



## The Formation of the "Skillful Inaction" and "Aggressive Attack" Schools in the English Foreign Policy of the 19th Century

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**Abstract:** *There are problems in world history that have not lost their relevance and importance over the years. One of such problems is the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia, which began in the middle of the XIX century. This issue is reflected in the monographs of all major world historians, politicians and experts, as well as in many textbooks, magazines and newspaper articles on international relations and diplomacy.*

*The process of struggle that began between the two imperialist states, Britain and Russia, has gathered many states around it over the years. This area of struggle has covered a very large area of the Eurasian region and has caused very complex political, economic and social problems.*

*This article describes the formation of the schools of "skillful inaction", "forward policy" in English historiography, the first political figures of these schools and their views.*

**Keywords:** *The Great Game, English Historiography, Indian Empire, Royal Colonial Institute, East India, Victorian Age, Royal Geographical Society.*

**Date of Submission:** 29-04-2023

**Date of Acceptance:** 31-05-2023

Today, in the republic, effective work is being done in the organization and provision of scientific research on current topics of social sciences, especially history. In the development of integration and cooperation relations of our country with developed foreign countries, there is a need to study the history of interstate relations in depth.

In 2017-2021, the Strategy of Actions on the five priority directions of the development of the Republic of Uzbekistan defines the issue of mutually beneficial and practical foreign policy as one of the priority directions. Also, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan emphasized that "we need to continue our activities in the field of foreign policy based on openness, mutual and beneficial cooperation and take measures to further increase its efficiency" and defined the main tasks in establishing international relations[1].

This study is based on PF-5046 dated May 19, 2017 "On measures to further improve international relations and friendly relations with foreign countries" and PF-5400 dated April 5, 2018 "Fundamental improvement of the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and foreign political and serves to a certain extent in the implementation of the tasks defined in the decrees on measures to strengthen its responsibility in the implementation of the priority directions of foreign economic activity and other regulatory documents related to the field[2].

The second half of the 19th century was a tense period in the foreign policy of Great Britain for the competition in the whole world, especially in Central Asia, and it was also an important turning point in the development of the confrontation between Great Britain and Russia in this region. The Crimean War of 1854-1856 and the Sipohy rebellion in India of 1857-1859 had a serious impact on the state of international relations in the region and prompted English authors to seriously engage in the process of studying the role of India in the system of the British Empire, Anglo-Russian rivalry, and the goals and objectives of the British Empire in Central Asia. In the second half of the 19th century, in the conditions of growing competition between the two great powers, Russia and Great Britain, it was the period of formation of the "Big Game" political process, which had an impact on the creation of political and historical works of English authors of that time[3].

In 1857, the Great Sipohi Uprising began in India against the British Empire. It can be said that this revolt seriously threatened the continuity of British rule in India. As a result, the British government had to carry out a series of reforms in India. In particular, the East India Company was abolished and the post of Governor-General in Calcutta was abolished. Queen Victoria of England was declared Queen of India, and all actual power was concentrated in the hands of the Viceroy. These processes in India caused increased attention in the British ruling circles to the issues of colonial policy in the East. By this time, the British had accepted India as the main element of the British Empire. For example, "Indian Empire (British possessions in India) is expanding as it was during the Roman Empire, and now it can easily be placed among the European countries.[4]"

The Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia had an impact on the development of history in Europe as a whole, particularly on British historiography. History was by this time dominated by the liberal or Victorian historical tradition. According to this tendency, in the struggle between the old and the new type of society and state, the consistent expansion of civilization, democracy and individual freedom began to be recognized as a step towards a new development. It is within this concept that the "White man's obligation" theory was developed, and he began to put forward the idea that it is the spiritual and educational task of the European peoples to promote the achievements of modern civilization and culture among the Asian peoples. This concept was expressed to one degree or another in the historiography of that time. In addition, in the second half of the 19th century, the formation and development of specialized scientific research institutions dealing with the problems of foreign and colonial policy continued. By this time, scholars from Oxford and Cambridge universities began to research issues of British policy in Central Asia[5].

In the first half of the 19th century, there was a shortage of personnel dealing with the history of the Eastern countries in the new history departments of these universities, and from the second half of the 19th century, the study of the history of the Eastern countries and the publication of the works of orientalists were started in these organizations. In view of the importance of the British colonial policy in the East, the Department of Colonial History was established at Oxford University, and the Center for the Study of Oriental Countries was established at the University of London[6].

