



A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH ON THE KARAKALPAKS OF THE FERGANA VALLEY

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Abstract. *This article examines scholarship on the Karakalpaks of the Fergana Valley published between 1933 and 2026 from a historiographical perspective. It explores how Soviet-era ethnographic and linguistic evidence was interpreted in Western and Turkish scholarship and how these interpretations relate to subsequent local research. Publications are compared in terms of their sources, research questions, and methods of substantiating conclusions. The works of E. D. Polivanov, L. S. Tolstova, and D. S. Nasyrov are treated as an earlier scholarly foundation rather than as foreign historiography. Particular attention is paid to bibliographic connections among K. H. Menges, S. Wurm, and J. Eckmann, the development of Tolstova's research, ethnic classification in census records, and Turkish scholars' use of historical chronicles. The analysis distinguishes official nationality records, everyday language use, and ethnic memory as different kinds of evidence. It argues that the historiographical significance of these publications lies in the changing relationship between evidence and interpretation rather than in their number or place of publication. The conclusions are limited to the publications examined.*

Keywords: *Fergana Valley, Karakalpaks, historiography, Soviet ethnography, foreign scholarship, local research, ethnic classification, population census, language, ethnic identity.*

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly information about the Karakalpaks of the Fergana Valley was collected at different times and for different purposes. Ethnographers studied settlement patterns, economic activities, and customs, while linguists compared the features of Karakalpak with those of other Turkic languages. Subsequent encyclopedias and reference works summarized some of these observations. Although the publications address related



subjects, their sources, questions, and conclusions differ. This article therefore examines how scholarly interpretations emerged and developed, rather than merely describing the contents of individual works.

Specialized field materials on the Fergana Karakalpaks were assembled primarily in Tolstova's publications of 1954–1959. Her joint study with Nasyrov, published in 1980, compared the ethnic and linguistic characteristics of the Fergana, Bukhara, and Samarkand groups. Gubaeva situated the issue within the broader ethnocultural history of the valley (Gubaeva, 1991; Nasyrov & Tolstova, 1980, pp. 106–124; Tolstova, 1954, pp. 19–32, 1959). These works provide an important comparative foundation for foreign scholarship, but they emerged within Soviet and local scholarly traditions. This distinction informs the classification of the studies considered here.

Research undertaken after Uzbekistan's independence developed in relation to this earlier body of evidence. Atakhanov examined migration, ethnocultural relations, and economic life among the Fergana Karakalpaks. Prekeeva focused on the Karakalpaks of Namangan, press coverage of these communities, and historiographical questions. Her article with Kutlimuratov, published in 2026, reviews earlier research by Uzbek scholars (Atakhanov, 2020b, pp. 3714–3722; Prekeeva & Kutlimuratov, 2026, pp. 71–74). Although some of these studies appeared abroad, they continue a local research tradition. Distinguishing publication venue from scholarly tradition is therefore essential to the comparison.

The central question is how information about the Fergana Karakalpaks entered scholarly circulation. Which conclusions derive from direct field observation or historical sources, and which result from reinterpretations of earlier publications? The repetition of a statistic or an ethnographic observation across several works does not demonstrate that new research was conducted. Accordingly, the publications are compared by the provenance of their evidence, their methods, and the scope of their conclusions, as well as by publication date.

The chronological scope extends from Polivanov's linguistic study of 1933 to local articles published in 2026. Menges's book, published in New York in 1947, is considered an early significant contribution to foreign linguistic scholarship. Soviet field research and post-independence local studies provide a comparative basis for evaluating foreign



interpretations. The selected publications do not establish the existence of a continuous series of foreign expeditions devoted to the Fergana Karakalpaks.

Three criteria guide the analysis: whether the Fergana group was the author's direct object of investigation; which sources supported the conclusions; and which period and territory those conclusions concerned. Field notes, censuses, chronicles, and encyclopedia entries provide different kinds of information. Connections between scholars are assessed through identifiable reviews, citations, and bibliographic references rather than inferred from thematic similarity.

In this article, "foreign historiography" refers to the scholarly environment and research tradition in which a work was produced. Tolstova and Polivanov belong to the Soviet scholarly legacy, whereas Atakhanov's articles in international journals report locally based research. The country of publication alone is insufficient to assign an author's interpretation to a particular foreign scholarly school.

