



PAPER

FEATURES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FUND'S MATERIALS FOR STUDYING THE ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN TURKESTAN

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Abstract

The article analyzes the features and significance of archival fund materials from the National Archive of Uzbekistan (NAUz) for studying the economic policy of the Russian Empire in Turkestan (1887–1917). Drawing on primary sources like fonds I-1 (Turkestan Governor-Generalship) and I-717, records of economic councils, it examines key aspects such as tax reforms, agrarian policies favoring cotton production, financial autonomy, and infrastructure development. These materials reveal the transition from sole-rule governance to collegial administration via the 1886 Regulations, highlighting imperial strategies for market integration, colonial exploitation, and local adaptations. Their unique value lies in unpublished protocols, cadastral data, and correspondence that document contradictions between metropolitan demands and regional realities, providing indispensable evidence for institutional and economic historiography.

Key words: Turkestan Governor-Generalship, economic policy, Russian Empire, archival fonds, 1886 reform, tax system, cotton economy, colonial administration, NAUz, institutionalization

Introduction

The first Governor-General of Turkestan, Kaufman, repeatedly presented various projects to the supreme government, proposing legislative regulation of its governance. The inconveniences of governing the region, caused by the temporary

regulations of 1867 and the orders of General Kaufman, and his unlimited power, created for control and supervision, were unable to fulfill the assigned tasks, which exceeded the capabilities of one person and placed too strong a stamp of the Governor-General's personal views on the emerging region [1; pp. 26, 27].

Compiled on: March 18, 2026.

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The administration of the region based on the "Provisional Regulations of 1867" led to an excessive concentration of power in the hands of the first Governor-General, K. P. von Kaufman. Such unlimited authority left the administration "overly imprinted with the personal views of one individual," which hindered effective oversight and the implementation of state tasks. After Kaufman's death in 1882, an urgent need arose to create a collegial body that would serve as a support system for the new administration's leaders.

After the death of the first Turkestan Governor-General, K. P. von Kaufman, in 1882, the question arose of creating a collegial body to assist newly appointed heads of the regional administration. As a result, the Council of the Turkestan Governor-General was formed in 1887 [2; pp. 1-2]. This government body differed from all previous ones in its system, functions, and organizational structure and was the only one in the Empire. The legislative basis for the creation of the Council of the Turkestan Governor-General was formed from the Regulation "On the Administration of the Turkestan Territory" dated June 12, 1886. Work on developing the foundations of this Regulation, which was not significantly changed during the entire existence of the Turkestan Governor-General, was begun back in 1882, when the newly appointed Governor-General of Turkestan, Lieutenant General Chernyaev, instructed Privy Councilor Girs to conduct an audit of all institutions of the region [3; p. 28].

The Turkestan Governorate-General was a subject of particular attention among other Central Asian outskirts of the Russian Empire. The most important task of the Imperial government throughout the existence of the Turkestan Governorate-General was the regulation of the system of governance and the administrative organization of local state institutions. All structures of power, from the Emperor and his State Council, the Committee of Ministers, and even the Governor-General of Turkestan, were involved in resolving this issue. Numerous projects [4; p. 27] were also discussed by special commissions [5; p. 28], and special government audits [6; pp. 28-30] of all the region's institutions were organized to develop a plan for its governance and organization.

Methods

The study is based on an analysis of archival documents and specialized literature on the Council's activities. The following sources were used: Materials of special government audits of the Turkestan region. Reports and projects submitted by Privy Councilor Giers based on the results of the audit of 1882–1883.

Minutes of the meetings of the United Departments of the State Council for 1886 (Journal No. 37).

Legislative acts, in particular the Regulation "On the management of the Turkestan region" of June 12, 1886.

