



Article

Economic-cultural Transformations in Fergana Valley and Their Regional Characteristics

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Abstract: In this article, the processes of economic and cultural transformation in the Ferghana Valley at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century and their regional characteristics are revealed. Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, has its own natural and geographical features. Its territory consists of plains, steppes, deserts, and mountains. This led to the formation of several economic and cultural types in certain historical-ethnographic regions.

Keywords: Fergana Valley, Kokan Khanate, Cultural Types, Sedentary Farmers, Semi-Arid Population, Nomadic Herders, Kyrgyz, Kipchaks

1. Introduction

As is known, during the historical development of various ethnic groups that have been engaged in traditional farming for centuries, their economy and culture have been transformed under the influence of local conditions. In scientific literature, the economic and cultural characteristics of a particular ethnic group are expressed by the concept of economic and cultural types. "Economic and cultural types" are a set of economies and cultures of peoples with similar natural, geographical and socio-economic development conditions. The concept of economic and cultural types has a broader meaning than the concept of economic types. This concept, related to the economic and cultural characteristics of the peoples of Central Asia, has found its theoretical basis in the works of a number of researchers [8;16]. In particular, Russian historians B. V. Andrianov and T. A. Scientists such as Zhdanko expressed their theoretical views on the economic and cultural types and their types of the peoples who lived in the territories of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries [2].

2. Materials and Methods

This day, such views put forward by researchers on the issue of "economic and cultural types" are gaining popularity. In some works of local Uzbek ethnologists U. S. Abdullaev, A. Kayumov and E. Kabulov, this concept is analyzed based on local materials. For example, U. S. Abdullaev studied economic and cultural types based on materials from the Fergana Valley [1], while A. Kayumov and E. Kabulov analyzed this issue using the example of the southern regions of Uzbekistan [13;14]. Since ancient times, three main economic and cultural types have formed on the territory of our country: sedentary

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farmers, semi-sedentary people and nomadic cattle breeders. "The ancient glory of Fergana is based on the fact that all its natural conditions created favorable conditions for sedentary agriculture. This glory is intertwined with the glorious glory of Samarkand," wrote academician A. Middendorf, who studied the Fergana Valley [9].

3. Results

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Fergana Valley was mainly characterized by the first and second economic and cultural types, which, in turn, had local directions.

The first economic and cultural type is an economic and cultural type based on sedentary agriculture. It is known from history that the Fergana Valley has been one of the regions where sedentary agriculture has been developed since ancient times [4]. Because the natural and geographical location of the Fergana Valley is favorable, it is surrounded by mountains. The moderate climate of the valley, abundant running water, the presence of the best in terms of composition, fertile soil have ensured the continuous development of irrigated agriculture since ancient times. Below we will dwell in detail on the features of the first economic and cultural type specific to the Fergana Valley.

In some sources, the Fergana Valley is even called "happy Fergana" due to its favorable natural and geographical conditions [10]. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the sedentary population of the Fergana Valley was mainly engaged in irrigated agriculture. In the second half of the 19th century, the transformation of the Kokand Khanate into a centralized state, as well as the strengthening of the khanate's economic position, led to important economic changes in this region, including the further development of irrigated agriculture in connection with the expansion of irrigation networks. In the 70s of the 19th century, the Kokand Khan Khudoyor Khan dug a large ditch from the Syrdarya River to develop land in the Fergana Valley for agriculture and to regulate irrigation networks. This ditch was known among the people as the "Ulug Nahr" [12]. This shows that the heads of state paid special attention to the development of irrigated agriculture and the construction and repair of irrigation facilities. The inhabitants of the Fergana Valley also used groundwater to irrigate the land. This irrigation method was used mainly in the mountainous areas of the valley.

As is known, sedentary agriculture is mainly based on land cultivation and artificial irrigation. Permanent farming required the population to live in a certain area, and as a result, sedentary culture was formed. Sedentary agriculture influenced the construction of housing and the textile industry. The main economic activity of the population living in the Fergana Valley has long been farming. Sedentary Uzbeks and Tajiks have been engaged in farming in the valley since ancient times.

