and 77 out of 97 at Andijan. A month later there was a congress of Moslem workers at Kokand, which declared for the transformation of Russian into a federal republic, in which Turkestan should enjoy complete autonomy in the settlement of the land question. This congress was probably responsible for the deputation of Turkestan Moslems which shortly afterwards waited on Kerensky at Petrograd to complain of the application to Turkestan of the embargo on the conveyance of landed property – a measure introduced all over Russia as a preliminary to the transfer of land from *private* ownership to *state*. Kerensky at once removed the embargo, and informed the deputation that the solution applied to the land question in European Russia would not be extended to their provinces (Ryskulov, 1964).

In September there was also all-Turkestan Moslem Congress at Tashkent which delegated executive power to a Moslem Regional Council (already in existence). The latter held a joint setting on the 26<sup>th</sup> September with the Turkestan (and Syr-Darya Soviets) – which had remained Mensheviks, while the Tashkent Soviets had been captured by Bolshevik elements – and the executive committees of the Councils of peasants and Kazakhs. This convention passed a resolution denying the authority of any administration which had not received its sanction, and it was probably this that brought the outbreak of the Bolshevik Tashkent Soviet to a head.

This first Bolshevik outbreak in Central Asia began with a mass-meeting at Tashkent, in which both the Administrative Committee of Duma members and the Menshevik Soviet of Turkestan were denounced. The military governor, who appealed the Russian solidarity against the danger of a Moslem rising, had to fly for his life. The Administrative Committee and the Turkestan Soviet were arrested by the Tashkent Soviet, which was supported by two Russian regiments in garrison; while, on the other hand, the cadets of the military school arrested the revolutionary committee, seized the citadel, and were backed by a general emeute of the Moslem population. The provisional government at Petrograd, which was enjoying its brief respite between Kornilov's failure and Lenin's success, telegraphed

an ultimatum to the Tashkent Soviet, and appointed the commander of the troops in the Kazan district to be Commissary-General of Turkestan, with orders to suppress the outbreak by force. At the same time, in order to make sure of the Moslem sympathy, a decree was promulgated at Petrograd introducing the zemstvo system into the provinces of Trans-Caspian, Samarkand, Syr-Darya, and Fergana – a measure which would give the Moslems a share in local government, while Soviet-rule would mean the perpetuation of Russian ascendancy behind a new façade. This was about the beginning of October, and the Provisional Government at Petrograd appeared to have fallen before the military intervention in Turkestan could be carried into effect. The Tashkent Soviet protested against the threatened «punitive expedition» by declaring general strike (Osipov, 1991).

#### *Semirechier*

The repeal of the tsar's decree of the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 1916, and the amnesty of those who had resisted the application of it, which were among the earliest acts of the Provisional Government at Petrograd after the first revolution in March 1917, seemed to have quieted the unrest in Turkestan as a whole, but not in the province of Semirechier. Here the grievance of compulsory service was reinforced by the much more serious grievance of the expropriation of the natives by Russian colonists that had been in progress for nearly twenty years. Resistance of the local people had precipitated ethnic conflict and after the massacre or expulsion of the greater part of Kazakh population, the Cossacks and the Russian colonists had become de facto possessors of the land.

Early in the summer of 1917 Taranchi and Dungans of the Semirechier province addressed the protest on the land question to the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Moslem Council at Petrograd (instituted at the Moscow All-Russian Moslem Congress in May 1917) and about the same time the Petrograd Soviet issued a proclamation to the Kazakhs, condemning the colonization policy of the empire but urging them to wait for redress until the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. Meanwhile, the Provisional Government voted 11,000,000 rubles for relief, but on the 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1917, the appeal (from Kazakh sources) was published in the social revolutionary journal «Dyelo Naroda», which stated that no steps to alleviate the situation had yet been taken. The latter appeal was confirmed by in the article of Philip Price published by «Manchester Guardian», November 27, 1917. English journalist reported that Kazakh

refugees in China had attempted to return, but that the colonists and Cossacks would not restore their land, and that the situation was beyond the Provisional Government's control. There is no evidence during the present year of any approach towards a settlement, though in February 1918 it was reported that two Russian delegates, appointed by the Petrograd Provisional Government before its fall, had arrived at Aksu (Xinjian, China) to treat with the Kazakh refugees from Russian Turkestan.

