

The Strategic Importance of Tashkent in 19th Century

Zebiniso KAMALOVA¹

Abstract

Annexed to the Khokand Khanate in the first half of the 19th century, the city of Tashkent was the most important trade center next to the capital city. It is also a city which is a State within a State and considered to be the most important economic pillar of the whole region. Having a history of 2200 years, the oldest name of the city is “Chach” and “Shash” and, besides, it is also mentioned as “land of Tashkent”, “province of Tashkent”, “Shahar”, “province of Tashkent Steppe of Kypchak” in historic works. An important center in the Khokand Khanate, Tashkent’s boundaries included Akhangaran, Chinaz, environs of Tashkent, the city and environs of Turkestan situated on the banks of the river Syr Darya, which city is within the territories of Kazakhstan at present. In the second half of the 19th century, the city of Tashkent was again a key point in the Turkestan region, which became a gallant scene for the occupation movements. Once the city of Tashkent had been captured by the Tsarist Russia in 1865, the occupation process gained momentum in the region and the city turned into the center of the Viceroyalty of Turkestan, which was established in 1867. What we will discuss will be the history and strategic importance as well as political, economic and sociocultural characteristics of the city of Tashkent.

Key Words: History, City of Tashkent, Turkestan, Khokand Khanate, Viceroyalty of Turkestan of Tsarist Russia

19. Yüzyılda Tařkent řehrinin Stratejik Önemi

Öz

Hokand Hanlıđı'na bađlı Tařkent řehri, 19. yüzyılın ilk yarısında hanlıđın bařkenti Hokand'dan sonra en önemli merkez olmuřtur. Devlet içinde devlet řehir özelliđine sahip olan Tařkent, bölgenin en önemli siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel diređi sayılırdı. 2200 yıllık uzun bir geçmiře sahip olan Tařkent'in en eski bilinen isimlerinden “Çaç” ve “Şaş” olup tarihi kaynaklarda “Tařkent Mülkü”, “Tařkent Vilayeti”, “Şehir”, “Tařkent ve Deř-i Kıpçak Vilayeti” olarak da anılmıřtır. Hokand Hanlıđı bünyesinde dinamik konumunu muhafaza eden Tařkent řehri cođrafı bakımdan Ahangaran, Çinaz, Tařkent çevresi, Sır Darya Nehri kıyısında yer alan bugünkü Türkistan řehri ve çevresini içeriyordu. 19. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında Tařkent řehri, Çar Rusya'sının Türkistan'a yönelik uyguladıđı iřgal hareketlerinde en ateřli sahnesi haline geldi. 1865'de Tařkent'in düşmesiyle beraber bölgede iřgal süreci ivme kazanmıř oldu. Türkistan Genel Valiliđi'nin kurulması ve Çar Rusya'sının Türkistan'da hâkimiyet kurmasıyla beraber cođrafı ve Sosyo-kültürel konumu itibarıyla Tařkent řehri 1867 yılında Genel Valiliđin yönetim merkezi haline gelmiřtir. Bu makalede ele alacađımız konu Tařkent řehrinin tarihi ve stratejik önemi, siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyokültürel özellikleri hem de Rusların Türkistan'ın iřgal hareketlerindeki ehemmiyeti olacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tařkent řehri, Türkistan, Hokand Hanlıđı, Türkistan Genel Valiliđi

Atıf İin / Please Cite As:

Kamalova, Z. (2022). The strategic importance of Tashkent in 19th century. *Manas Sosyal Arařtırmalar Dergisi*, 11(4), 1752-1762.

Geliř Tarihi / Received Date: 20.05.2022

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted Date: 22.09.2022

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr. - Istanbul Ticaret University Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, zkamalova@ticaret.edu.tr

 ORCID: 0000-0001-7703-0011

The History of the City of Tashkent

One of the primeval and important cities of Turkestan, Tashkent is situated on the right-hand bank of the river Syr Darya. In 2009, the 2200th anniversary of Tashkent was celebrated. Name of the city which served as a bridge in the social, cultural, political and commercial relationships in the middle of the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern countries throughout history is first mentioned in the Avesta, holy book of Zoroastrianism (Avesta, 1990, p. 119-120; Muhammedjanov, 1988, p. 50). In the inscriptions dated to the Sasanid Period, information is provided as to the fact that the last border of the Sassanid Empire in the east extends to Chach, Sogd and Chachstan (Muhammadjanov, 2009, p. 41). Toponym “Chach” is further referred to in the Sogdian texts incised on brick stones found in the Kultepe ruins in Southern Kazakhstan of the present day (Abdukayumov, 2009, p. 6). In the ancient Chinese annals, Chach means “stone” and expressed as a small land (Bichurin, 1998, p. 192; Vulfert et. al., 2013, p. 14-15). Some researchers dwelled upon the word “stone” which affected the name of the city and made efforts to associate it with mineral stones, i.e. precious stones (Abdukayumov, 2009, p. 8-9). In the Arabian sources, the name of the city was mentioned as “Shash” or “City of Shash”. Abu Rayhan al-Biruni referred to it as “Tashkent” for the first time in the 11th century. He opines that the name of the city comes from the Turkish word “Tash” (stone). Tashkent means the “City of Stone” (al-Biruni, 1965, p. 232). Mahmud al-Kashgari also stated that the word Tashkent came from the same name (Kashgari, 1960-1963, p. 108). Istahri and Ibn Havkal also stated in their works that there were lots of mineral stones in these territories (Abdukayumov, 2009, p. 9-10).

In the 9th-13th centuries, Shash, i.e. Tashkent, maintained its existence as three big administrative centers. Capital city of Shash was mentioned as Banokat. Shash was also referred to as a passage and a place-to-be in this period as well (Mason, 1953, p. 32-40). While the names Chach, Shash and Tashkent were used in the sources of the 14th-16th centuries, it was named as the land of Tashkent, province, shahar, Tashkent and Steppe of Kypchak in the post- 16th century sources and came to be used in this way.

Rule over Tashkent continuously changed as from the 16th century. Annexed to the rule of the Kazakh, Kalmuck and Chinese administration respectively by the 1780s, four districts of the city of Tashkent were ruled by individual Hodjas. As from the middle of the 18th century, the city of Tashkent was consisted of four districts: Sebzar, Kokcha, Beshyaghach and Shayhantahur. The Tashkent-centric political organization created by ruler of the Shayhantahur district, Yunis Hodja, who brought these four districts together, united the region from Sayram, Shymkent and Turkestan to the borders of Khujand in a short while. So, the borders of this political organization extended to Turkestan in the north, Karadagh in the northwest, Sayram Mountains in the east and the river Urema in the south. Akharagan, Chinaz, vicinity of Tashkent, the present city of Turkestan on the banks of the river Syr Darya and its environs were included in the territories of Tashkent. Tashkent had twelve gates: Kuymas, Kukon, Kashkar, Labzak, Tahtapul, Korasaroy, Saghbon, Chighatoy, Kokcha, Samarkand, Kamolon, Beshyaghach. The city of Tashkent was surrounded by moats and walls. Situated on the right-hand bank of the river Syr Darya for a few miles, Tashkent is located at a distance of approximately 1,200 miles to the sea. By 1808, the Khan of Khokand Alim Khan captured Tashkent from Sultan Hodja, son of Yunus Hodja, and all regions annexed to the latter passed on to the Khanate.

