THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AN UZBEK VILLAGE IN THE 20-30S OF THE XX CENTURY: FROM REFORMS TO COLLECTIVIZATION

Nodira R. Makhkamova

ABSTRACT

Objectives: The primary objectives of this article center on analyzing the socio-economic situation in an Uzbek village during the 20-30s of the XX century. The study aims to understand the impact of Soviet power on rural areas, specifically focusing on the presence and influence of the government during the initial years. Additionally, the objectives include examining the period of reforms in the 20s that led to significant improvements in the economic indicators of the agricultural sector.

Methods: The research methodology involves a historical analysis of the socio-economic conditions in the Uzbek village during the specified time frame. It includes a detailed examination of archival documents, historical records, and relevant literature to trace the changes in the rural landscape. The methods also entail a closer look at the policies implemented during the 20s, such as reforms and their effects, leading up to the initiation of collectivization and dispossession in 1929.

Results: The findings of the study highlight the initially unfelt presence of Soviet power in rural areas during the first years. The 20s, marked by reforms, saw significant economic improvements in the agricultural sector. However, the results underscore the detrimental impact of the subsequent policies of collectivization and dispossession in 1929. These policies transformed the role of the Uzbek farmer from an owner to a worker, leading to the destruction of the institution of private property and causing a tragic disruption in the once peaceful social life of the village.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the study reveals the dual nature of the Soviet influence on the Uzbek village during the 20-30s. While the initial years brought about positive economic changes through reforms, the subsequent policies had severe consequences, destroying the institution of private property and disrupting the social fabric of the village. The conclusion emphasizes the profound impact of governmental policies on local farmers and the transformation of their socio-economic status during this crucial period.

Keywords: village, farmers, collective farms, state farms, communes, land and water reforms, new economic policy, collectivization, dispossession.

Received: 04/09/2023
Accepted: 04/12/2023
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i12.2521

* Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Department of History of Uzbekistan, Tashkent University of Information Technologies named after Muhammad al-Khwarizmi, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, E-mail: mahkamova54@gmail.com, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8883-6713
A SITUAÇÃO SOCIOECONÔMICA NUMA ALDEIA UZBEQUE NOS ANOS 20-30 DO SÉCULO XX: DAS REFORMAS À COLETIVIZAÇÃO

RESUMO

Objetivos: Os objetivos principais deste artigo centravam-se na análise da situação socioeconômica de uma aldeia uzbeque durante os anos 20-30 do século XX. O estudo visa compreender o impacto do poder soviético nas áreas rurais, focando especificamente na presença e influência do governo durante os anos iniciais. Além disso, os objetivos incluem a análise do período de reformas na década de 20 que levou a melhorias significativas nos indicadores econômicos do setor agrícola.

Métodos: A metodologia de pesquisa envolve uma análise histórica das condições socioeconômicas na aldeia uzbeque durante o período de tempo especificado. Inclui um exame detalhado de documentos de arquivo, registros históricos e literatura relevante para rastrear as mudanças na paisagem rural. Os métodos também implicam um olhar mais atento sobre as políticas implementadas durante os anos 20, tais como reformas e seus efeitos, levando ao início da coletivização e desapropriação em 1929.

Resultados: Os resultados do estudo destacam a presença inicialmente não sentida do poder soviético nas áreas rurais durante os primeiros anos. Os anos 20, marcados por reformas, viram melhorias econômicas significativas no setor agrícola. No entanto, os resultados ressaltam o impacto prejudicial das políticas subsequentes de coletivização e desapropriação em 1929. Estas políticas transformaram o papel do agricultor uzbeque de proprietário para trabalhador, levando à destruição da instituição da propriedade privada e causando uma trágica perturbação na vida social outrora pacífica da aldeia.

Conclusão: Em conclusão, o estudo revela a dupla natureza da influência soviética na aldeia uzbeque durante os anos 20-30. Enquanto os anos iniciais trouxeram mudanças econômicas positivas através de reformas, as políticas subsequentes tiveram graves consequências, destruindo a instituição da propriedade privada e perturbando o tecido social da aldeia. A conclusão enfatiza o profundo impacto das políticas governamentais sobre os agricultores locais e a transformação de seu status socioeconômico durante esse período crucial.

Palavras-chave: aldeia, fazendeiros, fazendas coletivas, fazendas estatais, comunas, reformas agrárias e hídricas, nova política econômica, coletivização, desapropriação.

1 INTRODUCTION

In 1917, the rural population of Turkestan numbered 5,335,600 people and accounted for 83.6% of the total population [1.180]. Its economic situation by this time had deteriorated significantly. However, this had virtually no effect on his internal social relationships. By the time of the revolutionary events of 1917, there was no mood of pronounced social hatred and the communal foundations and the comprehensive influence of the religion of Islam were still strong. It was the absence of acute social antagonism in the village that did not cause a widespread agrarian movement in it in 1917 and was, as workers of the Soviet apparatus noted in the mid-20s, the main reason why “during the full height of a revolution of unprecedented size, fundamentally breaking all the foundations of the state system and the usual way of life, the natural desire of the
peasants for the land did not find a way out, was not expressed in the seizure of the Bai’s possessions, and here completely unearned possessions remained” [2.11].