The studies also differ in their proximity to the subject. The first group consists of research specifically devoted to the Fergana Karakalpaks. The second discusses them in censuses, encyclopedias, or wider ethnographic comparisons. The third addresses general Karakalpak history, language policy, and political institutions. The latter two groups are relevant to historiographical assessment, but they cannot be equated with direct local observation.

Territorial terminology also requires clarification. In scholarly works, "Fergana" sometimes denotes the entire valley, whereas in statistical records it may refer to Fergana Province within its boundaries at a particular date. Valley-wide information, which also encompasses Andijan and Namangan, cannot be directly compared with a provincial figure. Numerical data are therefore assessed in relation to their administrative coverage and enumeration methods.¹

Publication type affects the evidentiary possibilities of a work. A monograph may synthesize extensive material, a journal article may investigate a specific problem in depth, and a conference paper may briefly present preliminary findings. Conference contributions are therefore not expected to provide the same detailed substantiation

¹ "Fergana Valley" denotes the wider geographical area; "Fergana Province" denotes the administrative unit relevant to the cited enumeration. These territorial units must not be treated as interchangeable.



as a monograph. They nevertheless help establish when a question entered scholarly discussion.

Access to the sources is uneven: some publications are available in full, while others are represented only by catalog records or bibliographic descriptions. Reliable confirmation that a work was published does not verify every claim attributed to it. Conclusions based on directly examined texts are therefore distinguished from assessments resting solely on bibliographic information.

Main Body

Linguistic scholarship and its evidentiary limits

The first task is to identify the earliest published sources of information used by foreign authors. Much of the Western and Turkish literature draws on earlier ethnographic observations, statistics, or linguistic studies rather than on independent expeditions to Fergana villages. An explicit reference can demonstrate a scholarly connection; similarity of subject matter alone cannot establish direct influence.

Polivanov's 27-page study, *Nekotorye foneticheskie osobennosti kara-kalpakskogo yazyka*, was published in Tashkent in 1933. It concerns Karakalpak phonetics, and its bibliographic details are documented in library records (Polivanov, 1933). Unless passages referring specifically to Fergana villages or local informants are identified in the original text, the work cannot be treated as direct evidence of language shift in Fergana. It is therefore used here as part of the comparative linguistic legacy rather than as a specialized ethnographic investigation.

Menges's *Qaraqalpaq Grammar: Part One: Phonology* examines Karakalpak phonology in comparison with other Turkic languages (Menges, 1947). This classification offers a theoretical framework for analyzing local speech but does not independently document everyday language use in Fergana villages. The book's reception in foreign linguistics can be traced through subsequent reviews and articles.

In 1950, Wurm published a review of Menges's book in *Anthropos*, followed in 1951 by his study "The Karakalpak Language" (Wurm, 1950, pp. 403–408, 1951, pp. 487–610). The review establishes an explicit bibliographic engagement with Menges's work. However, the precise arguments Wurm accepted or challenged should not be stated conclusively without examining the original review.



Eckmann's 1953 review article, "Karakalpak dili I. Diyalektoloji üzerine malzeme," continues this scholarly exchange. While discussing Baskakov's dialectological work, Eckmann also refers to the studies of Menges and Wurm (Eckmann, 1953, pp. 407–410). These publications thus belong to a discussion linked by references, rather than merely forming a chronological sequence. Their influence on the ethnography of Fergana, however, requires separate evidence.

This linguistic discussion cannot be directly equated with the ethnic history of the Fergana Karakalpaks. Phonetic and dialectological classifications describe a language system; they do not independently establish ethnic self-identification, household language, or intergenerational memory in a particular village. The works of Menges, Wurm, and Eckmann are therefore examined as contributions to the development of scholarship on Karakalpak, rather than as direct accounts of local ethnic processes.

Soviet field research and regional comparison

Tolstova's research has a different evidentiary significance because it directly addresses the Fergana Karakalpaks. She published field observations in 1954, summarized her research in a dissertation abstract in 1955, and examined migration history in a separate article in 1957. Her 1959 monograph presented these investigations more extensively (Tolstova, 1954, pp. 19–32, 1955, 1957, pp. 29–46, 1959). A library catalog confirms the 16-page dissertation abstract, but its individual conclusions can be evaluated only through the original text.

The 1955 dissertation abstract and the 1959 monograph belong to the same research process. They should not be counted as the products of independent expeditions. Conversely, it would also be unjustified to assume that their contents are identical. Establishing which materials were revised and which conclusions were expanded requires a comparison of the dissertation, its abstract, and the monograph.