Tashkent in the Khokand Khanate Period

In the period of Alim Khan b. Narbuta Bek (1800-1810), who was also called “Hulagu” or “Tamerlane the Second” of the era and who succeeded to the Khokand throne in the early 19th century, the Khanate extended its territories and gained power in the region and started to have a strategic position (Niyoz Muhammad, 2014, p. 68). Upon the capture of the provinces of Tashkent and Shymkent, which are considered to be one of the important trade centers of Turkestan, Khokand started to play a significant role in the economic activities in the region and gained momentum in the international commercial relationships (Muhammadhakimhon, 2010, p. 172-173; Hudayarhazade, 2012, p. 103-104; Nalivkin, 1886, p. 86-887; Nabiev, 1966, p. 12). Once Tashkent, which was located at the crossroads of trade, had been included into the rule of the Khanate, the political, economic, social and civil life started to develop further. Changes occurring in the country elevated the position of the Khanate in domestic and foreign politics. We can describe the periods of Omar Khan (1810-1822) and Mohammad Ali Khan (1822-1842), who succeeded to the throne after Alim Khan, as a development step for Tashkent because Alim Khan had made a military reform in the country and annexed the provinces of Khojand, Akharagan oasis, Tashkent, Shymkent and Turkestan to the territories of the Khanate, thus bordering on Russia and

opening the trade route leading to the north (Niyoz Muhammad, 2014, p. 85-95). Therefore, Alim Khan, who pursued a case of power and authority by expanding in the region, was described as the very first Khokand Khan who made attempts to establish diplomatic relationship with Russia (Bobobekov, 2016, p.46).

Once it passed on to the rule of the Khokand Khanate, Tashkent was governed as a province containing several towns and fortresses on its southern borders. The province of Tashkent borders on Bukhara in the northwest, Kindir mountains in the south and the Kirghiz highlands in the east. In the heart of the city was the Orda² in which the Koshbegi³, who occupied an important place in the State hierarchy (Vohidov, 1995, p. 217; Nalivkin, 1886, p. 69-70). The streets are narrow and interlaced and two horse-carts could not pass side by side. In such a case, one of the carts had to go aside and make way for the other. There was only a stone-paved main street leading from the Orda to the marketplace (Sherbakov, 1873, p. 24). According to the information provided by V.V. Velyaminov-Zernov, who served the Russian Empire, there were 270 quarters, 310 mosques 17 madrasas, 11 baths, 15 caravanserais, 11.000 shacks and 50.000 inhabitants in Tashkent in the 19th century (Velyaminov-Zernov, 1856, p. 111). According to Nikolai Ilyich Potanin, who mapped all routes from Russia to the border of the Khanate within the task assigned to him during his service journey in the Khokand Khanate and who noted what he saw during his journey in detail, the city was surrounded by a defensive wall which was 20 versts (approximately 1 verst = 1 km) long and had a population over 10.000 people except women. There were approximately unroofed houses made of mud-bricks (Saveleva, 1856, p. 281). Schuyler⁴ estimates the population by the number of the mosques; accordingly, as there are 300 mosques, each mosque is allocated 30-50 households and each household at least 5 people, then it is estimated that there are approximately 60.000 inhabitants in Tashkent. Those who knew the city well stated that the number of inhabitants of the city was 120.000 and calculated the population as 47.799 people in tax payments (Schuyler, 1876, p. 104). Filipp Nazarov, translator-interpreter of the Siberian Army Corps, who was sent as an ambassador to Khokand in 1813 and 1814, stayed in Tashkent. According to him, the city was surrounded by a 15-verst defensive wall made of unfired bricks. There was a stronghold where approximately 10.000 soldiers stayed was located some ¼ verst from the city. The stronghold was surrounded by two defensive walls made of stone and two deep moats on the side facing Khokand and a defensive wall and a deep channel some 50-sajens wide on the side facing the city. In the middle of the stronghold was a fortress surrounded by long walls and 3 moats 7 sajens wide (1 sajen = 2,13 m) (Nazarov, 1968, p. 91-92). Made of bricks, the walls were 16 miles in length and 12 or 15 feet in height. They were thicker at the bottom than on the top and there are places where the soldiers could place the guns on the top. Further, there were four defensive fortresses against the assaults of the enemy. There were the Cathay (China) Fortress in the east, Kokcha Fortress in the west, Chagatai Fortress in the south and Kangli Fortress in the north. Gates in the walls and fortresses are mentioned by different names. According to the Russian researchers, they are 12 gates⁵ (Khoroshyn, 1876, p. 81). And Mohammad Salih Hodja, a native source, classifies the gates by the tribes keeping watch at the gates as a whole while he mentioned these gate names in different places of his work. 1. Gate of the Kiyât tribe, 2. Gate of the Turkish tribe, 3. Gate of the Uzbek tribe, 4. Gate of the Tahtapuli tribe, 5. Gate of the Karaserai tribe, 6. Gate of the Chagatai tribe, 7. Gate of the Sughbanian tribe, 8. Gate of the Kokcha tribe, 9. Gate of the Kamendaran tribe, 10. Gate of the Kangli tribe, 11. Gate of the Beshaghach tribe, 12. Gate of the Katagan tribe (Mohammad Solih Hodja, 1863-1888, p. 877a-b). As the city had twelve gates, the nomadic peoples sometimes called it the “City of Twelve Gates” (Bonvalot, 1894, p. 35). The city was divided into four districts in terms of internal organization. In the past, a district of the city covering 10 quarters was called “daha”. As a result of the increase in the number of quarters and the continuous enhancement of trade in

²Orda is the palace where the ruler or governor of a province stays in the Khanate. In the Turkish and Mongol States, the Khan's palace is a term used for the headquarters from which the ruler governed the State. See Uzbek Tilining İzohli Luğati, Özbekiston Milliy Ensiklopediyasi Devlet İlimiy Naşriyoti, v.5, 2008, p.163.

