

**ON THE QUESTION OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN THE PANJ DOMAIN OF EARLY
MIEVEAL SOGD (BASED ON MATERIALS FROM THE MUG MOUNTAIN)**

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Abstract: This scientific article analyzes and informs about the animal husbandry in the panj domain of early medieval sogd based on materials from the Mug Mountain. It examines the types of animals raised, their roles in the economy, and the cultural implications of pastoralism in this historical context.

Keywords: Livestock farming, Zarafshon, Karakul, sheep, donkeys, rams, cows, horses, oxen, dairy products, leather production, items of military, horse equipment, sewing clothes, footwear manufacturing.

Livestock farming, as an important branch of agriculture, has played a significant role throughout human history. It remained significant in Sogdiana during the early Middle Ages. This is evidenced by written documents from a castle on Mount Mug in the upper Zarafshan region, which frequently mention animals such as sheep, donkeys, rams, cows, and horses. The names of hides and skins are particularly numerous, providing further information about the animals raised in this region. The frequent mention of sheep, their hides, and skins suggests that small ruminants were more widely bred in the region than cattle. Perhaps it was easier for residents of the mountainous regions to feed and raise small ruminants. The abundance of water and greenery, along with the excellent pastures of the foothills, favored the development of livestock farming.

Written documents from Mount Mug, discovered in 1932 near the village of Khairabad (modern Ayni district), are the primary source for characterizing not only the situation in the region, but also allow for the first time to realistically present a picture of the economic, social, and business relations of Sogdiana in the 5th-8th centuries.

Let's turn to the documents. Document B-13 reports that Devashtich, the ruler of Sogd, ordered the delay of food deliveries to a certain Litpir. Spadak also informs the manager of the framandar's estate, Utta, that "...here (the sovereign)... ordered him to give me 50 sheep—the sheep that I have, he ordered them to give me." The same Spadak reports in document B-11 that he sent from Zravadk to the framandar "...with Ashtatch 63 sheep. And for those (sheep) that reach you, you must compile a very detailed inventory for them."¹

These two documents indicate 113 sheep. Another 13 sheep and two rams are mentioned in document B 11R, which states that they were consumed in Penjikent over a period of 10 days. These expenses may have been related to the organization of public duties, hashars, and work in the royal palace. But regardless of who and what these sheep and two rams were intended for,

¹ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. II. "Юридические документы и письма". Чтение, перевод и комментарии Лившица В.А. М., изд. вост. лит., 1962. С.144-148.

the very fact that sheep are frequently mentioned indicates their large numbers in the upper Zarafshan region in the 7th-8th centuries.

The letters repeatedly remind us to compile a detailed inventory of all sheep. Devashtich Spadak's order, "Find the sheep!" in document B-15, testifies to the strict orderliness with regard to everything on the farm (in the case of grain, even the names of the people who delivered it were to be recorded). Spadak's great agitation is evident: "And, sir, no matter how much I search for sheep here, I find none." Perhaps, according to the compiled records, a certain number of sheep were missing during an inspection, or perhaps these sheep were stolen by someone or got lost somewhere, which is unlikely.

Among the woolen items found at the castle on Mount Mug, one can find many items made of white sheep's wool, clumps of white sheep's wool, a fragment of felt made of white sheep's wool, fine, well-processed lambskin, and so on. Black and brown sheep's wool is also found.²

The large-scale breeding of sheep in the favorable mountain conditions is associated with the widespread use of their skin, wool, meat, and, most importantly, their milk, rich in vitamins and highly therapeutic. Rope, thread, fabric, rugs, clothing, and other items were also made from sheepskin. Many of these items were found during excavations of the castle on Mount Mug.

Evidence of the production of various types of clothing, such as cloaks and sheepskin coats, from lambswool (sheepskins) is presented in document NOV-1: "The Devashtich gvab (sovereign) is seven years old, the month of Nisanich. And 50 small lambskins were made for the gvab for a varpanak (a type of clothing)... And seven lambskins were made (for) one saddle cloth."³ A series of similar lists follows. In general, this is a list of items made for the king and his entourage, with the quantities of material used for each item, in this case lambskin, or merlushka. Cloaks are mentioned, for which only 5-6 skins were used, and garments made from 30 lambskins (a cloak for the framandar Utta) and 50 small ones (a cloak for Devashtich). In total, the document mentions 374 lambskins, in one case brown, of Pakhut tanning.

