



## THE MILITARY PRESS IS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE ON THE HISTORY OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOVIET AUTHORITY IN TURKESTAN

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### Annotation

The article analyzes the issue of coverage in the military periodical press of the armed movement against the Soviet regime in the Fergana Valley. The author tried to view from a source study point of view materials on the emergence and development of the movement, published in a number of newspapers and magazines published by Turkfront.

**Key words and phrases:** military periodical press, "basmachies", "basmachies movement", newspaper, magazine, "Krasnaya kazarma", "Voyennaya mysl", "Voyenniy rabotnik Turkestana", armed movement against the Soviet regime.

The Ferghana Valley, located at an important geopolitical point, has experienced many invasions in its history. Among such invasions, the greatest economic and moral damage to the life of the valley was undoubtedly the invasion of the Russian Empire and the colonial policy of the Soviet government. The center of the struggle for freedom from such an authoritarian regime was the Ferghana Valley.

The armed struggle against the Soviet power, which began in the Fergana Valley in 1918 and later spread to the whole of Turkestan, is one of the current topics of our history. This movement, which was called the "basmachi movement" by the Soviet authorities, was scientifically analyzed in depth during the years of independence, studied based on the principle of impartiality, and it was scientifically proven that it was an armed people's movement for freedom against the Soviet authorities [2; 5; 11]. During the period of independence, the historical truth about this movement emerged, and it became clear that it was an "independence movement", a struggle for national liberation.

During the past time, many sources related to the history of this movement have been put into scientific circulation, and the source science and historiography of the issue have been fundamentally enriched. However, we cannot say the same about revealing the source value of periodical press materials, which are important for the history of this issue. However, in the pages of newspapers and magazines of that time, many articles and messages were published about the causes, progress and consequences of this movement, and their analysis and inclusion in scientific circulation is important in the study of this problem.

The periodical press materials that reflect the history of the armed struggle against the Soviet government in the period 1918-1935 in the Fergana Valley (as well as in the whole of Turkestan) are generally divided into two groups: 1) newspapers; 2) magazines.

Taking into account that most of the press materials belong to the Soviet era, they can be divided into two groups according to their content and essence: 1) Newspapers and magazines intended for the general population; 2) Special newspapers and magazines intended for the fighters of the Red Army fighting against the "press" in Turkestan.



Below we will try to reveal the importance of newspapers and magazines belonging to the second group as a source for the history of the armed struggle against Soviet power. We decided to call these newspapers and magazines "military press" because they were published mainly on the initiative and under the auspices of Turkfront.

"Krasnoarmeets" newspaper, which began to be published in 1918 [16, 200], was the first military press to reflect the struggle against the Soviet government in Turkestan. From 1919, front newspapers such as "Red Front" and "Gornist", and from 1920 "Borets za Komunizm" began to be published. Since 1921, "Krasnoarmeyskaya gazeta", "Nabat revolutsii", "Ezhenedelnik politrabotnika" have joined the ranks of military newspapers. In general, during the armed struggle against Soviet power in Turkestan, the number of such newspapers increased to 20. When we studied the existing issues of the newspapers, we came to the conclusion that their main task was to organize the Red Army in Turkestan, to give ideological support to the military and moral training of soldiers in the fight against the "basmachi", and to carry out propaganda work in the ranks of the Red Army.

Nevertheless, some newspapers published such articles about the causes and factors of the development of the armed movement against the Soviet government, in which it can be seen that the situation was assessed correctly and objectively. In particular, in "Ezhenedelnik politrabotnika" it was estimated that the emergence of the "basmachi" movement is the result of the "military communism" of the Bolsheviks, a policy that is essentially the origin of colonialism, such as food development [12, 1]. Also, in the newspapers, it is a national movement, which is used by the majority of the population, and its slogan is "national liberation", that "basmachi" is a rising and growing movement against oppression and exploitation [8], and it is supported by the bourgeoisie and the rich, as well as peasants, artisans, merchants. and that it is used by chorikors [12, 8] is emphasized several times. The newspaper noted that this struggle in Fergana is essentially a partisan war, and the Red Army is choosing the wrong way to fight against it, and as a result, it is getting delayed more and more. It is recognized that the Red Army is defeated in most of the conflicts, because the people are sympathetic to the "basmachis" [12].

The Bolsheviks correctly realized the importance of ideological resistance in opposing the Turkestans who were fighting for independence, and forced propaganda through newspapers. For example, Y. Kirsh, who was the chairman of the military revolutionary committee of Fergana region at that time, stated in the newspaper pages that the "basmachi movement" in Fergana cannot be ended by force of arms, it is necessary to turn the people against the "basmachi people" and make people tired of them [12]. During the war against the rebels, this problem became the primary issue of the agenda for the military press. After all, an active ideological campaign was necessary to raise the fighting spirit of the soldiers, who consisted of representatives of different nationalities and had almost no idea about the Ferghana Valley.

