

The Historiography of the Financial History of the Soviet Period in Uzbekistan (1991–2026)

Duschanov Rasuljon Rahimbayevich

*National University of Uzbekistan,
Associate Professor, Department of Archival Studies
and Source Studies, Faculty of History,
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*

Since Uzbekistan gained independence, the thorough and impartial study of its history has been one of the most pressing tasks. In reconstructing the nation's own past, scholars faced the important challenge of studying an objective and truthful history and introducing it into scholarly circulation. It is well known that the financial system, as one of the main pillars of the state and the mechanism through which its material resources are distributed, has performed, both in the past and at present, a function of paramount importance for the state. Economists and historians alike are conducting research in this field, each from their own perspective; accordingly, the existing literature can be divided into two groups: studies by economists and studies by historians.

One such work is the book “History of the State Finances of Uzbekistan” by the financial scholar Professor H. Sobirov, which provides information on the historical roots of finance in the territory of Uzbekistan and seeks to delineate clearly the financial policy of each period. The author analyses the changes in the finances of the Turkestan ASSR from the first years of Soviet rule, the financial system of the republic after the formation of the Uzbek SSR, and the financial system of the Uzbek SSR during the Second World War and the post-war years. He identifies the types of taxes, noting that the excise tax comprised 12 varieties, the turnover tax included 53 taxes, and deductions from profits consisted of 6 types of taxes¹. The particular value of this book lies in the fact that it was written by a professional financier. In addition, the author discusses the number of taxes in that period and emphasises that taxes constituted the main source of revenue.

In recent years, the economist Zuhra Hikmat published the monograph “Economic Views of Great Scholars and Statesmen in the History of Uzbek Statehood”, which examines financial issues in the history of statehood, the economic views of great thinkers, and the development of economic thought in the history of the statehood of New Uzbekistan².

The textbook “State Budget”³, written by a group of authors, traces the formation of the state budget in Uzbekistan back to the period of the Russian Empire, noting that after the imperial authorities established a finance committee in Turkestan in 1868, the khans were deprived of control over their own treasuries. It further explains that from 1924 to 1991 the budget of Uzbekistan formed

¹ Sobirov H. O‘zbekiston davlat moliyasi tarixi [History of the State Finances of Uzbekistan]. – Tashkent: Ta’lim manbai, 2002. – Pp. 96–114.

² Zuhra Hikmat. O‘zbekiston davlatchiligi tarixida yashab o‘tgan buyuk alloma va davlat arboblarning iqtisodiy qarashlari [Economic Views of Great Scholars and Statesmen in the History of Uzbek Statehood]. – Tashkent: Ilm-ziyo-zakovat, 2023. – P. 192.

³ Komolov O.S., Bauyetdinov M.J., Gofurov D.B. Davlat budjeti [State Budget]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Innovatsion rivojlanish nashriyot-matbaa uyi, 2021. – P. 200.

part of the all-Union budget, and interprets the main budget indicators for 1985–1991 on the basis of analytical tables.

Among the textbooks and teaching manuals on finance written by economists and financiers, particular attention to taxation after 1991 is paid in Q. Yahyoev's book "Theory and Practice of Taxation". It discusses the economic essence, necessity, and functions of taxes; the structure of taxation in Uzbekistan; tax policy; and the composition of the tax system, including value-added tax, excise tax, property tax, the single land tax levied on agricultural producers, and taxes on the use of ecological and water resources. It also considers the income, property, and land taxes levied on individuals, as well as local taxes and fees⁴.

The textbook "Finance: Public Finance" by T.S. Malikov and N.H. Haydarov focuses on the essence, functions, and significance of the state budget, budget revenues and expenditures, and the budget deficit and the means of financing it⁵. It also provides information on the budget system, its structure and process, extra-budgetary funds, social security, state credit, and insurance.

In his book "Finance: Theoretical Foundations", Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor T.S. Malikov leads the reader to the conclusion that finance is historical in character and that every state creates a system for forming and using the funds necessary to perform its functions. The forms and methods of forming and using such funds may differ sharply across states and political systems. The point here concerns not the forms of collection but its objects, and property and income have always served as such objects. As regards the forms of collection, even in the ancient Greek states direct taxes were levied on owners of land and property, while a property tax was introduced in times of war. Indirect taxes took the form of customs duties and taxes on trade⁶. The author notes that scholarly works devoted to financial matters appeared in very ancient times and discusses European scholars among their authors. He also observes that although our compatriots did not write scholarly treatises specifically on finance, their scientific-political, religious, and educational works, bearing other titles, contain reflections on various financial issues.

