

CONSTRUCTION OF WORKERS' TOWNS AS ONE OF THE ASPECTS IN THE NEW HOUSING POLICY OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT IN UZBEKISTAN IN THE 20-30S OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Turdibay Ruzibayevich Shadmanov
National University of Uzbekistan

Abstract

In this article, the author attempted to analyze the policy of the Soviet state in the field of housing in the cities of Uzbekistan in 1920s-1930s of XX century. The author paid special attention to the search for forms of solving the housing policy by the Soviet government in the framework of overcoming the emerging housing crisis, including such measures as the construction of workers and socialist towns. At the same time, the Soviet government believed that the existing system of cooperative housing construction, the construction of workers and socialist towns, developed in most cases not a socialist way of life, but strengthened old individually-isolated forms of life. The construction of one or two apartment buildings in which each tenant had his own separate yard, fenced from the neighbor's yard, was perceived by the Soviet government as absolute individualism in the complete absence of any elements of collectivism. Despite all efforts, the housing problem, together with the presence of workers and other departmental dormitories, which was perceived by the majority as temporary, forced housing, was not completely resolved until the collapse of the Soviet state.

Keywords: housing policy, housing, work camps, socialist towns, temporary, forced housing.

From the first days of its existence, the Soviet government pursued a housing policy that was radically different from the pre-revolutionary one. Its main feature was that the government proclaimed state ownership of housing as the main means of its managerial influence on the gigantic masses of the population, driven by collectivization and industrialization.

The most important problem in the first years of Soviet power was the housing problem, which worsened due to the steady growth of the urban population. According to the 1921 census, in the new-city part of Tashkent were 6,228 houses with a total living area of 180,242 square sazhen. Of the total number of these houses, 39 percent were occupied by commercial premises and institutions. On average, each city resident had no more than 1 square sazhen of housing [1].

By mid-1921, the housing problem had worsened so much that more than 450 heated cars were used as apartments for workers, and about 500 families generally lived in the open air [2], and the situation did not improve in the future. For example, despite some successes in housing construction during the period 1925/26, when individual departments built residential buildings for their workers, the overall situation in this area remained tense. For example, the NKPS (People's Commissariat of Railways) built 11 four apartment buildings, but at the same time stated the fact that it had 40 carriages used for housing for workers, and the department was forced to place about 200 more families in barns, storage rooms and dugouts, which were not suitable for workers' housing, both technically and sanitarily [3].

The housing issue in the cities of the UzSSR, in connection with the successful economic growth of economic development, was an extremely serious social problem that could be resolved through the maximum influx of funds to eliminate the housing crisis and under the most favorable conditions for their use.

The development of industry, in all its types, as well as the restructuring of agriculture on the principles of collective and state farm associations, required the development of housing construction in order to attach workers to production, the concentration of worker housing close to production, cultural and public services in connection with the implementation of tasks for the reconstruction of the old life on a new collective basis.

This problem, taking into account also the issue of rebuilding old cities according to new socialist plans, was closely related to the layout and type of modern workers' housing; Therefore, the Soviet leadership was urgently faced with the issue of finding ways to implement cheap and convenient workers' housing that would meet the requirements and demands of the social and everyday order of the future inhabitants of the homes and, especially, representatives of the local main nationality.

The Soviet state, when pursuing its housing policy, placed special emphasis on creating certain privileges for a certain class, and therefore, in the implementation of housing construction, it paid special attention to the creation of cheap and convenient workers' towns. At the same time, according to the data presented in the brief report of the People's Commissariat of Communal Services of the UzSSR to the Supreme Council of National Economy (Supreme Council of National Economy) of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, in the UzSSR at the time of national-state delimitation, that is, in 1924-1925, there were 11,400 workers [4].

In the resolution of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the UzSSR, it was proposed not to allow small-scale isolated housing construction, but to concentrate this construction in certain areas in the form of separate worker-cooperative towns, carrying out, simultaneously with housing construction, the construction of cultural, social, and educational institutions [5].

In January 1921, the housing department of the new-city District Council, in order to ease the housing crisis, raised the question of building a workers' town beyond the Salar river. The district council proposed building 200 small two-room mansions with a kitchen. Other district councils of Tashkent supported the initiative of the new-city district council and called on the city's workers to take a direct part in the construction of workers' camps, to organize cleanup days and Sundays, as well as the collection of construction materials, for these purposes [6].