Among the military magazines that reflect the history of the struggle against the Soviet authorities in Fergana in a more complete and perfect way, we can list "Voennaya mys", "Voenny rabotnik Turkestana", "Krasnaya kazarma".

In these journals, the first articles and materials about the armed struggle against the Soviet authorities in Ferghana (mainly documents prepared for the agitbrigade or abstracts intended for political conversations with soldiers - N.H.) are dedicated to the emergence of the movement. In most of them, the information is similar to each other. For example, when it

comes to the emergence of an armed struggle against the Soviet government in the Fergana Valley, all authors start with the geographical location of the Fergana Valley, flora and fauna, population and its ethnic composition, economic potential and importance of the valley. Then they talk about the history and emergence of this armed struggle [6, 216-218; 4, 108-112; 13, 75-77; 7, 69-72].

The first work devoted to the history of the armed struggle against the Soviet government in Ferghana and the methods of struggle against it was the book "Kolonialnaya revoluyatsiya (Opyt Turkestana)" by G. Safarov [18]. On the one hand, "basmachi" is based on the national-liberation struggle caused by the destruction of the autonomy of Turkestan, and on the other hand, it is caused by the famine in the country, the destruction of agriculture in the Ferghana Valley, and the fact that the lower classes of the population cannot meet their daily needs at all. it is said. G. Skalov, N. Torakulov, N. Batmanov, D. Zuev, S. Gintsburg, S. Khlynovsky, Ya. Boronin, journalist-experts who worked in the military press in Turkestan supplemented and developed G. Safarov's thoughts in their articles.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, the military press published many articles on the history of the armed struggle against the Soviet authorities in Ferghana. The article entitled "Sovremennoe basmachestvo" [19, 9-10], authored by G. Skalov and N. Torakulov (Darvesh), concludes that the "basmachi" movement was caused by the destruction of peasant farms due to the wrong policy of the Soviet authorities in the country.

Also, G. Skalov draws attention to the fact that the economic and social causes of the armed struggle in Ferghana were based on the Soviet government's policy of forceful expropriation of the population's property, encroachment, and colonialism [20, 21-22]. His thoughts on the economic and social factors that caused the emergence of the "basmachi movement" were further developed in a number of articles by N. Torakulov [9, 108-110]. N. Torakulov says that in order to end the "basmachi movement" in Fergana, first of all, it is necessary to understand its social essence and study its history in depth, and to choose the right methods of fighting against it. In the article, among the factors that led to the armed struggle against the Soviet government, there was a shortage of grain due to the establishment of a cotton monopoly in the agriculture of Fergana, the country was cut off from the rest of the world, the evils of the Dashnaks, the mistakes made by the Bolsheviks in the policy of the region, that is, the involvement of the people of Fergana in forced labor and general military service. calling, actions of scholars to protect the religion of Islam are recorded [15, 11]. Another military journalist, D. Zuev, divides the reasons for the emergence of this armed movement into two [15, 13]. That is, 1) the land and water reform carried out by the Soviet authorities without any support in the country, the internal reason that the leaders who came to manage the country were not at all familiar with the local conditions, and 2) the work done by the rulers of neighboring countries - Afghanistan and Bukhara, in order to protect Islam (soviet according to historians, he shows his campaigns - N.H.) as an external cause.

We can find such opinions about the emergence and development of the "basmachi movement" in Ferghana in the articles published in the press pages by well-known personalities such as T. Riskulov [17] and I. Khidiraliev [21].

T. Riskulov's article contains comments that are not similar to the opinions of other authors. In particular, most of the military newspapers and magazines report that the main forces of the independence movement in the Ferghana Valley were defeated in 1920, and its

remnants were completely destroyed by 1923 [24, 25]. T. Riskulov states that since 1922, when Anvar Pasha came to Eastern Bukhara, the "basmachi movement" reached a new stage of development in Fergana, and after the death of Anvar Pasha, the support of the local population for "basmachis" decreased [17].

S. Shur can be mentioned among those who carried out great ideological propaganda work through the press to end the armed struggle against the Soviet government. In the articles "Korni basmachestva" ("The Roots of Basmachi") [22], "Borba za Krasnyy Turkestan" ("The Struggle for Red Turkestan") [23], the author wrote that the "basmachi movement" in Ferghana was an abuse of the position of some responsible persons working in the Soviet power system. says that it is the consequence of what he does. At the time, it was noted in Soviet historiography that such opinions were incorrect, that they could not reveal the causes and true nature of the struggle against the Soviet power, that such conclusions were unscientific and favored the anti-Bolshevik forces [24, 23-25].