³ Koshbegi (قاش بيگى): **Commander of a military unit**; He commanded the army during the war and was promoted to the position of Mingbashi. Those people who held the title of Koshbegi served as the head of the army at the time of war. The position of the koshbegi represented the vizier position in the Bukhara Emirate. These titles are confused due to a single letter. The person holding the position of a kushbegi accompanied the Khan at the time of hunting. He was responsible for the Khan's fowlers and gods and was the person who was charged with the Khan's rest at the time of hunting.

⁴ Eugene Schuyler (1873) – He served as the second privy secretary of the US Embassy in St. Petersburg. He went to the Turkestan region together with the Russian army in his capacity as a diplomat on 23rd March 1873. He travelled in and observed the Turkestan Khanates and his memoirs which he wrote were published in two volumes in New York in 1876.

⁵ 1. Beshyaghach, 2. Kaytmas, 3. Yulbars, 4. Khokand, 5. Kashgar, 6. Labzak, 7. Karaserai, 8. Saguan, 9. Chagatai, 10. Kukchi, 11. Samrkand, 12. Kashanan.

a daha over time, it became big a city. A daha was governed by a mingbashi who was the proxy of the khan. Dahas were consisted of quarters. Quarters were ruled by aksakals, tavashis and captains (Schuyler, 1876, p. 19). Bonvalot describes the dahas as “yurts”; accordingly, a city was divided into four big quarters called “yurts” and further into forty-two smaller quarters called “makhallahs” (Bonvalot, 189, p.35). In the later periods, such dahas started to be called Sebzar in the northwest, Kukcha in the west, Shayhantahur in the northeast and Beshyaghach in the west of the city. According to Maeva, there were 48 quarters in the daha of Shayhantahur.⁶ There were 38 quarters in the daha of Sebzar.⁷ There were 31 quarters in the daha of Kukcha.⁸ There were 32 quarters in th daha of Beshyaghach⁹ (Maeva, 1876, p. 262-266). However, it is not definite whether the total number of quarters in these dahas was one hundred and forty-nine. Nikolai Mallitskiy, who stayed in Tashkent and surveyed the quarters therein in 1927, mentioned 210 quarters and emphasised that the number of the quarters was not definite. While the number of the inhabitants of Tashkent in the first half of the 19th century was not definitely known, it is estimated to be between 30.000 and 100.000 people (Sultonov, 2009, p. 89-90; Vohidov, 2009, p. 45; The Levant Herald, 1865, p. 258).

Capture of the City of Tashkent by the Tsarist Russia

The basic characteristic of the policy which Russia pursued over Turkestan during the 19th century was to apply an expansionist policy towards Turkestan and naturally expand its territories. While the Akmesjid Fortress which was the point of entry to Turkestan in 1853 by the Russians, the occupying forces aimed at progressing to Tashkent and use this city as a Russian stronghold stuck into the Turkestan region. The fact that Tashkent was quite important both in geopolitical and geostrategic terms made it necessary for the Russian Empire to invade the city in its occupation scheme. The Tashkent issue which was in the principal center of attention of the Russian Government had been discussed in the assembly meeting held with the attendance of the Russian Tsar on 9th March 1863. Accordingly, a road map had been drawn to capture first Evliya Ata, then Shymkent and then Tashkent. In the spring of 1863, a decision was made in order to learn and collect information as to whether or not the upper reaches of the river Syr Darya were eligible for military operations.

The Khokand Khanate was consisted of such important centers as Khokand, Tashkent, Akmesjid and Turkestan. Invasion of Pishpek (Ziyoyev, 1990, p. 185), Evliya Ata and Turkestan in 1864 by the Russian Tsardom shortened the distance to reach Tashkent and this stirred up all people of Khokand because the soldiers under the command of Colonel Veryavkin, who occupied the city of Turkestan, cannonaded the shrine of Ahmad Yasavi, who was spiritually very important for the people in the region. The people of the city must not respond to the enemy in order to ensure the shrine to survive. The city of Turkestan was entirely plundered and the belongings of Hodja Ahmad Yasavi and Emir Tamerlane and the big cauldron made by Tamerlane were taken to Russia (Rahimov, 1995, p. 14; Emel Esin, 1989, 162-163). The Russians was preparing to make an attempt to capture Tashkent, which was the second most important city next to Khokand and which was the heart of Turkestan. However, there was the city of Shymkent, which must be raided, in between. Considering the strategic importance of the city, General-

⁶ 1. Tajik, 2. Kashgar, 3. Yangi Shehr (five other quarters bearing the same name were found), 4. Selim Mosque, 5. İllia, 6. Kiyât, 7. Keriadi (Karyaghdi), 8. Tash Kucha, 9. Mergincha, 10. Ohche, 11. Zandjilik (Zanjirlik) 12. Katar Töre607, 13. Turk, 14. Igerchi, 15. Almazar, 16. Doombegi (Divanbegi), 17. Balian Mesjid (Baland Mosque), 18. Kurgân Arkasi, 19. Gavkush, 20. Shur Tepe, 21. Degriat (Degroz), 22. Hadria, 23. Havuz Bak, 24. Cengâh, 25. Hish Mosque, 26. Hocarushna-I, 27. Ak Mesjid608, 28. Darhan, 29. Padar Kush, 30. Kuduk Bashi, 31. Badak, 32. Shatak, 33. Ganish Tepe, 34. Arka Kucha, 35. Car Kucha, 36. Mongol Kucha, 37. Kaltatai, 38. Divane Burh, 39. Tanav Bashi, 40. Chalmak.

⁷ 1. Kagat (Kahatabuzruk) (there were two makhallas bearing the same name), 2. Tahtapul, 3. Chuvalachi, 4. Kara-Serai, 5. Yav, 6. Mazarkhan, 7. Kangli Kucha, 8. Dessin Kucha, 9. Pasha-Ata hamam (Pushtuhmam), 10. Masseduz (Mahsiduz), 11. Hatın Mosque, 12. Hish Kuprik, 13. Hodja Kugachi, 14. Labzak, 15. Rabat, 16. Kunlak, 17. Hodja Kucha, 18. Yakachub, 19. Hazret-i Imam, 20. Tik Kucha, 21. Shakar, 22. Cin-Kucha, 23. Parchabab, 24. Batır, 25. Ahun-Guzar, 26. Kunjak, 27. Chinchaq, 28. Kadavod, 29. Chegit-Bashi, 30. Hodja Tarassekan (Hoca-i Terazi Shikan), 31. Turnav-Bashi, 32. Katta Sebzâr, 33. Darbaza-Kent, 34. Shakir-Guzar, 35. Kadi-Kucha, 36. Agmen Seyid.

