

**MAJOR ECONOMIC CENTERS IN THE KASHKADARYA OASIS AND THEIR ROLE
IN THE ECONOMY OF THE EMIRATE**

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Annotation: This topic is devoted to analyzing the major economic centers formed in the Kashkadarya oasis during the period of the Bukhara Emirate and their role in the economic life of the emirate. The study highlights the cities and villages of the oasis where trade, handicrafts, agriculture, and animal husbandry were developed, their role in domestic and foreign markets, and their economic connections. It also scientifically evaluates the significance of these centers in shaping the regional economic system, their impact on tax revenues, trade routes, and production processes.

Keywords: Kashkadarya oasis, Bukhara Emirate, economic centers, trade, handicrafts, agriculture, animal husbandry, markets, tax system, domestic trade, foreign trade, economic relations.

During the period of the Bukhara Emirate, each bekdrom in the Kashkadarya oasis contributed to various sectors of the economy based on its natural climate and geographical conditions. The areas of the oasis suitable for artificial irrigation—mainly the bekdroms of Shahrisabz, Kitab, and Karshi, and partly the Yakkabog bekdrom—consisted of settlements inhabited by a population engaged in settled agriculture. The grain, fruits, and melons grown in these territories were of great importance for the economy of the emirate. Meanwhile, in the economic life of the bekdroms of Chiroqchi and Guzor, which mainly included steppe and desert areas, animal husbandry predominated. At the same time, in certain amlok territories of both bekdroms, there were settlements whose populations were engaged in agriculture.

As mentioned above, the center of the Guzor bekdrom—the city of Guzor and its surroundings—was known as an area suitable for agriculture. At the same time, among the cities that served as political and administrative centers of all bekdroms of the Kashkadarya oasis, handicrafts and trade developed to a certain degree in dozens of amlok territories. Among them, the cities of Karshi and Shahrisabz stood out as major economic centers, performing the function of handicraft hubs not only for the Bukhara Emirate but also on a regional scale.

As will be discussed in more detail below, the population of the Kashkadarya oasis was particularly distinguished by its specialization in agriculture, handicrafts, and animal husbandry within the economic life of the Bukhara Emirate. It should be noted that the bekdroms located in the Zarafshan and Surkhan oases, the upper and middle basins of the Amu Darya, and the regions between the Hissar and Badakhshan mountains, which were part of the emirate, also occupied a specific place in its economic life to varying degrees and held particular importance in the fields of handicrafts, agriculture, and animal husbandry.

However, unlike several other bekdroms of the emirate, the bekdroms of the Kashkadarya oasis stood out as a region that encompassed almost all types of economic activities characteristic of the regional economy. During the period of the emirate, particularly between the 19th and 20th centuries, according to the records of foreign—mainly Russian—travelers, envoys, and merchants who visited Central Asia, the following sectors predominated in the economic life of the population of the Kashkadarya oasis:

1. agriculture (crop cultivation—grain, rice, tobacco growing, horticulture) — mainly in the bekdoms of Karshi[1], Shahrisabz, Kitab, and partly in Yakkabog, Guzor, and Chiroqchi;
2. metalworking (primarily the production of agricultural tools, blacksmithing, manufacture of weapons, household items, etc.) — in the cities of Karshi, Shahrisabz, Kitab, and Guzor;
3. textile production (cotton and silk weaving, making and sewing clothing, silk processing and dyeing of fabrics) — in the cities of Shahrisabz, Kitab[2], and Karshi;
4. woodworking (plaster carving, preparation of timber used in construction, making carts, platforms, windows, door frames, saddlery, cradles, chests, and household items such as spoons, dishes, ladles, lids, etc.) — mainly in the bekdoms of Karshi, Shahrisabz, and Kitab;
5. carpet weaving (valuable carpets woven for household use and specially produced for export abroad) — mainly in the amlok territories of Juynav, Kasbi, Maymanoq, and Fulodi of the Karshi bekdome, and in the Chiroqchi bekdome;
6. felt-making (production and pressing of felt) — mainly in the bekdoms of Chiroqchi, Karshi, and Guzor;
7. leatherworking and footwear production (processing hides, producing horse harnesses and various fittings for saddles and tack) — mainly in the cities of Karshi, Shahrisabz, and Kitab[3];
8. production of yurt (black tent, alachuq) components for nomadic and semi-nomadic populations—kerege, changarok, poles, etc. — mainly in the bekdoms of Chiroqchi, Yakkabog, and Guzor;
9. pottery (various household items—bowls, dishes, trays, storage jars, etc.) — mainly in the bekdoms of Karshi, Shahrisabz, and Kitab[4].