In our opinion, most of the points made in the above articles were correct. In fact, this action was the "response" of the people to the forced change of the way of life and economy, which had been formed for centuries not only in the Fergana Valley, but also in the entire Turkestan region by the Soviet authorities, and the transfer of the society to a "socialist system" unfamiliar to the population. But the publication of such articles in the press did not take long. With the introduction of new Western forces into the country and the expansion of the ranks of the Red Army, the Bolsheviks began to gain an upper hand in the fight against the "press movement". From this period, the press began to focus not on the origin of the basmachi movement, but on its complete end.

Now, in the articles and analytical materials published on the pages of military-scientific magazines, two ways to end the "press movement" have been determined: 1) Strengthening political propaganda among the population and relegating the armed struggle to the second level; 2) Relegating political propaganda to the second level by intensifying military operations. In most articles, it is repeated over and over again that the "basmachi movement" can be completely eliminated only when both methods are combined.

The pages of the military press published materials aimed at strengthening the mood of the Red Army "against the oppressors" and improving their professional knowledge. In order to make the Red soldiers morally and militarily superior to the colonists, articles on military affairs were regularly published. Materials were published under the heading "Military knowledge" through which soldiers were mentally and politically prepared to fight against their patriots. The reason for this was that before 1923, the soldiers of the Red Army, especially the infantrymen, who served on the Turkish front, could not yet be considered fighters. Russian soldiers who had just been drafted into the ranks of the Red Army and sent to Central Asia needed a certain period of time to get used to the country's climatic conditions, to learn the unique lifestyle and customs of the local population. And the young men in the "Bosmachilar" detachment were not ordinary stick-wielding peasants at this time [10, 14]. Most of them were experienced warriors with 4-5 years of military experience and fought in their own territories. As stated in the article of "Krasnaya Kazarm" magazine, issue 4, 1923, they grew up in the mountains, were exposed to the heat of the desert and the icy waters of the mountain rivers, and were masters of riding the local horse breed [10, 13].

The analysis of press materials shows that the independence movement in Turkestan started to be interpreted as a struggle of the whole nation or a small war in the pages of the



periodical press starting from 1921 [14]. In order to win this war, the Soviet government focused on strengthening the discipline in the military units in Turkestan, increasing the moral and professional training of the soldiers, and the full implementation of the assigned tasks. However, as the press materials testify, because the soldiers of the Red Army did not always fully meet the above qualities, disciplinary measures were taken against many responsible employees of the Turkfront [10, 15].

As a conclusion, it can be said that the Soviet military press of the 20s was in a real sense the propagandist and herald of the suppression of the armed movement against the Soviet regime in Ferghana. In the pages of newspapers and magazines published at that time, it is repeated over and over again that the necessary factor to end the independence movement was a large army and its violent action. From its inception to its conclusion, the fact that a numerically superior army was thrown against it was the focus of the press. For example, in order to achieve victory in the fight against the Soviet regime, first of all, attention was paid to the correct establishment of intelligence and communication, the determination of soldiers, the mobility of equipment, and the ability of the army to be able to make a sudden attack.

The military press evaluates the armed movement against the Soviet authorities in Ferghana as a partisan struggle and indicates 3 stages of its termination: 1) destruction of the main forces of the partisan detachments; 2) Termination of small groups, depriving them of sources of supply and bases; 3) Occupying the territories where the partisan detachments are operating, setting up reinforcements there and completely ending the independence movement [3, 93-94].

In the early 20s of the 20th century, there were many articles devoted to the independence movement in the pages of military newspapers and magazines. From 1924-1925, the number of articles on this topic will decrease sharply, because by this time, the official circles believed that the armed movement against the Soviet authorities in the valley had ended. In fact, by this time, the "press movement" had reached a new stage and had become a veritable guerilla struggle, breaking into smaller divisions throughout the region. The press deliberately turned a blind eye to this and began to emphasize the full establishment of Soviet power in the country. The purpose of this was to instill in the minds of the population the idea that the Soviet system was firmly established.

It should not be forgotten that the word is a very powerful weapon. One of its main battlefields is the press pages. The press, in turn, is an ideological weapon, a means of propaganda. The Soviet authorities also effectively used this weapon to end the "basmachi movement" in Fergana and establish a strong position in the region. The new government managed to put an end to the massive resistance movement in Ferghana, using both political, military and ideological means.

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