For the Bolsheviks who came to power, the peasants were a vast layer of the petty bourgeoisie. Due to their individual way of farming and the social psychology of the owners, they, like handicraftsmen, artisans, and traders, were for them a constant source of enemies of the new government. The Marxist program assumed a radical restructuring of the structure and psychology of the peasantry. The individual peasant had to disappear as a social unit of Soviet society. He was to be replaced by an agricultural worker working on large collective farms, on socialized land with socialized equipment. Therefore, the entire agrarian policy of the Soviet government was aimed at “de-peasantizing” the village and its “socialization”. In the general plan of implementing this program in the first years of Soviet power, its main efforts were aimed at creating socialist forms of economic management in the village; formation of new social structures; strengthening the social support represented by the poorest part of the farmers, increasing their social activity; every possible limitation of the development opportunities for individual dehkan farms, and subsequently their complete elimination as a social category.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretically, in Turkestan there were a number of factors that could become generative in the implementation of the Bolshevik program to create collective farms on socialized land, making the transition from individual farming to collective farming less painful - the small size of dehkan farms; intensive farming; high population density; well-developed collectivism skills stemming from communal land and water management, joint construction and repair of irrigation systems; widespread custom of mutual assistance and mutual assistance, etc. But, in fact, it was precisely these factors that became the reason that the farmers of Turkestan in the first years of Soviet power remained committed to the old economic system and, in their overwhelming majority, did not support the measures of the Soviet government for the socialist reorganization of their work and life. The farmer chose to stay to work on his small plot of land, skillfully using every piece of it and firmly knowing that his rural society would come to his aid in difficult times. Moreover, during this period the Soviet state did little to help farmers, and the created communes and agricultural cooperatives were poor.
Since there were no large field plantation farms in Turkestan, in 1918–1919. Mostly large gardens, vineyards, and nurseries were nationalized. At the same time, along with large farms of 200–500 dessiatines, smaller land holdings of 50–70 dessiatines were very often nationalized [3]. In total, by the spring of 1919, there were 105 nationalized gardens and vineyards with an area of 3,149 des.

The nationalization of these farms changed little in land relations in the village. She once again emphasized the specifics of land relations in the Turkestan village and confirmed that there was not even the very concept of the possibility of seizing someone else’s land.

During the same period, new economic forms in agriculture appeared in the village, hitherto unknown to the farmers - collective farms. The peculiarity of their creation during this period was that they were created not by order, but by voluntary agreement of a group of individual farmers, usually the poorest. The first collective farms were created in the form of communes, labor artels, and agricultural partnerships. They were poorly organized, each farm had its own charter, most of them were based on the egalitarian principle of distribution - “from each according to his strength, to each according to his needs,” which was incomprehensible to the farmers and alien to their psychology. The main problem was their economic insolvency due to the narrowness of their social base. As a rule, they were poor peasants and could only exist with the help of the state, which itself was in a difficult financial situation.

During the period 1919 - early 1920, 150 communes and artels were created in the Tashkent district alone [4.180]. By the end of the summer of 1919, there were over 400 collective farms in the republic, which had 35 thousand dessiatines of land and united up to 40 thousand people. Their situation was very difficult, in most cases they were poorly suited to the tasks facing them. This was especially true for communes. Therefore, in the summer of 1919, it was decided to move from the creation of communes to the creation of collective farms in the form of agricultural cooperatives and partnerships, in which the distribution of products would be made according to the principle “to each according to his work”. But the overwhelming majority of them were not examples of new forms of socialist management.

Party and Soviet bodies were focused in the Turkestan village only on the poor, in whom they saw the social support of their power and the basis for the socialist reorganization of land use. In order to make the poor their allies, the Third Congress of
the Communist Party of Turkestan, as its immediate task, determined the need to urgently “drive a wedge between the village kulaks and bays on the one hand and the poor peasants on the other” [5.47]. “In order to attract the farmers to their side,” writes the American researcher J. Wheeler, “the Soviet government had to create an artificial revolution in the village, since there had never been class differences here, and the first task of the authorities was to instill a sense of resentment in the minds of the farmers and through widespread propaganda campaign to create among the have-nots a feeling of hatred towards the have-bys” [6.134-135]. The Soviet authorities deliberately pitted poor farmers against diligent farmers and provoked a split in the once united rural society. They called on farmers not to pay “not a single grain, not a single penny” to the owners of the land for rent. With the permission of the authorities, the poor began to requisition and confiscate agricultural equipment, seeds, draft animals, etc. from rich fellow villagers, and impose significant amounts of indemnity on them. Moreover, they took indemnities and confiscated property not only from rich bays, but also from middle peasants who had 5-6 dessiatines of land.

3 METHODOLOGY

To implement the policy of class split and form its social base, the Soviet government in the summer of 1918 began to create “class organizations based on class” in the village - committees of the poor. In the autumn of 1919 they were replaced by unions of the poor. They were given the right to identify the size of the land of wealthy fellow villagers, the presence of surplus agricultural equipment and livestock. On the basis of committees and unions of the poor, the “Koshchi” Union arose in 1920. With the help of all these organizations, the Soviet government slowly but purposefully destroyed the internal social life of the village, the mentality of the rural population of the region.

In general, the activities of the Soviet government in the village in the first years of its formation did not contribute to the stabilization and improvement of the situation of farmers. The situation of cotton farmers was significantly worsened by such measures of the Soviet government as the cessation of banks issuing loans to cotton firms, the liquidation of small loan partnerships after the liquidation of the Turkestan People’s Bank, and extremely low purchase prices for cotton.

Before beginning broad agrarian reforms in Turkestan, the Soviet government had to eliminate the remnants of the colonial resettlement policy of tsarism. Russian settlers,
who made up only 8% of rural residents in the agriculture of Turkestan, owned almost half of all cultivated land and were provided with land 15 times more than the indigenous population [7.116]. It was necessary, as J. Wheeler wrote, “to remove the existing hatred that the Muslim population felt towards the Russian settlers who seized their lands” [8.135]. The land and water reform of 1921–1922 was designed to solve this problem. She also proposed to confiscate land from non-working farms, as well as monastic, church and waqf lands. Along the way, the reform was supposed to solve the problem of transferring the nomadic population to settled life. The reform was carried out very quickly and already in the fall of 1922 its work was stopped. As a result of the reform, 150 villages, 175 farms, 95 settlements of Russian settlers were liquidated, and 8,084 of their families were evicted. More than 250 thousand acres of land were confiscated from the kulaks-migrants, who transferred 12.6 thousand farm laborers and poor peasants [9.5]. In a certificate from the State Planning Committee of the TASSR, the XII Congress of Councils of Turkestan was informed that as a result of the reform, 1 million 768 thousand 970 dessiatines of land entered the land fund, of which 659.7 thousand dessiatines were distributed and 15,799 dessiatines were developed. Of these, 9.5 thousand dessiatines were allocated to the settled Uzbek population for 3 thousand farms [3].