The issues of colonialism began to be deeply studied in scientific research centers such as the Royal Geographical Society and the Asiatic Society. By the 60s of the 19th century, new oriental scientific societies and centers began to be established in India. In 1868, the Royal Colonial Institute was founded in Great Britain on the initiative of the Prince of Wales. The institute became a center for the promotion of colonial ideas, a large library was collected in its fund, the employees of the institute were in different parts of the empire, organized lectures that aroused interest in colonialism in the public, financed expeditions of the colonial and reconnaissance type. In 1886, the Royal Colonial Institute was renamed the Imperial Institute. In the 1960s, the East India Association was established in British India. In the activities of this organization, Anglo-Russian rivalry in Afghanistan and Iran was analyzed[7].

In the 1960s and 1980s, the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia was seriously studied mainly by the Royal Geographical Society. The head of this organization, along with the orientalist G. Rawlinson, are early researchers of the "Big Game" policy, R. Murchison, D. Wood. D. Bulger, Dj. Malleon, S.D. Littledad, F.E. Younghusband conducted scientific research.

These persons are scientists who left the ranks of military and officials who served for a long time in the East India Company and studied the history, geography, language, and customs of Eastern countries for many years. In turn, the British government in India actively encouraged these studies and began to play a role as an organizer of scientific research expeditions to Central Asia.

In the 1950s and 1960s, English historiography devoted to the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia appeared and developed against the background of the opposition between the supporters of the two schools ("Skillful inaction" and "aggressive policy"). Famous military and political figures, diplomats, colonial administration officials, travelers, historians and publicists participated in the creation of these concepts. Discussion of the "Big Game" policy in Central Asia and its priorities has become not only an academic debate, but also a political struggle[8].

Proponents of the "masterful inaction" school argued that Russia was not trying to take over India. Because there was neither real desire nor resources for this in the Russian Empire. From this point of view, it was argued that there was no need to expand the British borders in India through expansion. Supporters of this idea announced to the general public the need to strengthen the influence of Great Britain in Central Asia through trade and diplomacy. One of the most prominent representatives of the "Skillful Immobility" school, the founder of this doctrine, the Viceroy of India Dj. Lawrence, then British Prime Minister W. Gladstone, famous historian and publicist V.M. Thornburn, F. Trench, Ya.A. McGahan, G.D. Campbell (Duke of Argyll), G. It was Hanna. They created the scientific foundations of British foreign policy in Central Asia and developed the basic rules of the "Skillful Inaction" approach[8].

By the second half of the 19th century, Yu. Skyler, P. F. Walker, A. G. Forbes, E. Bell, F. Fisher, M. Morris, A. Researchers such as Abbot contributed to the dissemination and strengthening of the ideas of the School of Mastery Inaction in government circles and among the public[9].

Competitors of this direction, and supporters of the "aggressive policy" school, emphasized that all Russian actions in Central Asia were aimed at creating a threat to British India. Even the most Russophobic authors believed that Russians could solve political problems on the European continent by exerting pressure on this colonial territory, while they were well aware that Russia had no intention of conquering India. This was especially true for the straits and Istanbul (Constantinople), which played an important role in British seaway communication from the Mediterranean to India. Supporters of this idea saw the penetration of the Russian Empire into Central Asia as the creation of conditions that would guarantee the success of the campaign to India. For example, in accordance with the agreements concluded with the Central Asian khanates, it was evaluated as the full possession of the region, the maintenance of the army and military forces at the expense of local resources, the replenishment of the ranks of the active army at the expense of the indigenous population, and the preparation of the rear fronts of the planned military campaigns. "If the Muscovites are allowed to strengthen themselves on the borders of India, our political and financial difficulties will increase a hundredfold," it was stated[10].

Therefore, in order to eliminate the "Russian threat", Great Britain, using all its weapons, should go to the point of military conflict. Supporters of this idea G. Rawlinson, Ch. McGregor, Dj. Malleon, G. Hamley, D. Buldger, Ch. Marvin, F. Burnaby and G. Bellew, F. Robinson, W. It is worth noting the likes of Baker.

If we can conclude from the given information, we can observe that different ideas and views have emerged in the field of competition between the imperialist powers for the countries of Central Asia and the East. In the initial period, only works with opposing moods were created in the two camps of confrontational ideologies, but later the situation began to change radically. It was a process related to the fact that science in Western countries was able to become independent from the influence of ideology. When we observed the results of these processes in English and foreign historiography, it should be noted that Russian historiography, which was a competitor to them, could not get out of the ideological mold even during the time of the former Soviet state.

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions and recommendations were developed:

- To publish an anthology on the basis of archival documents of the period in order to analyze the historiography of the two centers of a confrontational nature;
- Organization of special courses entitled "English-Russian competition in international relations" at the master's level of the Faculty of History of higher educational institutions;

It is appropriate to prepare a series of programs on the history of international relations in Central Asia in cooperation with the "History of Uzbekistan" TV channel.

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