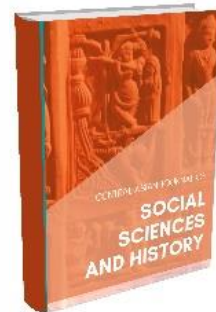




## CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HISTORY

Journal homepage: <https://cajssh.centralasianstudies.org>



### The Institute of the Second Secretary in the Uzbek SSR and the Colonial Policy of the Soviet Union

**Shokhjahan Rashidov,**

PhD, Senior researcher of University of Science and technologies (Tashkent)

Email: [shokhjahanr@inbox.ru](mailto:shokhjahanr@inbox.ru)

#### Abstract:

In this article, the author analyzed the political processes of the 1950s. The activities of Roman Melnikov, who worked as the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in 1949-1959, have been studied in detail. R. Melnikov's attempts to influence the political processes in Uzbekistan and his conflict relations with the Uzbek political elite are studied.

#### ARTICLE INFO

##### *Article history:*

Received 09-Feb-23

Received in revised form 15-Feb-23

Accepted 17-Mar-23

**Available online 18-Apr-2023**

**Key word:** second secretary, leadership of the Uzbek SSR, political elite, change of leaders, “thaw”, Communist Party of Uzbekistan.

In the 30s of the 20th century, Stalin introduced the post of second secretary of the Central Committee to control the national republics. The second secretary was appointed from the Moscow and was considered one of the important pillars of the implementation of colonial policy. According to regulations, the second secretaries sent to the national republics had to be born in Russia and belong to the Russian nationality. There were two main tasks of second secretaries: the implementation of personnel policy and the internationalization of the republic.

The political leaders of the national republics who prevented the fulfillment of the two above-mentioned tasks were punished by the Center in different ways.

In the 50s of the 20th century, the highest position: As the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, the political leadership was carried out by 5 people. This is the period when, during the years of the existence of the Soviet state, most of the leaders were replaced (1). Sharof Rashidov completed the "game of thrones" in the 1950s and ruled the republic the longest - 24 years.

However, against the background of the above-mentioned political changes, the influence of Roman Yefimovich Melnikov, the second secretary of the Uzbek SSR, or "backstage leader" was great.

R. Melnikov was born in 1908 in the village of Sinichino, Uvarovsky district, Moscow region. At first he worked at factories in Moscow, and from 1931 he began working in the Stalinist District Council of Moscow. In 1936, he became chairman of the Pervomaisky District Council of Moscow. In 1945-1948 he studied at the Higher Party School under the Central Committee of the CPSU (b). During these years R. Melnikov showed "high" loyalty to the ideas of the party and communism, and was awarded different state awards (2).

In early 1949, he was appointed deputy representative of the Central Committee of the CPSU for the Uzbek SSR. Moscow's attachment of people like R. Melnikov to Uzbekistan, which is the largest and most important political point in Central Asia, shows how important, reliable and "loyally" it serves the interests of the party. Sources indicate that since November 1949, he was sent to Tashkent as the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (2). The second secretary was entrusted with important tasks and assignments to be carried out in the Uzbek SSR. Among them, the most important task was to keep the activities of the political elite of Uzbekistan under the strict control.

When R. Melnikov arrived in Uzbekistan, Usman Yusupov was acting as the first political leader of the republic. He held the position of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan since 1937, and in the years after the Great Patriotic War, huge construction and landscaping works in the republic were directly connected with his name. During the years of Usman Yusupov's leadership, the recruitment of new local candidates for members of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan accelerated (3, 16.). All this contributed to the growth of his popularity among the Uzbek people. Moreover, it was clear that Usman Yusupov's good relations with Stalin did not suit Roman Melnikov, who had just started working as the second secretary of the Central Committee. The reason is that the presence of such a leader with his authority as U. Yusupov, prevented R. Melnikov from acting and interfering freely in the internal affairs of the republic.

For this reason, R. Melnikov was primarily interested in removing Usman Yusupov from political power and even from Uzbekistan. In April 1950, the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan was held. "Most of all objected to Usman Yusupov" at the three-day critical plenum (4, 154). After 12 years of leadership as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, Yusupov was transferred to Moscow.

