



## AUTONOMY OF TURKEY - THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC INDEPENDENT STATE IN OUR COUNTRY

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**Abstract:** This article talks about the establishment of Turkestan Autonomy and its reforms in the country, its activities and its role in our statehood.

**Key words:** Kokand, commander Kichik Ergash, congress, Mustafa Chokai, Ulamochilar, Millat Majlisi, Bachqir, Autonom

105 years ago, Turkestan autonomy was established as the first democratic, secular, independent state in our country. This autonomy has a special place in the history of our national statehood.

The events of 1917, known as the "October Revolution" in history, led to the intensification of social and political movements in Turkestan.

The approach to the issue of statehood building and the promotion of the idea of full autonomy of Turkestan were visible on the pages of the national newspaper from April 1917<sup>1</sup>. Because the main purpose of the First Congress of Muslims of Turkestan, which was held in April 1917, was how to manage the country and prepare for the formation of a national government.

The congress was called based on the "Declaration of Nations on Self-Determination". On November 26-28, 1917, the fourth extraordinary congress of Turkestan Muslims was held in the city of Koqan. At the request of the democratic Muslim intellectuals, representatives of the European part of Turkestan population also took part in it. At the congress, the Turkestan Autonomous Government (consisting of 8 members) was formed from the members of the Turkestan Provisional Council. 4 more seats were allocated for nominations from among representatives of the European population. The government consists of Muhammadjon Tinishboyev (Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs), Islam Shoakhmedov (Deputy Prime Minister), Mustafa Chokai (Minister of Foreign Affairs), Ubaidullahojha Asadullahojayev (Military Minister), Hidoyatbek Agayev (Minister of Land and Water Resources), Obidjon Mahmudov (Minister of Food), Abdurahmon Orazayev (Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs), Solomon Gersfeld (Minister of Finance). was introduced. Later, some changes took place in the structure of the government. After M. Tinishboyev went to Orenburg to participate in the activities of the Alash Horde Autonomy (1917), Mustafa Chokai took the post of Prime Minister. Shoahmedov became the Minister of Finance (instead of S. Hersfeld), Potelyakhov the Minister of Food (instead of O. Mahmudov), O. Mahmudov the Minister of Justice, Nasirkhan Tora the Minister of Education, Saidnosir Mirjalilov the Government Treasurer. Unlike the illiterate Bolshevik commissars, the members of the government were well-educated progressive intellectuals, five of whom were lawyers. It was determined that the National Assembly of Turkestan should consist of 54 members (36 Muslims, 18 Europeans). During the congress, the Millat Majlis consisting of 32 members was elected.

<sup>1</sup> S. Madyarova History of Turkestan Autonomy (1917-2008) T.F.N. graduation thesis Tashkent - 2010.

In addition to the above people, the members of the National Assembly included the following people: Ubaidulla Khodjayev, Tashpolatbek Norbotabekov, Sadreddin Sharifkhodjayev, Kungirkhodja Khodzhinov, Ismatulla Ubaydullin, Said Ja'farboy Saidov, Islam Shoahmedov, Abdurahmonbek Urazayev, Khidoyatbek Yuraly Agayev, Nasirkhontora Komolkhontorayev, Mirodil Mirzaahmedov, Tashkhodja Ashurkhodzhayev, Abdulkadir Kushbegiyev, Obidjon Mahmudov, Jamshidbek Karabekov, Abdusamat Abdusalimov, Abdulla Dersalin, Musa Akchirin, Mustafa Mansurov, Mahmudhoja Behbudi, Ibrahim Davletshin, Muhammadjon Tinishboyev, Khalil Shirinsky, Talibjon Musaboyev, Olimkhontora Shokirkhontorayev, Sobirjon Yusupov, Odiljon Umarov and others<sup>2</sup>.

Based on the decision of the Kurultay adopted on November 27: "People of different nationalities living in Turkestan show the will of the peoples called by the Russian revolution to determine their own rights and declare Turkestan territorially autonomous within the Federal Republic of Russia." In connection with the declaration of this state, the Council of the Kurultay adopts the following statement, distributes it among the population in the form of leaflets and publishes it in the press:

"Long live Turkestan autonomy!

The 4th extraordinary congress of Muslims of Turkestan declares Turkestan unitary autonomy, i.e. "territorial autonomy" while remaining united with the Russian republic established on the basis of the federation according to the wishes of the peoples of Turkestan. The realization of this autonomy is entrusted to the "Uchreditelni sobiraniye" (Muslim member of the Turkestan assembly) of the assembled people of All-Turkistan.

Therefore, it also solemnly declares that the rights of the nations that have established a kingdom in Turkestan should be preserved in all respects. Shahri Khoqand, 1332 Hijri, 25-Safarul-Khair, November 27, 1916 AD<sup>3</sup>.

Turkestan autonomy was not a fully independent state. Moreover, it did not fully cover the territory of present-day Uzbekistan, nor the territory of other countries in the region, but was established on the approximate territory of the former Kokand Khanate. The autonomy was established on the territory of today's 70% of Uzbekistan, 90% of Kyrgyzstan, 15-20% of Kazakhstan, 35% of Tajikistan, and the total population of the country exceeds 5 million people.

The Bolsheviks of the country considered the government of Turkestan autonomy a great threat. At the extraordinary 4th Congress of Workers', Soldiers' and Christian Deputies of the Turkestan Region (Tashkent, January 19-26, 1918), the issue of attitude to autonomy was in the main place. The Sejd considered the Turkestan Autonomous Government and its members to be outlawed and even made a decision to imprison the ministers. On January 30, 1918, the Republic of Turkestan began military operations to end the autonomy of Turkestan. For this, the Bolsheviks in Tashkent made extensive use of Red Guards and Armenian Dashnaks. According to the national press, the fighting started on January 31 (February 13 according to the new calculation). On February 14, 1918 (with a new calculation), the Republic of Turkestan declared martial law in the Fergana region.