#### *Khiva*

When the March revolution broke out at Petrograd the Khan of Khiva was taking a cure in the Crimea. He at once telegraphed expression of loyalty to the Provisional Government, and returned to Khiva where a popular movement quickly forced him to grant a constitution and to dismiss and punish his former ministers. The new Khivan parliament (Mejlis) asked the All-Russian Moslem Council at Petrograd for advisers to assist in reconstruction, and two, namely, M.M. Achmatovitch and Mus Bigeyev were sent.

The Khiva revolution was supported by the Yomud Turkmen, who had taken part in the rising of 1916, and had been chastised by a Russian punitive expedition. Their support took the form of plundering towns and destroying Russian property, and in August it was reported that the Russian authorities were taken military action against them. This seemed to have strengthened the anti-Russian mood as opposed to the revolutionary element in the Knivan movement. Discontent at the increase in power of the local Soviets during the months preceding the fall of the Provisional Government was influencing the Moslems in the Russian provinces in the same direction. For instance, Kniva subject Junaid Khan, who had been a leader in the 1916 rising, was organizing a movement for the complete independence of Moslem Central Asia, seizing Russian munitions while promoting Turkish propaganda. With this object he is said to have visited Baku and Tiflis at the beginning of October, when the fighting between Tashkent Soviet and its Moslem and bourgeois opponents was taking place. Later nothing new was heard about this person. Khiva during 1917 played subordinated part in the course of the revolution in Central Asia due to small population comparative backwardness.

#### *Bukhara*

Bukhara, on the other hand< with its fertile oases, comparatively large population, and position existence of railway between Tashkent and Trans-Caspian, has been a focus of extremist and separatist tendencies.

Khan of Bukhara also protested his loyalty to Russia after revolution, and granted a constitution on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1917. Unfortunately, next day the Moslem clergy realized a counter-revolution led by reactionary officials and merchants. Some of the «Young Bukharians» were lynched by the mob. The counter-revolution seemed to have been favored by Khan, and by the Russian representative M. Miller, an official of the tsar regime who had not yet been removed. The Young Bukharian Executive Committee thereafter appealed to the Revolutionary Committee in Samarkand (in Russian territory), so Russian troops entered Bukhara and restored the constitution. Miller and his assistant Shulgin and Kamar-ad-din, the leader of the reactionary mullahs, were deported, Khan's prime-minister was imprisoned and another person appointed and new resident was sent by Russian Provisional Government.

This resident as was reported by German source adopted a policy of non-intervention into internal affairs of Bukhara and declared that the Khanate was «a British as well as Russian sphere of influence» – a phrase that German propaganda used for its benefit. Thus the Bukharian reactionaries were suppressed by force, but they still were the strongest party in the Khanate. They didn't forget Samarkand and other territories which Bukhara had to cede to Russia in 1864; and if the movement for a reactionary, fanatical, independent, and united Moslem prevailed Bukhara would be a center of this political turmoil.

### **To the Bolshevik Victory 1917**

At the end of September 1917 Tashkent Soviets assisted by German prisoners of war and Moslems along with moderate Russians resumed their struggle. The Soviet with the support of Russian Harrison seemed quickly to gain control over situation in the city where it dissolved the existing workmen and soldiers organizations and formed a new body of purely Bolshevik representatives. However, their power didn't extend for a long period. The Orenburg Cossacks cut Tashkent-Moscow railway in order to isolate Tashkent from European Russia (where Lenin led Bolshevik government was by this time in power) and to deprive it of food supplies. This measure immediately threatened to starve the whole population of Central Asia. The Semirechier province refused to recognize Tashkent Soviet authority while the professional unions of Samarkand at their meeting hold on 14<sup>th</sup> of December decided not to send delegates to Tashkent. Turkestan Moslem Congress assembled at Kokand on December 11<sup>th</sup> in

Fergana region decided to proclaim the autonomy of Turkestan as part of Russian Federation, subject to be confirmed by the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. A special representative council and appointee of the Provisional Government had to carry out on the local administration until meeting of Constituent Assembly to start talks with Trans-Caspian and Cossacks.