In mid-1922, on the initiative of the authorities, funds were allocated for the construction of a workers' camp for railway workers. In the summer of the same year, construction began on workers' camps (20 houses) at Tezikova Dacha and on the former Pervushinsky lands (10 houses). After the completion of the main construction work in 1922, the workers' towns received their names – Pervomaisky and Lenin. By the indicated time, workers had already settled in some houses[7].

At the end of 1922, the construction of a workers' town began in the old city part of Tashkent. Two years later, construction of a second workers' camp began here, consisting of 13 houses of the same type.

In order to finance and further develop this project for the period from 1926/27 to 1928/29 inclusive, Tsecombank[8] allocated 598,000 rubles for lending to individual developers. However, the own investments of individual developers, in relation to the loan received on average in the republic, were expressed in the amount of 71.9% [9], since the state's own funds were not enough for these purposes.

Considering that the five-year housing construction plan in Uzbekistan, drawn up by the State Planning Committee and the NKVD of the Uzbek SSR, as well as the five-year housing construction plan of the housing construction cooperation, does not provide the necessary pace and forms of housing construction in connection with the development of the national economy of the republic, the Executive

Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan proposed the Council of People's Commissars of the Uzbek SSR to create a government commission with the participation of engineering and technical forces and interested departments and organizations, which would be entrusted with the following tasks:

Within three months, develop a long-term plan for housing construction in Uzbekistan, taking into account the housing construction of state and collective farms, based on the idea of primarily providing housing for industrial workers, as well as completing work on planning the cities of Uzbekistan and allocating certain areas for workers' housing construction (workers towns)[10].

At the beginning of 1932, at the 1st Tashkent City Party Conference, a resolution was adopted "On the tasks of party organizations in Central Asia," which emphasized the need to focus on accelerating the pace of housing construction and attracting public funds to it. The Tashkent City Council proposed, after the completion of the construction of residential buildings, to begin construction of another 447 thousand square meters of housing [11]. However, despite all the decisions made, the construction plan for 1932 was not implemented. December 4, 1933, Bureau of the Tashkent City Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan, on the results of housing, communal and cultural construction. The Bureau recognized the progress of construction work during this period as unsatisfactory and pointed out the lack of efficiency in implementing the decisions of the plenums of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks [12].

During the years of industrialization, a workers' town was built on Takhtapul, as well as houses for workers and employees of Tashtram and tanneries. This period is characterized mainly by one-story buildings. In the early 30s, about 10 thousand people lived in just one workers' town on Takhtapul, of which 80% were representatives of the local population. During the same period, houses for various kinds of visiting specialists appeared in Tashkent[13]; by 1933 there were already 16 of them. Moreover, according to the data presented in the above-mentioned brief report of the People's Commissariat of Communal Services of the UzSSR to the Supreme Council of National Economy (VSNKh) of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, by 1936 there were 68,600 industrial workers in the Uzbek SSR, of which more half of the Uzbeks. The total number of workers in the republic (industrial, construction, state farms and MTS) reached 234,700 people[14], with the main increase in personnel coming from workers from Uzbeks and other local nationalities. At the same time, the population of the UzSSR as of 1926 was 5,272,801 people [15].

That is, as a percentage, the number of workers in relation to the bulk of the population did not exceed 4.5%. As for the planning of construction, the construction of workers' towns, workers' quarters, from the point of view of organizing the socialist life of the cooperative population, there was no planning as such. As stated by local authorities represented by the NKVD and the communal section of the State Planning Committee of the UzSSR, handicraft dominated in this matter, and the existing system of cooperative housing construction did not develop a socialist way of life but strengthened the old individually isolated forms of life [16].

In the period from 1933 to 1935 in the city of Tashkent, 102,448 square meters of housing were built and put into operation; over the same years, 96,947 square meters were lost due to the demolition of buildings for new construction, as a result of which the increase in living space over 4 years in the second five-year plan amounted to 5,501 square meters [17], while the population during this time increased by almost 100 thousand people.

A similar situation, in the sense of the insignificance of covering the loss of living space due to new construction, was observed in the city of Samarkand. In 1934, in a number of cities in the Fergana Valley, spring rains destroyed several thousand buildings, of which 2,000 were in the city of Kokand alone.

In more difficult conditions, in terms of providing workers with living space, there were regional centers, and especially in the newly organized areas, where there were only a few European-style houses and employees of institutions had to huddle in local-type buildings that were primitively adapted for

housing [18].