In addition to the national army of the autonomous region, representatives of the civilian population of Kokand also took part in the initial battle. The number of people who mainly carried axes, hammers and sticks reached 10,000 people. Despite this, these unarmed people bravely repelled the attack of the Red soldiers on the city of Ko'kan for three days. In the meantime, there was

<sup>2</sup> S. Agzamkhodjaev. History of Turkestan Autonomy. Tashkent- 2006 g - 194 str

<sup>3</sup> <https://oyina.uz/uz/article/1395>



chaos in the ranks of autonomists. On February 18, due to the pressure of clerics, Mustafa Cho'kai resigned and left Kokan like some other ministers. Some ministers (H. Agayev and others) died in the battle. Other members of the government (O. Mahmudov, Nasirkhan Tora, S. Gersfeld, U. Asadullakhojayev, I. Shoahmedov) were later captured by the Bolsheviks.

Kichik Ergash, the head of the mirshabs of Kokand city, became the head of the Turkestan Autonomous Government on February 18. On the night of February 19, the military commissar of Turkestan region Ye. 11 echelons of infantry, cavalry and artillery units led by Perfilyev arrived. For 3 days starting from February 19, the red soldiers rained incendiary shells from cannons on the city. The city was completely destroyed and left in ruins. More than 10,000 people were killed in Kokan during 3 days. The surviving part of the autonomous army under the leadership of Kichik Ergash (200-300 young men) retreated to the village of Bachkir near Kokan and repelled the enemy's attack by building defensive fortifications. The Red Guards intensified their looting and killing of civilians in and around Kokan. The Soviet regime overthrew the Turkestan Autonomous Government by force of arms on February 19. On February 22, 1918, the "peace treaty" prepared by the Bolsheviks was signed in the building of the Russo-Asia Bank in Ko'kan.

The study of this period of the provisional government began with G.K. Safarov's "Colonial Revolution"<sup>4</sup>. The basis for writing this work was the need for a political understanding of the dialectic of interaction between national liberation and revolutionary movements in Turkestan. Rano Rajabova, Ravshan Abdullayev, Marat Hasanov, among the historians of Uzbekistan, published the first articles about the Turkestan Autonomy and the activities of national political parties in Turkestan in 1917 in the Soviet era - in the 80s of the 20th century. In particular, we can see the monograph of Professor Saidakbar Azamkhodzhayev's doctoral dissertation, published in 2006, as a source that vividly reflects the actions of Turkestan Autonomy in the struggle for national liberation.

According to S. Azamkhojayev, the violent dissolution of the Turkestan Autonomous Government, supported by the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to abolish it in February 1918, shows that the Bolshevik "rulers" openly disregarded the vital interests of the native population<sup>5</sup>. Turkestans, in his opinion, tried to take the first practical step towards the restoration of national statehood on a democratic basis in order to resolutely throw off the chains of colonialism and become masters of their own destiny. As Azamkhozhaev again noted, the overthrow of the Turkestan Autonomous Government was perceived by the Turkestans as a new proof of the Bolsheviks' plans to invade Turkestan, and they took up arms to protect their homeland from the invaders. This was the beginning of the mass movement against the Soviet regime in Turkestan<sup>6</sup>. Azamkhozhaev actively uses concepts such as "national statehood", "democracy", "independence" and interprets them in the spirit of patriotism. Referring to the form of governance in the Kokan Autonomous Region, Azamkhozhaev emphasizes the "democratic" nature of the Turkestan Autonomous Region, that is, he refers to the separation of powers in the autonomous region and does not distinguish between republicanism and classical democracy. It should be noted that new institutions such as ministries and parliament were European innovations and had nothing to do with "local" forms of governance. In my opinion, the Kokan autonomy was more like a republic than a democratic nation-state. It should be noted that the composition of the government was

<sup>4</sup> Safarov G. Colonial revolution (Opyt Turkestana) – M: Gosizdat 1921g

<sup>5</sup> Agzamkhodjaev S. C. History of Turkestan Autonomy (Turkistan Autonomy). - T.: Tashkent Islamic University, 2006. - 236 p.

<sup>6</sup> Agzamkhodjaev S. C. History of Turkestan Autonomy (Turkistan Autonomy). - T.: Tashkent Islamic University, 2006. - 237 p.

multinational, which confirms our opinion about the transnational nature of this formation. In 2010, Salima Madyarova's "Historiography of Turkestan Autonomy (1917-2008)" candidate's thesis, which was defended, covered the research up to that time. In 2021, the book "The Life and Fate of Turkestan Autonomy Ministers and Members of the Majlis" written by Kahramon Rajabov in 2021, covers the fate of people from the great representatives of that time to the ordinary members of the Congress on a scientific basis. Based on the historiographical analysis of the researches of the Soviet period, it can be concluded that the history of the autonomy of Turkestan in this period is not comprehensively and impartially covered. At that time, the political situation in Turkestan and the views of the population were not fully studied.

In conclusion, it should be said that Turkestan Autonomy was the product of the wishes of our ancestors to build a truly independent democratic state. Autonomy, warmly welcomed and supported by the people, is important in the history of our statehood. Those who were considered by the Bolsheviks as a great danger and tried with all their might to destroy the autonomy as soon as possible, to prevent it from establishing relations with foreign countries, and those who achieved it. Despite this, the memory of Turkestan Autonomy and our ancestors who established it will remain forever in the memory of our people.

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