Tolstova's 1961 article on the Samarkand Karakalpaks directly connects with her earlier Fergana research. At the beginning of the article, she cites her publications of 1954, 1957, and 1959 and draws on field observations undertaken by the Zarafshan team in 1960 (Tolstova, 1961b, pp. 34–44). Her comparison of a narrative recorded in Samarkand with a Fergana version is especially significant: the text demonstrates both the expansion of the research area and the reuse of earlier material for a new comparison.



Tolstova also published an article on the Karakalpaks of Bukhara Province in 1961 (Tolstova, 1961a, pp. 44–51). Comparing Fergana, Samarkand, and Bukhara materials within one scholar's work made it possible to identify similarities and differences between local groups. Such comparisons do not, by themselves, establish that linguistic and cultural change followed the same course in all three regions. Her 1963 study addressed Karakalpaks beyond the Khorezm oasis more broadly, while her joint work with Nasyrov compared the ethnic and linguistic development of local groups (Nasyrov & Tolstova, 1980, pp. 106–124; Tolstova, 1963).

How this fieldwork tradition entered foreign scholarship is a separate question. Zhdanko's study of Karakalpak ethnic history and Gubaeva's monograph on the population of Fergana provide a comparative historical context (Gubaeva, 1991; Zhdanko, 1950). They are not foreign studies in the sense used here, but they allow later syntheses to be assessed against local and regional evidence.

Western reference works and ethnic statistics

Krader's *Peoples of Central Asia* places the region's peoples within a broad anthropological and social framework (Krader, 1963). Its significance lies primarily in the criteria used to situate ethnic communities within a regional classification. This general anthropological perspective does not replace specialized field observations of the Fergana Karakalpaks.

The entry “Karakalpak” in volume 4 of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, attributed to Barthold and Wixman, reports 732 Karakalpaks in Fergana Province in the 1970 enumeration (Barthold & Wixman, 1978, pp. 610–611). This statistic applies to a particular administrative territory. An inference about the extent of ethnic assimilation goes beyond the figure itself and requires further investigation. Applying the provincial figure to the entire valley would likewise be historically inappropriate.

Before comparing encyclopedia statistics with earlier population counts, researchers must establish the territory covered, the ethnic categories used, and the recording procedures. These conditions may have changed between 1897, 1926, and 1970. Differences between figures cannot therefore be attributed automatically to migration or assimilation. Brief encyclopedia statements must be read with the same limitation in mind.



Akiner's *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union* brings together historical, demographic, and linguistic information about Muslim peoples of the Soviet Union in English (Akiner, 1983). For Western readers, its value lies in consolidating previously dispersed literature. Its syntheses nevertheless do not have the same evidentiary status as Tolstova's direct observations in Fergana. The provenance of particular statements must be established separately.

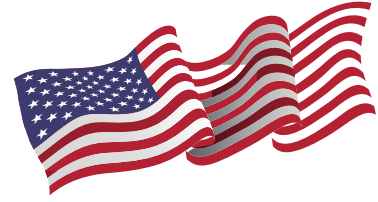
Wixman's article on ethnolinguistic data in Soviet censuses examines how nationality and language were recorded. His subsequent handbook systematizes information about ethnic groups (Wixman, 1983, pp. 545–558, 1984). The first discusses methods of working with statistics, while the second belongs to a synthesizing reference genre. The figure of 732 Karakalpaks in Fergana Province should therefore be attributed to the encyclopedia entry that reports it, rather than to Wixman's methodological article of 1983.

A central issue raised by Wixman is that recorded nationality, native language, and the language of everyday communication do not necessarily coincide (Wixman, 1983, pp. 545–558). Communities with different ethnic affiliations may speak the same language, while people recorded under one nationality may use different languages. Changes in official counts must consequently be compared with evidence about local speech, self-designation, and family memory.²

The works of Krader, Akiner, Wixman, and Mote illustrate different ways of reworking information in Western scholarship. Krader situates communities within a broad anthropological picture; Akiner assembles historical and demographic information; Wixman critically examines census criteria. Mote's "Karakalpaks" belongs to the concise encyclopedia-entry genre (Mote, 1994). Without distinguishing independent investigation from reliance on earlier literature, it is difficult to reconstruct how scholarly knowledge of the Fergana Karakalpaks developed.

Western handbooks and encyclopedias help clarify the general geographical distribution of the Karakalpaks. They do not, however, provide detailed accounts of the economic and cultural features of individual villages in Andijan, Namangan, or Fergana.