⁸ 1. Hafiz, 2. Guyaki, 3. Kuttut, 4. Kurik-Bashi, 5. Savan (there was one quarter called Savan and a makhalla g-bearing the same name), 6. Chakara, 7. Tepe, 8. Kunjak, 9. Chagatai, 10. Pisakchi, 11. Chikchiman, 12. Tuhlijallob, 13. Kalalan, 14. Ishkuvat, 15. Langar, 16. Ozgen, 17. Kisa-Kurgan, 18. Huyavan, 19. Chukchi, 20. Kunchi, 21. Padihan, 22. Chukur-Kishlak, 23. Sara-Hundan, 24. Kukchi, 25. Obnazar, 26. Aylish, 27. Halimkup, 28. Damak, 29. Yangi.

⁹ 1. Yangi-Bakhan, 2. Kamalan, 3. Chakar, 4. Darhan, 5. Zebak-Hish-kuprik, 6. Baland Mosque, 7. Sarparaz, 8. Charsu, 9. Ishan-Guzar, 10. Samarkand, 11. Okshi, 12. Darvaza, 13. Zengi Ata, 14. Milliar, 15. Chupon Ata, 16. Suzu Ata, 17. Sari-Chapan, 18. Cillik Mosque, 19. Uzbek, 20. Mirza-Hazi, 21. Kugurmach, 22. Ters-Arik, 23. Kuk Mosque, 24. Kulgulik, 25. Takalik Mazar, 26. Kara-Tash, 27. Yalangkori, 28. Murad, 29. Old Orda, 30. Arpapaya, 31. Laylak (Laklak).

Colonel Chernyayev¹⁰ said the following: “To capture Shymkent was to grasp the key to whole Turkestan.” Chernyayev marched on Shymkent on 7th July 1864 (Toib, 1900, p. 40^b-41^b; Lasinskiy, 1891, p. 213; Saray, 1993, p. 21).

The Khokand throne was the scene of conflicts in that period. The delegates of the local tribes that formed groups within the State and wanted to nominate their own candidate khans out of the sons of khans and take the control and confronted one another to do this failed to notice the principal enemy. Despite this, the people of the Khanate banded together against the progress of the Russian army. Tashkent became the center of the war against the Tsarist invasion. Sultah Seyid Han succeeded to the throne with the support of Alimqul, leader of the Kirghiz-Kypchak tribes, who was known by the title “Emir of Lashkar”, in 1864. Military units came from the other cities of the Khanate, namely from Margilan, Khojend, Andijan, Namangan and Osh, and combined under the order of Alimqul, commander of the army of the Khokand Khanate, against the Russian army gradually progressing into the inner parts of the Khanate. Aiming at recapturing the cities of Evliya Ata and Turkestan and thus stop the Russian progress, Alimqul ensured the Russian army to withdraw 40 km away from the city of Shymkent. Twelve thousand people from Khokand were martyred during this skirmish. While the Khokand army was fighting for life in the war against the Russians, it was heard that the military units of the Bukhara Emirate had started an assault on Khokand, the capital of the Khanate. Upon this news, Alimqul marched to protect the capital with part of his army. He left behind 6.000 soldiers of Normuhammed Koshbegi, ruler of the province of Turkestan, to defend Tashkent against 15.000 Russian soldiers (Attor, 1991, p. 121-122; Beisembiev, p. 5-6; Mackenzi, 1917, p. 210-211). Besides, the Khokand army had to fight the soldiers of Bukhara for Oratepe and Khojend. While the Khokand army fighting at two fronts simultaneously had difficulties; the Russians who made hay of the situation attacked Shymkent on 3rd September 1864 and occupied the city on 22nd September 1864 (Muşrif, 1995, p. 74; Ziyoyev, 1998, p. 140; Koç, 2015, p. 40).

Russian commander General Chernyayev did not agree to the view of the government on the occupation of Tashkent. Being highly superior in warfare, General Chernyayev made preparations in order to besiege this city and skillfully took advantage of the tribalism and clashes between tribes which were the infirmity causing Turkestan to be invaded. Preparing for an attack on Tashkent on 27th September 1864, Chernyayev encountered the resistance of the local people. Historian Muhammed Solih states that all made their best efforts to defend the homeland at that time (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 474). Attack on Tashkent by the Russian General Chernyayev was rebuffed by the soldiers under the leadership of Yaqub Beg Badavlat¹¹. The determination and sagacity displayed against the Tsarist army by the defenders ensured that 72 of the enemy perished. This urged Chernyayev to retreat (Toib, 1900, p. 45^a-45^b).

In the same year, while Molla Alimqul was in war for the Iqan Fortress with more than a thousand of his soldiers, he heard that Chernyayev had attacked Tashkent again on 27th April 1865. (Toib, 1900, p. 47^a-48^a; Attor, 1991, 125). Russians occupied and then demolished the Niyazbeg Fortress, which was the Khanate’s stronghold situated on the right bank of the river Chirchik. Kaykovus stream which was the spring providing the city with water was destroyed by the Russians upon the suggestion of the son of Abdurrahman Beg Shadman, who was originally from Shakhrisabz and lived in the Chuvalachi quarter and acted in concert with Chernyayev, and the waterway to Tashkent was drained into the river Chirchik. Eventually, the people of Tashkent were left without water for forty days (Attor, 1991, p. 479; Muşrif, 1995, p. 75; Ziyoyev, 1998, p. 151). On the other hand, the people of Tashkent rallied around Molla Alimqul and put up an uphill battle. Even if Alimqul’s soldiers were higher in number (there is information that they were thirty/forty thousand soldiers), lack of military training and insufficient military supplies were the factors preventing the victory over the Russian soldiers.

Chernyayev started his war operations on Tashkent from the southern side, thus preventing any potential auxiliary assaults to come from Khokand and Bukhara. The very first clash between two parties took place on 9th May 1865. Some local historians accused the Kypchak and Kirghiz communities to

¹⁰ Colonel Mekhail Grigorevich Chernyayev (20.10/3.11.1828-4/16.8.1898) was born to a noble family in the village of Tubishky in the province of Mogilyev of modern Belarus. A commander in the Russian Tsardom, general-colonel (1882) Chernyayev graduated from the Academy of War in 1853 and took place in the Crimean and Caucasian Wars. He occupied the cities of Evliya Ata, Shymkent and Tashkent annexed to the Khokand Khanate in his capacity as the commander of the Western Siberia Army in 1864-65. Afterwards, he served as the military governor of the Province of Turkestan. He was dismissed on the grounds that he had abused his position in 1866. He is known for his ruthlessness and heartlessness during the occupation of Turkestan.