The expansion of housing construction in the regions, which expanded noticeably during the five-year plans, was still insufficient to quickly eliminate the housing crisis, which, in the opinion of the Soviet authorities, served as a serious obstacle to attracting qualified personnel for workers in the regions.

In order to prevent small-scale isolated housing construction and the scattering of this construction in different areas of cities, as well as the concentration of this construction in certain areas in the form of separate workers-cooperative towns, carrying out simultaneously with housing construction the construction of cultural, social and mass educational institutions of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan. considered it necessary to raise before the Council of People's Commissars of the UzSSR the question of organizing work on planning the cities of Uzbekistan and the allocation of certain zones for workers' housing construction, taking into account the moments of implementation of collectivism in housing construction, and also to ask the Council of People's Commissars to issue directives on the redevelopment of housing in former old cities. On the other hand, the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan. considered it necessary to ask the Council of People's Commissars of the UzSSR to create a special government commission, which should develop basic directives on the problem of building socialist cities (socialist towns) at large industrial enterprises under construction (Ugleazot, Kadyryastroy, textile factory, Uzneft, etc.)[19].

Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan. also considered it necessary to ask the Council of People's Commissars of the UzSSR to issue a resolution that in the coming years new housing construction should take place overwhelmingly in areas with a predominant population of workers and primarily at industrial enterprises. As for housing construction in other urban settlements of Uzbekistan, it should have been classified as secondary and minimal funds should have been provided for these areas [20].

Since the Soviet government believed that housing construction in most cases of small 1-2-4 apartment buildings, with a separate courtyard for each apartment, in no way contributed to the socialization of the worker's life, but strengthened individual philistine tendencies, it was decided to rely on construction of multi-storey buildings. Since 1934, the construction of multi-storey buildings began, and until 1937 it was carried out mainly by industry people's commissariats, housing cooperatives [21], and city councils.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the housing policy of the Soviet government was class-based and was a powerful ideological tool of the Bolsheviks. The creation of a new way of life as the most important component of the cultural revolution was associated primarily with the rejection of bourgeois individualism and the consciousness of oneself as part of a collective, and in this sense, the Soviet government believed that the existing system of cooperative housing construction, the construction of workers and socialist towns, developed in most cases a non-socialist way of life, but strengthened the old individually isolated forms of life. She perceived the construction of one or two apartment buildings in which each tenant had his own separate yard, fenced off from the neighbor's yard, as absolute individualism in the complete absence of any elements of collectivism.

In addition, the Soviet authorities believed that in the 1920s and 1930s new housing construction should have taken place overwhelmingly in areas with a predominant population of workers and primarily at industrial enterprises. As for housing construction in other urban settlements of Uzbekistan, it should have been classified as secondary and minimal funds should have been allocated for these areas.

References

1. GATO, f. 10, op.1, d.360, p.135.
2. TsGA RUz, f. R.17, op.1, d.1112, p. 25.
3. TsGA RUz, f. R. 837, op.1, d.108, p.53
4. TsGA RUz, f. R. 2182, op.1, d.192, p.4

5. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d. 1892, p.83, p.115.
6. GATO, f. 10, op.1, d.338, p.123.
7. GATO, f. 10, op.1, d.338, p.123.
8. The Central Bank of Communal Services and Housing Construction (Tsekombank) 1925-1959) is a specialized state bank of the USSR, founded for the purpose of lending for the construction, restoration and expansion of public utility enterprises and structures, as well as the construction and repair of residential premises.
9. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d.1892, p.83, p.109.
10. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d.1892, p.114
11. G. Rashidov. History of socialist Tashkent. Tashkent, Nauka Publishing House, 1965, vol.1, p.296
12. G. Rashidov. History of socialist Tashkent. Tashkent, Nauka Publishing House, 1965, vol.1 p.297
13. TsGA RUz, f. R.837, op. 10, d. 1106, pp. 4, 6, 66, 68
14. TsGA RUz, f. R.2182, op.1, d.192, p.4
15. [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Перепись_населения_СССР_\(1926\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Перепись_населения_СССР_(1926))
16. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d. 1892, p.87.
17. TsGA RUz, f. R.2182, op.1, d.192, p.12
18. TsGA RUz, f. R.2182, op.1, d.192, p.13
19. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d.1892, p.114
20. TsGA RUz, f. R.95, op.1, d.1892, p.120
21. TsGA RUz, f. R.2182, op.1, d.192, p.9