



MELORATING AND IRRIGATION POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN THE SURKHANDARYA OASIS

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Abstract

In Central Asia, archaeological excavations are regularly carried out in the Surkhandarya oasis, the eastern part of the Ferghana Valley, the Amu Darya delta and the Zarafshan river basin. The main goal of the tsarist occupation of the Surkhandarya region was economic benefit and the rapid satisfaction of the needs of Russian industrialists for raw materials.

Keywords: oasis, regular harvest, raw cotton, Sherabad oasis, Zang canal, labor force

Introduction

Surkhandarya since ancient times in hot regions where it is impossible to harvest without irrigation, then falls unevenly, resulting in agriculture. developed in areas where there is no stable crop yield. In the arid climate of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Central Asia, Mexico and Iran, people learned to grow edible plants in floodplains. Later, such lands were surrounded by borders for long-term water conservation and agriculture. it was possible to get a regular harvest from the crops. In Central Asia, archaeological excavations are regularly carried out in the Surkhandarya oasis, the eastern part of the Ferghana Valley, the Amu Darya delta and the Zarafshan river basin.

The construction of the first canals, the construction of which was not difficult, took place in the 6th century BC. It dates from the middle of the 1st millennium. In the Middle Ages, a great discovery was made in irrigated agriculture - the first water lift. As a result, it became possible to irrigate smaller plots of land above canals or natural water sources. The main goal of the tsarist occupation of the Surkhandarya region was economic benefit and the rapid satisfaction of the needs of Russian industrialists for raw materials. Consequently, he initially focused on improving the irrigation system in the oasis, since water was essential for crops, and it is well known that crops cannot be





harvested without water. It is known from the pages of history that one of the main goals of tsarism in the conquest of Central Asia was the production of raw cotton. Since the second half of the 19th century, Russian industry has not received raw materials - cotton fiber. As the US Civil War raged from 1862-1865, Russia's textile industry, which was powered by 90% American cotton, was in crisis. That's why Russia planned in the future to become the main cotton base of Turkestan. An 1862 article in the press said that "the benefits of Russia's relations with Central Asia will be so embraced"? Tsarist officials raised cotton prices to attract the indigenous population to cotton, if in 1860 1 pound of cotton cost 4-6 rubles, in 1861 7 rubles 50 tiyn, in 1862 - 12-13 rubles, in 1864 - 24 rubles. As a result of the rise in cotton prices, naturally, the cotton fields expanded as well. Agriculture in our region is adapting to the needs of the Russian market and is beginning to change the nature of its production. The policy pursued by the Russian colonialists also had a significant impact on this situation. This is evidenced by the following opinions of tsarist officials: "Each pound of Turkestan cotton is competition for Russian and Siberian wheat. Every pound of Turkestan cotton competes with American cotton, therefore, despite the fact that imported and expensive grain is imported into the country, irrigated lands must be cleared for cotton sowing."

Lucerne, corn, rice and other crops are less planted on the irrigated lands of the region, cotton fields are expanding. If in 1894 116,452 acres of cotton were sown in the region, then by 1916 533,661 acres of cotton were sown. In Surkhandarya, as well as throughout Uzbekistan, cotton fields will increase and cotton yields will increase. This can be seen from the increase in the transportation of cotton through Surkhandarya, if in 1908 17 thousand pounds of cotton were transported, in 1910 - 34 thousand, and in 1911 this figure was 60 thousand pounds. Many specialists will be involved in order to occupy the lands of the Sherabad oasis and create a large cotton monopoly. In particular, military engineer A.G. Ananyev in his work "Irrigation of the lands of the Sherabad oasis with Surkhandarya water" noted that in addition to cultural significance, the irrigation of the Sherabad steppes is important for the Russian state. valuable. He writes, among other things:

- 1) From a military point of view, this improves the strategic position of the detachments stationed in Termez, since they will be able to settle in a prosperous area, provide themselves with food and manpower, and be indispensable. for travel they also find means;
- 2) From an economic point of view, an important market will be created for the sale of products made in Russia, and there will be more than one million pounds of cotton fiber on the Russian market. This will free us from American dependence, which will





allow us to finance the construction of a strategically important railroad, in addition to cotton; 3) In terms of impact on natural conditions, will undoubtedly improve tropical climate, which, in turn, will lead to an improvement in the sanitary condition of the region;

4) Local significance: it will be possible to strengthen the weaknesses of the Termez irrigation system, since this system cannot withstand the shocks of the Surkhandarya water, it will require the construction of many additional reservoirs. In addition, state irrigated lands can be increased from 400 acres to 10,000 acres, which will enrich the treasury of tsarist Russia.

The tsarist government in the regional and territorial division paid attention to the following factors:

- 1) climate and soil fertility;
- 2) Sources of land development;
- 3) The location of the surface part;
- 4) labor force;
- 5) Water supply.

The excavation of the famous Zang Canal began in 1908 and was completed in 1914. The design of the canal is associated with the name of a native of Eshonbek, who rode a horse and showed the way to the canal, which was dug 55-60 kilometers. In general,

the tsarist government considers the Surkhandarya oasis not only from the point of view of military, but also from the point of view of economic interests. To break out of American dependence on cotton and use indigenous labor, the tsarist government brought in prominent reclamation workers and irrigators. In the short term, it is planned to increase the sown area from 4,000 acres to 10,000 acres, which will benefit the treasury of tsarist Russia through the creation of a system of irrigation stations.

The vast lands of Central Asia are vast, the Syr Darya, Amudarya, Surkhandarya and other rivers flow through it. Only a small part of these rivers is used for irrigated agriculture, the rest flows into the Aral Sea. The main task of the "civilized" tsarist Russia was to establish complete power over Turkestan and Bukhara, to adapt these priceless steppes to their will, taking into account the interests of their state. To achieve this goal, the creation of the Sherabad Valley Development Project, the transformation of these high-yielding and rich lands into the main cotton fields in the future will remain the most important daily task.

With the permission of the Emirate of Bukhara, on February 23, 1912, 72 thousand hectares of land in the Sherabad Valley were transferred to the Russian engineer A.G. Ananiev on a contractual basis. The agreement will be signed by Mirza Nasrulloboy Kushbegi, Minister of Land Affairs of the Emir of Bukhara. Accordingly, the Emir of





Bukhara will give Ananiev A.G. the following lands of the Sherabad and Baysun principalities: squares.

In a letter to the Russian emperor in Bukhara about the activities of the Sherabad joint-stock company in land management, he immediately established the Sherabad joint-stock company, promptly carried out economic work, and expanded the Zang Canal. required for cultivation and expansion of the area under the main canal Dzharkurgan. It was necessary to strengthen control over the involuntary development of land around the canal by the local population. In 1916, the acquisition of land around the Zang Canal from the local population and its transfer to the Sherabad joint-stock company was included in the agenda. It was noted that the Emirate of Bukhara recaptured the lands arbitrarily occupied by the Russian government and organized their regular taxation. In his diaries about the visit of the tsarist official R.Yu. Roevis to Southern Bukhara, the following views were expressed on the geographical position of the Sherabad principality. The territory of the Sherabad principality is located at the end of the Sherabad mountains and extends towards Termez and consists of mud, sand and earth. In the southern part of Angora and 10-15 versts of the road to the Amu Darya there are sand dunes, mostly similar to camel ridges.

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