² In this discussion, "nationality" denotes the ethnic category recorded in Soviet enumeration, rather than citizenship. Recorded nationality and language are analytically distinct variables (Wixman, 1983, pp. 545–558).



Their historiographical contribution must therefore be assessed within the limits of their general classifications; local observations absent from these works cannot be attributed to them.

Turkish scholarship and the use of chronicles

One early Turkish synthesis is Yılmaz's "Karakalpak Türkleri ve Bugünkü Karakalpakistan," published in issue 16 of *Yeni Türkiye* in 1997. It assembles information about Karakalpak history and Karakalpakstan for Turkish readers (Yılmaz, 1997, pp. 1320–1329). The Fergana group is not the subject of a separate field investigation. The article is significant here because it shows how existing information entered the Turkish scholarly environment.

Taşagıl's "Karakalpaks" appeared in volume 24 of *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, on pages 426–427 (Taşagıl, 2001). It briefly describes the historical distribution of the Karakalpaks and their division into upper and lower groups. This account helps establish the general historical context, but an encyclopedia entry alone cannot reconstruct migration routes, dates, and specific settlements.

Yılmaz's later work combines general Karakalpak history with the study of written historical sources. In 2002, he examined passages concerning the Karakalpaks in Agahi's *Gülşen-i Devlet*; in 2003, he addressed accounts of Karakalpak relations with the Khiva Khanate in Munis and Agahi's *Firdevsü'l-İkbâl* (Yılmaz, 2002, pp. 476–505, 2003, pp. 151–180). These are not specialized studies of Fergana. Their comparative value lies in allowing an assessment of how chronicle evidence was used in later scholarship.

The occurrence of the ethnonym "Karakalpak" in a chronicle does not establish that the event described concerned the Fergana Karakalpaks. Such an identification requires comparison of the event's date and location, the meaning of the term, and evidence from other sources. Yılmaz's work helps formulate these source-critical questions but does not replace local ethnographic observation.

Yılmaz's conference contribution on language and its development in the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan concerns institutional language development (Yılmaz, 2004, pp. 3250–3268). This subject differs from everyday language practices among dispersed communities in Fergana. His books of 2006 and 2008 address Karakalpak



political, social, and cultural history across a broader chronological span (Yılmaz, 2006, 2008). Together, these publications demonstrate the diversity of questions pursued in Turkish scholarship.

Taşağıl's encyclopedia entry and Yılmaz's chronicle studies serve different scholarly purposes. Taşağıl provides a general account of Karakalpak history and distribution, whereas Yılmaz examines passages in particular historical texts. Their information may be complementary, but its evidentiary relevance to Fergana must be evaluated separately.

This distinction is visible in the handling of sources. An encyclopedia places ethnic names and migration routes within a condensed historical outline. Chronicle analysis pays closer attention to original wording, the date of composition, and translation (Taşağıl, 2001, pp. 426–427; Yılmaz, 2002, pp. 476–505). A general encyclopedia statement about migration should therefore not be used as direct proof of an event described in a particular chronicle.

Political institutions and language policy

Another strand of Western scholarship addresses political relations. Hanks's "A Separate Space?" examines Karakalpak nationalism and territorial autonomy within the political system of post-Soviet Uzbekistan (Hanks, 2000, pp. 939–953). Fergana villages are not its direct object of study. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that foreign scholarship on the Karakalpaks extends beyond ethnography.

Schlyter's study of the Karakalpaks and other language minorities under Central Asian state rule focuses on relations between linguistic minorities and state policy (Schlyter, 2005, pp. 81–94). It offers material for assessing official language status and the influence of state institutions on language use. This orientation does not imply that language practices in Fergana Karakalpak households were specifically investigated.

Comparing Hanks and Schlyter helps distinguish political autonomy from language institutions (Hanks, 2000, pp. 939–953; Schlyter, 2005, pp. 81–94). Hanks emphasizes state and territorial relations, whereas Schlyter addresses the institutional circumstances of language minorities. Dispersed Karakalpak communities in Fergana are not central to either study. Their theoretical approaches can inform conclusions about Fergana only when compared with local ethnographic evidence.



Ulukbek Uulu's article on Uzbek national formation discusses the development of the Uzbek national designation, the term "Sart," and debates surrounding ethnic classification (Ulukbek Uulu, 2023, pp. 1968–1986). It provides a broader conceptual context for assessing the names under which Karakalpaks were recorded in censuses. General conclusions about national identification cannot, however, be applied directly to a particular Fergana village or to the figure recorded in 1970.

