

THE ROLE OF THE CITY OF KARSHI IN FOREIGN TRADE.

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**Annotation.** *In this article, the role of the city of Karshi, one of the political and cultural centers of the Kashkadarya oasis, in international trade in the second half of the 18th century - the beginning of the 20th century, is analyzed based on written and ethnographic research.*

**Keywords.** *Large trade centers, caravan routes, Karshi city markets, European countries, Russia, England, Eastern countries, Iran, India, Afghanistan, artisans and merchants.*

Cities also became important as major trade centers. In the second half of the 18th century - the beginning of the 20th century, the main occupation of the majority of the city's population was trade. Karshi, the largest commercial city in the oasis, played an important role in the trade relations of the entire Bukhara Emirate. Due to the fact that the city of Karshi is located at the crossroads of the great caravan route, the city was in constant communication with the east and west, south and north regions and countries. The city of Karshi is an important city in the Emirate of Bukhara, connecting the Bukhara oasis with Shahrisabz and Hisar. It is known that the caravan route from Bukhara, after Khoja Mubarak, split into two branches, passed through Maymanaq to Karshi, and from there to Tokhariston through Guzor. Another road from Karshi connected Karshi with Kesh (Shahrisabz). The second branch separated from Khoja Mubarak passed through Kasbi, Bazda to Kelif Pass and from there to Afghanistan. Karshi is connected with Samarkand mainly by the Jam road. On these caravan routes, the caravan system was active day and night, winter and summer. The inhabitants of Karshi mainly traded in grain, raisins, handicrafts, leather and other products. A lot of agricultural products - barley, wheat, cotton, tobacco, horticultural products, vegetables and sugarcane products - were brought to Karshi from the villages located around the city. Cattle breeders supplied wool, woolen threads and finished products (carpets, leather, ropes, etc.), leather and leather products, and live livestock to the city market. In the city market, the demand for black skins was especially high. These black skins, supplied by cattle breeders around the city of Karshi, were collected in the market of Karshi and taken to Russia via Bukhara. The blue gray variety grown in Karshi Bek has a special place among the black leather varieties that are excluded. Varieties of Karakol skin called grained, karpak (premature lamb skin) are very popular, and they are sent in large quantities to Russia, England, Turkey, Afghanistan, China, Iran, Kokand, Khiva. [15;32]

The city of Karshi was the main trading center for all nomadic herders in the lower Kashkadarya. Opposite there is a large cattle market, where even the Turkmen

living on the banks of the Amudarya brought their sheep and the famous Turkmen horses to sell.[7;25] In the sources, it is noted that stalls selling wool and woolen products occupy a very large area in Karshi.[17;109]

Also, many agricultural products and handicrafts brought from the Surkhan oasis were sold in the Karshi market. The sources contain information about the sale of olacha brought from Hisar, different types of carpets brought from Sherabad, and knives and daggers of Hisar craftsmen, famous throughout the emirate, in the markets of Karshi.[5;34, 4;377] Through the Karshi market, the products of Samarkand and Bukhara artisans, as well as valuable silk items, spread to other parts of the oasis.[8;90]

Often imported products are distributed throughout the oasis through the Karshi market. For example, porcelain, metal and metal products are imported from Russia.[2;366] From the metal brought from Russia, especially yellow copper, local craftsmen and coppersmiths made various types of products. Due to the fact that the neighboring nomadic cattle-breeding population of the city of Karshi was in constant contact with the Turkmens of the Amudarya River and the cattle-breeders living in the Karshi desert, most of their goods delivered to Russia and the eastern countries were skins and leather products. In particular, in 1840-1850, in 1840-1850, i.e., 427,797 pieces of blackbuck skins were brought to Russia via the Orenburg road, and 60,583 pieces via Troitsky.[3;295] Bukhara became famous for the export of blackbuck skins and brought a lot of income to the state treasury.

Various fabrics imported from India were also distributed to the oasis through Karshi Bazaar. In particular, white cloth imported from Punjab was in high demand among the population.[17;114] Cotton, silk threads, and indigo, a dye used for dyeing fabrics, were also sold in front of it.[8;92] Among the products brought from India and spread to the oasis through the Karshi market, it is appropriate to mention green tea.[17;115] Medicinal plant roots, herbs and medicines brought from Russia (at the end of the 19th century), Iran, India and Afghanistan were also sold at the counter.[19;51] In the Karshi market, the rich and self-sufficient families of the residents of the oasis bought a lot of porcelain dishes - bowls, teapots, bowls and plates brought from China.[8;92]

Thus, Karshi was of great importance as a major trade center in the vast steppe desert zone, which stretched to the Amudarya. In addition, Karshi played an important role in Bukhara's trade relations with the cities of Afghanistan (Balkh, Herat, Kabul) and India. Although the waterways were opened as a result of geographical discoveries, foreign merchants continued to travel through the caravan routes, which were very important in the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Several branches of this road connecting the east and the west formed an intersection in the city of Karshi. That is why these trade routes brought a lot of income to the treasury of the Bukhara Emirate of Karshi. It can be known from historical information that the merchants who stopped at the caravansary of this city

paid a duty to the treasury of the emirate for each sold product. For example, here the trade caravans paid 105 zakat for 1 camel load, 51 zakat for 1 camel itself, 32 zakat for horse, 15 for donkey, and 88 zakat for each of the slaves.[15;32]

From 1844 (until 1851), the transportation of blackcurrant from Bukhara to Iran increased more than before.[15;32] Because of the prohibition of trade relations with the British by the Emirate of Bukhara, the British government was forced to buy karakol not directly, but only through the mediation of Iranian merchants. It can be seen from this that Karakol reached England through Iran, and through England to all European countries. Of course, the services of Russian merchants were also great in its sale at the price of gold in the European markets.