During the reform, the social task of transferring the nomadic and semi-nomadic population to a sedentary lifestyle was very painfully solved. The presence of this social stratum was one of the specific features of Turkestan. In 1920, there were 253.5 thousand nomadic farms in the republic, which accounted for 29.5% of all dekhkan farms with a population of 1 million 231.7 thousand people or 28.9% of rural residents. They owned 284 thousand dessiatines of land. By 1920, compared to 1917, the number of farms decreased by 25.3%, the population - by 31.3%, draft animals - by 73.4%, land - by 45.5% [10.23-25]. The Soviet government considered the transfer of nomadic households to a sedentary lifestyle as a transition to a higher level of social development. But at the same time, she did not take into account that for the nomadic population this would be extremely painful, since there would not just be a change in economic activity, but, covering all aspects of the life of the nomadic population, it would entail fundamental changes in their traditions, psychology, and professional skills. This process was all the more painful because it was carried out, like all measures of the Soviet government at that time, in a hurry and as part of another political “campaign”. The reform provided land management to 8.5 thousand settled Kyrgyz farms, to which 143 thousand dessiatines
were allocated. land; 1232 nomadic Kyrgyz households were allocated 20.3 thousand
dessiatines; land-poor Kyrgyz societies were allocated 350 thousand dessiatines of land
for pasturing livestock [3].

The reform of 1921–1922, having solved its main task, did not make significant
changes to the land relations of the village. The bulk of the farmers did not oppose the
bays and did not support, to the extent expected by the authorities, the policy of limiting
the bai’s land ownership. But, as the American researcher M. Rivkin wrote, “it was
readily accepted by farmers because of its anti-Russian, anti-colonial orientation.”
[11.63]. Its political resonance was well characterized by another American scientist J.
Wheeler. He wrote: “By limiting the first stage of agrarian reform mainly to the
elimination of Russian colonialism in Turkestan, the new regime succeeded in creating
the impression, which it had previously failed to do, that it had a real intention to eliminate
national inequality” [8.135].

The situation in the village began to change in a positive di-
rection after the
proclamation of the NEP, which created the conditions for individual farmers to once
again become active independent economic entities. It should be noted that the revival of
all branches of agriculture, which began in Turkestan in 1922,
was carried out not by
collective and state farms (there were few of them and they were not economically
wealthy), but by individual farmers. They were helped by such NEP reform measures as
replacing food, feed and raw materials allocations with a tax in kind; permission, under
certain conditions, to lease land and hired labor; allowing free exchange; the introduction
of a single natural and then agricultural tax; abolition of the monopoly on the purchase of
cotton within the republic and fixed prices for cotton; introduction of economic incentives
for farmers growing cotton; widespread development of credit and agricultural
cooperation.

In 1923, for the first time since 1916, a relatively small, but still, increase in sown
areas and harvested agricultural products began in the agriculture of the republic. The
successful restoration process was hampered by the dominance of a purely class approach
in solving acute socio-economic problems. A system of rental relations and the use of
hired labor was permitted on a strictly class basis. They were allowed only for “labor
farms”. The tax system was built on the same principle, when the poor paid little or were
completely exempt from taxes, but the total amount of taxes was compensated by wealthy
households. The class principle of tax policy in Turkestan was clearly directed against
strong owners, who for the most part were not “parasites”, because even if they had hired temporary workers, they worked in the field on an equal basis with them.

The class principle was also placed at the forefront of state cooperative policy. The Soviet government viewed cooperation as a means of involving small commodity producers in socialism, as well as a social tool for crowding out the private sector. This was especially evident when admitting members of the cooperative, when priority was given to the poor (wealthy farmers had to make as a first contribution an amount 2 times higher than the contributions of the middle peasants and 12 times higher than the contributions of the poor), as well as in issuing loans, when the agricultural bank issued loans to members cooperatives at 12%, and individuals at 37–39%. However, despite these negative aspects, cooperation, as a form of economic cooperation between farmers and the state, was positively received by individual farmers in Turkestan. Moreover, they were accustomed by communal relations to joint work, which made it easier for them to transition to cooperation, in which it was easier to introduce more progressive forms of agriculture. That is why the cooperative movement became widespread in the agriculture of Turkestan in the early 20s. Along with credit, reclamation and agricultural production cooperation developed. They allowed the small owner to apply the simplest forms of the social principle of management, although the class approach artificially alienated a significant part of the working social groups of farmers from active participation in the economic development of society and, as a result, slowed down its pace [12].

Thus, in the early 20s, the social structure of the village, compared to 1917, underwent virtually no changes; agriculture was still dominated by individual small dekhkan farms.

A characteristic feature in the social relations of the village during this period were the first steps of the Soviet government to introduce socialist elements into them by the formation of new social strata - collective farmers and state farm workers, associated with new economic sectors of the economy - collective farms and state farms. But there were very few of them, they were economically weak, poorly organized and did not play any significant role either in the economy of the village or in its social relations.

The Soviet government was firmly convinced that the dominance of small-scale commodity production in agriculture was incompatible with the ideas and plans for building a socialist society, therefore it was necessary to actively introduce socialist production relations in the Uzbek village. But first, it was necessary to completely solve
The pressing problems of land management - to liquidate large land ownership and allocate land to landless and land-poor farms, to rouse the village poor to fight against rich fellow villagers. The land and water reform was designed to solve these problems. Preparing for its implementation, Soviet and party bodies had extremely scanty information about the real economic situation of the Uzbek village, land and social relations, the degree of social differentiation, and the positions of Soviet power in it. To obtain the necessary information, in 1925, by decision of the Sredazburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, a sample survey of villages in the Central Asian region was carried out. In Uzbekistan, 9 average-typical volosts were examined (Niazbek, Khankin, Kitab, Vabkent, Balykchin, Isfara, Karakul, Assaka, Chimbay) in the Tashkent, Fergana, Khorezm, Kashkadarya and Zerafshan regions. The materials of these surveys provided surprisingly objective information for that time about the real state of the economy and social relations of the Uzbek village in the mid-20s.

