
AGRICULTURE AND TRADE DURING THE PRE-COLONIAL BUKHARA EMIRATE

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Agriculture in the Bukhara Emirate was well developed and the wealth of the population was one of the highest in Central Asia. This wealth is comparable to the wealthy Khanate of Kokand. Agriculture lands of the Emirate were situated along the Valley, which included Rivers of Zerafshan, Shahrisabz and Oxus. Other lands were irrigated artificially via channels and manmade irrigation systems such as *aryk*. In the areas far from the river and creeks, continuous heat and dry air affected the growth of the plants and trees very negatively. From March to May, only the lands between the cities of Bukhara and Karshi as well as the areas between the river Oxus and Miankol valley flourished. In the Emirate, most commonly grown grains were wheat, millet, barley, bulrush and corn. Wheat was usually sown either in winter or in spring. The first produce was usually harvested at the end of May and the second was collected at the end of September or October. One *batman*¹ of wheat cost from 16 *Tenge*² to 1 *Tilla*³ (from 3 Roubles 20 *kopeek* to 4 Roubles). Rice cultivation was only enough for internal consumption. Barley was sown twice, in early spring and autumn and was collected in May or in autumn. Its price was 8 *Tenge* for a *batman*. Millet sown in small amounts, however, it gave rich yields and its price was 5-6 *Tenge* per *batman*. Corn was sown at the end of April and yielded in July to feed animals. Another harvest was collected during August or September for the people to consume. Corn was one of the cheapest grains and was a popular food consumed among commoners of the Emirate. The cost of corn was 7 *Tenge* per *batman*. Another common agriculture product was cotton. Cotton was sown in spring and collected during the early autumn. From the cottonseeds, cooking oil was produced. Cotton fields required regular irrigation. The cotton was the main export item to Russia priced at 4 *Tilla* (16 Roubles) per *batman*. Another common agriculture product was *alfalfa* (lucerne), which was collected 4-5 times in the summer and its price was 1 *Tenge* (20 *kopeek*).

Another developed agriculture sector of the Bukhara Emirate was gardening and horticulture. There was a saying among the local population: In order to understand how rich a person was, one should know his land size under the gardening and horticulture. The local population's main food consumption, in addition to grains, was fruits and vegetables. Surplus of the products was exported. Profits from gardening and horticulture exceeded profits from the produced grains. For instance, in the Emirate, 1 *tanab*⁴ of unprocessed but good land on average was priced between 18-20 *Tilla* and for the cultivated land was between 25-30 *Tilla*. The average price of the grain produced from 1 *tanab* land was 4 *Tilla* and for the production of fruits and vegetables was up to 27 *Tilla*. Most common fruits were grapes, apple, pear, cherry, pomegranates, peach, mulberry, figs and *jiyda*. Most common vegetables were onions, carrots, tomatoes, etc., except potatoes and cabbage.

Manufacturing mainly consisted of handmade items ranging from silk, wool and cotton. Cotton made materials were usually thick and were painted in blue or green. From silk, various striped textile was

¹ 1 *batman* equals to 8 *puds* or 128 kilograms

² 1 *tanga* equals to 3.36 grams of silver. Internet source accessed on 30.10.2017. https://uz.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buxoro_Amirligi

³ 1 *tilla* (gold coin) equals to 4.266 grams of gold. Source: *Adle, Ch. & Habib, I. (Eds.), (2003). History of Civilisations series. History of Central Asia. Development in contrast: from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. (Vol. 5) UNESCO. Paris, France. Pp. 440*

⁴ *Tanab*-land measurement in Central Asia, usually 1 *tanab* equals to 40 meters square. Internet Source: <http://n.ziyouz.com> accessed on 12.09.2017

made and exported to Russia. Wool was used as a felt, woollen hat and thick material to make bags to transport exported goods to Russia. From the skin of the donkey, leather was made and Samarkand was famous with the leather that was sold widely in the Central Asian bazaars.