Since April 1950, the first political leader of Uzbekistan instead of U. Yusupov was appointed Amin Irmatovich Niyazov. The new leader of Uzbekistan tried not to deviate from the instructions of R.

Melnikov. From this period, it was noticed that Roman Melnikov began to actively interfere in all socio-political processes in the Uzbek SSR.

Melnikov began to provide information to Moscow on behalf of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan on issues not included in his functional duties. In particular, on November 5, 1950, in a letter written to Moscow, to the Central Committee of the CPSU, on behalf of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, he asked for permission to create a sports society of collective farmers named after Pakhtakor (manufacturer cotton) (5, 265.).

In the early 50s of the 20th century, the leadership of Uzbekistan made a number of decisions that contradict national interests not only on the political, but also on the ideological field. Amin Niyazov had neither the courage nor the political will to stop it. Among them, the saddest was the policy of repression against Uzbek writers and poets.

On February 21-22, 1952, the infamous X Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan was held, dedicated to ideological issues. The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan A.E. Niyazov gave a lecture "On the situation of ideological work in the republic and measures to improve it"

In the lecture, a group of intellectuals of Uzbekistan (writers, scientists, poets, etc.) were wrongly accused of nationalism(6, 261-262.). According to sources, the text of Amin Niyazov's speech was edited several times by R. Melnikov and "enriched" with lies and fabrications aimed to discrediting the Uzbek intelligentsia.

During this period, the Soviet totalitarian ideology tried to falsify history and distort historical reality for its political purposes. Scientists and writers who did not "serve" political ideology and did not follow its path were subjected to various pressures and persecutions.

In August 1952, at the 11th plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, R. Melnikov said that the ignorance of the Russian language by local cadres was a serious obstacle to raising the political and cultural level. Emphasizing that only a person who has studied Russian in party organizations can become a cultured and knowledgeable worker, he openly demonstrated his colonization ideas.

In August 1952, at the 11th plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, R. Melnikov said that the ignorance of the Russian language by local cadres was a serious obstacle to raising the political and cultural level. He stressed that only a person who has learned Russian in party organizations can become a cultured and knowledgeable employee(7). It was an attempt to humiliate native Uzbek speakers and lower the prestige of the Uzbek language.

These things continued after Stalin's death and the change of political power. Amin Niyazov tried not to deviate from the line drawn by the Center and R. Melnikov. In particular, at the V Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, held on July 13, 1953, A. Niyazov condemned the activities of the Jadids and Fayzulla Khodjaevs (8, 11). They did a lot of work to raise the political consciousness of the Uzbek people and were repressed by the Soviet authorities. The sources note that the reports of the first political figures of Uzbekistan at the plenums and meetings were reviewed by R. Melnikov(9, 268-269).

With the coming to power of N. Khrushchev, he sought to make changes to the Soviet system of government. The political leadership has changed in many republics within the Union. But Roman Melnikov, who faithfully served as the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, continued his work under N. Khrushchev.

Khrushchev was not satisfied with the current state of the personnel system in the Uzbek SSR and tried to take it under his control. He sought to "update" the personnel nomenclature of Uzbekistan based on the list sent from Moscow.

According to Professor Niklas Norling, based on information from the archives of the Russian Federation, Roman Melnikov sent a letter to N. Khrushchev on May 24, 1954, informing him that he agreed with the "new nomenclature" sent from the Central Committee of the CPSU. The Party of Uzbekistan and the reduction of senior personnel in the republic. According to Professor Niklas Norling, based on information from the archives of the Russian Federation, Roman Melnikov sent a letter to N. Khrushchev on May 24, 1954, informing him that he agreed with the "new nomenclature" sent from the Central Committee of the CPSU. The Party of Uzbekistan and the reduction of senior personnel in the republic. According to Professor Niklas Norling, based on information from the archives of the Russian Federation, Roman Melnikov sent a letter to N. Khrushchev on May 24, 1954, informing him that he agreed with the "new nomenclature" sent from the Central Committee of the CPSU, which refers to the reduction of senior personnel in the republic (10, 151).

Thus, the personnel issue in a large republic was solved with the participation of the Moscow and R. Melnikov.