In addition, professions directly and indirectly related to the above-mentioned types of handicrafts—such as resin and dye workshops, saddle makers, skullcap (doppi) makers, textile producers, oil manufacturers (oil presses, juvozkhonas), mills and grain grinders, repairers of household items, makers of various toys for children, cart repairers, boat builders and repairers, producers of hunting weapons, makers of musical instruments, decorators and painters, organizers of public entertainment—storytellers, singers, acrobats, comedians, male musicians and dancers, healers and prayer reciters, circumcision masters, barbers, cooks, confectionery producers, bakers, producers of medicinal herbs, and others—had also, to varying degrees, become specialized occupations in each of the bekdoms.

Apart from the urban population, a portion of the rural inhabitants who had neither land nor water, and no livestock, were engaged in handicrafts. Such a way of life was not only driven by necessity but was also rooted in the centuries-old traditions of the Kashkadarya oasis. In particular, pottery was developed in Kasbi, while in Gilon, Koson, and Guzor crafts such as blacksmithing, textile production, and dyeing were widespread.

As will be discussed in more detail below, the emergence of neighborhoods (mahallas) and guzars—primarily in the centers of bekdoms and amlok territories—associated with various professions, and partly even the naming of villages, indicates how widely these crafts were distributed in the oasis. Just as each of these crafts had its own specialized masters, there were also social groups engaged in their trade, mainly operating in markets; sometimes they even formed their own neighborhoods and guzars. The presence in the spoken language of the oasis population of terms such as choyfurush (tea sellers), kigizfurush (felt sellers), qandalotfurush (confectionery sellers), supurgifurush (broom sellers), ro‘yanfurush, yog‘ochfurush (wood sellers), telpakfurush (fur cap sellers), choponfurush (robe sellers), tandirfurush (tandoor sellers), sovunfurush (soap sellers), mahsifurush (soft footwear sellers), etikfurush (boot sellers), and others also confirms this[5].

In the khanates of Central Asia, particularly in the Bukhara Emirate, as in ancient and medieval times, various forms of handicrafts such as weaving, embroidery, carpet making, pottery, blacksmithing, coppersmithing, engraving, jewelry making, decorative painting, and others were developed. Textile production and related craft quarters were located around the old city of Karshi; at the same time, guzars such as Halvogar, Temirchi, Kulollik, and Chilangaron existed in the city[6]. Meanwhile, in the districts of Kamashi, Chiroqchi, and Dehqonobod of the Kashkadarya oasis (in mountain and foothill villages such as Qizilsoy, Oqrobat, Jetimquduq), the weaving of woolen fabrics, carpets, and reed mats was widespread; gold embroidery was common in the city of Karshi, while embroidery was particularly popular in Shahrisabz[7].

In the economic life of the Bukhara Emirate, each bekdomb of the Kashkadarya oasis occupied its own place to a certain extent. Among them, the bekdombs of Karshi and Shahrisabz, in particular, functioned as major economic centers not only within the emirate but also at the level of such Central Asian cities as Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, Kokand, Margilan, Andijan, Osh, Taraz, Khujand, Balkh, and others. Below, we will examine some of the cities of the oasis based on the specialized branches of handicrafts developed in them.

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