

## Trade Relations of The Bukhara Emirate with The Eastern Beyliks (1756–1868)

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### Abstract

This article highlights the distinctive features of trade in internal markets within the framework of mutual trade relations conducted by the Bukhara Emirate with the Eastern beyliks, and explains the important role played in the development of trade by trade routes, caravanserais, rabats serving trade caravans, sardobas, wells, and other roadside structures.

**Keywords:** Bukhara Emirate, Eastern Beyliks, Surkhan Oasis, Surkhandarya, Trade Relations, Internal Trade, External Trade, Caravan Routes, Silk Road, Caravanserais, Markets, Handicrafts, Agricultural Products, Livestock Trade, Amu Darya

### 1. Introduction

In the second half of the XVIII century and during the XIX century, mutual trade relations conducted with the Surkhan oasis located in the eastern territory of the Bukhara Emirate occupied an important place in the socio-economic life of the emirate. These trade relations further increased the significance of major cities of the Surkhan oasis such as Termez, Sherabad, Denov, Darband, and Boysun not only as internal, but also as external and transit trade centers [1]. In particular, these cities established permanent trade and commercial relations with major economic centers located in the western territory of the emirate, such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Qarshi, and Shahrissabz.

In the Bukhara Emirate, the Surkhandarya oasis of the eastern beylik occupied a special place in the production of agricultural and livestock products. The population of the mountainous and foothill regions of the oasis actively conducted trade and commercial relations with the local population living in the plains [2]. In particular, an important place in the internal trade of the oasis was occupied by various grain crops and food products prepared from them, such as wheat, rice, sesame, flax, flour, and bread; clothes sewn from various cotton and silk fabrics; leather and rawhide products and clothing made from them; household items; and labor tools used in agriculture.

### 2. Methodology

This article reveals the specific features of internal markets, the establishment of new market areas, and trade in agricultural, food, and livestock products in the mutual trade

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relations of the Bukhara Emirate with the Eastern Bukhara beylik on the basis of information from periodicals and archival documents of the Kushbegi Chancellery of the Bukhara Emirate preserved in the National Archive of Uzbekistan by authors of the former colonial period such as Ya. Timofeeich, N. Maev, Colonel Galkin, Captain Stetkevich, and L.F. Kostenko.

Based on materials from Soviet-period periodicals by B.Kh. Karmishev, T. Annaev, Sh. Shaydullaev, and A. Skvortsov, the article also demonstrates that the trade of handicraft products in internal markets and the passage of the Amu Darya waterway through the territory of the Surkhandarya oasis created broad opportunities for the development of external trade relations.

The article also broadly analyzes data contained in scientific works and monographs by researchers of the independence period such as F.B. Ochildiev, A. Alimardonov, L. Dodkhudoeva, Z. Holiqov, U. Mavlonov, and D. Mahkamova, highlighting the role of food products and household items produced by craftsmen of the cities of Hisor, Denov, Sherabad, Boysun, Sariosiyo, Mirshodi, and Yurchi in internal trade, as well as the importance and convenience for merchants of the four caravan routes crossing the Hisor mountain ranges in external trade relations.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Trade relations were mainly conducted in markets located in densely populated places and centers of major cities of the oasis, and they served to satisfy the population's demand and needs for internal market products. Merchants from neighboring villages and beyliks brought various agricultural and handicraft products as well as livestock to the markets, where active trade operations were carried out.

In particular, the population of the territories of the Qorategin, Hisor, Kulob, and Baljuvon beyliks of the Surkhan oasis specialized mainly in wheat production, and major merchants from the cities of Baljuvon Garm, Havalang, and Kulob, as well as the villages of Saroy, Sari-Chashma, and Poshin, were engaged in wheat trade [3]. These merchants purchased grain products grown in the regions of Hisor, Guzor, Yurchi, Denov, and Sherabad directly in the fields at wholesale prices and transported them by trade caravans through the city of Boysun to Qarshi and through the city of Sherabad to the markets of Karki [4]. In this way, every year agricultural products such as rice, wheat, sesame, and flax with a total weight of 15,000 poods were sent from the eastern beyliks to Qarshi on 1,000 camels. As a result, from the middle of the XIX century large warehouses for storing grain products necessary for public consumption were built in the cities of Bukhara and Qarshi.