¹¹ Muhammed Yaqub Beg Badavlat (1820, Pskent-1877, Kashgar) is the founder of the State of Yettishar in Eastern Turkestan. He was poisoned to death in 1877. See Serhat Doğan, *Yakub Bey ve Kaşgar Hanlığı - Doğu Türkistan'da Son Osmanlı Hanı*, Ötüken, İstanbul, 2020.

encourage the Russian army to enter Tashkent and even to assist the Russians to capture Shymkent due to the grudge they bore on Molla Alimqul at the time when Shymkent fell. In some sources, it is stated that Molla Alimqul caused the Kazakh people living in the territories of the Khokand Khanate to voluntarily become Russian nationals due to his attacks on and plunders in Turkestan and its environs. The people of the province of Turkestan, who were angry with the Khokand Khanate, sent a letter to the Russian government with the following content: "You have just captured all the territories in the vicinity except the Castle of Turkestan. A severe enmity has occurred between the sultans of Transoxiana (Sogdina). The Emir of Bukhara have captured the khans in Fergana and slayed some of them. He has brought the whole territory of Fergana under his control. Soon the ant will grow into the dragon and the stream into the sea soon. It is dependent on the alliance of Bukhara and Khokand that the armies of the two capitals – together with the army of Kohistan– reached the boundaries with their head in Tibet and their tail in Kandahar and their back in India. That you feel bold enough to impinge and occupy these territories occurs due to the sultans of the Moslem people fail to make alliance. Besides, people who are not of lineage have found places in these two houses and are acting without consultation. Capture Steppe of Kypchak and enter Tashkent before they settle their power and before the peoples stand up. These two capitals (Bukhara and Khokand) are doing badly at the moment and your work which seems to be hard will be simultaneously easy as well." (Niyoz Muhammad, 2014, p. s.264)

The Kirghiz and Kypchak, nomadic tribes of the Khanate, reached an agreement between them and did not succor Molla Alimqul at the battle of Tashkent but sent a letter of apology in the name of Sultan Seyid Khan, khan of Khokand. Sarts fought by the side of the Emir of Lashkar till the end (Attor, 1991, p. 126). When the Khokand army asked for help from Bukhara due to such difficult situation, they could not receive an affirmative reply (Ziyoyev, 1998, p. 152; Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 486).

Molla Alimqul resisted the current attacks of the Russian soldiers and urged Chernyayev to retreat, but was aware of the fact that the danger was close. Alimqul's pre-war vehement rhetoric speeches, in which he said that courage and defense of the homeland were a matter of faith made the people of Tashkent, young and old alike, fill the public squares in demonstrations. Muhmed Solih described how all individuals of the society including the women, children, youth, elders, students, teachers, mullahs, etc. laid down their lives and properties and mobilised with excitement in his work (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 501).

The Russian soldiers started to organize attacks on Tashkent with lethal impacts for the last time at the early hours on 9th May 1865 and the clash was very severe. Molla Alimqul was wounded at the battle but ordered that the people of Tashkent had to retreat to the inner parts of the city and the soldiers to keep fighting. Despite this, the townsmen kept fighting without retreating (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 501; Mahdum Hoji, 2009, p. 96). Soon afterwards, the commander Molla Alimqul, who was thirty-three or thirty-four years old, fell a martyr but encouraged the people to fight against the Russian to his bitter end (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 267; Attor; Toib, 1900, p. 213^a-222^b; Schuyler, 2007, p. 92). His tomb is located at the Sheikh Khovand Tahur Cemetery in the city of Tashkent (Attor, 1991, p. 127; Islomov & Maksudov, 2015, p. 20).

Russian commander General Chernyayev declared ceasefire, anticipating that the city would surrender upon Molla Alimqul's death. However, even if they were desperate, the people of Tashkent continued fighting on their own against the assault which Chernyayev resumed on 14th June 1865 but had to surrender on 15th June 1865 (Attor, 1991, p. 127-128; Ziyoyev, 1998, p. 186). Chernyayev sent his report containing the surrender of the city of Tashkent to him to St. Petersburg on 17th June 1865 (Romanovskiy, 1868, p. 162). Chernyayev deployed artillery at such positions as Shaykhantur, Beshyaghach, etc. where the people lived in great numbers and threatened the people by declaring that a peace treaty must be made, otherwise he would ravage the city. General Chernyayev invited the dignitaries of the city of Tashkent such as Judge Hodja Kazikalon (great kadi), Abdulkassim Ishan, Domulla Salih Beg to his presence and a peace treaty was signed at the assembly attended by merchants and foreign traders. According to the treaty, promise was made that the people of the city would practice their own religion, that all issues would be settled pursuant to the sharia law, that properties would keep being owned by their former owners and that the people would be exempted from all taxes except customs duty for a period of one year. The stamps of the dahas of Shaykhantur, Beshyaghach, Sebzar and Kokcha were affixed on the treaty (Terentev, 1906, p. 320).

Even though Chernyayev's success in the invasion of Tashkent was joyfully welcomed in St. Petersburg, this event was the outcome of Chernyayev's self-ordained actions. Objections were raised at some levels of the Russian government and reactions increased in the international press. Chernyayev had a false letter drawn up which stated that the people of Tashkent surrendered to the Russians on their own will and had the dignities of Tashkent sign the letter perforce in order to acquit what he had done. This letter was a disregard for the struggle of the people of Tashkent. Objection of Damulla Salih Beg Akhund of Tashkent, who displayed courage against Chernyayev, is of historical nature. In the letter which caused to be imprisoned, it was stated that the cities and fortresses from Akmasjid to Gulja belonged to Tashkent, that those territories had been captured by war and plunder by the Russian soldiers, that the people of Tashkent who had been left without food and water for forty days had remained without a leader upon the martyrdom of the commander Molla Alimqul, that the people had fought to their bitter end and that they had acceded to peace as a last resort due to hunger and thirst when everything had been ravaged (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 13^a). Damulla Salih Beg Akhund and his supporters were exiled to Siberia. The Russian government sent this treaty to St. Petersburg and it was distributed all over the place in order to silence the international press. Particularly, the Russian Embassy in Turkey reproduced this false treaty and posted it at the streets, marketplaces and other important central locations in İstanbul (Ziyoyev, 1998, p. 185; Hayit, 1963, p. 16-33). Once the Russians had grasped the government, the dignitaries of the State, i.e. Sheikh-al İslam, kadi, tribal princes and commanders went to Kashgar (Muhammad Solih, 1863-88, p. 135^{a,b}; Scott, 2017, p. 197-208).