A shared issue across these works is the relationship between ethnic names, official registration, and a community's understanding of itself. These dimensions are connected, but change in one does not establish equivalent change in another. This limitation is particularly important when foreign syntheses are compared with later local observations.

Local research after independence

Following Atakhanov's study of 2005, further articles addressed migration, settlement, and ethnocultural relations among the Fergana Karakalpaks. His publications of 2020 and 2021 are thematically close, but classifying them as duplicate publications would require direct comparison of their texts, sources, and conclusions (Atakhanov, 2005, pp. 198–201, 2020b, pp. 3714–3722, 2021, pp. 586–596). Historiographical evaluation depends more on what each work adds to existing knowledge than on the number of publications.

Atakhanov's article of 2020 examines animal husbandry, while his 2022 study addresses fishing (Atakhanov, 2020a, pp. 4–9, 2022, pp. 246–249). These topics allow the economic practices described by Tolstova to be compared with later research. Greater thematic specificity does not by itself establish that new field materials were collected. Such novelty must be assessed by comparing the evidence presented in the publications.

Prekeeva's 2023 article focuses on the Karakalpaks of Namangan, while her 2024 study examines press materials about the "Upper Karakalpaks." Her joint publication with Kutlimuratov reviews earlier Uzbek scholarship (Prekeeva, 2023, pp. 89–91, 2024, pp. 95–96; Prekeeva & Kutlimuratov, 2026, pp. 71–74). Within this research, community history, press reporting, and historiographical sources perform different functions. These distinctions matter when assessing its relationship to foreign literature.

Local historiography also includes M. A. Abdullaev's 2023 conference contribution on Karakalpak ethnology during the independence period and his 2024 article on



local ethnographic research (M. A. Abdullaev, 2023, pp. 29–32, 2024, pp. 47–49). U. S. Abdullaev's 2026 conference paper addresses the history of agriculture among the Fergana Karakalpaks (U. S. Abdullaev, 2026, pp. 88–90). These studies demonstrate the continuation of research across different subject areas. Their length, evidence, and aims differ, however, and a brief conference paper should not be assessed by the same expectations as an extensive fieldwork monograph. They provide local material against which broader interpretations can be compared.

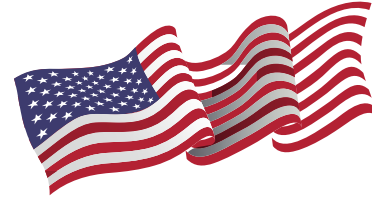
Publications from 2020–2026 show continuing interest in migration, economic activities, language, and the historiography of the Fergana Karakalpaks. They do not establish that an independent school specializing in this community has emerged in Western countries or Turkey. Instead, they indicate that questions about the relationship between local evidence and foreign syntheses remain to be investigated.

Connecting post-independence scholarship with earlier literature requires attention to how sources are used. Prekeeva and Kutlimuratov examine the local scholarly legacy, while the present study also compares foreign linguistic reviews, encyclopedia statistics, and Turkish approaches to chronicles. These approaches differ in the works they examine and the questions they ask, rather than merely in their titles.

Scholarly connections and questions for further research

A clear example of bibliographic connection appears in the works of Menges, Wurm, and Eckmann. Wurm reviewed Menges's book in 1950 and published a separate study of Karakalpak in 1951. Eckmann's 1953 review refers to both earlier authors (Eckmann, 1953, pp. 407–410; Wurm, 1950, pp. 403–408, 1951, pp. 487–610). This is an identifiable scholarly exchange rather than a simple sequence of publications. Its influence on Fergana ethnography still requires separate substantiation.

Continuity takes a different form in Tolstova's work. In her 1961 Samarkand article, she cites her Fergana studies of 1954, 1957, and 1959 and compares a Samarkand narrative with its Fergana counterpart (Tolstova, 1961b, pp. 34–44). This demonstrates the reuse of earlier expedition materials in research on another region. Similarities between the narratives nevertheless do not establish that local histories and cultural experiences were identical.



Connections can also be traced in Turkish encyclopedic scholarship. The bibliography of Taşağıl's "Karakalpaklar" includes Barthold and Wixman's "Karakalpak" (Barthold & Wixman, 1978, pp. 610–611; Taşağıl, 2001, pp. 426–427). This confirms a reference to the earlier encyclopedia entry. It does not establish that all of Taşağıl's arguments derive from that source or reproduce it in full. The existence of a reference and the extent of intellectual borrowing are separate questions.