Soon the relationship between N. Khrushchev and Amin Niyazov began to deteriorate. Firstly, N. Khrushchev considered A. Niyazov one of the leaders of Stalin's time. Secondly, Niyazov sometimes criticized Khrushchev's decisions on cotton cultivation. As a result, materials critical of Niyazov's activities were sent to Moscow. Melnikov headed this work.

According to the testimony of the Russian historian F. In December 1955, the activities of Amin Niyazov were discussed in the bureau and secretariat of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, headed by R. Melnikov. At the meeting, the work of A. Niyazov was recognized as unsatisfactory. It was stated that he could not do the work (11, 57).

On December 22, 1955 was held the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (12).

R. Melnikov, who chaired the plenum, noted that the appointment of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan was on the agenda. The plenum appointed Nuriddin Akramovich Mukhitdinov as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. Although N. Mukhitdinov did not lead for long, he began to make clear demands to the Center based on the interests of the republic.

It was on his initiative that the issue of rehabilitation of the heads of state A. Ikramov and F. Khodjaev, who were subjected to repression in the twentieth century.

According to secret documents stored in the archives of the Russian Federation, Mukhitdinov's

initiative was the main factor in the acquittal of A. Ikramov (13, 53).

On October 11-13, 1956, it was planned to hold the first meeting of the intelligentsia of Uzbekistan, at which N. Mukhitdinov's speech on the issue of the justification of the repressed was to be heard. Roman Melnikov proposes to exclude from the text of the lecture the proposals on the names of the acquitted and on the course of the acquittal process (14, 184-185). The sources record that N. Mukhitdinov courageously listed the names of persons whose names were justified in his report, one after another (15, 55-56).

Nuritdin Mukhitdinov has done a lot to attract national personnel to the management, increase the prestige of the Uzbek language and other national issues. These actions of N. Mukhitdinov caused R. Melnikov's discomfort. For this reason, Roman Melnikov and his supporters are trying to remove N. Mukhitdinov from the administration of the republic. Recognized by N. Khrushchev as one of the most promising cadres, N. Mukhitdinov was admitted to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU in December 1957. It was one of the most prestigious positions in the Soviet administration. Thus, N. Mukhitdinov was expelled from Uzbekistan. As noted by the historian H. Ziyaev, "This exile was a great loss for Uzbekistan. The party considered it dangerous for such talented politicians and nationalists as N. Mukhitdinov to become a pillar of the people" (16).

On December 28, 1957, the VI Plenum of the Central Committee of the Central Committee of Uzbekistan was held. The main issue was the consideration of the new candidacy of the first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in connection with the transition of Nuriddin Mukhitdinov to a new position. At the plenum, Sabir Kamalovich Kamolov was elected first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (17, 6).

Although Sabir Kamolov was the first political leader of Uzbekistan, but he did not lead him for long, but positive changes were observed in the republic. Special attention was paid to the development of the chemical industry of Uzbekistan, the widespread introduction of the ideas of innovators in the industry. In addition, in 1958 Uzbekistan transferred 3,046,500 tons of cotton to the state. This is also the result of the selfless efforts of the Uzbek people. This figure was 210,100 tons more than in 1957.

In general, the results of the republic in other areas were also quite good. However, there was a conflict between Sabir Kamolov and Roman Melnikov.

Documents stored in Russian archives and other sources focus on this aspect. In particular, at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan held on March 14, 1959, the issue of Sabir Kamalov's dismissal was raised. A number of shortcomings in S. Kamolov's work were criticized at the plenary session. Among them were conversations about strained relations between S. Kamolov and R. Melnikov. S. Kamolov was well aware of the activities of Roman Melnikov as a result of his many years of work in the party-state system.

According to the documents stored in the RGASPI (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History), Sabir Kamolov did not fulfill a number of instructions of the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan Roman Melnikov.

Even S. Kamolov asked Siroj Nuritdinov (18) to take R. Melnikov as the second secretary for the Tashkent region (19, 219-220).

Sabir Kamolov wanted to remove Roman Melnikov from the central office of the republic and

solve internal issues himself. However, in the end, the "eyes and ears" of Moscow R. Melnikov prevailed and Sabir Kamolov was sent to head the executive committee of the Fergana region (20).