During the years of independence, the reassessment of the history of the Soviet period also gave rise to new approaches to the history of finance. As historians introduced archival documents, statistical data, budget materials, periodicals, government decrees, and normative legal acts into scholarly circulation, the possibilities for a more objective assessment of the functioning of the Soviet financial system expanded. Of particular scholarly importance is source-based research into such areas as the state budget and the structure of its revenues and expenditures, tax policy, the system of financial control and auditing, relations between the republican and all-Union budgets, and personnel policy in the financial sector.

One of the studies close to the topic produced during the years of independence is the book "History of Local Taxes", written by a group of authors, which discusses the types of taxes associated with Soviet tax policy and the changes they underwent. It is especially significant in that it divides the history of Soviet tax policy from 1918 to 1990 into seven periods⁷. This periodisation itself attests to the considerable confusion and frequent changes that characterised the tax system of the Soviet state.

In addition, the book "History of Taxes in Uzbekistan", also written by a group of authors, examines how taxes took shape in Uzbekistan from antiquity onwards, the opportunities and reforms currently being introduced in this field, and the changes in the history of taxation, dividing the Soviet

⁴ Yahyoev Q. Soliqqa tortish nazariyasi va amaliyoti [Theory and Practice of Taxation]. Textbook. – Tashkent, 2003. – Pp. 9–179.

⁵ Malikov T.S., Haydarov N.H. Moliya: umumdavlat moliyasi [Finance: Public Finance]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Iqtisod-moliya, 2009. – Pp. 6–43.

⁶ Malikov N.S. Moliya: nazariy asoslar [Finance: Theoretical Foundations]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Iqtisod-moliya, 2021. – P. 42.

⁷ Jo'rayev Sh., Boboyev S. Mahalliy soliqlar tarixi [History of Local Taxes]. – Bukhara, 2004. – P. 79.

tax system into six periods⁸. The authors particularly emphasise that taxes served as a source replenishing the treasury in the khanates and in earlier periods, and that under Soviet rule, too, taxes constituted the main source of budget revenue.

In his recent research, the historian Sh.Sh. Choriyeu provides an in-depth analysis of the “Archival Fonds Relating to the Finance, Budget, and Tax Affairs of Uzbekistan” and points to the large number and volume of inventories (opisi) of the People’s Commissariat of Finance preserved in the archive. Drawing on archival documents, he explains why, from 1924 to 1930, the budget year was tied to the agricultural cycle, given the high share of the agricultural tax in the budget. He shows that the practice of beginning the budget year on 1 October dated from 1922, that as a result of subsequent changes the state budget year was set from 1 January to 31 December from 1931 onwards, and, by means of a table, clearly demonstrates that the budget approval process at that time passed through seven stages⁹.

Among the studies most closely related to the topic are the articles published by R. To‘xtayeva in the course of her research. Of particular value is the information they contain on monetary and financial relations under Soviet rule and on the allocation of funds from the Turkestan budget to education, which accounted for a large share of expenditures¹⁰.

In another article, based on archival documents, she addresses the issue of personnel in the financial sector. She concludes that financial employees frequently lacked sufficient knowledge and qualifications in their field and approached their duties with indifference, and that refresher courses for financial staff focused primarily on political topics rather than on professional specialisation – circumstances that undoubtedly had a negative impact on the development of the sector¹¹.

Her subsequent articles discuss the turnover tax, income tax, and other sources as the main sources of state budget revenue. Their significance lies in the fact that they also address the role of the budget in socio-economic life and the expenditures allocated to its various spheres¹².

In conclusion, an analysis of the historiography of financial history shows that the Soviet financial system and its functioning in the Uzbek SSR have been studied at various times from economic, legal, political, and historical perspectives. However, in many cases these studies have not sufficiently revealed, from a critical-historical standpoint, the contradictory aspects of the centralised system of financial administration, the restriction of the republics’ financial interests, or the specific features of the distribution of budgetary funds among regions.

The literature produced since independence also shows that certain aspects of the financial system of the Uzbek SSR have not yet been studied comprehensively. In particular, there is a need for a systematic, archive-based analysis of the financial relations between the republican and all-Union budgets, the factors behind the formation of budget deficits, the regional features of tax policy, the financial capacities of local budgets, the activities of financial control and audit bodies, personnel policy in the financial sector, and the socio-economic consequences of the centralised allocation of funds.

⁸ Oblomurodov N., Tolipov F. O‘zbekistonda soliqlar tarixi [History of Taxes in Uzbekistan]. – Tashkent, 2009. – P. 136.

⁹ Choriyeu Sh.Sh. O‘zMA hujjatlarida O‘zbekiston ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy tarixi (1925–1941-yillar) [The Socio-Economic History of Uzbekistan in the Documents of the National Archive of Uzbekistan (1925–1941)]. – Tashkent: Book Many Print, 2024. – P. 80.

