

**HISTORICAL FORMATION AND SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE RUSSIAN
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY**

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Annotation: This article analyzes the historical formation, scientific activity, and unique features of the Russian Geographical Society. Historical-analytical, systemic, comparative, and geopolitical approaches were applied. The findings show that the society played a central role in the development of Russian geography, particularly in expedition research, natural zonality, landscape studies, ethnography, and geopolitical thought. The scientific legacy of the RGS continues to serve as a foundation for the modern integrative and interdisciplinary development of geographical science.

Keywords: Russian Geographical Society, historical formation, geographical school, expeditions, natural zonality, landscape science, ethnography, geopolitics, scientific heritage.

Introduction. The Russian Geographical Society (RGS) is one of the most influential scientific organizations that emerged in Russia in the mid-19th century as a result of the intensification of science, research and expeditionary activity. The formation of this society, founded in 1845 in St. Petersburg, was directly related to the need to study the vast geographical, ethnographic and natural resources of the Russian territories. At that time, the economic, military, scientific and cultural needs of the state required in-depth knowledge of the territories, the creation of cartographic maps, the identification of natural resources and the study of the ethnographic characteristics of population groups.

Although the formation of the Russian Geographical Society was inspired by the achievements of European geography, it was able to create its own independent scientific school. In particular, such scientists as Semenov-Tyan-Shansky, Przhevalsky, Miklukho-Maclay, Dokuchaev, Berg made a great contribution to the development of society. Through their research, the Russian Geographical School has become a scientific school focused not only on the descriptive analysis of nature and territories, but also on their study based on a systematic, philosophical and comprehensive approach.

One of the distinctive features of the society is the interpretation of geography as an integrated science of natural, social and cultural processes, as well as the creation of a scientific database through the organization of large-scale expeditions. As a result of the activities of the RGS, the most important geographical and ethnographic data on Asia, Siberia, the Far East, the Caucasus and Central Asia of Russia have been collected. This process has given a powerful impetus to the development of not only geography, but also the fields of anthropology, ethnology, geology and ecology.

Therefore, the study of the historical formation of the Russian Geographical Society, its scientific school and its specific features is of great importance in understanding the current

development of geography, the phenomenon of the Russian Geographical School and the roots of modern scientific directions.

Literature review. Scientific sources on the historical formation and development of the Russian Geographical Society as a scientific school include extensive historical, geographical, and ethnographic research. This section analyzes the main sources on the formation of the society, its activities, its expeditionary heritage, and the formation of its scientific schools.

The most important information about the early activities of the Russian Geographical Society is found in the works written by the society's organizers and early members.

P.P.Semenov-Tyan-Shansky (1870–1880s) covered in detail the creation of the society, its main departments, and scientific tasks. He provided the first fundamental analysis of the society's expeditionary activities and its role in the study of Russian territories. Historical and geographical works by N.M. Yadrintsev, I.P. Magidovich, and V.V.Potapov indicate the political, economic, and scientific factors that led to the creation of the RGS.

These publications provide basic historical information about the society's activities, scientific priorities, and organizational structure in the 19th century. The richest heritage of the RGS is its expeditionary research. The following sources are important for them:

The expedition diaries and scientific reports of N.M. Przhevalsky, V.A. Obruchev, G.N. Potanin on Central Asia, Tibet, Mongolia.

The anthropological research of N.N. Miklukho-Maclay in New Guinea and the Pacific Islands illustrate the achievements of the Russian Geographical Society in the field of ethnography.

The works of such scientists as V.V. Dokuchaev, L.S. Berg, A.N. Krasnov on geological and geomorphological research demonstrate the contribution of the RGS to the development of natural geographical sciences.

These sources reflect the fundamental developments of the society in the fields of geography, ethnography, biology, climatology, and soil science.

Western researchers (for example, J. Forsyth, M. Bassin) analyzed the activities of the Russian Geographical Society in connection with geopolitical and scientific expansion. They noted that the scientific power of the geographical society played an important role in the process of Russia's expansion into Asia and Siberia. These sources reveal the international influence of the Russian Geographical Society.

An analysis of the literature shows that the formation and development of the Russian Geographical Society is a unique phenomenon in the history of geography. The Society's expeditions, scientific schools, natural and ethnographic research played an important role in the development of Russian and world geography. Its legacy still serves as an important theoretical basis for scientific, cultural and geopolitical research today.

Research methodology. This study aims to analyze the formation process, scientific activities and specific aspects of the Russian Geographical Society on a scientific and theoretical basis.

Analysis and results. In the middle of the 19th century, the Russian Empire's need to study Siberia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Far East increased.

The RGO was formed on the basis of this need as an organization that combined scientific, practical, and geopolitical tasks. A number of scientific schools were formed within the society School of Soil Science (Dokuchaev), School of Landscape Science (Berg), Ethnographic-Anthropological School (Miklukho-Maclay), School of Economic Geography (Baransky, Grigoryev).

These schools influenced the further development of world geography.

P.N. Savitsky and other Eurasianists showed geographical space as the fundamental basis for the formation of states and civilizations. They interpreted Russia as a geocultural unit between Europe and Asia. These ideas are also used in modern geopolitics.

The Russian geographical school contributed to the development of geography as an integrative science by considering the complex relationships between nature, society, economy, and culture as a single system.

The information collected by the RGO was of crucial importance in the processes of the empire demarcating borders, compiling military maps, implementing colonial policy, exploring economic resources.

This aspect indicates that the activities of the RGO were not scientific, but strategic in nature.

The scientific work of RGO scientists had a great influence not only on Russian, but also on world geography:

Dokuchaev's theory of zonality became the basis of world ecological geography;

Berg's landscape theory was used in global geomorphology and ecology;

Miklukho-Maclay's anthropology is considered the foundation of today's ethnology.

Conclusion and suggestions. The results of the study show that the Russian Geographical Society (RGO) was formed in the middle of the 19th century under the influence of the scientific, economic and geopolitical needs of the Russian Empire, and it became an important scientific center in the development of geography. The activities of the society led to the emergence of fundamental scientific schools in such areas as the study of vast territories, cartography, ethnography, geology, soil science and landscape science. The scientific heritage of such scientists as Przhevalsky, Potanin, Miklukho-Maclay, Dokuchaev, Berg was reflected not only in the development of Russian geography, but also in the development of world geography.

One of the distinctive features of the RGO is the study of geography on the basis of complex and interdisciplinary integration, the implementation of expeditionary research on a large scale, as well as the development of geography in harmony with state policy and strategic interests. The scientific and theoretical views of society still serve as an important theoretical foundation for geopolitics, anthropology, ecological geography, and cultural-geographical research today.

Wide use of the heritage of the Russian Geographical Society in geography education: It is advisable to apply the approaches of scientists such as Dokuchaev, Berg, Baransky, Miklukho-Maclay to geography in the higher education system of Uzbekistan.

Application of the methods of the classical Russian geographical school in territorial development studies: Landscape studies, natural zonality, anthropological and geographical analysis give effective results in the study of the regions of Uzbekistan.

Use of the experience of the Russian Geographical Society in the development of the geographical society of Uzbekistan: The model of the Russian Geographical Society can serve as an example in the processes of organizing expeditions, supporting young scientists, and creating scientific schools.

Careful application of the Eurasian approach of the Russian Geographical Society in geopolitical studies: The concepts of spatial philosophy and geocultural connections can be useful in analyzing the geostrategic environment of Central Asia.

Development of interdisciplinary research: Complex systematic approaches should be developed at the intersection of geography - anthropology - history - ecology.

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