Table 1: Exports of the Bukhara Emirate to the Russian empire from 1862 to 1866 in Roubles.⁵

Name of the goods	In the year of 1862	In the year of 1863	In the year of 1864	In the year of 1865	In the year of 1866
Cotton	1,801,697	2,908,212	6,105,241	3,231,922	3,138,945
Leather	16,618	37,697	87,908	62,991	15,252
Fruits and Vegetables	68,891	73,351	7,281	5,020	9,976
Wheat	2,046	3,716	146	1,522	3,699
Paper	52,833	39,274	96,035	189,448	16,497
Silk	54,076	51,295	45,663	32,058	110,387
Wool	6,050	2,640	1,830	-	102
Paper items	346,354	458,233	245,433	187,219	38,112
Woollen items	7,802	12,117	4,782	2,828	-
Soft items	244,044	235,543	250,824	164,769	117,025
Paints	11,119	7,202	454	27	-
Tea	11,514	13,129	9,424	5,407	1,856
Total	2, 740,600	3,880,600	6,868,343	3,890,000	3,454,000

The table above reveals that the main export products were mostly cotton, and other considerable articles were silk, paper items and soft items. Due to the war situation between Russia and the Khanate of Kokand, and triumph over the major city of the Khanate, Tashkent in 1865, by General Chernyayev, as can be seen from the afore-depicted table, trade balance of the Emirate of Bukhara with The Russians had been affected negatively in all aspects. Considerable reduction of the cotton exports occurred in the following year after the Russians conquered new lands together with Tashkent. Cotton exports shrank almost twice compared to the year 1864, from 6.1 million Roubles to 3.2 million Roubles in 1865 and 3.1 million Roubles in 1866. This might be due to newly conquered land abundance, with cotton sources and free access to them for the Russian Empire. Most of the mines in the Emirate were situated in Shahrissabz. There, iron, zinc and coal were mined. Marble was made near the city of Karshi. Other metal works included knives and kitchen utensils.

For centuries, Islamic traditions have contributed to the formation of unique Muslim culture in Central Asia, interwoven with the rich cultural heritage of the peoples of this region (Mukhamedov, 2020 , p. 4). Trade in the Emirate was pervasive considering the amount of the labour involved. As for the main trade centre, they were in the cities of Bukhara, Samarkand and Karshi, where the prices for all other bazaar-traded articles were set. Every day the main cities were full of sellers and buyers, whereas, in the smaller localities trade was carried out once or twice a week. On many occasions, trade was for the exchange of the goods between the trader and the buyer. The Bukhara Emirate's trade was the most advanced in the Central Asian region, due to the geographical location as well as the historically important role of the Emirate in the Islamic world. Traded articles between China, India, Russia and Persia usually passed through the Emirate, giving them the opportunity to safe keep the goods in the *Karavan-sarays* (storehouses). As Obruchev states in the Turkestan Collection, "Every year around 15 thousand fully loaded

⁵ Ibid. see p. 114

camels loaded goods passed through the Emirate.” (Military-statistic collection., 1868, p. 113) One of the main sources of incomes for the Emirate came from the duties on passing caravans. The Government of Bukhara always tried to encourage this type of caravans to stop by in the Emirate giving them a safe place to rest such as in *Karavan-sarays*. Caravan traders had the chance to have a rest and accumulate strength, before continuing their long and dangerous journeys. Muslim traders were subject to Zakat on trade articles at the rate of 2.5% as well as other traders paid custom duties of 5%. Needless to say that the role of the zakat as a balancer in the society has been proved for many centuries since the spread of Islam (Ganiyev, 2020, p. 10). Its aim is to balance wealth distribution in the country fairly (Ganiyev A. &., 2020, p. 441). Owner of the caravan dealt with Zakatchi (local Zakat collector) who then calculated zakat based on 2.5% of whole amount of the goods to be exported (Oybekovich, 2017, p. 43).

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