



The Role of the Fergana Customs Area in the Trade Between Russia and Kashgar (East Turkestan, Second Half of the 19th - Early 20th Centuries)

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the trade policy of Russia with Kashgar (East Turkestan) through Central Asia in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Fergana region (Kokand) has become one of the main transfer points in Russian-Kashgar trade relations.

Keywords: *Exchange Committee; Russia; Kashgar; East Turkestan; Turkestan Territory; Cotton; Oil Mill; Textile Industry; Raw Materials; Trade; Premium Goods; Kokand Customs; Irkeshtam Crossing Point; Merchants; Advance Payment*

Introduction

In the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the commercial and industrial center of the Fergana region was the Kokand city, where all the largest trade institutions of the Fergana Valley were concentrated. With the establishment in 1889 of the Kokand customs and the Irkeshtam crossing point, has begun the correct accounting of trade affairs and the correct maintenance of trade statistics between Russia and Kashgar through the Fergana region. Kokand customs has become one of the main transfer points in Russian-Kashgar trade relations.

Research Methods

In the covering the topic, a complex of historical methods, such as objectivity, historicity, historical sequence was used based on a systematic analysis of archival materials.

Research Results

On the basis of the agreement of 1881 between the Russian government and China, trade routes between the Fergana region and Kashgar began to improve. This event influenced the increase in caravan traffic. So, in 1885-1886. from Kashgar to Kokand a caravan consisting of 3,164 camels arrived with goods worth 1,423,459 rubles [1]. Another important article of import from Kashgar was animal products:

lamb fat, intestines, various types of leather and wool. According to the data of the Tashkent customs inspection area, 31141 poods of these products were brought from Kashgar to Kokand from 1895 to 1899.[2]

It should be noted that Russian goods entering Kashgar were exported from the Fergana Valley, mainly by Kokand, Margelan and Andijan merchants. According to B.L. Grombchevsky, who visited Kashgar in 1885, 320 merchants from Kokand, Andijan and Margelan were constantly in the Kashgar region and carried out trade operations. [3] These traders lived in the following cities of Kashgar: Kashgar - 120 people, Yangi-Gisar - 20, Yarkand - 70, Khotan - 80 and Keriya - 30 [4].

With the establishment of the Fergana customs section, it includes: the 1st class Kokand customs, the Irkeshtam crossing point and the customs point in Kashgar. These institutions serve the Fergana border with China. The latter runs along one of the numerous spurs of the Tien Shansk ridge. Its total length is more than 700 versts. It begins in the north from the Suek junction pass, from which the border of Fergana and Semirechye also stretches, and ends in the south with the Uz-Belpassin the Pamirs. There are many passes between these two end points [5].

With the establishment of the Kokand customs house and the Irkeshtam crossing point in 1889, has begun the correct accounting of trade affairs in accordance with the requirements of customs regulations and the correct maintenance of trade statistics between Russia and Kashgar through the Fergana region. Kokand customs served not only as a warehouse for receiving and storing various goods, but also for distributing them to the population of the Fergana Valley. It has become one of the main transfer points in Russian-Kashgar trade relations.

Kokand customs had I class and III category with a two-year reserve right [6]. The customs gave merchants who trade with Kashgar a certificate of transportation, upon the presentation of which they were allowed to enter the Kashgar markets without hindrance.

In the very first year of the opening of the customs office, there were so many people wishing to send goods through it to Kashgaria that the customs officers had to work until midnight [7]. From the moment the customs office was opened on March 18, 1899 to December 16, 1899, according to 122 applications, 7,604 boxes of various products weighing 29,849 poods [8] were exported from it to Kashgar, and in 1899 - 1900 from the customs office in Kashgar were exported mainly sugar, matches, manufactory and other Russian goods - by 2.5 million rubles [9].

The main markets for the sale of Kashgar goods in the Fergana region were the markets of Kokand and Margelan, through which these goods were sent to Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. Such goods as leather, wool, silk and cotton were exported to European Russia [10].