The party workers who carried out the survey were forced to admit that by 1925 in the Uzbek village “the old land relations, regulated by Sharia and adat, remained almost untouched, both in form and in essence,” since “the revolution had not yet thoroughly shake and destroy, the centuries-old social structure of the village” and “the population of all volosts, regardless of the degree of their development and geographical location, lives according to the old traditions and laws of the community,” and “the conservative consciousness of the Uzbek farmer has not yet realized that the new government is called upon to represent and protect him interests” [13].

Facts showed that in the mid-20s, the Uzbek village was still in a difficult situation caused by the First World War, the coup of 1917, and subsequent political and economic measures of the Soviet government. There were many abandoned farms and empty lands (in the Balykchinskaya volost in 1925, only 15.2% of the usable land was sown), there was a shortage of draft animals and equipment (in the villages of the Niazbek volost there were 50% of such farms) [14]. But, at the same time, there were also positive changes in the restoration of agriculture. In general, most of the volosts restored their farms to 2/3 of the size of 1917, irrigation structures were restored, and sown areas were revived. Thus, in the villages of Balykchinskaya volost in 1925, compared to 1917, the share of cotton in the total composition of sown crops increased from 45% to 53%, grain - from 9.7% to 10.3%, melons - from 3.8% to 6.5% [15]; in the Isfara volost, cotton crops increased from
4.6% to 8%, rice - from 25% to 70%, dzhugars - from 5% to 10%. Livestock production recovered more slowly.

The internal life in the village during this period, according to the definition of the commission members, was characterized by “religiosity, witchcraft, the power of rural elders, the guild system in crafts, comprehensive Sharia norms,” and all this formed “a Chinese wall, through which sprouts broke through with great difficulty, launched by the Soviet school, medicine and agronomic help,” but these “sprouts of the new made their way not from under the ruins of the old, but from under the still strong centuries-old massifs” [13].

Such arrays were, first of all, religion and traditions, which still strictly regulated internal social relations in the Uzbek village, as before 1917. Religion permeated not only the private life and rural life of farmers, but also village social relations. All meetings and sessions of a public nature, as a rule, took place in the mosque after the service. Public opinion was formed there, affairs and news were discussed. “The Soviet principle of separation of church and state,” noted members of the commission, “was still far from being understood by either the clergy or the population. It was widely believed that the Soviet state should support religion, as well as cotton growing”.

Religion and traditions also determined the public morality of the Uzbek village. European party workers (and they were the overwhelming majority of the commission) were simply amazed by the decorum and good morals of the peasants, who had deeply ingrained themselves in their consciousness, as well as the politeness and courtesy in their treatment among themselves and with strangers, even with “little” and dependent ones. “The darkest farmer, it was noted in the commission’s materials, “has what can be called good manners in the serious meaning of the word... Comprehensive etiquette exists for all occasions in personal life and community life: everything is precisely described, every gesture, every word.”. In addition, all European inspectors unanimously noted the amazing diligence of the Uzbek farmer: “A great worker, of which there are few, the farmer has deeply rooted instincts of the owner, which historically developed on the basis of ownership of equipment and land, work on it until exhaustion and skills in this work bordering on the art of a skilled, talented master” [16].

In the Uzbek village in the mid-20s, just as in the first post-revolutionary years, class differentiation was poorly developed. The commission noted that “social contradictions were obscured in the minds of their bearers.” The centuries-old dominance
of traditions in the internal social relations of the village determined the rule according to which one must always protect “one’s own,” and “one’s own” is a relative, a fellow countryman. It was these relations that for a long time made it very difficult for Soviet workers to create poor peasant assets in the villages. Traditions determined the desire of farmers for peaceful resolution of conflicts. As the commission noted, “even such pressing life issues as water issues did not cause a trip with ketmen from one village to another. A way out of this situation was sought peacefully through petitions and repeated negotiations” [13].

Uzbek farmers sacredly respected the institution of private property and never agreed to the unauthorized seizure of someone else’s land, guided by the rule - “the property of a true believer is the blood of a true believer.” The commission noted that there was no unauthorized seizure of land even in the villages of the Fergana Valley, where the fire of the national liberation movement burned especially strongly. There were many empty plots of land here, the owners of which had moved to quieter areas, and this land would have been abundantly sufficient for all farms in need. However, farmers cultivated only rented land, and in not a single village was there a single case of unauthorized plowing of empty land. Thus, in the villages of Khoja-Abad, Kum-Tepe, Tulk-Aisu of the Balykchi volost (Fergana region), out of 876 dessiatinas of arable land, 250 dessiatines were empty, belonging to absent owners. Of these, only 9 dessiatines were sown, rented by the tearikers. At the same time, 11.2% of the farms in these villages, in need of land, rented it from their fellow villagers [15].

Nothing changed with the advent of the new government in the position of the dehkan woman, which, as before, was regulated by the Koran and Sharia. In the house, the woman housewife occupied a dominant position, managing the entire household, but in public life she still had no rights and had to cover her face outside the house. In none of the surveyed regions was work carried out among women dekhkans in any form. Moreover, as the commission noted, this issue was not even raised by anyone.

In contrast to Soviet historiography, which claimed that in the Uzbek village by the mid-20s, the position of Soviet power was quite strong, the materials of the Sredazburo commission indicated that due to a lack of funds and trained personnel, its presence there was practically not felt. What is characteristic is that this situation was not only in such remote regions as Kashkadarya, Khorezm, Bukhara, but even in the capital Tashkent region. Thus, in the materials of the survey of the Niazbek volost, the center of
which, the village of Kibray, was located only 16 km from Tashkent, it was noted that its population “had no idea about the new laws of the Soviet government on land, did not know why taxes were taken from them, where the collected money is being spent”. All residents of villages took part in elections to village councils, without even suspecting that the new laws determined the category of persons deprived of voting rights. Over the past seven years, all the “activities” of the Soviet government in the Niazbek voïodst were manifested in the opening of two Soviet 4-grade schools, two educational schools, one medical assistant station and several red teahouses with illiterate teahouse owners. “These teahouses, the report noted, differed from ordinary ones only in that they displayed several revolutionary posters in a Russian language incomprehensible to the population” [14]. And in the villages of the Khankinsky voïodst of the Khorezm region there was practically no Soviet power at all (it was still in the hands of the Khan’s aksakal apparatus), only one Soviet primary school was created and there was not a single medical assistant station [16]. In the Kitab voïodst, Soviet power “in most cases was understood as an improved power of the old type, without imagining its social essence.” This detail is interesting - “the big bais boasted of their wealth in front of the commission members; they not only did not hide their land holdings, but even sought to show off them, being confident that this should elevate them in the eyes of the center workers. It never occurred to them that there could be a government that puts the interests of the poor at the center of its attention.” All the events that took place in the republic in the voïodst were perceived only through distorted rumors, “no one even heard about the formation of the USSR and about national delimitation there” [13] .