Viceroy of Orenburg Krijanovski came to the devastated city in September 1865 and announced that Tashkent had been annexed to the State of the Tsarist Russia (Hasani, 1992, p. 8). He is the Tsar's general who explicitly stated that the Russians would bring civilization to the "wild" peoples of Turkestan, that the life of the oppressed peoples would be improved thanks to the Russian authority and that the Russian traditions and language must be applied to the people of Turkestan (Raport, 1865). Afterwards, Chernyayev was called back to the capital of the Tsardom when he was en route to Jizzak and Romanovski took over his position in March 1866.

Tashkent – Administrative Center of the Viceroy of Turkestan

Turkestan territories occupied by the Russians had reached 15,270 sqm by 1867 (Tillayeva, 2009, p. 123-127). Viceroyalty of Turkestan was established on the land captured from the Kazakh Ordas, from Bukhara and Khokand in that year. The very first viceroy of this administrative organization affiliated to the Ministry of Defence was General-Adjutant Konstantin Petrovich Kaufman, who was of German origin (Uzb.NSA, Fond 47, Op. 1, D. 41, p.160; Kraevoye Upravleniye Otçet, 1910, p. 7-8; Özbekiston SSR Tarihi, 1971, p.26). (1867-1882) He started his office in this position on 14th June 1867. The city of Tashkent was the capital of this administrative organization comprised of Syrdarya, Yettisu and Samarkand regions. The Viceroy ruled the region from Tashkent in his capacity as the deputy of the Tsar and was also responsible for the provincial administration, police organization and legal affairs. Provinces governed by the viceroy were administered by dividing into uyezds (*administrative units in the Viceroyalty of Turkestan*). Heads of the uyezds were selected by the viceroy. The uyezds were subdivided into volosts. Volosts living with the resident people were governed via aksakalliks which were considered the smallest administrative units. The regions where people with a nomadic life style were subdivided into avuls. There were 1000-2000 aksakallik¹² or avul¹³ under the rule of each volost.

While administrative organizations were made in the center of the province on one hand, efforts were also made to implement a military and diplomatic policy towards Khive, Bukhara and Khokand, which were the Khanates neighboring the Viceroyalty, on the other. Hence, the city of Tashkent was the basic administrative center which shaped the Turkestan policy of the Tsarist Russia in its colonial activities.

In order to officialise that the occupied territories which belonged to the Khokand Khanate, colonel Shaufus was sent to Khudayar Khan, who was then on the throne of the Khokand Khanate. On this occasion, a 5-article agreement was reached by and between Khudayar Khan and the viceroy General Kaufman (having unlimited right over Turkestan and referred to as "Half Monarch" by the locals) on 13th February 1868. According to the agreement, Russian merchants were granted the right to make free trade

¹² Aksakallik – Smallest administrative unit in the provinces where resident peoples lived in the Khokand Khanate. Aksakalliks comprised of a big village or several small villages were ruled by Aksakals (White Beards)

¹³ Avul – Smallest administrative in the regions where nomadic tribes lived in the Khokand Khanate. They were ruled just like the aksakalliks.

and build caravanserais in all regions of the Khokand Khanate; it was further agreed that the caravans of merchants would reach the neighboring khanates in a safe and secure manner; Taxpaying status of the Russian merchants and industrialists was equalized with that of the people Khokand. These elements bore a great importance as they would enable Russia to make trade with the territories of Western China. However, such conveniences were only valid for the merchants of Khokand within the territories included in the Viceroyalty of Turkestan (Vsemirnyy Puteshestvennik, 1971, p. 21; Bobobekov, 2017, p. 80). Khudayar Khan maintained the order until 1873 thanks to the agreement which he made with General Kaufman but the Khanate fell into a difficult condition and was dead to the world. The State was entirely subject to Russia in political terms and lost its independence (Hasani, 1992, p. 9). Even though it was not mentioned that the Khokand Khanate was affiliated to Russian Tsardom, the Khanate acted dependent on Russia until 1876.

Bukhara was directly controlled from Tashkent, capital of the Viceroyalty of Turkestan, in military and political terms until 1885. In the first half of the 1860s and 1870s, expeditions were launched on the independent states of Turkestan under the Viceroyalty of Turkestan. As a result of such expeditions, the Khive Khanate had to submit to the Tsarist sovereignty under an 18-article treaty on 12th August 1873. As per the treaty, this Khanate gave up its right of sovereignty over the right-hand side of the river Amu Darya which was annexed to it. Along with the Khive Khanate, another state which the Tsarist Russia subdued was the Emirate of Bukhara. Under an 18-article treaty entered into on 28th September 1873 by and between the two States, the Emir of Bukhara agreed that Samarkand belonged to Russia and the Russian sovereignty. Just like the other two khanates, the Khanate of Khokand could not maintain its existence and it ceased to exist in 1876. The Oblast of Fergana affiliated to the Viceroyalty of Turkestan was established in its lieu on 19th February. While entering the 20th century, the administrative organization in Turkestan ruled by the Tsarist Russia was as follows: 1. Viceroyalty of the Steppes, 2. Viceroyalty of Turkestan, 3. Emirate of Bukhara and 4. Khiva Khanate (Vsemirnyy Puteshestvennik, 1971, p. 21-22; Bobobekov, 2017, p. 80-81; Kurat, 2014, p. 350; Muminov 1976, p. 161-163).

Thanks to the treaties made and commercial relationships with the Russians, number of the inhabitants increased in such cities as Khokand, Namangan, Kattakurgan and Shymkent. Besides, new trade routes and trade centers were created. In this period, the population of Tashkent rather increased as well and the economic status of the city gained value. With a population of 60.000 and 80.000 people in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Tashkent turned into one of the industrial and commercial centers of Turkestan in that period.

Conclusion

The most important city in the Khokand Khanate next to the capital city, Tashkent was not only a trade center in the State but a State with the State as well. It was deemed to be the most important economic pillar of the whole region. The location of the city which was the trade route extending to Russia in the north and to India in the south and to China in the east via the Steppe of Kypchak and the crossroads connecting the region to the west was deemed to be the center of development and profit for the region. The Tashkent region had affected the interests of whatever administrative system it was affiliated to. However, it should be emphasized that Tashkent could make decisions on any political developments in the region in an independent or semi-independent manner. Tashkent played an important role in the processes of economic and socio-cultural change.

Tsarist Russia had analyzed the regions in detail before it started its occupational activities in Turkestan. Selection of the city of Tashkent as the administrative center of Turkestan was the outcome of this in-depth survey and a part of the strategic planning. The geographical position of Tashkent was very important for Russia in the successful progress of the colonial politics, in the management of the region and in the control of the occupied territories.

