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# The Administrative-Governance System Of The Kokand Uyezd Within The Fergana Region (1876–1917)

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**Abstract:** The annexation of the Kokand Khanate by the Russian Empire in 1876 marked a significant turning point in the political and administrative landscape of Central Asia. Following this event, the establishment of the Fergana Region as part of the Turkestan General-Governorate led to the introduction of a new administrative-governance structure modeled on Russian imperial norms. Within this framework, the Kokand Uyezd emerged as a key territorial-administrative unit, reflecting the broader objectives of imperial integration and control.

**Keywords:** Kokand Uezdi, Fergana Region, Administrative Governance System, Russian Empire, Turkestan General-Governorate, Socio-political Processes, Uyezd Administration, Migration Processes, Demographic Changes, Forced Resettlement Policy, Changes in Population Structure

**Introduction:** This study focuses on the administrative-governance system of the Kokand Uyezd during the period 1876 to 1917, a time of deep social, political, and demographic transformation. The paper explores the institutional structure of uyezd administration, the role of imperial officials, and the impact of governance on local populations. Special attention is given to migration processes and demographic shifts, particularly the resettlement policies enforced by the Russian authorities, which significantly altered the ethnic and social composition of the region.

By examining archival materials, official documents, and contemporary scholarly perspectives, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of colonial administration practices in Central Asia and their lasting

effects on regional development and social dynamics.

### LITERARY ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

The administrative history of the Kokand Uyezd within the Fergana Region has been examined in the context of broader Russian colonial policy and governance mechanisms in Central Asia. A review of the existing literature reveals a number of significant works that focus on the political integration of the Turkestan region into the Russian Empire, the role of local and imperial elites, and the transformation of administrative systems during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Key historical studies by Russian and Central Asian scholars provide insights into the structure and function of uyezd-level governance, including the reforms introduced by imperial authorities. In particular, the works of V. Nalivkin, N. Ostroumov, and Soviet-era historians offer valuable descriptions of administrative divisions, social composition, and the functioning of colonial bureaucracy. More recent academic contributions have emphasized post-colonial and socio-political interpretations, analyzing the impact of migration, land resettlement, and changing demographic dynamics.

The methodological approach of this study combines historical-comparative analysis with archival research. Primary sources such as official decrees, administrative reports, colonial maps, and population statistics have been used to reconstruct the structure and evolution of the Kokand Uyezd's administrative apparatus. Comparative analysis with other uyezds of the Fergana Region enables a more nuanced understanding of regional governance patterns and local specificities.

In addition, a socio-historical lens is applied to assess the effects of forced migration policies and demographic shifts on the local population. This interdisciplinary methodology allows for a comprehensive exploration of how imperial governance strategies influenced both administrative organization and social change in the Kokand Uyezd during the period under study.

### DISCUSSION

The administrative structure established in the Kokand Uyezd after its incorporation into the Russian Empire reflected the broader imperial strategy of centralized control and colonial management. The replacement of traditional governance institutions with Russian bureaucratic models led to significant shifts in political authority, legal systems, and resource allocation.

One key aspect of this transformation was the implementation of a hierarchical administrative framework subordinated to the Fergana regional

center. Local elites were marginalized or integrated into lower-level positions, while Russian officials held dominant roles in decision-making. This restructuring not only altered the balance of power but also created tensions between colonial administrators and indigenous populations.

Migration policies played a crucial role in shaping the socio-demographic profile of the uyezd. The resettlement of Russian and Slavic peasants into the region led to land redistribution, economic displacement of locals, and gradual demographic changes. These processes contributed to social stratification and cultural shifts, especially in urban and agriculturally rich zones.

Despite the formal imposition of order, the administrative system remained partially dependent on informal networks and local intermediaries to ensure functionality. This duality between official regulation and practical adaptation underscores the complexity of colonial governance in the Kokand Uyezd.

Overall, the administrative developments in the uyezd from 1876 to 1917 illustrate how imperial policies were adapted to local conditions while still serving the overarching goals of political control, economic exploitation, and cultural assimilation.