At the beginning of the XIX century, the small number of internal markets in the territories of the Eastern beyliks and the remoteness of markets from populated settlements created considerable inconvenience in conducting trade and commercial activities. In this regard, information preserved in the National Archive of Uzbekistan about petitions addressed to the emir by certain officials and representatives of the local population requesting permission to establish markets in vacant areas is of particular importance.

In particular, among the archival documents of the fund called "Kushbegi Chancellery of the Bukhara Emirate" (Fund I-126) preserved in the National Archive of Uzbekistan, there is important information about petitions submitted by local population representatives to officials and the emir requesting the allocation of land for internal markets and the establishment of market days in certain territories of the Surkhan oasis. For example, representatives of the local population of the Yangiarik area of Boysun province submitted a petition to the provincial qazi Mulla Asomiddin, stating that 500 households equal to the landholding of one amlokdor

resided in that area. However, the archival document especially emphasized that there was no market there, and if a market were opened, merchants from Boysun and Sherabad would come there to sell their products, and it would also create convenience in paying *kharaj* taxes.

Another petition written to the emir stated the following: “In the village of Poshkhurd of the Darband district of Boysun province, Tuesday is considered market day for the local population. The local population purchases trade goods necessary for their daily needs and always prays for You. However, the Darband district is located at a distance of 8 farsakhs from the village of Poshkhurd, and this creates considerable difficulties for the population of this district to come to the Poshkhurd market and conduct trade activities. Therefore, the people of Darband ask You to permit the construction of a market in their district and to allow a market to be held there on Tuesdays”.

The population of the Surkhan oasis was skilled not only in producing agricultural products, but also in manufacturing various handicraft products. For example, striped fabrics woven by craftsmen from Hisor, knives and daggers made by blacksmiths, and seals were highly demanded in internal markets. The Kungrats of Denov lived along the slopes of Bobotog and engaged in rain-fed agriculture, charcoal production from maple trees in forests, and gathering and selling almonds. Tajiks cultivated grapes and supplied all cities and villages of Hisor with raisins made from them. Strong silk fabrics woven by craftsmen from Sherabad, Boysun, Sariosiyo, Mirshodi, and Yurchi were transported in large quantities by major merchants to the markets of Bukhara and Samarkand [5].

In the eastern territorial beyliks of the emirate, market days were organized territorially on certain days of the week in such a way that they did not interfere with one another and were arranged conveniently for sellers and buyers. In particular, the market in the mountainous village of Kohitang of the Sherabad beylik was mainly held on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and the population from the territories stretching from the Amu Darya to Guzor went to this market to sell agricultural and livestock products and in exchange purchase handicraft products [6].

The inhabitants of the villages of Hovuz, Sina, and Vakhshivor brought dried raisins prepared from grapes to the Kulob market for sale, and from this market purchased striped fabric woven in Qoratog [7]. In addition, wealthy merchants who arrived every year in the middle of October to the Denov beylik purchased dried raisins brought from Urgut in bulk at wholesale prices and exchanged part of them for cheap Russian fabrics made from raw cotton. Sweet halvas prepared by Boysun confectioners were sold in the markets of Guzor and Kelif, while silk and semi-silk striped fabrics produced by Boysun craftsmen had their buyers in Samarkand, Tashkent, and even in Afghanistan and India [8].

The Boysun, Qorategin, Qarshi, Shahrisabz, and Hisor beyliks located in the eastern territory of the emirate were rich in iron ore, and many cast-iron foundries operated there. In particular, there were 23 blacksmith workshops in the Boysun beylik, where skilled craftsmen from the villages of Avlod, Darband, and Gaza produced household items made of iron for everyday use, such as ewers, lamps, cauldrons, plow teeth, sickles, drills for presses, and axes. These iron products were sold by merchants not only in surrounding markets but also in Qoratog, Regar, and Dashnobod.

Boat-building and shipbuilding workshops of craftsmen were also built in places close to water in the Karki, Kalif, and Sherabad beyliks. In particular, at that time 16 special handicraft workshops producing boats operated around the Kalif beylik, while in Sherabad there were more than 10 such workshops. The boats made by craftsmen were divided into several types and differed from one another according to their size and cargo-carrying capacity. For

example, master boat craftsmen could build 10 boats capable of carrying 600 poods of cargo within 40 days [9]. Medium-sized boats were from 40 to 60 feet in length, from 7 to 10 feet in width, and up to 3 feet in side height. Larger ships than boats had a length of 12 sazhen, a width of 2.5 gaz, and a height of 1.5 gaz, and these ships could carry up to 700 poods of cargo. At that time, each of these boats was valued in the markets from 400 to 450 tangas [10].