It's possible that the pelts of the finest sheep breeds, such as Karakul, were used for the ceremonial attire of the Tsar and his entourage. Then we would be bold enough to assume that Karakul and other breeds of sheep were bred in the Zarafshan Valley. For example, E. Schaefer cites reports from Chinese sources that "sheep with enormous, heavy tails weighing as much as ten jins are raised in Samarkand. And such sheep are not a myth; they are a fat-tailed breed, common in Bukhara and the steppes of Kazakhstan, whose young produce the famous Astrakhan astrakhan sheepskin—karakul."⁴ This means that fat-tailed sheep also existed in Sogdiana. Perhaps the fat from these animals is mentioned in document B-8.

² Якубов Ю. Паргар в VII-VIII в.в. н.э. (Верхний Зеравшан в эпоху раннего средневековья). Душанбе, "Дониш", 1979. С. 108.

³ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. Ш. "Хозяйственные документы". Чтение, перевод и комментарии Боголюбова М.Н. и Смирновой О.И. М., изд. вост. лит.. 1963. С. 40.

⁴ Шефер Э. Золотые персики Самарканда. Книга о чужеземных диковинах в империи Тан. (Перевод Зеймаля Е.В. и Лубо-Лесниченко Е.И). М., "Наука", 1981. С. 109.

Among the Mug finds are many fragments of goat hides and skins, including a large fragment of a white goat's hide, and fragments of untreated hides with remnants of reddish-brown and black wool. Ropes and cords made of white and red goat wool were also found.⁵ Citing a list of finds, Yakubov Yu. comes to the conclusion: "Thus, the absence of information about goats in the Mug documents did not mean that they were not bred in Upper Zarafshan in the 7th-8th centuries."⁶ We refute his opinion about the absence of such information in the documents. They exist in document B-3: "The sovereign Pancha Devashtich is 11 years old. The month is Mazekhhandich, the day is Khorroch. From the framandar Utta to the Madrushkatsky head of the reservoir Vgashmarik. And I received from you, Vgashmarik, ... four (skins) of mountain goat, of which one is colored leather, and three are raw ("twisted") skins, and 13 fox (skins) ..., and another four fox ...".⁷ Document B-19 also refers to five wild goat skins.⁸ This means that the hides and skins of wild animals were also used in the household, necessitating hunting. The widespread and abundant capture of wild animals indicates the development of a hunting industry. Perhaps, as today, there were amateur hunters, as well as specialized hunters, for whom the procurement of wild animal hides was a duty and something akin to work. Vgashmarik likely also obtained hides from ordinary hunters. In this regard, the composition of the ash pits and piles in the courtyard of the kuhendiz in Penjikent, which served as a garbage dump, is of interest. It is particularly noteworthy that the majority of the bones found there are those of wild boar.⁹ Judging by this, the ruler of Penjikent and his entourage frequently hunted wild boar, which is quite likely, as they are still found in the nearby mountains surrounding Penjikent. The popularity of this type of hunting among the early medieval nobility is evidenced by the depiction of boar hunting scenes on so-called "Sassanid" silverware, including the famous "Sogdian Horseman" platter.¹⁰ But the spoils of noble hunters, although they served as food, certainly did not constitute the wealth of the palace household.

There is no doubt that, alongside mountain and wild goats, domesticated animals also existed. The foothill and mountain villages of Zarafshan provided all the necessary natural and climatic conditions for raising small cattle. The inhabitants of these villages (Kum, Madm, Kshtut, Iskodar, Fatmev, and others – see schematic map) could have been primarily engaged in raising and delivering the aforementioned animals, their hides, meat, and milk to the palace warehouses and pens. Our assumption is supported by the words of O. I. Smirnova: "Kum, like the entire region, was rich in grain and livestock. From here, wheat was delivered to the

⁵ Якубов Ю. Указ. соч. С. 108-110.

⁶ Якубов Я. Указ. соч. С. 71.

⁷ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. II. С. 72.

⁸ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. III. С. 60.

⁹ Тереножкин А.И. Раскопки в кухендизе Пенджикента. "Труды СТАЭ". Т.1. С. 89, 93.

¹⁰ Орбели И.А. и Тревер К.В. Сасанидский металл. М.-Л., 1935. Табл. 3,4,9.; Ставиский Б.Я. Дворцо-вое хозяйство пенджикентского владетеля. "Советское востоковедение". Изв. АН СССР, 1957, № 1. С.90.