Sharaf Rashidovich Rashidov, who was appointed to replace Sabir Kamelov, managed to stop the process of changing leaders in Uzbekistan in the 50s of the twentieth century and led from 1959 to 1983. In the first year of Sharof Rashidov's leadership, Moscow recalled Roman Melnikov from Uzbekistan and handed him over to the Central Committee of the CPSU. R. Melnikov worked in various positions in the Central Committee of the CPSU and retired in 1982.

Thus, the influence of Roman Melnikov was great in the conflict processes that took place in the Uzbek SSR in the 50s of the 20th century. In particular, he reacted with intolerance to the actions of the Uzbek leadership on national issues.

## REFERENCES

1. Initially, in April 1950, Usman Yusupov was transferred to the Center. This figure, who led Uzbekistan during the Second World War and the reconstruction that followed, enjoyed great authority among the people. After U. Yusupov, Amin Ermatovich Niyazov was appointed first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in 1950-1955, Nuriddin Akramovich Mukhitdinov in 1955-1957, and Sabir Kamolovich Kamolov was appointed head of Uzbekistan in 1957-1959.
2. Қизил Ўзбекистон (Red Uzbekistan). 1950 йил 5 март. №53
3. Мухаммадиев Р. Ўзбекистон ССРдаги ижтимоий-иқтисодий ва сиёсий жараёнларда Усмон Юсуповни тутган ўрни. Тарих фанлари бўйича фалсафа доктори (PhD) диссертацияси автореферати. -Тошкент, 2022.
4. Мухиддинов Н. Усмон Юсупов // Шарқ юлдузи, 1992. №1.
5. Советская национальная политика: идеология и практики 1945-1953. -Москва: РОССПЭН, 2013.
6. Ражабов Қ. Ўзбекистон ССРда совет режимининг қатағон сиёсати ва унинг оқибатлари (1917-1991 й.). – Тошкент: Фан, 2022.
7. Қизил Ўзбекистон. 1952 йил 5 август. №184
8. Ўзбекистон ПАА. (Archive of the Presidential Administration of Uzbekistan). 58-фонд, 170-рўйхат, 17-иш.
9. Мухитдинов Н. Кремлда ўтган йилларим. -Тошкент: Ўзбекистон, 1995.
10. Nicklas Norling. Myth and reality: politics in Soviet Uzbekistan. A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. -Baltimor, 2014.
11. Раззаков Ф. Коррупция в Политбюро. Дело «красного узбека». – Москва: Алгоритм, 2009.
12. Қизил Ўзбекистон. 1955 йил 23 декабр. №302.

13. Қаранг: <http://istmat.info/>: РГАСПИ (Российский государственный архив социально-политической истории), 17-фонд, 171-рўйхат, 444-йиғмажилд,
14. Мухитдинов Н. Река времени. -Москва: Руст-рости, 1995.
15. Доклад тов. Мухитдинова Н.А. Первого секретаря ЦК КП Узбекистан. I съезд интеллигенции Узбекистана. 11-13 октября 1956 года. Стенографический отчет. - Ташкент: Государственное издательство Узбекской ССР, 1957.
16. Зиёев Ҳ. Занжирбанд ҳукмдорлар / Ўзбекистон адабиёти ва санъати, 18 сентябрь, 1992 йил.
17. Ўзбекистон ПАА. 58-фонд, 182-рўйхат, 14-йиғмажилд, 6-варак
18. Сирож Нуритдинов 1956-1959 йилларда Тошкент вилоят партия комитетининг раҳбари бўлиб ишлаган.
19. РГАСПИ. Ф.17, оп. 89, д. 649, л. 5-17.; Региональная политика Н.С. Хрущева. ЦК КПСС и местные партийные комитеты 1953-1964 гг. / Доставители О.В. Хлевнюк, М.Ю. Прозуменщиков, В.Ю. Васильев, Й. Горлипкий, Т.Ю. Жукова, В.В. Кондрашин, Л.П. Кошелева, Р.А. Подкур, Е.В. Шевелева. - Москва: Российская политическая энциклопедия, 2009.
20. Фарғона вилоят архиви. 1124-фонд, 7-рўйхат, 885-йиғмажилд.
21. Shokhjahan, R. 2021. Stalin's last years: aggravation of political processes in Uzbekistan. International Journal on Integrated Education. 4, 5 (May 2021).