The Moslem Congress that was a coalition of Moslem Regional Council, a body of Cadet organized by more educated and well-to-do Turkestan Moslems at the beginning of revolution, and the Moslem federalists, a smaller party which had been in favor of autonomy. The Moslem thus presented comparatively united front, and they had support of bourgeois and Menshevik Russians. The new Provisional Government was composed of six Moslems and a Jewish Minister of Finance but in new representative council the Moslems reserved only 36 out of 54 seats leaving the other third to the Russian representatives. In fact, the Provisional Government at Kokand represented the same combination of moderate elements at the old Administrative Committee of Duma members at Tashkent, with that significant change that the preponderance had passed from the Russians to Moslems and that the policy had been definitely decided in favor of decentralization.

The Government of seven and Council of fifty six occupied office in Kokand on 23<sup>d</sup> of December and autonomy of Turkestan was proclaimed formally on this date. Semirechier, Trans-Caspian, and the two khanates were not included into proclamation as well as Bukhara and Afghan participants,

The Tashkent Soviet declared on 26<sup>th</sup> of December a state of siege. For a moment they had the prospect of support from the small Moslem «Ulema» party, the body in Russian provinces corresponding to reactionaries in Bukhara. The «Ulema» might have been influenced by the extraordinary wireless appeal to Moslem sentiments launched by Lenin on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Moslems had a congress in Tashkent in the middle of December under the patronage of Soviets. But they were involved in conflicts with «Ulema» party from one side and Soviet and Moslem supporters from another. In January 1918 the Moslem clergy of Fergana published a manifest denouncing all Russian as infidels and tyrants, and calling on all Moslems to establish an independent federation 'with a national anthem of their own».

This point is reconciliation between the Moslem liberals and reactionaries in opposition to Russian Bolshevik Soviet in Tashkent, leading to a more uncompromising policy on the part of the Moslem

bloc as whole. It was reported in January that the general impression among the Fergana Moslems was that the federation would be with Turkey rather than with Russia, and that the Turkish propagandists had appeared in Kokand and well received. On the other hand it was known that there were no signs of Pan-Turanism in Fergana, instead the order was well maintained and food supply process was improving. The authority was functioning quietly under auspice of Provisional Government, by old Russian officials. Prisoners of war, mostly Austrians, were allowed personal liberty but had to answer roll-calls to be under control. There were still a moderate number of Russian troops in the province who were also under control and were in fact involuntary prisoners, but were free to take service with Kokand government. There was yet no Moslem army.

Thus, from December to February Fergana (the most important cotton crop owing province of Russian Central Asia) was actually governed by a representative of moderate Moslem organization in harmony with Russian moderates. However, the continuation of regime depended on whether the local Russian soldiers would support or would follow the example of their comrades in Tashkent.

#### *Bolshevik Victory in Kokand (February 1918)*

The Provisional Government in Kokand failed to prevent Bolshevik propaganda, and on February 12<sup>th</sup> Bolshevik coup was carried out. Supporters of the Bolsheviks cut the telephone and telegraph wires and damaged the railway which led to Kokand isolation from the rest of the province. They also attacked though unsuccessfully the citadel and local Soviet. The next day the Red Guards appeared to join Kokand Armenians and Russian reservists, later was arrested the president of provisional Government. As a result a Military Revolutionary Committee was set up. Next days a street fight between Red Guards and Provisional Government supporters continued. On 18<sup>th</sup> February Bolshevik reinforcements arrived under command of military commissary of the Tashkent Soviet. There were two more days of desperate fighting but by February 20<sup>th</sup> it was over. Red Guards were the masters of Kokand. Supporters of the Provisional Government were executed and deported in large numbers. The «rebellion» of the Provisional Government was declared an end and amnesty was suggested on condition of complete submission, surrender of the leaders and delivery of arms. The deaths in Kokand during this struggle were estimated from 3,000 to 5,000 and the material damage at 300,000,000 rubles. Thousands of people were made homeless, and great stores of cotton were burnt (Novaya Zhizn, March 27, 1918).

The overthrow of Moslem government in Fergana seemed to infuriate reactionary clergy in Bukhara and at the beginning of March and the struggle between them and «Young Bukharians» was broke out. The latter's position at power was restored by Russian troops in April 1917. «Young Bukharians» appealed to the revolutionary elements in the Russian province, represented by Bolsheviks while the «Old Bukharians» also gained support of ex-officers in Russian garrisons in all Central Asia. The Tashkent Soviet was thus involved into Bukhara's civil war the more as it was interrupting traffic along the Trans-Caspian railway, on which (and water route by the Caspian and the Volga) the Central Asian Bolsheviks were entirely dependent for communication with the central Bolshevik government in European part of Russia. Consequently a well-equipped Bolshevik expeditionary force (infantry, cavalry, artillery, railway battalion) was sent to help «Young Bukharians» to defeat later in two bloody battles the «Old Bukharians».