On the other hand, the role of tobacco products in the trade relations of Karshi was incomparable. Karshi tobacco, recognized as the best quality tobacco grown in Central Asia, was marketed under the name "white tobacco".[8;89] He was constantly taken to Tashkent, Kokan and Khiva, in addition to neighboring Beliks. In the 80s of the 19th century, in the markets of the Khiva Khanate, Karshi tobacco was sold for 7 soums per poud, and Shahrissabz tobacco for 5 soums per poud.[13;91] Just as Shiraz tobacco was popular in Iran, Karshi tobacco was equally popular in Central Asia.

In addition, in the markets of Karshi, not only local fabrics, but also high-quality silk and silk fabrics imported from Bukhara, Samarkand, Shahrissabz, and eastern Beklik via Hisar were very active. The silk and yarn fabrics made in the big cities of Bukhara Emirate, including Karshi itself, were sold to the neighboring countries of Afghanistan, India, and Russia.[8;91]

During this period, silk fabrics and clothes produced by local residents not only competed with Russian factory goods, but also became famous and popular in European markets.[11;172] Also, according to the sources, most of the cotton sent from Bukhara to Russia was contributed by the Shahrissabz Bey. Shahrissabz cotton was transported to Bukhara through the city of Karshi and then sent to Russia.

In addition, the famous carpets woven in the village of Qamashi in Belik were very active in this market.[6;222] Embroidered and high-quality Karshi carpets, shawls and felts are in high demand in other regions of Bukhara Emirate.[14;126] Such carpets and felts are among the goods sent to European countries via Iran (via Herat to Mashhad), Russia, and Istanbul.

The city of Karshi served as an intermediate market not only for carpets woven in itself, but also for the export of famous Kashmir shawls to the international trade market, including Russia and European countries. Because the Kashmiri paddy brought to Bukhara through Kabul was transported through the city of Karshi. This process, in turn, made it possible for it to be cheaper in Karshi than in other places of the emirate, and to be taken to other countries directly from this place. According to the sources, 2000 out of 3000 cashmere shawls brought to Bukhara in 1 year were sent to Russia.[1;77] It is also known that during this period Kashmir rice was the

second most exported product from Bukhara Emirate to Iran after black rice. As we said above, the role of the city of Karshi in this trade was incomparable.

Kashi knife products were also widely spread throughout Central Asia. These knife-making products, which are taken to Iran, Arabia and Turkey by pilgrims, are priced 3-4 times higher than in other countries. In particular, knives and swords covered with gold and silver and decorated with precious stones were highly valued abroad.[3;170,171] At the beginning of the 20th century, Karshi knives, made of steel and covered with gold or silver, were valued at around 7-8 soums.[16;4]

Most of the oasis consists of desert areas and it is located on a caravan route, which caused a great demand for camels, which are considered the main means of transport here. That is why many camels were sold and bought in Karshi markets. One- and two-humped fast camels, bred by the surrounding herdsmen, neighboring Beks and Turkmens, were sold even to Afghanistan, mainly as a convenient means of transportation.[9;104] Trade caravans from Karshi hired camels to carry goods. In contrast, camel carriers served caravans by charging 1 silver coin for 1 stone distance.[12;70] The introduction of cargo transportation by camels and the location of Karshi city on the caravan routes, in turn, contributed to the growth of camel trade in the city markets.

Many donkeys were also sold and bought in the market as a durable, easy-to-carry vehicle. Their white color was more expensive than other colors. Pilgrims going on Hajj drive many donkeys from here to countries like Iran, Baghdad, Damascus and Egypt, writes A. Vambery.[3;293] Cattle and goats of various breeds were on sale in the livestock market.

Zakat in the amount of 1/40 of the income of those who traded in the market was collected in the almshouses of the markets.[10;116] The main tax levied on artisans and merchants was income tax, and Muslim merchants were charged 1 out of 40 dunabai products, non-Muslim merchants were charged 1 out of 20 dunabai products, and non-donabai products were taxed at the rate of 5% of the product price.[18;104] The rules of collection of zakat tax, established during the Arab caliphate and preserved for centuries, changed a lot in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and during this period, taxes were collected more than those mentioned above. In addition, we can show as an example that the amount of zakat tax collected from merchants is much higher than the rules of procedure. Russian merchants were charged zakat in the amount of 5%, up to 10%. Regardless of the country from which they are in the market, Muslim merchants were charged a flat rate of 40 chervons for each stall, while Russian merchants were charged up to 12 chervons.[18;104] At the same time, every merchant who received a written certificate of payment of zakat could trade freely in all regions of the emirate.

Thus, by the beginning of the 18th-20th centuries, the increase in demand for consumer goods and the development of foreign trade led to the expansion of production. In the markets of the city of Karshi, foreign products were sold along with

local products, and trade activities brought a lot of income to the residents of the city and the treasury of the emirate.

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