World's political map in the 19th century witnessed several changes in terms of the human history. Particularly, the territories of Turkestan were affected by such changes and conversions to a great extent. As a consequence of such changes, Tashkent further came to the forefront as a center once again. Variable politics created different impacts on the people of Tashkent and the region. Being the capital of the Uzbekistan Soviet Socialist Republic in the Soviet period following the Tsarist Period, the city of Tashkent maintained its position as the capital city and a trade and cultural center after the independence of Uzbekistan in 1991.

Ethical Declaration

In the writing process of the study titled “*The Strategic Importance of Tashkent in 19th Century*”, there were followed the scientific, ethical and the citation rules; was not made any falsification on the collected data and this study was not sent to any other academic media for evaluation. Since the document review was conducted in this study, there is no need for an ethics committee decision.

References

- Abu Rayhon Beruniy. (1965). *Izbrannie Proizvedenie (Hindistan)*. (Translated by A.Rasulev, Y.Hakimjanov, G.Jalalov), Tashkent: Uzbekistan SSSR Fan Press.
- Akdes N. K. (2014). *Rusya Taribi, Başlangıcından 1917'ye Kadar*, (6. Pressure). Ankara: Turk Tarihi Kurumu Press.
- Avaz Muhammad Attor Hukandiy, *Tarib-i Cabonnamoyi*. C. II, Uzbekistan Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Section No: 9455.
- Avaz Muhammad Attor Hukandiy. (1991). *Tarib-i Cabonnamoyi*, (Translated from Persian Sh. Vohidov) *Shark Yulduzi Journal*, V. 8, p. 119-137, Tashkent.
- Avesta. (1990). *Izbrannyye Gimni*. (Translated and edited by I.M.Steblin-Kamenskogo), Dushanbe: Adib Press.
- Bobobekov H. (2016). *Kukon Taribi*. Tashkent: Fan va Tehnologiya Press.
- Bobobekov H. (2017). *Kukon Honligining Kiskacha* Tashkent: Taribi. Fan va Tehnologiya Press.
- Bonvalot G. (1894). *Eski Yurt Orta Aşa'dan*. Translated Reşat Özmen, Tercuman Gazetesi, Istanbul.
- Bichurin N.Ya. (1950). *Sobraniye Svedeniy O Narodah, Obitavshih v Sredney Azii v Drevniye Vremena*, Vol.2, Moskva.
- Blamberg, I.F. (1978). *Vospominaniya*. Glavnaya Redaksiya Vostochnoy Literaturi, Moskva: Nauka.
- Diñçer, K. (2015). *Rus Elçilik Raporlarına Göre Hokand Hanlığı (XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısı)*, Istanbul: İdeal Kültür Press.
- Doğan Serhat. (2020). *Yakub Bey ve Kaşgar Hanlığı - Doğu Türkistan'da Son Osmanlı Hanı*. Istanbul: Ötüken Yayınları.
- Emel Esin. (1989). *Ahmed Yesev'i Külliyesi*, DIA, p.162-163, İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Press.
- Hudayarhanzade, (2012). *Ancum at-Tavarib*. (Translated and edited by Sh. Vohidov, H. Bobobekov), Tashkent: Yangi Asr Avlodi Press.
- Hayit Baymirza. (1963). “*Türkistanda Rusiya Hakimiyati Taraqqiparvarlık Emişi*”, *Milli Türkistan*, Vol. 95 A, Mart April, p. 16-33.
- Hasaniy Majid. (1992). *Turkiston Boskini*, Tashkent: Nur Press.
- Ilhamov Z. A. (2004). Alikuli Amirlashkar va Uning Kukon Honligi Siyosiy Hayotida Tutgan O'рни, (Doctoral Dissertation), Tashkent State Pedagogical University, Tashkent.
- Islomov Z., Maksudov D. (2015). *Şayb Hovand Tabur Yodgorlik Macmuasi*. Tashkent: Tashkent Islamic University Press.
- Istoriya Buhari s Drevneyshih Vremen do Naşih Dney*, (1976). (Haz. İ. M. Muminov), Tashkent: Fan Press.
- Işkuvatov V. T. (2009). *Kukon-Rossiya Diplomatik Munosabatlar Tarixshunosligi*, Tashkent: Mahpirat Press.
- Kraevoye Upravleniye, Otchet po Revizii Turkestanaskogo Kraya*. (1910). Proizvedennoy po Visoçayşemu Poveleniyu Senatorom Gofmeysterom Grafom K. K. Palenom, SPb.
- Uzbekiston Taribi*, (2011). (Edited by. Murtazayeva R.), Tashkent: Akademiya Press.
- Uzbekiston Taribi, Turkiston Çorizmi Mustamlakaşişi Davrida*, (2011). (Edited by Hamdam Sodikov, Narzulla Jörayev), 1. book, Tashkent: Shark.
- Uzbekiston SSR Tarihi, (1971). C.II, Tashkent.
- Lasinskiy, (1891). *Hronologia Russkoy Voenniy İstorii*, Tipografiya Departamenta Ugalov Mahovaya, SPb.
- MacKenzi David *The Conquest and Administration of Turkistan, 1860-85*, Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917, (Edited by Michel Rywkin), Mansell Publishing Limited London and New York.
- Mahmut Koshgariy, (1960-1963). *Turkiy Suzlar Devoni (Devon-i Lugatit-Turk)*. (Translated and edited by S.M.Mutalibov), Vol. 1/3, Tashkent.
- Maeva N.A. (1876). “*Azjatskiy Tashkent*”, *Materiali Dlya Statistiki Turkestanaskogo Kraya Ejogodnik*, Vol.IV, (Edited by N.A.Maeva), SPb.
- Mason M.E. (1953). *Abanqaran*, Arheologo-topograficheskiy Ocherk, Tashkent.
- Mirzoolim Muşrif. (1995). *Ansob us-Salotin va Tavorih ul-Havokin – Kukon Honligi Taribi*. edited by Akbar Matgoziyev, Muhabbat Usmonova, Tashkent: Gafur Gulom Adabiyot va Sanat Press.
- Mullo Olim Mahdum Hoci, (1915). *Turkiston Taribi*. Uzbekistan Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Section, No: 5751, Tashkent.
- Mullo Olim Mahdum Hoci, (2009). *Taribi Turkiston*. (Ed. Sh. Vahidov, R. Halikova), Tashkent: Yangi Asr Avlodi. Muhammad Aziz Marğiloniy, *Tarib-i Aziziy*. Uzbekistan Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Section, No: 11108.
- Muhammed Solih Hoca Toşkandiy, (1863-88). *Tarib-i Cadida-i Toşkand*. C.II, Uzbekistan Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Section No: 7791, 11072, Tashkent.
- Mullo Muhammad Yunusson Toib, (1900). *Tarib-i Alimkuli Amir-i Laşkar*. Uzbekistan Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Section No: 12136.
- Muhammadhakimhon Tora, (2010). *Muntabab at-Tavorih, (Hokand va Buboro Taribi, Sayobat va Hotiralar)*. (Translated from Persian-Tajik to Uzbek Sh. Vohidov,) Tashkent: Yangi Asr Avlodi.