Devastich barns and small cattle were delivered."¹¹ Thus, both the Muga documents and archaeological excavation data attest to the breeding of goats during this period.

A number of documents (A-8, A-7, A-10, B-3, B-5, B-19, A-4) attest to the development of livestock farming. These documents mention Vgashmarik receiving, primarily from the framandar (A-8), from tanners (B-5), and from other individuals (A-10, A-4), as well as from the framandar, a total of 525 skins of various animals (the consumption of 16 skins is described in document B-12).

The Muga archive contains information about cattle—cows and bulls. Document A-5 states: "And for 11 drachmas (a monetary unit) I bought a cow, the one that was eaten at the New Year's (festival)."¹² Document A-11 speaks of the payment of 13 drachmas for two cows ("two oxen", "a team of oxen").¹³ Each ox cost 6-7 drachmas, while a cow cost 11. This means that a cow cost almost twice as much as an ox in the 7th-8th centuries. Its high price was likely due to the fact that the cow was a source of milk and meat. This cow was intended for the New Year's feast, meaning a more well-fed and well-fed cow was chosen. Perhaps this is why its price was so high. If so, then an ordinary cow might have been slightly cheaper. Oxen in harness were naturally purchased for field work, and their cost would also have been considerable.

Documents A-4 and A-10, which mention bull hides, as well as finds of pieces of leather belonging to cattle and a cord made from cow tail hair, supplement the archive's reports.

Of the domestic animals, there is information about a horse. Document A-5 mentions a horse purchased for 200 drachmas.¹⁴ This is evidence of the high value of horses in the Middle Ages. This was the price of a strong, healthy, thoroughbred horse, which was the main form of exchange; China paid for them in silk. For example, in 607, 13,000 lengths of silk were paid for 3,000 horses. At that time, one horse cost 4.4 lengths (110 drachmas). In 770, the Uyghurs supplied the Chinese with 100,000 horses annually in exchange for a million lengths of silk, and the value of the horses was equal to 10 lengths. Based on the value of silk indicated by Balami, one length was equal to 20 drachmas. Therefore, the price of one horse was equal to the value of 10 lengths, or 200 drachmas.¹⁵ Thus, the price of a horse (these were purebred, beautiful, strong horses) doubled in the second half of the 7th century. This was certainly related to the political situation in Sogdiana, when the need to defend against the Arabs necessitated the creation of a stronger and more robust mounted guard. A horse listed in the archives costs 100 drachmas, but it is a lame, frail horse.

Spadak reports in document B-15 that post horses were delivered to him from Darg and asks what he should do with them: "And I would distribute them thus—one for the sovereign and one for you (the framandar). And you ask, and whatever (the sovereign) orders, that's what you

¹¹ Смирнова О.И. Очерки из истории Согда. М., "Наука", 1970. С. 52, прим. 119.

¹² Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. II. С. 182.

¹³ Там же, С.185.

¹⁴ Там же. С. 182.

¹⁵ Смирнова О.И. Указ. соч. С.197.

shall do."¹⁶ Thus, in the early Middle Ages, and even later, horses were widely used as messengers, draft animals, and a means of exchange, but primarily for warriors, as the events of that time required the existence of mounted troops. A shield discovered during excavations, bearing a colorful image of a mounted warrior, is valuable as a primary source for studying the weaponry of the Sogdian horseman.¹⁷ The horse armor the framdar received from Khufarn (B-18) bears witness to this.

"The Turkmen horse, or Turki horse, received its name from its original homeland—Turkestan. Standing 15-16 hands tall and distinguished by great endurance, these horses have a slender body and long legs, a large head with a Roman nose, and a sheep's neck. They owe their speed and beauty to Arabian blood. In Tang China, it was believed that these horses, which they brought from water-rich Samarkand as sires for their war trotters, were of the true Fergana jun breed." The story also revealed that six genuine "blood-sweating" horses were sent from Fergana to the court of Xuanzong in the mid-8th century. They were called Red Chyrtpad, Lilac Chyrtpad, Scarlet Chyrtpad, Yellow Chyrtpad, Carnation Chyrtpad, and Peach Chyrtpad (Chyrtpad means "four-legged" in Sogdian). Horses rich in Arabian blood were brought to China from Samarkand, Fergana, Kesh, Tokharistan, Chach, and Maymurgh.¹⁸