The audit of T.S. Girs found four temporary regulations in effect in Turkestan, none of which had been legislatively approved. Thus: The Syr Darya region was governed on the basis of the regulations of July 11, 1867, drawn up by the Steppe Commission and significantly amended by separate orders of the Governor-General;

In the Zeravshan district, temporary regulations were in effect, approved by Adjutant General von Kaufman on June 29, 1868, supplemented and amended by subsequent orders;

The Amu Darya department was managed on the basis of the temporary Regulations approved by the Governor-General on May 21, 1874, and district chiefs were obliged to follow the rules for district chiefs of the Regulations of 1867, while the land structure of the department was organized on the basis of the project for the administration of the region of 1873, which was presented at the time for consideration by the Ministries, but was not approved;

The Fergana region, in administrative, land and tax terms, was organized on the basis of the 1873 project, and the judicial part - on the basis of the Regulation of the Steppe Commission of 1867.

Overall governance of the region was entrusted to the Governor-General. In the Syr Darya and Fergana regions, governance was entrusted to the governor and the regional administration, while in the Zeravshan District and Amu Darya Department, it was entrusted to their heads, along with their associated chanceries. The regions were divided into districts, the Zeravshan District into departments corresponding to the districts, and the

Amu Darya Department into sections.

Results

As a result of the audit in 1882 and 1883, Privy Councilor Girs presented: 1. a report on the state of the region and all its institutions, 2. a note on the main principles for the organization of governance of the Turkestan region, and 3. a draft Regulation on the governance of the region, with a detailed explanatory note [7; pp. 28, 29].

Having thus examined the reports of Comrade Girs, we came to the conclusion that the Governor-General of Turkestan, having received exclusive rights and broad powers under the 1867 Regulations, violated the independence and overstepped the authority of provincial collegial institutions, governors, and regional boards, reducing them to the level of his own chanceries and, in turn, elevating the Chancellery of the Governor-General to the illegal and uncharacteristic height of the main decision-making institution.

The consequence of such centralization of power was, on the one hand, that institutions, even collegial ones, began to be guided not by the law, but by the orders of the Governor-General, which came in the form of circulars, instructions and individual orders, and on the other hand, that the Office of the Head of the Territory was burdened with massive correspondence not related to its direct responsibilities.

The said draft Regulation was subjected to detailed discussion by the United Departments of the State Council at its meetings on 11, 18, 25 January, 1, 3, 6, 13, 20, 27 February and 1, 3, 8 and 24 March 1886 (Journal No. 37) and, after corrections made based on the conclusions of the United Departments, was awarded the Emperor's approval on 12 June 1886 (P.S.Z. No. 3814, collected text, Art. 817, Holy Laws, Vol. II, ed. 1886 and 1892). It was precisely during the period of the above-mentioned discussions of the project, in connection with the comments of the departments, that the question arose among the Departments of the State Council as to whether it would not be useful to establish under the Turkestan Governor-General such a collegial institution, the discussion of which could include, in addition to zemstvo and land-tax matters, also other important issues concerning

the governance of the Turkestan region.

In this regard, the Departments reasoned that the peculiarities of the vast Turkestan region, given its border location and remoteness from the capital, absolutely require the presence of a strong local authority. This is precisely the goal the project under consideration seeks to achieve, combining, in the person of the Turkestan Governor-General, the highest civil administration of the region with command of the military forces stationed there, and vesting him, in addition to the rights vested, by general law, in the Chief Governors of the provinces, with various powers not enjoyed by Governors-General within the Empire. Therefore, the highest direction of internal administrative matters arising must present incomparably greater difficulties in areas facing conditions similar to those of the Turkestan region than in the provinces of European Russia.