The Sredazburo commission, consisting of experienced party workers, seriously analyzed the situation in the Uzbek village on the eve of the land and water reform, and concluded: “it is necessary to approach the destruction of the old village very carefully, skillfully calculating broad achievements for many years, since the position of Soviet power in the village very weak, and the old traditions have very strong roots in the consciousness of farmers and in their internal social relations”. Unfortunately, it was not taken into account by the party leadership of the country and the republic, and three years later a broad campaign was launched to revolutionize the village, introducing farmers to socialism through collectivization.

The commission's materials not only made it possible to get an idea of the economic and internal social situation of the Uzbek village in the mid-20s, but also
provided an opportunity to obtain more complete and real information about its social structure and to determine the balance of class forces. First of all, they showed that the division of rural residents into poor, middle peasants and bays, only on the basis of the recorded sizes of their land plots, distorts the characteristics of the social structure of the village. It was officially believed that the poorest part of the village, the rural proletariat, consisted of landless farmers. But in this group, statistics included, along with farmers who do not have land, also farmers who do not have crops. In fact, these were completely different social categories. If the landless farms were truly the rural proletariat, then those without crops, on the contrary, in most cases, were wealthy owners who had land, but did not cultivate it, but rented it out. In this case, the social face of the village changed noticeably. For example, in the Niazbek volost of the Tashkent region, in the surveyed 586 farms, 85 farms (14.5%) were considered poor because they did not have land and crops. But of these, only 45 farms did not have land and were truly poor, and 41 farms had land, but did not have crops, since their owners rented out their land, then it turned out that the poverty in these villages was not 14.5%, a 7.6%, and the number of wealthy households increased by 6.9% [14]. In the Kitab volost of the Kashkadarya region, in the surveyed 638 farms, 157 farms (24.6%) were taken into account without land and without crops, that is, the poor, but of these, only 106 farms did not have land and the poor, thus, amounted to 16.5% [13]. And this picture was in all the surveyed volosts. This allows us to assert that the official statistics about the severe impoverishment of the Uzbek village in the second half of the 20s were clearly exaggerated, but they served as the main argument of the party and the Soviet government for the need for collectivization of agriculture in the republic.

The commission's materials also showed that the real majority (50-60%) in the surveyed villages were middle peasant farms, and the middle peasant was a fairly stable figure during this period. He did not rent out his land, but used it all for its intended purpose, and only sometimes, if the family had enough workers, he rented another 1-2 dessiatines of land and used hired labor to a limited extent (only for hilling crops or harvesting). The official authorities called such strong farms of the middle peasants “prosperous labor” farms. They were the main producers of commercial products and a decisive force in the restoration of agriculture in the 20s of the XX century.

The commission’s materials provided very important information about the wealthy group within the population of the village - the bai, which included farms with
more than seven acres of land. First of all, it must be said that in the surveyed farms there were no recorded owners of large land plots of 40-50 dessiatines. This, of course, did not mean that there were none of them in the republic at all, but it indicated that there were extremely few of them and they in no way determined the picture of the land management of the village. Basically, these buys owned 7-10-15 dessiatines, rarely up to 20 dessiatines. By Russian standards, these were just ordinary kulak farms. In Uzbekistan, they were called bai “prosperous non-labor farms” because they used hired labor and rented out excess land. But in essence, most of these farms could not be considered “unlabored” just by these purely external signs. Their owners most often worked in the fields along with hired workers, who were usually hired because of the lack of adult workers in the family and they cultivated no more than 5-6 dessiatines of land for themselves, and rented out the surplus. Let’s give 2 typical examples. The farm of Abdurakhman Abduvali (kishlak Khoja-Abad, Balykchinsky volost) had 22.5 tanapas of land (3.75 dessiatines) and rented 3 tanapas (0.5 dessiatines) of land, had 1 working horse, 2 working bulls, 1 cow, cart, 1 omach, 1 mala, 3 ketmen, 2 urak, 1 pitchfork, 1 shovel. The family consisted of 6 people and had 2 adult workers (father 47 years old and son 18 years old). This farm was considered “prosperous labor”, but since it rented little land at any time it could be called “unlabored”. The farm of Yuldashbay Pirnazarov from the same village had 76 tanaps (12.5 dessiatines) of land, 1 work horse, 2 work bulls, 1 cow, cart, 2 omacha, 1 mala, 4 ketmen, 4 urak, 2 pitchforks, 1 shovel. The family also consisted of 6 people, but there was only one adult worker (a 28-year-old son). Therefore, the family hired 1 employee per year. The land was managed as follows: 25 tanapas (4.1 dess.) sowed themselves, 25 tanapas were handed over to the chayrikker on a half-rate basis, 23 tanapas of land were empty (8 tanapas due to a lack of labor and 15 tanapas due to a lack of water). This farm was considered a “prosperous non-labor” farm, although in essence it was a normal labor farm, in which, in fact, 4 des. the owner himself worked next to the hired worker, since the family did not have a second man of working age [15].

Thus, the line for defining “prosperous labor” and “prosperous non-labor” farms was very thin and opened up enormous scope for making subjective decisions when carrying out land cuts during the land and water reform, and especially when compiling lists of kulaks in the process of political campaigns for “dispossession” and “liquidation of the kulaks as a class”.
Land and water reform 1925-1927 has not yet solved the problems of socialist reconstruction of the village. It was supposed to eliminate polar groups of land management, allocating land to farmers who do not have it, or have very little, at the expense of farms that have a large amount of it. At the same time, party decisions correctly emphasized that when carrying out the reform, the middle peasant should not be affected, so as not to interrupt “the process of accumulation that has emerged in the progressive middle peasant economy” [17.137]. But in practice, when carrying out land management work, this approach to the middle peasant was most often violated.