Documents indicate the presence of stables and horse caretakers on the farm. For example, according to document A-5, the shepherd Van received 6 drachmas for herding cattle, while the head of the stable was given one yakhont (B-9) for 80 drachmas. Yakhonts were a group of precious and semiprecious stones in Sogdiana. Document B-9 refers to stones of fairly high quality. The actual value of this sum can be judged from the few specific data in Mug documents characterizing the drachma exchange rate of that time. A cow cost 11 drachmas, a horse 200 drachmas.¹⁹

The archive contains a document of very interesting content - B-9, a letter from the Rust ruler Afarun Zkatch about a stubborn donkey: "As for the donkey that cannot be delivered, send it on a strong horse."²⁰ Apparently, the donkey's stubbornness caused problems with its delivery to another location. Nothing is said about its cost, but this letter allows us to estimate its value. Donkeys have long been considered a pack animal, used to transport various goods, harnessed to carts, used for farm work, and also for riding. In fact, this donkey had to be transported on a sturdy horse. But how? M.M. Iskhakov provides the answer: "In this case, the donkey must be

¹⁶ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. II. С. 151.

¹⁷ Якубовский А. Ю. Живопись древнего Пенджикента по материалам Таджикско - Согдийской археологической экспедиции 1948-1949 г.г. - "Изв. АН СССР. Серия ист. и филос.", 1950, № 5, VII; Ставиский Б.Я. О двух памятниках согдийского изобразительного искусства. - КСИИМК, 1956. Вып. 61. С. 63-65.

¹⁸ Шефер Э. Указ. соч. С. 90-91.

¹⁹ Согдийские документы с горы Муг. Вып. II. С. 161.

²⁰ Там же. С. 158.

...tied to a cart behind the horse." This means a cart with a sturdy horse, behind which the donkey is recommended to be transported.²¹

The document's contents indicate the presence of draft animals in Sogdiana—donkeys, horses, and oxen—used in various agricultural tasks, including transporting cargo, pulling carts, plowing the land, and often in hand mills, where they turned millstones. The donkey was the number one draft animal in the mountainous terrain of Panjakent. The endurance of these animals is remarkable. Such animals are still considered essential in agriculture and farming.

The proclamation in the "History of the Tang" of the thesis: "Horses are the military readiness of the state" allows us to expand our understanding of the value of strong, thoroughbred horses in the Sogdian army.²² Postal horses and riding horses were widely used.

Thus, based on all of the above, it can be stated that in early medieval Sogdiana, livestock farming was based on the breeding of small and large livestock, especially sheep, goats, cows, bulls, and horses. This was directly related to the population's daily needs for milk, meat, and fat. Importantly, these animals could also be sold as commodities at the market or bartered for economic needs. The hides and skins of these animals were widely used to make various types of clothing and footwear, military and horse equipment (harnesses, bridles, etc.), and household items (storage sacks, basket lids, etc.). Animal hair served as raw material for the production of thread, rope, and cords used in the production of woolen fabrics, carpets, and other items. Processed animal hides were used for writing various documents and letters. The Muga series of documents contains numerous letters written on leather (see diagram). The need for animal hides and skins led to the specialization of individual villages and people in livestock breeding (cattle breeding), the processing of hides and skins (tannery), the creation of specialized workshops for sewing clothing from these raw materials for high-ranking officials, as well as handicraft workshops for making leather clothing and footwear for the general population. Such a workshop existed in the village of Madrushkat, with its high-mountain pastures. Smirnova points out that "a significant portion of the hides came to the settled regions from the nomadic Turks (who also supplied slaughter and pack animals). The Turks brought the hides in their raw form, which were tanned on site by the settled population. The village of Madrushkat was located in the border zone with the nomads, which may explain the fact that tannery was developed there."²³ Strict state control over this entire process existed.

Along with domesticated animals, the skins of wild animals were also used. Hunting contributed to the development of fur production. Skins varied in quality, ranging from raw hides, select leather, colored skins, donkey, bull, cowhide, goat, fox, twisted hides, and even well-preserved hides. The price of animals also varied depending on their condition and intended use.

Livestock farming in early medieval Sogdiana contributed to the development of many other branches of agricultural and handicraft production (see diagram). Sogdiana had all the conditions for the development of livestock farming: green pastures, a favorable climate, and

²¹ Исхаков М.М. Унутилган подшоликдан хатлар. Ташкент: "Фан", 1992. С. 29.