Furthermore, the task of finalizing the organization of this region cannot be considered fully resolved with the implementation of the legislation under discussion. As the population and government bodies become accustomed to new forms of governance, and as government bodies study the region's local characteristics, the currently established fundamental principles of its organization will undoubtedly require further development. Thus, in addition to managing current affairs, the region's highest authority still faces the extensive task of finalizing the organization of its subordinate localities and gradually integrating them with other parts of the Empire. Successfully completing such numerous and complex tasks could easily prove beyond the capabilities of the Territory's Supreme Commander if, in issuing orders on current affairs and directing legislative matters, he is forced to rely solely on his own discretion, lacking a collegial body for preliminary consideration of matters of particular importance. The need to alleviate the burden placed on the Governor-General in this way was apparently also recognized by the commission, which proposed a collegial discussion of matters concerning zemstvo duties, as well as land and tax arrangements, within the Zemstvo Affairs Committee. Despite the exceptional importance for the population and the treasury of the prudent

conduct of these areas of government in the Turkestan region, it is impossible not to anticipate that serious questions will arise more or less frequently in other areas of administrative activity. To properly understand and resolve these questions, the Governor-General will need to hear the opinions of experienced individuals who are thoroughly familiar with local conditions. Regardless of this, in matters that will be submitted to the highest government for resolution, it is extremely important for central institutions to consider the various views that may be expressed on the matter by individuals intimately familiar with the region's conditions and to thoroughly ascertain all the circumstances of the matter. Only in this way will these institutions be spared the inconvenient and time-consuming necessity of requiring, in addition to the Governor-General, additional opinions from subordinate individuals and institutions.

For these reasons, the State Council believed that the proposed committee on Zemstvo affairs should be given the significance of a Council, the discussion of which, in addition to matters on zemstvo duties and land tax arrangements, would also include the most important matters on other parts of administration and legislative issues.

Turning next to the question of which specific matters, other than zemstvo and land-tax matters, should fall within the jurisdiction of the Governor-General's Council, the Departments of the State Council took into account that a detailed listing of them in law would hardly be convenient or appropriate. Foreseeing and exhausting the entire range of general issues that may arise in the governance of the region is extremely difficult. On the other hand, a precise definition in law of matters to be brought before the Council could, in many cases, constrain the Chief Governor of the region in his orders.

Meanwhile, questions of this category may easily arise that are essentially simple in nature and whose resolution brooks no delay. Under these circumstances, their preliminary consideration by the Council, inevitably accompanied by some delay, would not only be unhelpful but could sometimes have unfavorable consequences. As a result of this, the Departments preferred to decree that the Council's jurisdiction would include, in addition to

matters concerning zemstvo duties, land and tax arrangements, also legislative issues and all those matters concerning general administration that the Governor-General deems necessary to submit for its consideration.

As regards the personal composition of the Council, the proposal of the draft (Article 342) on the composition of the committee on zemstvo affairs could, in the opinion of the Departments, be applied to the first without change, with the following additions: the local chairman of the regional court and the regional prosecutor also participate in the Council in the discussion of legislative issues and matters of general administration submitted to the Council by order of the Governor-General, and in matters concerning the educational part, the chief inspector of schools, who is attached to the Governor-General, is invited to the Council with the right to vote.

The office work in the Council for Zemstvo Duties is assigned to a permanent member from the Ministry of Finance, while the office work on all other matters is concentrated in the office of the Governor-General, under the leadership of the head of the office.

Discussion

Finally, with regard to the significance of the Council's resolutions, the Departments recognized that, in matters of general administration, the Council's conclusions should have only an advisory value, while questions of zemstvo management and land tax matters should be decided by a majority vote. But in order not to place the Governor-General, vested with the highest authority in the region and responsible for the well-being of the area entrusted to him, in an inappropriate and, as it were, subordinate position to the Council in cases where he does not agree with the opinion of the majority, it is necessary, in the opinion of the Departments, to grant him the right, without implementing such a decision of the Council, to submit the question that gave rise to disagreement for resolution to the relevant Ministry. In addition, the Governor-General should enjoy the authority, in exceptional and urgent cases, to order, under personal responsibility, the implementation of the opinion of the minority or his own, without waiting

for the resolution of the disputed issue, but with the notification only of the relevant Minister of the circumstances that prompted him to resort to this measure [8; [pp. 224-227].

Thus, the Council became a unique body for the Empire, combining collegial discussion with the preservation of broad powers of the highest official in the border region.

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