### RESULT

The study reveals that the administrative-governance system implemented in the Kokand Uyezd between 1876 and 1917 was characterized by the consolidation of Russian imperial control through a hierarchical bureaucratic structure. Traditional local governance institutions were largely replaced or subordinated to colonial authorities, leading to significant political and social reorganization.

The introduction of migration and resettlement policies markedly affected the demographic composition of the uyezd, resulting in increased ethnic diversity and social tensions. Russian colonization efforts led to land redistribution that altered traditional patterns of land ownership and economic activity.

Despite formal administrative reforms, local dynamics and informal practices continued to influence governance, indicating a complex interplay between imperial objectives and regional realities. Overall, the uyezd's administrative evolution reflects broader processes of colonial integration, social transformation, and demographic change in Central Asia during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

As a result of the Russian Empire's invasion, the khanate was abolished on February 19, 1876, and the city of Kokand became the administrative center of the Fergana Region, which was established within the

Turkestan General-Governorate. Due to the transfer of the regional center to New Margilan on April 27, 1877, Kokand city was designated as the administrative center of the Kokand Uyezd within the Fergana Region starting from June 1 of the same year. Until 1917, the city of Kokand was governed by the uyezd head. The uyezd head held both administrative and economic management powers, and in addressing social issues, he was assisted by three deputies elected for a term of three years from among the influential representatives of the population, two of whom represented the Russian community. As the city's territory and economy expanded and the population increased, the administrative apparatus also grew. From 1907 onwards, the number of deputies increased to six, four of whom represented the Russian population. The Tsarist regime's system of governance in Turkestan was fundamentally based on the oppression of local laborers and the complete violation of their rights. Until 1886, the Fergana Region and its cities were administered according to a plan proposed by K.P.Kaufmann in 1873, which, however, was not approved by the higher authorities. As in all other regions of Turkestan, the Tsar's officials here held sole authority over both military and civil administration. This arrangement aimed to promptly suppress any opposition or movements that could potentially challenge the Tsarist government in this newly acquired and remote territory.

The city of Kokand was designated as the administrative center of the Fergana Region and, compared to other cities in the region, had several distinctive features in its governance system. Given Kokand's prior role as the center of the former khanate, its significant influence in the political and economic life of the area, as well as the large presence of military personnel and imperial officials, the city was granted a special autonomous administrative status on July 15, 1876.

This special status also reflected the growing strategic importance of Kokand in the context of Russian colonial migration policy. The resettlement of Russian settlers and officials to Kokand intensified during this period, contributing to demographic changes and reinforcing administrative control. Migration processes played a key role in reshaping the city's social structure and integrating it more firmly into the imperial system.

The structure of the city administration was as follows: the head of the city was Colonel Karolkov. He was assisted by Captain V. L. Padachnev as the senior aide and Lieutenant V. P. Zabusev as the junior aide. A. L. Freyberger and I. V. Molokov served as administrative officers, while Second Lieutenant A. G. Bogdanov held

the position of written translator. In December of the same year, the staff was expanded with the addition of three more aide positions alongside the two secretaries.

On April 27, 1877, the provincial center was officially relocated from the city of Kokand to the newly established Yangi Margilan. In connection with this, all administrative positions related to the governance of the city were abolished, and the administration of the city was transferred to the district (uezd) head.

Following this, one senior aide, a chief secretary, and one written and one oral translator were assigned to the district (uezd) administrator, with additional salaries.

Additionally, the judicial bailiff school in the city was abolished, and its functions were transferred to the district administration.

On June 19, 1877, the Governor-General of Turkestan, Kaufman, approved this proposal to allocate additional staff positions for the administration of the Kokand district. Under this arrangement, one aide, one secretary, one written translator, and one oral translator were assigned to the district (uezd) head.

Additionally, a new position for police administration was introduced at the Kokand district office in Qosh.

Thus, all police, judicial, and other administrative oversight functions in Kokand were transferred under the authority of the district head.

As a result, until 1917, the city of Kokand remained administratively under the jurisdiction of the Kokand district.

It is well known that on July 12, 1886, the Russian Tsar approved the Regulation on the Administration of the Turkestan Region. This regulation aimed to turn the Turkestan region and its cities into a true colony, to facilitate exploitation by Russian officials and capitalists, and to completely suppress the discontent of the working masses against the Tsarist regime. This regulation, with some amendments, remained in effect until 1917.