The raw materials exported from East Turkestan to Russia were of good quality and were bought in the Kashgar markets at very low prices, which promised large profits for the capitalists of Russia. So, at the end of the 19th century, a pood of fiber in the Kashgar market was bought for 1 ruble 80 kopecks, and sold in Osh for 5-6 rubles [11].

Pointing to the good quality and cheapness of Kashgar cotton, and the prospects for the future, one of the customs officials noted: "The purchase of cotton in Chinese Turkestan for our (Russian - B.Sh.) factory districts will make this country the second Fergana, and our trade in the near in the future may immediately increase by several million rubles" [12].

The needs of Russian cotton factories for Kashgar cotton influenced the increase in its import to Russia. So, if in 1901 cotton was exported from Kashgar to Russia - by 29,781 rubles, in 1902 - by 48,655 rubles, in 1903 - by 395,007 rubles, then in 1904 - by 617,752 rubles. [13].

Although the development of trade between Russia and East Turkestan was influenced by such factors as the lack of a telegraph and correct postal communication, the poor condition of the roads leading to Kashgar from Fergana and the lack of transportation means, the trade turnover between them is growing every year. So, by the beginning of the XX century. the number of merchants trading with Kashgar reached up to 2 thousand people [14].

The increase in trade was influenced by the so-called "bonuses" on some Russian goods exported to Kashgar, such as: manufactory, sugar, kerosene, matches, etc. The amount of such bonuses, for example, on cotton fabrics dyed with madder, reached 6 rubles 25 kopecks per pood and for harsh yarn - 5 rubles 30 kopecks per pood. The export of the premium manufactory at the beginning of the 20th century along the Chinese border through the Fergana region reached 40-50 thousand poods for an amount of premiums of up to 240 thousand rubles per year. In addition, through the Kokand customs, they exported with the addition of the excise tax: sugar (refined and sand) about 13 thousand poods, lighting oils - 1.3 thousand poods and over 3.5 million boxes of matches [15].

Russian premium goods, traveling to Kashgar with the release labels of the Kokand customs, were passed through the Irkeshtam crossing point without hindrance, only with a check on the number of boxes and bags. Also, according to the permission of the Minister of Finance, merchants trading in Kashgar were allowed to deposit money in advance in Kokand customs in advance against duties for goods inspected in Kashgar [16].

After the manufactured goods exported from Russia to Kashgar, sugar and lighting oils were in great demand. The main suppliers of refined sugar and granulated sugar were the Lebedinsky, Raigorodsky and Olfovetsky factories of the Kiev province, the Vendychevsky sugar factory of the Podolsk province and others. The Nobel Brothers Partnership supplied Kashgaria with lighting oils and matches. So, in 1908, the aforementioned factories and partnerships, through the Kokand customs to Kashgar, exported: granulated sugar - 5,957 poods, refined sugar - 7,077 poods, kerosene - 1,308 poods, matches (75 pieces in each boxe) - 3 466 595 boxes. [17].

By 1909, the trade between Russia and East Turkestan through the Irkeshtam crossing point and the Kokand customs office dropped sharply. So, in the first four months of 1909, the import of Chinese paper fabrics (mats) to the Kokand customs decreased in comparison with 1908 - by 102,142 rubles, raw silk - by 45,530 rubles, felt (felt) - by 39,014 rubles, cocoons silkworms - by 18,600 rubles, raw cotton - by 17,055 rubles, lamb furs - by 12,650 rubles, dyed fabrics - by 2,620 rubles, woolen carpets - by 7,505 rubles, woolen carpets - by 2,055 rubles, etc. for a total of 392,893 rubles [18].

In the same period, the exchange rate for the Chinese tenga fell sharply, while the Russian ruble rose to 1 ruble 50 kopecks, which in turn reduced the purchasing power of Kashgar merchants by one third and affected the demand for Russian goods [19]. The reason for this phenomenon was the law of January 16, 1909, according to which the duty ("li jing") was increased on goods imported and exported to China along the eastern border [20].