At the end of the 19th century, the agricultural settlements of the Fergana Valley population were mainly located near streams and rivers such as the Naryn, Karadarya, Isfara, Sokh, Aravon, Akboyra, and Asht. As mentioned above, canals and ditches were dug by state leaders and officials to develop agriculture and the irrigation system.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the attitude of the Russian Empire to the lands and water structures of the settled peasants in the Fergana Valley changed. As a result of the adaptation of land and water to the needs of Russian industry and the population relocated to the valley, land shortages increased in the settled peasant farms. According to the law issued in 1900, irrigated and fallow lands were not assigned to individual peasants, but to village communities. This led to further discontent among the settled peasants. The 1910 law "On the seizure of surplus lands" from the settled population further complicated the situation. As a result, at the beginning of the 20th century, disputes over land and water between the settled peasants in the Fergana Valley, and sometimes even the villages, were frequent.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the positive aspects of the resettlement policy of the Russian Empire that influenced the economic culture of the local population. The

Russian-speaking population, who were brought to the region from the Russian Empire, began to use new techniques in agriculture, such as the Russian plow, threshing equipment, grain-throwing equipment, and seeders. This led to changes in the farming of the local population. It is worth noting that, along with the use of modern technical equipment, the immigrants also began to grow agricultural crops that were unconventional for local farmers. For example, the German Mennonites who were brought here brought 6 varieties of potatoes, tomato and eggplant varieties, and new rye seeds [7]. As a result of such transformations in farming, significant changes also occurred in the economic culture of the local population.

In the period under review (the late 19th - early 20th centuries), sedentary farmers grew grain, oilseed, leguminous, melon, and vegetable crops on their fields. They also sowed various varieties of cotton. Among the grain crops grown in the Fergana Valley, wheat was the main one, occupying a large part of the cultivated area. At the end of the 19th century, the settled farmers in the valley began to plant more millet than wheat. Because millet was the main food product of the poor population. In addition, the maize plant was also widespread in the valley, and by the beginning of the 20th century, about 60 new varieties of this plant had been created [3]. The settled population paid increasing attention to the cultivation of rice along the rivers and streams.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, cotton cultivation further developed in the regions of Uzbekistan, including the Fergana Valley. The following information clearly demonstrates this situation. For example, in 1860, the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan amounted to 25 thousand tons, but by 1913 this figure had exceeded 517 thousand tons [17]. Especially after the Russian Empire conquered the Kokand Khanate, attention to cotton cultivation in the valley regions increased. We can also learn from the following statistical data from that period that at the beginning of the 20th century, cotton was planted more than other crops in the Fergana Valley. In the Balikchi volost of Andijan uyezd, in 1897, cotton was planted on 42.9 percent of the land, while by 1925 this figure had reached 53.7 percent. In 1885, most of the arable land in the Fergana Valley was planted with grain wheat, millet, rice, and alfalfa, with cotton accounting for only 14 percent of the arable land, and by 1915, the share of cotton fields had reached 44 percent [11]. Marifatpapvar Ishokhon Ibrat also wrote in his work "History of Fergana" that at the beginning of the 20th century, local farmers grew less grain crops such as wheat, barley, and millet and planted more cotton instead [6]. This information shows that by the beginning of the 20th century, as a result of the increased planting of cotton, grain crops began to be squeezed out of the arable land.

During this period, a number of changes were observed in the arable land of the Fergana Valley, in particular, in the cotton sector. For example, from the end of the 19th century, new varieties of cotton began to be planted in the valley regions, and these new crops began to be planted in the valley earlier than in the southern regions of Uzbekistan [14]. Initially, in 1870, the "Sea Island" cotton seed was planted in the valley fields, but after this new variety did not give the expected results, in 1879, the "Upland" variety was imported from America and began to be planted. The American variety of cotton was distinguished by its higher yield compared to local varieties [18]. This new variety of cotton was planted in more areas in the Fergana Valley. Also, in addition to growing cotton in the valley, cotton ginning factories were built in cooperation with local wealthy people and foreign traders to process it. In 1890, there were 36 cotton ginning factories owned by local investors in the Fergana Valley, and by 1900, their number had reached 93 [15].

4. Conclusion

In short, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, cotton growing and related industries began to play a major role in the economic and cultural life of the settled population in the Fergana Valley [19]. During this period, the semi-sedentary population

increasingly adopted features characteristic of the sedentary population in their housing construction, clothing, and food. There is no doubt that under these conditions, the mutual relations between ethnic groups of two different economic and cultural types were largely positive [20].

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