The city's political, economic, public works, and other administrative affairs were placed under the supervision of the district (uezd) head, assisted by precinct bailiffs and city deputies. In other words, the role of intermediary governance was carried out by 3 to 4 elected deputies from among the wealthy residents of the city.

At a council held on May 7, 1887, the Governor-General of Turkestan decided on the number of deputies and the election procedure.

According to this council decision, the city of Kokand was granted the right to elect three deputies, two of

whom were Russians.

The activities of these deputies were entirely dependent on the district (uezd) head or the precinct chief.

Their responsibilities were limited solely to the collection of taxes and fees.

Although the Tsarist government attempted to adapt its administrative bodies to the changing conditions of urban life, by the early 20th century it became evident that the existing administrative structures in Turkestan—particularly in some commercially and industrially developing cities such as Kokand—were no longer capable of adequately meeting the needs and demands of the population.

The city was divided into districts called dahas, each governed by an amin (also known as a mingbashi), meaning a neighborhood elder or head.

According to the Regulation on the Administration of the Turkestan Region adopted in 1886, the division of the Fergana province's districts into administrative precincts (uchastkas) and the assignment of their management to appointed bailiffs (pristavs) led to the division of the Kokand district into such precincts as well.

The city of Kokand was divided into four dahas, each governed by an aksakal (elder). The dahas were further divided into neighborhoods (mahallas), which were administered by ellikbashis (local leaders).

The dacha elders, who reported to the chief aksakal, collected taxes from the population with the help of mirshabs (local enforcers).

In general, local representatives were mainly responsible for tasks such as collecting taxes and conveying administrative orders to the public — in essence, performing lower-level executive functions. Administrative and economic affairs were handled by the district (uezd) head.

In 1896, the position of chief aksakal was replaced by a city police department. A police chief, appointed from among Russians, assumed the functions of city head and maintained strict control over the old part of the city, where the local population resided. A significant portion — 24.1 percent — of the city's revenue was allocated to funding the police service. .

It is important to note that the creation and delineation of administrative precincts (uchastkas) were carried out without taking into account the specific local conditions of the regions. These divisions lacked clearly defined administrative and territorial boundaries.

As a result, the interests of the local population were

often harmed, and in some cases, residents were forced to pay taxes twice.

Local authorities, instead of providing salaries, compensated tax collectors by awarding them 5 to even 10 percent of the total amount of taxes collected .

For a certain period, the activities of the aksakals were overseen by a chief aksakal selected from the local population and appointed by the military governor.

The chief aksakal also held supreme police authority in the city, commanding the regular police officers—mirshabs—who were also recruited from among the local population. In terms of their jurisdiction, city aksakals were considered equivalent to volost administrators (village-level officials).

Beginning in 1896, the position of chief aksakal in the cities of the Fergana region was abolished. As previously mentioned, the colonial administration justified this decision by claiming that chief aksakals—being appointed from among the local population—were obstructing the strengthening of police control in the cities.

They argued that control over the local population should be transferred directly into the hands of the Russian administration. As a result, the position of chief aksakal was abolished, and their responsibilities were transferred to the city police department. It should be noted that in practice, the politzmeister of Kokand effectively held the position of city head. Their primary assistant in this role was the qorboshi—a representative from the local population appointed by the military governor. The qorboshi was mainly responsible for maintaining police control in the “old city.” It is important to mention that, overall, the qorboshi, along with the city aksakals, ellikbashis, and onbashis, served alongside Russian officials in implementing the colonial policies of Tsarism in the city. The colonial administration continued to strengthen the police regime in order to keep the local population in subjugation. By the early 20th century, the power and presence of the police administration had grown significantly.

This situation intensified even further by 1911, when criminal investigation departments were established under the district administrations in the Fergana region, including in the city of Kokand, with the aim of strengthening police control over the population

It should be emphasized that the Tsarist government, in organizing the administration of Turkestan—its remote colony—largely preserved the existing old feudal structures, either without any change or through only partial reforms.

