

THE EMIRATE OF BUKHARA AND INDIA BETWEEN TEA TRADE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH AND EARLY 20 TH CENTURIES

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
In the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Indians living in Central Asia was significant. Indians settled compactly in the caravanserais of Central Asia. They created a unique way of life in each region, and if there were no caravanserais nearby, they settled in one area and created “Indian rows” and “Indian neighborhoods”. Indian society in Central Asia consisted of representatives of the emerging national capital, who mainly dealt with trade and monetary matters. Those who came from India, in addition to trade and usury, also engaged in entrepreneurship. Among the Indians were cooks, bakers, and confectioners.	Caravanseraï, protectorate, indigo, khalmuri, hisson, pari, patta, nauzugur, usury, kanaus, kaliko, pud, pound, mile, export, import.

Introduction

By the second half of the 19th century, the number of immigrants from India was constantly growing. If in the first half of the 19th century about two thousand of them lived in the Bukhara Emirate alone[1], then by the second half of the 19th century there were more than five thousand Indians[2]. Most of the immigrants from India were from the cities of Shikarpur, Sindh, Multan, and Punjab, while a smaller number were from Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay[3]. In the territory of the Bukhara Emirate and Turkestan, Indians, as a rule, lived temporarily. Usually, they engaged in business for 10-15 years, and then returned to their homeland. In rare cases, the residence of Indians in the territory of Turkestan was expanded. For this, Indians had to accept Russian citizenship[4]. Indians lived not only in large cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Namangan, Andijan, Fergana, but also in small towns and even villages.

MAIN PART

A significant portion of Indian entrepreneurs chose Bukhara and its peripheral regions as their permanent place of work and residence. Bukhara maintained its status as the trade center of Central Asia.

According to L. F. Kostenko's information, "Bukhara holds great importance compared to neighboring states due to its highly advantageous central position. It is located at the center of trade routes connecting the east and south of Asia with the north and west, as well as with Europe through Russia"[5].

In Central Asia, the main occupations of Indians were trade and moneylending. The transformation of the Bukhara Emirate into a protectorate by Russia did not halt trade relations. In the 19th century, caravan routes linked important trade centers of Central Asia with the Indian cities of Shikarpur, Multan, and Peshawar. One of these routes went from India to Kabul through Lahore, Peshawar, and the Khyber Pass. In Kabul, all trade caravans united, passing through Bamiyan, Tashkurgan, and Mazar-i-Sharif, then entering the territories of the Bukhara Emirate at the Kelif crossing of the Amu Darya. The journey from Bukhara to Kabul took 27 days[6].

During this period, Indian exports remained similar to those of previous eras: indigo, spices, tea, semi-precious stones, metal and ceramic products, rice, sugar, and goods manufactured by the British and Indians continuously flowed into the Bukhara markets.

According to A.K. Geins, 10-15 thousand camel-loads of goods (ranging from 160 thousand to 240 thousand poods) arrived annually through Kabul to Bukhara, Kokand, Kashgar, and other cities of Central Asia[7].

From Bukhara, silk, goatskin, horse meat, and hashish products were exported to Afghanistan, and then to India. In reality, silk was not produced in Bukhara; it was produced in Kokand and brought to Bukhara, from where it was sent to India. The highest quality silk was sold in Kokand for 197 rubles 60 kopecks, while in the markets of Bukhara the price of this silk rose to 240 rubles[8].

In addition to the 800 bales of silk exported to India annually, other silk products were also exported: kanaus, scarves (6 thousand poods) [9], Bukharan tablecloths embroidered with silk[10], calico, and cheap furs[11]. This indicates that India occupied an important place in Bukhara's foreign trade relations. This situation continued almost until the end of the 19th century.

In the 1860s, Indian merchants began bringing tea to Central Asia. Tea exports later became one of India's most profitable exports. Previously, tea was brought here from China via Kashgar and Ghulja. However, the uprising in East Turkestan in 1864 severely disrupted the tea trade. This opened up opportunities for Indian tea exports to Central Asian markets. Tea imported from India was sold at low prices, and large quantities of tea were also offered on credit for up to two years. After some time, selling tea on credit became common practice[12].

In an effort to counter Anglo-Indian competition, duty-free tea deliveries from Kyakhta to Turkestan via Irkutsk were established in 1868, and high customs duties were imposed on Indian tea. However, these measures proved ineffective, and sources indicate that tea imported from India was also smuggled into Russia through Turkestan. Between 1875 and 1889 alone, tea exports from India to Central Asia increased fivefold[13].

Indian tea exports to Central Asia reached significant volumes, causing great concern among the trading circles of Russian society. Tea and related issues were widely discussed in the pages of "Turkistan News" and other print publications. As a result, in 1877, a group of officials led by N. A. Mayev[14] was sent to Bukhara to gather information about the tea trade. According to his reports, tea was delivered from Calcutta to Peshawar, then the caravan reached the Kelif crossroads through Kabul and Tashkurgan. Here, the caravans crossed the Amu Darya, then headed to Kelif and Karshi, from where they reached Bukhara. In Bukhara, tea packages intended for the city were delivered unopened to special caravanserais, six of which were designated solely for tea storage.

The largest of these was the Abdurashid caravanserai, where up to 3,000 camel loads of tea were brought and stored annually. Two smaller caravanserais also stored tea: Mirzagul - 1,500 camel loads, and Badriddin - up to 1,200 camel loads[15].

Due to the opening of the Trans-Caspian Railway, imports of Indian tea to Bukhara and the Turkestan region continued to increase[16]. Goods from India were transported by sea to Batumi, then along the Caucasus Railway to Baku, and subsequently across the Caspian Sea to Krasnovodsk. This route was highly profitable for Russia, as the cargo was transported via Russian steamships and railways, generating substantial revenue. With the opening of the sea transit route in 1895, green tea imports rose to 25,000 poods, which constituted 1/5 of the total tea imports[17].

According to archival records, green tea brought to Central Asia from Bombay, India, was also imported to the Bukhara Emirate. This was a very high-quality tea, with only green tea grown in Japan being able to compete with it. This information was reported on March 12, 1880, by Nikolai Ivanov Ivanovich, a guild merchant in Tashkent[18].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Indian merchants regularly brought their goods to the Bukhara Emirate and all regions of Central Asia. Among these goods, tea occupies a special place. The above information shows that tea trade between Bukhara and India was active. Due to the high demand for Indian tea, the Soviet government's restrictions did not have a significant negative impact on this process. Indian merchants exported tea products not only to the Bukhara Emirate, but also to Russia itself through Bukhara. We can see from sources that this situation was brought in large quantities by clandestine means during the period of restrictions. Thus, we can see that trade relations between India and the Bukhara Emirate continued at all times and under all circumstances.

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