Livestock trade also occupied a special place in the mutual trade relations of the Surkhan oasis with neighboring beyliks. All livestock gathered in the Eastern Bukhara beyliks was collected at the Mirshodi market on Wednesdays. Sheep and goats gathered in this market were first driven to the Boysun beylik and then to the cities of Guzor and Qarshi. Every year, on average from 10,000 to 20,000 head of livestock were driven out from the oasis. In the livestock markets of the Denov, Yangibozor, and Mirshodi beyliks, young cattle were sold for 25–30 tangas, sheep for 5–9 tangas, horses for 20–40 tangas, oxen for 21–40 tangas, and donkeys for 5–12 tangas [11].

According to their structure and specific characteristics, the internal trade routes in the Eastern beyliks were divided into overland caravan routes and water routes. The main part of the overland caravan routes connecting the oasis beyliks with the major trade-economic centers of the Bukhara Emirate passed through plains, mountain ranges, and partly sandy deserts. In particular, from ancient times along the southern slopes of the Hisor mountain range, the Boysun–Mirshodi–Denov–Sarijuy–Dashtobod–Qoratog route, the road leading from the Kafirnihon oasis to the Surkhan oasis through the Chorraha pass in Bobotog, and the caravan routes extending from Denov along the left bank of the Surkhandarya through Qumqorgon to Pattakesar have remained in existence until today and have not lost their importance [12]. In addition, trade relations involving various products were conducted through internal caravan routes connecting the oasis with neighboring beyliks such as Shahrissabz–Denov, Shahrissabz–Yurchi, Shahrissabz–Darband, Guzor–Darband, Denov–Hisor, and Qabodiyon–Boysun.

In the external trade relations of the Surkhan oasis with the Western Bukhara beyliks, the states of Afghanistan and India, and neighboring beyliks, the four caravan routes crossing the Hisor mountain ranges possessed the greatest convenience and importance. At the beginning of the XIX century, the directions and distances of these caravan routes were as follows:

The first route began from the Qabodiyon crossing of the Amu Darya and passed through Oqmachir, Turkhor, Hisor, Dushanbe, Khushyore, Qoshtut, Varzikand, and Panjikent to Samarkand, with a total length of 498 km; The second route extended from the Pattakesar crossing through Salovat, Jarkurgan, Arpapoya, Qumqorgon, Denov, Sangardak, Pasrud, Surkhob, Qoshtut, Varzikand, and Panjikent to Samarkand, with a total length of 480 km;

The third route passed from the Chochkaguzar crossing through Beshqoton, Sherabad, Laylogon, Darband, Kaltaminor, Yakkabog, Shahrissabz, and Omonqoton to Samarkand, with a total length of 310 km;

The fourth route extended from Kelif through Khojaqishloq, Kohitang, Abdullakhonrabot, Beshbuloq, Guzor, Qarshi, Arabband, Jom, Saripul, and Torariq to Samarkand, with a total length of more than 350 km [13].

From the middle of the XIX century onward, these roads operated in three directions [8.p.106]. The first of them connected the cities of Samarkand – Shahrissabz – Yakkabog – Toshqorgon – Shotrud Pass – Sarijuy – Yurchi – Denov – Termez – Balkh; the second connected Samarkand – Jom – Chiyaliquduq – Guzor – Oqrabot – Temir Darvoza – Termez –

Balkh; and the third connected Samarkand – Shahrissabz – Kaltaminor Pass – Oqrabot – Temir Darvoza – Termez – Balkh, thereby creating broad opportunities for the implementation of their mutual trade-commercial relations.

As is known, the external trade relations of the Bukhara Emirate with the state of Afghanistan were mostly carried out through the Amu Darya waterway. In particular, merchants of the Eastern beyliks also gained great profit from trade conducted through the waterways crossing the Amu Darya rather than through overland caravan routes in carrying out trade-commercial activities.