These structures were considered a key tool for



maintaining economic, political, and cultural backwardness in the region. Judicial and civil matters were handled by qazis, who resolved all cases in accordance with Islamic Sharia law. The qazis were elected for a term of three years during elections held at the volost (rural district) level. Certain contentious issues, such as water disputes, were resolved through Sharia law. However, based on its colonial policy, the Tsarist government prohibited qazis (Islamic judges) from handling major criminal cases. All criminal matters were assigned exclusively to Russian courts. People's courts (folk courts) had the authority to sentence offenders to imprisonment for up to three months.

Sentences exceeding that term were subject to approval by the military governor upon petition from the people's court. In addition, qazis had the right to impose fines of up to 300 rubles, imprison those unable to pay the fines, assign them to various forms of labor, and—under orders from the higher regional administration—exile individuals deemed “dangerous to the city” to remote areas.

Due to the absence of a unified procedural code in the qazi courts, their proceedings were often disorganized. In 1894, Governor-General Baron Vrevskiy approved special instructions for the “people's judges” (i.e., for the qazi courts). Additionally, on November 28, 1902, the Governor-General issued a special decree aimed at expediting judicial proceedings. Based on these instructions and decrees, the proceedings in the qazi courts became somewhat more regulated. From those responsible for cases heard in the qazikhana (qazi courts), mirzas collected fees of 10-12 tiyin, while yasavuls took 25 tiyin. In addition, bribes were obtained from defendants through various means.

Because of this, intense competition arose before elections to the position of qazi. Each candidate nominated for the qazi position spent a considerable amount of money not only to gain the support of government officials and administrators but also to win over the ellikbashis (local community leaders). Later on, these efforts were multiplied several times over as they extorted money from the general population.

According to K.K. Palen's observations, becoming a qazi (judge) or not was somewhat dependent on the voters, as qazis would buy off and court the “voters.”

The position of qazi was typically held by influential and resourceful individuals. “The people's court became a battleground for candidates to take revenge on each other, while the population itself turned into a tool exploited by the elected officials. Those elected would strive with great effort during their judicial

terms to recoup, and even exceed, the substantial expenses they had incurred during their election campaigns”. Thus, the so-called “people's courts,” notorious for their corruption and bribery, defended the interests of the ruling classes and sought to maintain oppressive relations. The Tsarist government did not establish special judicial bodies under its direct control in Turkestan and its cities; instead, judicial matters were entrusted to military commanders.

However, later, according to the regulations of 1886 and 1889, the Tsarist government established the following judicial bodies in Turkestan: the magistrate's court (mirovoy sudya, conciliatory judge), i.e., the provincial city judge, the second district courts, and the Tashkent judicial chamber.

Magistrate judges (mirovoy sudya) handled the main cases in the cities.

Although magistrate judges in Russian provinces were established through elections, here they were appointed by the Ministry of Justice based on division into cities and districts, and were subordinate to the district court. Officials were very afraid of the local working population and severely punished even their slightest politically motivated actions by involving military and district courts.

Participants in popular protest movements were severely punished. In the region, the Tsarist officials and their judicial apparatus increasingly resorted to ruthless imprisonment, execution, and exile of many people. For example, in his report on the revision of Turkestan in 1882–1883, Senator F.K. Girs noted that abuses of power by district, city, volost, and village administrations had intensified everywhere. This situation was also acknowledged later by K.K. Palen, who conducted inspections in Turkestan and its cities.

Overall, the total number of administrative bodies increased. For instance, in the management of the Kokand district, apart from the district head, there were 9 officials in various positions in 1886.

By 1900, under the authority of the district head, there was one assistant, a bailiff, assigned bailiffs for the departments of Bachkir, Kenagas, Konibodom, and the surrounding city areas, two police bailiffs for Kokand city, a secretary, two messengers, one written translator, district and city doctors, a nurse, a city architect, and two consular clerks — making a total of 16 positions.

Thus, although the administrative and governance system of the Turkestan region took a definite form by the 1890s, the issue of the administrative apparatus in governing the region remained a subject of much debate until 1917. As a result of the Tsarist government

applying the principle of "military civil administration" in the region, a military-officer style was effectively established, which gave this system a distinctly "military-bureaucratic" character aligned with Tsarism's colonial policy.

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