These examples reveal three forms of scholarly continuity: engagement with earlier research in a review, an author's reuse of field materials in subsequent work, and reference to an earlier publication in an encyclopedia. Examining these relationships distinguishes historiographical analysis from a bibliography. Where only thematic resemblance is identifiable, no conclusion about direct scholarly influence is warranted.

Population statistics impose a different limitation. Comparing the enumerations of 1897, 1926, and 1970 requires clarification of changes in administrative boundaries, ethnic terminology, and recording criteria. The figure of 732 Karakalpaks in Fergana Province in 1970 cannot be directly compared with earlier valley-wide totals (Barthold & Wixman, 1978, pp. 610–611). Changes in official figures may reflect classification practices as well as population movement.

Further research could compare the settlements recorded by Tolstova with historical maps, household registers, and archival records. Village and clan names may persist differently from census nationality labels. Women's memories, marriage networks, and the intergenerational transmission of food and clothing traditions also require specific investigation. These are proposed research questions, not established findings of this article.

The scholarly value of foreign research cannot be measured solely by whether it involved a new expedition. Asking a new question of existing evidence, examining the foundations of ethnic classification, and critically reviewing an earlier work are also scholarly contributions. Such reinterpretation should nevertheless be distinguished from demonstrable intellectual influence: use of an earlier publication must be substantiated by a citation, review, or explicit bibliographic reference.³

³ A review or bibliographic citation documents engagement with an earlier publication. It does not, by itself, establish agreement with all of that publication's conclusions.



CONCLUSION

Knowledge of the Fergana Karakalpaks developed through three connected strands with different functions. Soviet ethnographic studies collected evidence about settlement, migration history, and everyday culture. Foreign linguistic and encyclopedic works situated information within broader classifications and interpretations. Local studies after independence revisited particular questions using materials from a later period. The historiographical significance of this literature lies in changes in the relationship between evidence and interpretation rather than in the number of publications.

The first finding concerns the evidentiary status of sources. Tolstova's specialized field materials, the censuses discussed by Wixman, encyclopedia entries, and linguistic studies do not answer the same questions. The inclusion of information about Karakalpaks in a foreign synthesis does not demonstrate that its author conducted independent observation in Fergana villages. Maintaining this distinction clarifies the boundary between general interpretation and local ethnographic evidence.

The second finding concerns identifiable connections between scholarly traditions. Wurm's review of Menges, Eckmann's references to earlier linguistic research, Tolstova's reuse of Fergana materials in her Samarkand article, and the encyclopedia reference in Taşağıl's bibliography represent different kinds of direct engagement. A citation alone does not imply full agreement. Assessing intellectual influence requires examination of the cited passage and the interpretation attached to it.

The third finding concerns ethnic statistics. The figure of 732 Karakalpaks in Fergana Province in 1970 pertains to a particular territory and enumeration period. It cannot be compared directly with valley-wide figures for 1897 or 1926. Recorded nationality, everyday language, and ethnic memory likewise need not coincide. Statistical decline or a change in classification cannot independently establish the end of a local community's cultural continuity.

Western and Turkish scholarship does not constitute a single interpretive approach. Phonological classification, general ethnic history, chronicle interpretation, territorial autonomy, and state language policy involve different research questions. The works of Menges, Yılmaz, Hanks, and Schlyter can be compared in these terms, but there is no



basis for assuming that each provides independent evidence of everyday life among the Fergana group. Their contribution often consists in introducing questions and concepts through which existing material can be reconsidered.

Later local studies address animal husbandry, fishing, agriculture, language, and historical memory alongside migration and settlement. Publication of a similarly themed work under a new title or in a later year is not itself evidence of scholarly novelty. Evaluating Atakhanov, Prekeeva, and other authors requires establishing which sources they introduced, how they revised earlier conclusions, and what comparative materials they used.

The historiography of the Fergana Karakalpaks therefore requires a history of how information entered scholarly circulation, was reworked, and was evaluated. Within the corpus examined, the most dependable conclusions arise from distinguishing direct observation, historical enumeration, and subsequent interpretation. Existing publications do not substantiate a single pattern of assimilation or language shift across all regions. Such a claim would require separate research comparing censuses, local archives, and family memories on consistent terms. Assessments of publications whose original texts were not examined remain limited to bibliographic evidence.

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