şehir adı 'Şaş', 'Medinet uş-Şaş' diye geçmektedir. XI. yüzyılda Abu Reyhan Biruni ilk kez Türkçe tanımlamıştır. Ona göre şehrin ismi Türkçe "Taş" kelimesiyle ilintilidir. Yani Taşkent "Taş kışlak" anlamını vermektedir. İstahri ve İbn Havkal eserlerinde bu topraklarda maden taşlarının çok olduğundan bahsedilmiştir.

IX-XIII yüzyıllarda Şaş yani Taşkent, üç büyük idari merkezden oluşmaktaydı. Başkenti Banokat şehri olmuş ve bölge bir kavşak niteliğinde kaynaklarda bahsi geçmektedir. Uğrak merkezi olan Taşkent, XIV-XVI. yüzyıllarda Çaç, Şaş, Taşkent isimleri ile bilinmiş, XVI. yüzyıldan sonraki kaynaklarda "Taşkent mülkü", "Vilâyet, şehir", "Taşkent ve Deşt-i Kıpçak vilâyeti" olarak anılmaktadır.

XVI. yüzyıldan itibaren Taşkent hâkimiyeti sürekli el değiştirmiştir. Bu dönemde Taşkent şehri dört bölgeden oluşmaktaydı: Sebzar, Kökçe, Beşyağaç ve Şeyhantahur. Hokand Hanı Âlim Han döneminde (1800-1810) Taşkent Hanlık tasarrufuna geçti (1808). Hokand Hanlığının idaresi altında Taşkent hududu güney sınırlarındaki birçok şehir ve kaleleri kendi içinde barındıran bir vilâyet makamında yönetildi.

XIX. yüzyıl boyunca Rusya'nın Türkistan üzerinde izlediği politikanın temel özelliği Türkistan'a doğru yayılmacı siyaseti uygulayarak, topraklarının doğal bir şekilde genişletmekti. Türkistan'ın giriş kapısı olan Akmesicet kalesi 1853'te Ruslar tarafından kuşatılırken, işgalci güçler Taşkent'e kadar ilerlemeyi, bu şehri Rusya'nın Türkistan bölgesine saplanmış kuvvetli bir karargâh olarak kullanmayı amaçlamıştı. Taşkent'in jeopolitik ve jeostratejik özelliği Çar Rusya'sının işgal politikasında şehrin istilasını zorunlu kılmıştı. Çarlığın esas dikkat merkezinde yer alan Taşkent meselesi hatta Rus Çarının bizzat katılımıyla gerçekleşen mecliste tartışılmıştı. Türkistan işgali için oluşturulan askeri ilerleme planına göre önce Evliya Ata sonra Çimkent ve ardından Taşkent'i ele geçirilecekti. Ruslar, Hokand'dan sonraki en önemli ikinci şehir ve Türkistan'ın kalbi olan Taşkent'i ele geçirmek için önce bu şehrin anahtarı konumunda olan Çimkent şehrini ele geçirmesi gerekirdi. General-Albay Çernyayev, 7 Temmuz 1864 yılında Çimkent'in üstüne yürümüştür.

Taşkent, Çar istilasına karşı savaşın merkezi olmuştur. Harbî üstünlüğü yüksek olan Rus ordusu Taşkent'i kanlı bir şekilde ancak zorluklarla teslim almıştı. Emir-i Leşker unvanıyla bilinen Kırgız-Kıpçak boylarının lideri Âlimkul'un önderliğinde halkın güçlü direnişiyle karşı karşıya kalmıştı. 9 Mayıs 1865'te Rus askerleri Taşkent üzerine son ölümcül darbelerle saldırır ve Molla Âlimkul bu muharebede yaralanarak vefat eder.

1867 yılında Ruslar tarafından istila edilen Türkistan hududu 15,270 m²'ye ulaşmıştır. Bu tarihte kurulan Türkistan Genel Valiliğinin merkezi olarak seçilen Taşkent şehri, aynı zamanda koloni faaliyetlerinde Çarlık Rusya'sının Türkistan politikasını şekillendiren başlıca yönetim merkeziydi. Çarlık Rusya'sı Türkistan'a işgal faaliyetlerini başlatmadan önce uzun müddet bölgeyi detaylı olarak tetkik etmiştir. Taşkent şehrinin Türkistan'ın yönetim merkezi olarak seçilmesi bu derin araştırmanın neticesi ve stratejik planlamanın bir parçası idi. Koloni siyasetinin başarılı bir şekilde ilerletilmesinde, bölgenin yönetilmesinde ve işgal edilmiş hudutların kontrolünde Taşkent'in coğrafi konumu Rusya açısından çok önemliydi.

Ruslarla yapılan anlaşma ve ticari münasebetler sayesinde Taşkent'in nüfusu oldukça artmış ve şehrin iktisadi konumu olarak değer kazanmıştır. XVIII. yüzyıl sonunda ve XIX. yüzyıl başında nüfusu 60.000 ile 80.000 arasında olan Taşkent, Türkistan'ın o dönemdeki sanayi ve ticaret merkezlerinden birisi haline dönüşmüştür.

Taşkent, geçmişten günümüze sadece önemli bir ticari merkez değil aynı zamanda devlet içinde bir devlet şehir olmuştur. Kuzeyde Deşt-i Kıpçak üzerinden Rusya'ya, Güneyde Hindistan'a, Doğu'da Çin'e kadar uzanan ticari güzergâh ve bölgeyi Batuya bağlayan kavşak niteliğindeki şehrin yerleşim konumu bölge açısından kalkınma ve kazanç merkezi sayılmıştır. Taşkent bölgesi hangi idarî sisteme bağlı ise onun çıkarlarına en büyük tesiri olmuştur. Fakat şunu vurgulamak gerekir ki mıntıkadaki siyasi gelişmelerde Taşkent bağımsız veya yarı bağımsız şekilde karar alabiliyordu. Taşkent ekonomik, sosyo-kültürel değişim süreçlerinde önemli rol oynamıştır.

Türkistan toprakları Rusların tahakkümü altında çok değişim ve dönüşümlere uğradı. Fakat bu değişimler sonucunda Taşkent merkez olarak daha da ön plana çıkmış oldu. Önce Çar Rusya'sının Türkistan bölge merkezi, sonra Sovyetler döneminde Özbekistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'nin başkenti ve Sovyetlerin parçalanmasıyla bağımsız Özbekistan'ın merkezi oldu.