Baku was at that time in hands of Trans-Caucasian Tatars who had formed a National Council after Bolshevik revolution in November (Petrograd). They were closely cooperating with Georgians and Armenians in Trans-Caucasian Commissariat and Diet. But Turkic people though a majority were the only part in multinational environment – Russian, Armenians and others. The Armenians were at odds with Turkic people and this made them open to Bolshevik ideas. Accordingly arrival of small Bolshevik forces in gun-boats from Central Asia with some contingent, probably from Astrakhan, was enough to cause an outbreak in the city and after a week of bloody struggle the local nationalists were beaten and Baku remained in hands of Bolsheviks.

Thus, by the middle of April the Tashkent Soviet had beaten down all resistance in the vast region depending on the Trans-Caspian Railway, from Fergana to Baku. In May a Soviet Congress held in Tashkent declared Russian Turkestan a Soviet republic, delegated the government to a Council of People's Commissaries, and sent a mission to Moscow to delimit frontiers.

### **Conclusion**

The fall of the provisional Government in Central Asia and victory of the Bolshevik regime significantly affected the situation from the international point of view. A moderate Moslem administration on good terms with moderate local Russian people aiming to make Turkestan

and autonomous State in a democratic Russian federation would be a better neighbor to Asian states such as Afghanistan and China. Unfortunately, sack of moderate Moslem in Kokand meant a victory of proletariat in Tashkent which caused the fierce reaction of Moslem believers, led by Ulema in Bukhara directed against all European influence in Central Asia. The last step means that whole Turkestan started its movement towards foundation of the independent Moslem khanate in alliance with other Moslem powers. Interestingly enough we see some evidences from the side of local citizens that German propaganda had become extremely active in these provinces as well as the idea of desirability of the alliance between Bukhara and Ottoman Empire. The documents contained information that German and Austrian prisoners of war were fighting on the side of Bolsheviks especially in Bukhara campaign. Around 30,000 Austrians and 8,000 Germans as was reported participated in the Bolshevik military campaigns though these figures look as exaggerated.

The chief menace of the situation was orientation of the Central Asian Moslems towards Turkey and Germany, which was encouraged by the events, followed Bolsheviks' victory. Tashkent Soviet was able to establish its complete power though the whole country was suffering of starvation and slaughter. Moreover, Afghanistan had been quite active to receive positively an envoy of Bukhara Amir thus to prove partly rumors that Khans of Khiva and Bukhara had accepted proposal from Turkey that they should join Pan-Turanian Federation. This was opposite to the situation a year earlier when Khan of Khiva had appealed to the All-Russian Moslem Council at Petrograd. Unfortunately, the dissolution of the Council by Bolshevik Government was announced on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1918. Since then there were

no official body to settle issues between European and Central Asian parts of Russia.

At the end of 1918 Sadri Maksudov, the president of the Representative Council in Fergana, arrived to Istanbul. He had started his trip before the Bolshevik victory in October 1917 and his task was to thank Turkey for the building of five medreses in Turkestan, for which the Ottoman Parliament had voted funds. Maksudov took the occasion to make a speech attacking the Russians and prophesying the glorious future for Turkestan «with the help of our brothers in Constantinople» (Watergate House Daily Review, 1918, May 25). The speech was placarded in Turkey while later Maksudov and Sheikh-ul-Islam at Istanbul sent joint greetings to the Moslems of the Crimea, the Caucasus, Khiva, Bukhara, Persia, India and China.

Then in Central Asia the Pan-Turanian or Pan-Islamic movement struggle against the Bolshevik regime could not be delayed any more. It was inevitable that the further fall of Bolshevik regime if it happened would be immediately replaced by reactionary Moslem pro-Turkish forces. So, these sentiments were primarily taken into consideration by European powers such as Great Britain and France to avoid mainly intervention into Central Asian affairs. But as soon as Turkish military forces would reach Baku Bolshevik regime tried to use all means to keep this region under strict control. This consideration was dictated by highest importance of the oil wells situated there and still undamaged by the enemy and because Baku was the bridgehead of the Trans-Caspian Railway. These considerations played major role for the Bolshevik regime to strengthen its presence and political power over vast territories of Russian Turkestan and Trans-Caspian.

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