

TRADE RELATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIAN KHANATES WITH NEIGHBORING STATES

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Abstract:

This article provides a scientific analysis of the history of trade relations between the Central Asian khanates and neighboring states. The role of the khanates in internal and external trade in the mid-19th century has been examined using sources and archival materials. The extent of the khanates' large-scale external trade relations with Siberia is also highlighted.

Keywords: Trade, diplomatic relations, caravanserai, sardoba, pud, sarjin, leather goods, coarse calico, silk and semi-silk fabrics, lambskin, metals, metal products, European fabrics, velvet, sugar, glass, spun gold, silver, fine canvas.

Introduction

Studying the history of Uzbekistan in depth, introducing young people to the rich historical heritage of our past, and making them aware of the nation's significant contributions to global scientific thought and culture are crucial. It is important to honor and take pride in our country's outstanding scholars, instilling a sense of national pride. Therefore, creating an accurate scientific history of our state and nation is a vital and urgent issue today.

On January 19, 2023, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held a videoconference on the fundamental improvement of the system of spiritual and educational activities, as well as strengthening cooperation between state and public organizations in this regard.

Looking at world history, every nation has risen primarily through its spiritual unity and national ideology. As Uzbekistan moves toward building a new future and joining the ranks of developed countries, the issue of national ideology is of great importance.

The peoples of Central Asia have long established close economic and trade relations with neighboring states. The region's strategic location along the Great Silk Road, which connected the East and West for centuries, played a significant role. The products manufactured in this region were in high demand in neighboring states, attracting traders from other countries. Central Asian peoples also benefited from trade relations with foreign states, leading to continuous movement of trade caravans. Over time, the number of states engaged in trade with Central Asia increased.

Interest in studying the various aspects of the life of the Kokand Khanate and other Central Asian states began well before Russia's military campaigns in the region. This process was largely driven by the rich historical heritage of these states and their trade-economic relations with Western and Eastern countries. In the 19th century, when Central Asia became a site of military-political and diplomatic competition between Russia and Great Britain, research on the history of the khanates increased. Additionally, internal conflicts among the khanates created favorable conditions for Tsarist Russia's imperialist and strategic objectives in the region.

Central Asia's connection with Siberia has deep historical roots. Since ancient times, a trade route passed from Central Asia, along the Irtysh River, to Eastern Europe. Later, Uzbek merchants used this route to travel to Volga regions, including Khazar and Bulgar kingdoms, for trade. As mentioned earlier, Khorezmian merchants played an important role as traders and artisans in these areas. Their activities continued even after the establishment of the Golden Horde, maintaining trade relations with Siberia and other regions under its control.

Researchers identify three types of trade relations between Central Asia and Moscow:

1. "Povalnaya" (Free Trade) – This was carried out by independent merchants.
2. Trade through royal and khan-owned goods – This trade was conducted through merchants sent by the Shah or Khan as part of diplomatic missions. Goods belonging to kings and khans were tax-exempt.
3. "Lyubitelskiye pominki" (Duty-Free Exchange of Goods) – This was a barter trade between the rulers of the two states¹.

1 Ivanov P.P. Essays on the History of Central Asia (16th – Mid-19th centuries). – Moscow: IVL. 1958. – p. 33..

During the reign of Peter I (early 18th century), Russia's interest in Central Asia increased. The region attracted Russia due to its potential as an economic and trade hub between the East and West, as well as its role as a key transit point for trade routes to India. In 1714, Peter I learned from the Governor of Siberia, Prince Gagarin, about the presence of gold sands in the city of Erketi (modern-day Yarkand). At that time, Erketi was under the control of the Dzungar Khanate. Gagarin recommended that Peter I seize the city and build a fortress on the Yamishev Lake route.²

The Khiva Khanate, due to its strategic location on caravan routes, played an important role in Russia's trade relations with Bukhara. The khanate actively participated in trade between the East and West. Its external trade relations were closely linked to its political, economic, and cultural development. By the 18th century, diplomatic processes between Central Asia and Russia intensified. This was largely due to Russia's increasing demand for Central Asian resources and the region's growing interest in economic cooperation.

By the late 18th century and early 19th century, trade and diplomatic relations between Khiva and Russia significantly developed. One of the key reasons for this was the advancement of Russia's textile industry and its rising demand for raw materials. Meanwhile, in Khiva, there was a growing need to unify the country politically and expand trade with Russia.³

During the early 19th century, trade between Khiva and Russia expanded. Although Khivan merchants traded with neighboring states such as Bukhara, Kokand, Iran, and Afghanistan, their most profitable and convenient trade was with Russia. Khivan merchants also bought goods from Bukhara, selling some locally and exporting the rest to Russia. Exports from Khiva to Russia included: raw cotton, leather goods, coarse calico, silk and semi-silk fabrics, lambskin. Imports from Russia to Khiva included: metals and metal products, European fabrics, velvet, sugar, glass, spun gold and silver, fine canvas.

Trade between the Uzbek khanates and Russia became increasingly vital to the economic stability of the khanates. For instance, in 1836, when trade between

2 Mavlonov U. The Ancient Roads of Central Asia: Stages of Formation and Development. – Tashkent: Academy, 2008. – p. 251.

3 Ivanov P.P. Essays on the History of Central Asia (16th – Mid-19th centuries). – Moscow: IVL. 1958. – p. 58.

Khiva and Russia was interrupted, the prices of industrial goods in Khiva rose by 15%, leather prices by 100%, cinnabar by 150%, and raw cotton by 50%.⁴

Russian merchants not only expanded Russia's economic influence in Central Asia but also played a significant role in gathering intelligence on the region. The Governor of Orenburg, Perovsky, advocated for expanding privileges for merchants trading with Central Asia. He believed that this would both boost Russian factory sales and provide the most accurate intelligence about events in the region, which was of great strategic importance for Russia.

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4 Akbarov R.X. The History of the Kokand Khanate. – Fergana: 2015. – p. 56.