In particular, the crossings of Pattakesar, Termez, Yorgoh, Chochkaguzar, and Qorakamar along the Amu Darya waterway passed through the territory of the Surkhandarya oasis, creating broad opportunities for the development of external trade relations [14]. In addition, these crossings continued their activity until the second half of the XIX century, that is, until the Bukhara Emirate was conquered by the Russian Empire and the Amu Darya flotilla was established. Boatmen in these cities also transported passengers to the opposite side of the river for a certain fee. For example, at the crossings one person paid 0.25 tanga, a donkey 0.5 silver tanga, a cart (loaded or unloaded) 1 silver tanga, and horses and camels (loaded or unloaded) 1 silver tanga as passage fare.

In the external trade relations of Bukhara–Surkhan, roadside structures such as fortified places protecting trade caravans from robber attacks, rabats, caravanserais, sardobas and wells for water storage, and underground water channels occupied an important place. In the external trade relations of the Bukhara Emirate with neighboring khanates and states, ensuring security on caravan routes, protecting trade caravans from robber attacks, and eliminating groups of bandits were considered among the most important matters of state significance. Therefore, historical sources related to the XIX century emphasize that military soldiers of the Surkhan oasis beyliks in the eastern territories of the Bukhara Emirate were stationed in mountainous villages such as Darband, Boysun, Sayrob, Kakaydi, Sangardak, Denov, Jarkurgan, Qorakamar, and Sherabad, and that their main duty was to protect caravan routes from attacks by nomadic Turkmen robbers [15]. Along the internal and external trade caravan routes of the Surkhan oasis and in the centers of large cities, many rabats and caravanserais also operated in order to develop mutual trade-commercial relations, store various trade goods, determine their quantity, and establish prices. For example, the caravanserais located along the caravan routes of Beshqoton, Taskent, Oqtosh, and Qorakamar played an important role in ensuring the safety of trade caravans and supplying the camels, horses, and mules in caravans with drinking water and fodder [16].

Caravanserais were built not only along caravan routes, but also in the centers of large villages and cities, and their number increased year by year.

In particular, in the 1860s there were 5 caravanserais in Denov, 3 in Sherabad, and 2 in Boysun, and representatives of various nationalities owned their own caravanserais. In each of these caravanserais, trade goods from 1,500 to 2,000 camels were placed, customs duties and zakat taxes were collected from them, and wholesale trade of commercial goods was also conducted [17].

The hot and dry climatic conditions characteristic of the steppe and desert regions of the oasis required the presence of sardobas and wells for water storage along the caravan routes passing through these territories. In this regard, information from XIX-century Russian military spies about the existence of numerous water wells along the caravan routes leading from the cities of Bukhara and Qarshi to the crossings of the Amu Darya and from Chorjuy to Marv is of particular importance. It is stated there that the wells along these caravan routes were dug

to depths ranging from 2–5 sazhen to 10–11 sazhen [18], and that in order to prevent contamination of the well water, their tops were covered with specially sized devices made of iron or wood [19].

Along the caravan routes passing through the territories of the Eastern beyliks, merchants of trade caravans used carts as a means of transport for carrying their loads. These two-wheeled carts differed in size, and according to the draft animal attached to them they were called horse carts, camel carts, ox carts, mule carts, and donkey carts. Usually, a reed kajava was tied to each horse, and 8 poods (128 kg) of cargo were loaded onto it. In trade caravans, two-humped camels were used more frequently, and loads from 18–20 poods up to 30 poods were loaded onto them [20]. Because political and socio-economic development did not proceed uniformly in all beyliks of the Bukhara Emirate, the type and amount of taxes collected from them also differed. In particular, archival sources relating to the 1860s contain valuable information about annual income tax amounts. For example, in 1867, 225,000 silver tangas were collected as trade tax from merchants of the Baljuvon beylik, 70,000 silver tangas from Kulob, 140,000 silver tangas from Guzor, 100,000 silver tangas from Sherabad [21], and 75,000 tangas from Denov [22].

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of trade-commercial relations involving agricultural and handicraft products in the Eastern beyliks of the emirate in accordance with the demands and needs of the population created broad opportunities for the strengthening of interstate relations. Trade routes and caravanserais served to increase the emirate's position in internal and external markets and to strengthen its geopolitical importance as a transit territory in international economic relations. The caravanserais in the emirate functioned not only as temporary residences for merchants, but also as places where wholesale trade-commercial operations were carried out, necessary taxes were collected, and prices for certain trade goods were established.

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