The main blow was the reform of 1925-1927. was supposed to hit large landholdings of the “landlord type.” But there were initially few of these in Uzbekistan and they were mostly liquidated in 1918. Therefore, during this reform, the farms of small bais, to some extent similar to Russian kulaks, were subject to expropriation. And since, according to the decision of the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, “a large-kulak group using hired labor for exploitative purposes” was equated with a bai [18.137], then, in essence, the reform eliminated not only large and medium-sized farmers, but also “prosperous non-labor farmers,” partially affecting “prosperous labor farmers” who use even daily wage labor. Thus, land reform in Uzbekistan, as in the entire Central Asian region, anticipated the subsequent liquidation of kulak and wealthy farms during the years of mass collectivization.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The reform affected 23,941 farms, of which 21,298 had land in excess of the established norm and were subject to cuts (in total, 248,046 dessiatines of land entered the allocation fund, almost 66 thousand landless and land-poor farmers were provided with housing) [19.101]. It made noticeable changes in the social structure of the village, as evidenced by the following data from the People’s Commissariat of Agriculture of the Republic for its three leading regions - Tashkent, Fergana and Samarkand.

The structure of the Uzbek village of Tashkent and Fergana. Samarkand regions before and after land and water reform 1925-1927 (V %) [20.50]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Before and After Reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>landless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before the reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by Authors (2023)
The positive results of the reform were the almost complete elimination of landless farmers and the significant strengthening of the middle peasants, whose share increased to 58.7%. But the problem of allocating land to land-poor farmers remained unresolved, as evidenced by their significant share in the village structure - 36.7%, which decreased by only 2.6%. There was a shortage of almost 1.5 million dessiatines, land for 395 thousand dehkan farms. These lands could only be given to them by resettlement to lands of new irrigation. But the state did not have funds for this in the near future. There were no personnel of land surveyors, hydraulic engineers, or agronomists. Therefore, the solution to this problem hung in the air, and for a long time. There was another difficulty of a psychological nature - due to the ancient attachment of farmers to their village, where they themselves lived and worked, their fathers and grandfathers, even without land, reacted extremely negatively to the very idea of their possible resettlement. This created an atmosphere of social tension in the rural community.

When starting the reform, the party, in addition to the problem of land management, also intended to solve a political problem - to draw a sharp line between rich and poor, to draw low-income farmers into the struggle for land [21.26], that is, to raise the poor against the rich, unleash a class struggle, create an atmosphere of class hatred, and destroy the social unity of the Uzbek village, based on mutual assistance and mutual assistance. But the process of carrying out the reform itself - taking land from the rich and giving it to the poor - did not go as she expected. J. Wheeler writes that “during the reform of 1925-1927. In Uzbekistan, there was resistance not only from former landowners whose land was taken away, but also from the farmers themselves, who often took the side of the former owners, trying to maintain the “status quo”. This was explained by the general psychological mood of the Uzbek farmer, to whom the principles and methods of class enmity were still alien, and therefore “he refused the fruits of the artificially instilled policy of class dictatorship” [22.70]. There were frequent cases when farmers, having taken land, tried to return it, feeling guilty of appropriating someone else’s property. As M. Chokaev writes, “they felt guilty because they were endowed with land not with national power, not with power enjoying national authority, but with power alien to their worldview and national consciousness” [22].

And yet, the reform measures pitted the poor against the wealthy bais, who were liquidated with their help, and even against the middle peasants, to whom the lands they occupied were left, and in some cases additional ones were cut off, while many landless
farmers were left not allocated land, with the prospect resettlement to new irrigated lands. The destructive work was carried out by the land reform assistance commissions generated by the reform, created by the Soviet government in each village from the landless poor, and helping the authorities to identify the Bai farms, the lands and equipment they had hidden. Therefore, it must be said that to some extent, the reform achieved the negative goal set by the party. It caused the appearance of the first social crack in community unity, with which the Uzbek village steadfastly endured the Bolshevik coup of 1917 and the political and economic upheavals of the first half of the 20s. It was significantly expanded by the collectivization of agriculture and the “liquidation of the kulaks as a class”.

In economic terms, the reform played a positive role in solving the problems of raising agriculture. By freeing the charikers from the need to pay for rented land, she gave them the opportunity to use this money to develop the economy. Therefore, despite the liquidation of large farms, there was no decline in agricultural production in the republic, but, on the contrary, there was a process of its steady increase. Participant in the reform in Uzbekistan, economist A.M. Davydov wrote: “Farmers allocated land under the reform, within 1-2 years, were able to more than replace the products of farms liquidated and cut back during the reform process. They energetically developed the land they received and more energetically developed cotton growing on the basis of personal labor, without any significant use of outside labor. The individual farmer, having received the land, demonstrated his ability to work and rationally manage his land” [23.168].

The reform gave farmers the opportunity to actively manage their land. Farms that, due to a lack of labor or equipment, could not cope with agricultural work, were allowed to use hired labor or partially lease the land. Everyone working on their own land was given the freedom to choose forms of land use: to run their farm individually, in a community, to unite in artels, machine or reclamation partnerships, communes, etc. The Land Code did not force anyone to manage the land because he does not want or cannot [24.27]. In 1927, legislation still sought to create firm conditions for the development of agriculture based on labor land use under the conditions of the Soviet state and under its control. The high-quality cotton-producing dekhkan economy of Uzbekistan was, to a much greater extent, than the peasant farms of central Russia producing bread, connected with the market and, through the market, with large socialist industry. It could be more amenable to social regulation by the state, which had the opportunity to support poor and
middle peasant labor farms and limit the growth of large non-labor farms. And by the beginning of the reform, such regulatory levers already had a good practice of working through Uzkhlopkom, which credited dekhkan farms with money and equipment and bought cotton from them. It was a supporting and regulatory body, a powerful link with large socialist industry. His work experience has shown that small suppliers are the most careful payers. “Cotton has a real opportunity to influence the social structure of the village,” wrote Deputy People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the Republic E. Zelkina, “helping small dekhkan farms to rise economically, many times speeding up the process of their cooperation, voluntary, clearly justified by economic feasibility and benefit”.