In March 1909, at the request of the Kokand and Margelan merchants trading in Kashgaria, the customs inspector of the Fergana section of the state. the adviser N. Fedorov checked the trade of Russian-subject merchants in Kashgaria. The inspection revealed facts of violation of the 1881 treaty between Russia and China by officials of the Chinese financial services. According to Article 13 of the 1881 treaty, goods imported into China by Russian and Russian-national merchants and exported from there were taxed at the rate common for foreign trade in the amount of 17%, instead of 5% of the value of the goods [21]. In pursuance of the request of the Kokand Exchange Committee addressed to the Ministry of Finance and the Council of Ministers, the previous procedure, i.e. payment of 5% duty on the value of goods was retained in force until August 11, 1911 [22], and then postponed "until further notice" [23].

This contributed to the increase in trade between Russia and Kashgar through the Fergana customs section. So, only in four months (May-August) 1909 through Irkeshtam the Kokand customs received goods worth 405,553 rubles [24]. If in 1909 goods were brought through the Fergana customs section - by 1,428,746 rubles [25], then in 1910 the amount of receipts increased to 2,425,696 rubles. [26].

So, if in 1908 Russian goods were exported to Kashgar through the Fergana customs section - by 1,867,705 rubles [27], and in 1909 - by 2,479,830 rubles, then in 1910 the amount of export increased to 3,155,514 rubles [28]. If the total trade turnover between Russia and Kashgar through the Fergana and Przhevalsky areas in 1910 amounted to about 6.4 million rubles [29] then in 1911 it amounted to more than 8.2 million rubles [30].

The increase in the number of trading merchants and the development of trade made it necessary to open transport companies in Kashgar. Thus, by 1914 two Russian companies "Eastern Transport and Insurance" and "Russian Transport and Insurance" had opened their offices in East Turkestan [31]. The main items of export from Kashgar during this period were lamb and sheep skins, cotton, raw silk, various furs, gold in ingots, woolen carpets, colored stones (jade), Chinese fabrics, etc. According to the Kokand Stock Exchange Committee, in 1913 sheep skins were brought in - for 300 793 rubles, raw silk - for 309 600 rubles., raw cotton - by 837,337 rubles, sheep wool - by 162,861 rubles, woolen carpets - by 261,645 rubles [32].

The first place in terms of the number of imports of items of Russian origin through all customs areas to Kashgar was occupied by cotton products, mainly from Moscow and Lodz firms; the second place was taken by the silkworm and the third - by metals and metal products. It should be noted that not all items sent to Kashgar through the Fergana area were recorded at the Kokand customs. They could go through Osh and Andijan, and the duty was paid in Irkeshtam and Kashgar. Despite this, the Kokand customs retained the main role in the export of Russian goods to East Turkestan. For comparison, an example can be given: for example, if in 1913 the total export of goods through the customs offices of Russia to Kashgar was equal to 4,567,420 rubles, then from this amount the goods for 3,004,284 rubles were released from the Kokand customs[33].

Table 1 shows the main goods sent through the Kokand customs to East Turkestan in 1913 - 1914.

Table 1.

Name of goods	The value of goods in rubles	
	1913	1914
Cotton products	2760651	2434740
Rafinated sugar	21573	126156
Sugars and	90340	121756
Matches	76362	12700
Woolen products	21771	14580
Kerosene	16109	16359
Tobacco products	14725	8592
Cigarettes sleeves	2744	-
Total	3004284	2734883

According to these data, the export of cotton products through the Kokand customs to Kashgar for two years amounted to 5,195,391; while in 1913 from India to Kashgar, an English manufactory was delivered to only 719,723 rupees (1 rupee equals 65 kopecks) [34].

Conclusion

Sources show that the attempts made by Russia in the 80s of the XIX century to establish and develop trade relations with East Turkestan through the Fergana Valley justified themselves. Russia began to export cheap raw materials for its factories and plants, such as: cotton, silk, animal products and at the same time Chinese goods, began to import matches, manufactory, kerosene, sewing machines, enameled dishes, sugar, etc. into Kashgar at a cheap price. One of the main roles in the development of trade between Russia and East Turkestan was played by the city of Kokand, which was, as it were, a transshipment point, as well as the establishment of the Kokand customs, which had a significant impact on the further growth of trade between Russia and East Turkestan.

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