¹⁰ To‘xtayeva R. Sovet hokimiyatining dastlabki yillarida moliyaviy siyosat va pul muomalasi (Turkiston ASSR misolida) [Financial Policy and Money Circulation in the Early Years of Soviet Rule: The Case of the Turkestan ASSR] // Xorazm Ma‘mun akademiyasi axborotnomasi [Bulletin of the Khorezm Ma‘mun Academy]. – Khiva, 2022. – No. 1. – P. 180.

¹¹ To‘xtayeva R. O‘zbekistonda moliya kadrlarini tayyorlash tizimi holati (XX asrning 50-yillari) [The State of the Financial Personnel Training System in Uzbekistan in the 1950s] // Markaziy Osiyo sivilizatsiya tizimida O‘zbekiston tarixi va madaniyati [History and Culture of Uzbekistan in the Central Asian Civilisational System]: Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, 14 May 2022. – Karshi, 2022. – P. 138.

¹² To‘xtayeva R. O‘zbekistonda moliyaviy siyosat va uning ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy hayotga ta‘siri (XX asrning 60–80-yillari) [Financial Policy in Uzbekistan and Its Impact on Socio-Economic Life, 1960s–1980s] // O‘rta Osiyo tarixi va arxeologiyasi [History and Archaeology of Central Asia]: Scientific Conference. Issue 9. – Termez, 2023. – P. 138.

Overall, although the historiography of financial history has formed a certain scholarly understanding of the emergence and development of financial relations in the Soviet period, the re-examination of this process on the basis of new archival materials and modern historical and methodological approaches remains a pressing task.

LIST OF SOURCES AND REFERENCES

1. Sobirov H. O'zbekiston davlat moliyasi tarixi [History of the State Finances of Uzbekistan]. – Tashkent: Ta'lim manbai, 2002. – Pp. 96–114.
2. Zuhra Hikmat. O'zbekiston davlatchiligi tarixida yashab o'tgan buyuk alloma va davlat arboblarning iqtisodiy qarashlari [Economic Views of Great Scholars and Statesmen in the History of Uzbek Statehood]. – Tashkent: Ilm-ziyo-zakovat, 2023. – P. 192.
3. Komolov O.S., Bauyetdinov M.J., Gofurov D.B. Davlat budjeti [State Budget]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Innovatsion rivojlanish nashriyot-matbaa uyi, 2021. – P. 200.
4. Yahyoev Q. Soliqqa tortish nazariyasi va amaliyoti [Theory and Practice of Taxation]. Textbook. – Tashkent, 2003. – Pp. 9–179.
5. Malikov T.S., Haydarov N.H. Moliya: umumdavlat moliyasi [Finance: Public Finance]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Iqtisod-moliya, 2009. – Pp. 6–43.
6. Malikov N.S. Moliya: nazariy asoslar [Finance: Theoretical Foundations]. Textbook. – Tashkent: Iqtisod-moliya, 2021. – P. 42.
7. Jo'rayev Sh., Boboyev S. Mahalliy soliqlar tarixi [History of Local Taxes]. – Bukhara, 2004. – P. 79.
8. Oblomurodov N., Tolipov F. O'zbekistonda soliqlar tarixi [History of Taxes in Uzbekistan]. – Tashkent, 2009. – P. 136.
9. Choriyev Sh.Sh. O'zMA hujjatlarida O'zbekiston ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy tarixi (1925–1941-yillar) [The Socio-Economic History of Uzbekistan in the Documents of the National Archive of Uzbekistan (1925–1941)]. – Tashkent: Book Many Print, 2024. – P. 80.
10. To'xtayeva R. Sovet hokimiyatining dastlabki yillarida moliyaviy siyosat va pul muomalasi (Turkiston ASSR misolida) [Financial Policy and Money Circulation in the Early Years of Soviet Rule: The Case of the Turkestan ASSR] // Xorazm Ma'mun akademiyasi axborotnomasi [Bulletin of the Khorezm Ma'mun Academy]. – Khiva, 2022. – No. 1. – P. 180.
11. To'xtayeva R. O'zbekistonda moliya kadrlarini tayyorlash tizimi holati (XX asrning 50-yillari) [The State of the Financial Personnel Training System in Uzbekistan in the 1950s] // Markaziy Osiyo sivilizatsiya tizimida O'zbekiston tarixi va madaniyati [History and Culture of Uzbekistan in the Central Asian Civilisational System]: Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, 14 May 2022. – Karshi, 2022. – P. 138.
12. To'xtayeva R. O'zbekistonda moliyaviy siyosat va uning ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy hayotga ta'siri (XX asrning 60–80-yillari) [Financial Policy in Uzbekistan and Its Impact on Socio-Economic Life, 1960s–1980s] // O'rta Osiyo tarixi va arxeologiyasi [History and Archaeology of Central Asia]: Scientific Conference. Issue 9. – Termez, 2023. – P. 138.