While reducing the number of landless and rich farmers, the reform did not stop the process of social stratification of the village. But it strengthened the trend of increasing the number of small-scale producers - strong middle peasant farms. This was shown by a nesting census conducted in 1929 in three cotton regions (Buvaidinsky, Gijduvan and Margilansky) and three grain regions (Kassansaisky, Zaaminsky and Payaryksky). Over the two years after the reform, proletarian elements in the surveyed areas decreased (in cotton areas by 1.7%, in grain areas - by 4.8%) and at the same time small-scale commodity elements increased (in cotton areas by 0.9%, in grain areas - by 2.8%) [25,57].

The cooperation of individual farmers played a major role in this process. The past years have shown that they, interested in developing their economy, willingly joined cooperatives, in which their habit of communal relations helped them. Widespread in 1926-1928. The republic received credit, supply and sales, and the simplest forms of production cooperation. In 1927, cooperation covered 63.8% of dekhkan farms, which were given 15 million rubles. loans 20.5% of raw hides, 45.5% of wool, 70.2% of astrakhan fur, 91.5% of cocoons, 63.4% of dried fruits were procured through cooperatives [26]. In 1928, 635 thousand farmers were members of credit cooperation, 609 thousand - industrial cotton-growing cooperatives, 396 thousand - consumer cooperatives, 200 thousand - reclamation cooperatives, 27 thousand - livestock cooperatives, 14.5 thousand - fruit-growing cooperatives [27,5]. Consequently, many households were members of several cooperatives. The rapidly growing cooperation system has become a powerful factor in the economic growth of the village. Through it, the activities of the private sector were regulated, trade turnover was ensured, and government loans were distributed. The strengthening of cooperative principles
contributed to the natural growth of the simplest forms of cooperation into more complex ones, the transition from credit and supply cooperation to production cooperation.

Thus, the Uzbek village in the second half of the 20s, despite the weak position of the Soviet government and its insignificant assistance, represented a fairly strong socio-economic structure in the national economy of the republic, in which the dominant position was occupied by individual farmers. It was they who during this period restored the destroyed agriculture, since the collective farms created were low-power and could not play any significant role in this restoration process.

Land and water reform 1925-1927 Having positively resolved such an important social problem for the village as the provision of land to landless farmers and significantly strengthening the middle peasants, it created real and serious prerequisites for the development of agriculture in the republic through the efforts of individual farmers. During this period, the Uzbek village successfully moved towards more progressive forms of management and wider production cooperation on a voluntary basis. A real path for successful development within the framework of a socialist state opened up before him on the terms of voluntary cooperation with it.

The end of the 20s and the beginning of the 30s were in the history of the republic a period of complete destruction of another, and at the same time the most numerous, stratum of independent producers of the old social structure - individual farmers. For the party, it was completely unacceptable for the further development of agriculture on the basis of strengthening this source of reproduction of the class enemy of socialist society - the rich owner-buy. Therefore, at the end of the 20s, when in the central regions of the country difficulties arose with growing marketable grain in small peasant farms, and in the Central Asian region the problem of land arose for the allocation of almost 400 thousand peasant farms that did not receive land during the land and water reform, the party the leadership stated that small-scale individual peasant farming had exhausted the resources of its capabilities, that they had no future, and that only collective farms could ensure further development of agriculture. This task was accomplished by the complete collectivization of agriculture, which was proclaimed at the XV Congress of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, and the Soviet totalitarian state began to construct the socialist village in Uzbekistan. “Mass collectivization,” notes R.Kh. Aminova, put an end to the NEP at a time when its benefits had only just begun to be realized” [28].
1929, called by the Soviet authorities “the year of the great turning point,” became the starting point for the extermination of the farmer-owner and worker. “The beginning of collectivization,” writes J. Wheeler, “meant the end of the agrarian reforms of the Soviet regime... By destroying the traditional system of land relations and water rights, the Soviet regime cut off the very roots of Muslim society” [8].

Complete collectivization in Uzbekistan was carried out at an accelerated pace without any particular need. It was not the result of the mass voluntary entry of farmers into collective farms, but was a violent action - a tragedy of the Uzbek village, which was not ready for it either economically or psychologically. Simultaneously with complete collectivization, a campaign was launched to “eliminate the kulaks as a class.” These processes were interconnected. Dispossession was supposed to provide a material basis for the created collective farms, since the property of the dispossessed was transferred to the indivisible funds of collective farms as entrance fees of farm laborers and the poor and was expressed in significant amounts (for the period from the end of 1929 to the middle of 1930 it was estimated at 175 million rub. [29.64]). It was mainly the middle peasants who were hit by this policy in Uzbekistan, since large bais were liquidated in the first post-revolutionary years, as well as during the land and water reform of 1925-1927.

and by the beginning of the 30s they did not exist not only as a whole “class”, but even as a significant social stratum. The remaining wealthy bais were dispossessed and liquidated, mainly the strong middle peasants who during this period formed the solid economic basis of the economy of the Uzbek village. As R.H. Aminov, “they dispossessed people who once became the owners of the land and lived and worked on this land... They dispossessed them because their ancestors were deeply religious people and because they expressed their attitude towards the actions of the authorities, and because of their origin” [30.185]. This campaign was carried out with extremely harsh measures. Dispossessed people were deprived of their property, evicted to inconvenient lands and even outside the republic [31]. Strong farmers who knew how to run their own farms, knew the land and knew how to work on it were evicted and deprived of their land and means of production. This is once again confirmed by this fact - the farms of wealthy farmers evicted to rain-fed lands, according to the head of government F. Khojaev, in the early 30s “provided significant success in the development of the rain-fed problem in the republic”. Through their efforts, rainfed areas increased by 55% in 1930 and the yield of rainfed wheat increased significantly. In the Tashkent district, for example, it doubled in
1930 compared to 1927 - from 20.1 pounds per hectare to 44.1 pounds per hectare [32.293].