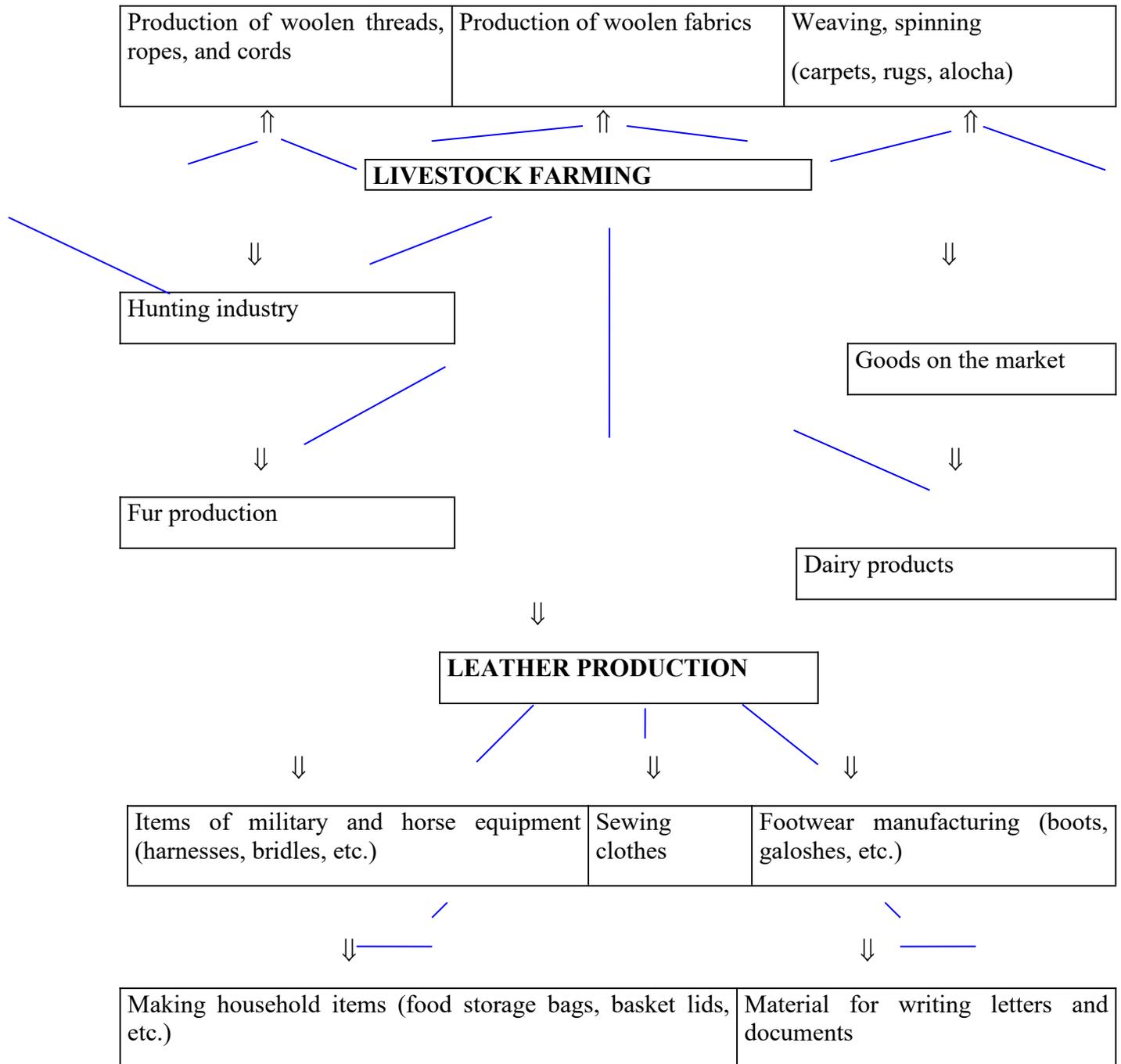
²² Шефер Э. Указ. соч. С. 87.

²³ Смирнова О.И. Указ. соч. С. 122.

abundant water resources. Animals were used in agricultural work and served as a means of exchange and purchase and sale at the market.

Scheme

SECTORS OF ECONOMY DEVELOPING BASED ON LIVESTOCK BREEDING IN THE PANCH POSSESSION OF SOGDA



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