Individual farmers who still remained outside the collective farms were under particularly strong pressure from the state in the early 1930s. In addition to administrative pressure from above, it created for them, through a system of progressive taxation, economic conditions under which their independent development simply became impossible. Outright violence and exorbitant taxes practically drove them into collective farms. By the end of 1932 in Uzbekistan, collectivization covered 81.7% of dekhkan farms and 68.1% of sown areas, by the end of 1937 - 95% of dehkan farms and 99.4% of sown areas [33.49].

R.H. Aminova characterizes the social consequences of the radical change in the social structure of the rural population that occurred in the 1930s in the republic: “The place of the small producer was taken by a collective farmer close in social status to an agricultural worker. New social groups appeared: rural machine operators, collective farm management. There have been certain positive changes in the way of life of the dekhkan population; modern household and cultural items have been included in their everyday life. The educational and, to some extent, professional level of farmers has increased. However, the scale and impact of these social changes have been greatly overestimated. They were constrained, first of all, by the extremely low level of wages and relatively small allocations from the state budget for the improvement of villages. The politicization of cultural life and the harsh administrative-command methods of managing collective farms reminded farmers of the old days. There has been no fundamental change in the position of the dehkan woman. She was still busy with hard domestic and agricultural work” [34.79].

The first publications on this problem appeared already in the 20s. XX century These were the works of major economists and agrarians A.P. Demidova, G.I. Cherdantseva. Yu.M. Poniatovsky, Yu.M. Poslavsky, V.I. Yufereva, N.K. Yaroshevich, who examined in detail the socio-economic situation of the Turkestan village in the first years of Soviet power and proposed ways out of the crisis. These authors reasonably argued that a small individual dekhkan farm in the conditions of Turkestan was the most stable economic unit at that time and it was this one, subject to assistance from the state, that could become the basis for the rise of agriculture in the republic. They opposed the creation of large collective farms, but supported the idea of creating various forms of
cooperation in the village and, above all, credit, as the most effective means for the development of all agriculture. These works were distinguished by their objective approach to assessing events. Works published in subsequent periods were written in accordance with Marxist-Leninist theory and are of interest to researchers due to the presence of rich factual material. An objective assessment of this problem became possible thanks to Uzbekistan gaining state independence.

The theoretical and methodological basis of this article was the orientation towards the concept of new historical thinking with its priority of universal humanitarian values. To solve the assigned problems, the work used the principles of historicism, objectivity, comprehensiveness, determinism, systematicity, as well as a problem-chronological approach. At the same time, the study used a pragmatic method of cognition, which involves considering the social experience of the past and present from the point of view of their practical significance.

5 CONCLUSION

Assessing the harmful consequences of collectivization for the Uzbek farmer, R.Kh. Aminova wrote in her last work: “Collectivization led the peasants to alienation from the land, with which they were connected by thousands of threads and sensitively felt it. With socialization, they lost these qualities, because they considered the land to be a nobody’s land. Farmers, forcibly united into collective farms, were not interested in participating in social production or in increasing labor productivity” [35]. Farmers - independent producers-owners in the early 30s ceased to exist as an independent social stratum. Transformation into a new Soviet class - collective farm dehkanism - put them in strict dependence on the state, depriving them of political and economic freedom.

As a result of socialist agrarian reforms in Soviet society, the social layer of peasants - independent owners - was destroyed and a new social stratum was created - the class of collective farm peasantry. According to the 1939 census in Uzbekistan, this class made up 62.6% of the total population of the republic or 75.3% of its amateur part. According to the political leadership of the country, collective farmers, as a result of the victory of the collective farm system, became a socially unified class, since the differences in their economic status disappeared - the division into farm laborers, chayrikers, middle peasants, and bais. This was true only in the sense that within the dehkans groups whose social status was based on private ownership of the means of
production disappeared. But the farmers did not receive the expected social homogeneity. Very soon, a new social hierarchy began to take shape on collective farms - an elite represented by collective farm chairmen, secretaries of party cells, foremen, section managers, managers, accountants, bookkeepers. Their social and financial situation quickly began to differ from that of ordinary collective farmers.

The village did not receive an equal social status with other classes in the state as a whole. The labor of a farmer, despite the high physical costs, was paid much lower than the labor of workers and intellectuals. Payment for workdays on collective farms was so low that it did not provide a living wage for collective farmers and did not create conditions for increased labor productivity and interest of collective farmers in its results. The passport system introduced in the country in 1932 significantly worsened the situation of collective farmers. Since collective farmers were not issued passports, this limited their freedom of movement within the unified Soviet state. Among the collective farmers themselves, their own privileged groups emerged from the forefront of socialist competition and “fighters for high yields,” who enjoyed special material and other benefits. Some farmers, the so-called “dispossessed”, were outside society and did not have civil rights. In addition, the creation of state farms and MTS separated state farm workers and rural machine operators working in the public sector from a single rural society, while all other farmers worked in the cooperative-collective farm sector. In terms of conditions and wages, state farm workers and rural machine operators became part of the working class and had better material conditions, but in terms of lifestyle and intravillage relations they remained farmers.

At the cost of enormous losses, the old structure of the village was destroyed, its traditional way of life was destroyed, and discord was introduced into the once unified social relationships. While remaining a worker, the farmer ceased to be the owner of the land on which he worked.
REFERENCES


2. Land issue in Uzbekistan. Materials for the 2nd Kurultai of the Soviets. – Samarkand, 1927. – P.11


12. For more details on the development of agricultural cooperation, see: Golovanov A.A., Saidov I.M. Decree op. – pp. 254-279.


15. Right there. Vol. V. Balykchinskaya volost. ... – P. 11;39;35

16. Right there. Vol. II. Khankinsky volost. ... - P. 12;140


20. National economy of Central Asia in figures. – Tashkent, 1929. – P. 50


24. Land issue in Uzbekistan. ... – P. 27.


34. Aminova R.H. Returning to the history of collectivization in Uzbekistan. ... – P. 79.