



DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE RELATIONS THROUGH THE AMU DARYA CROSSINGS

Shukhrat Ashurovich Allamuratov,

Associate Professor of the National Pedagogical University of Uzbekistan named after Nizami, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History

E-mail: allamuratov_shuxrat@uznpu.uz

Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 26 th February 2026 Accepted: 24 th March 2026	<i>This article is devoted to the history of trade relations and transit connections of the countries of the region through the Amu Darya crossings in the late 19th century. It is also analyzed that the Amu Darya crossings, which are of great economic and political importance, have long been a means of uniting peoples as bridges connecting the intersecting land and waterways of the region.</i>

Keywords: Amudarya waterway, crossings, customs duty, tariffs for crossings, transportation

INTRODUCTION. The Amu Darya was not only a convenient waterway for communication with the riverside regions, cities, and trade centers, but also a river connecting trade (caravan) routes crossing the Amu Darya. This made the Amu Darya the main waterway artery in the region. The choice of crossing points on the river depended on the narrow and convenient natural crossings of the river, nearby settlements, or trade routes along the oases. From the beginning of the Amu Darya to the lower reaches, there were permanent and seasonal crossings for communication between the population living on both banks of the river.

The development of internal and external relations in Central Asia, the continuous movement of caravans, directly depended on the trade routes passing through the Amu Darya passes. Therefore, the Russian Empire paid special attention to the passes passing through the Amu Darya in order to enter the Afghan and Indian markets. Because the bulk of the goods imported from Russia were delivered to Afghanistan through the Amu Darya.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODS.

Information about the crossings of the Amu Darya in the second half of the 19th century - the beginning of the 20th century is found in the I-1, I-2, I-3, I-126-funds of the National Archive of Uzbekistan (hereinafter - the National Archive of Uzbekistan). Also, information on the topic is found in the dissertation studies, monographs and a number of articles of E.A.Kabulov, F.B.Ochildiev, S.Sulaymanov, Ya.Karimov, Sh.Allamuratov and U.Djuraeva.

DISCUSSION. For this purpose, Captain Bykov initially studied the crossings from the confluence of the Vakhsh and Panj rivers along the Amu Darya to Khorezm. In

the process of studying them, he listed the following requirements and tasks for the effective use of crossings in various situations:

- loading and unloading of cargo should be convenient on both banks at all times of the year;
- the presence of a convenient pier on the shores where local and Russian ships can dock at any time of the year;
- the implementation of unhindered movement of ships and steamers (including barges) between the coasts, without interfering with each other, throughout the year, in any weather conditions;
- the possibility of ships from neighboring ports sailing to the port, in addition to local boats and ships;
- In the past, sanitation and housekeeping services had to be well established [1, P.6].

RESULTS. From the above requirements and tasks, it can be seen that the choice of river crossings was mainly determined by a convenient location on the coast, a nearby settlement, or close communication routes. When choosing such places, the possibility of boat and ship traffic and the location of convenient piers on both banks also played an important role. This allowed for the rapid exchange of any cargo through the banks during the crossings, and served as a bridge connecting trade routes.

The main means of communication on the banks and fords of the Amu Darya were ships and boats. Ships were mainly located at important fords such as Chardzhou, Karki, Kalif, Chochkaguzar and Pattakesar, which served to transport people and goods between the two banks. Round flat-bottomed boats were also used at the Panj and upper Amu Darya fords. It took 20



minutes to cross from one bank to the other [2, P.27]. According to Captain Bykov, each large ship on the fords had 6-7 people on board, and an average ship had 3-4 to 5 workers. 25 percent (1/4) of the total income from the fords was left for the benefit of the sailors, and all the remaining proceeds were collected through the beks for the government treasury [1, P.6].

Another source written by Russian military man MV Grulyov provides the following information about this: "5-7 people were needed to steer the ship, they were called sailors. The ships were steered with the help of awkward and heavy oars, and even pulled to the desired destination with ropes. The sailors received 1/5 of the proceeds for their wages. The boats were intended only for transporting cargo and people, and their carrying capacity was 50-75 batman. 3-4 people were needed to steer the boat, they were called boatmen" [3, P.59]. Depending on the size and weight of the boats, they could carry horses, artillery, and cargo; they could carry from 60 to 80 pounds of cargo, 16 infantrymen, and 20 passengers; Boats 4.5 sarjin long, 1 arshin 10 vershok wide at the top and 1.5 arshin deep on the sides could sail downstream with 10 people [1, P.37]. S. Mazov notes that in the mid-1880s at the Pattakesar pass there were 2 Afghan boats that could carry 200 sheep at a time [2, P.27].

The number of ships and boats on the crossings depended on the needs of the population at each crossing and the amount of cargo in the caravan movement. In crossings where densely populated settlements and major caravan routes crossed, shipowners who transported passengers and cargo benefited greatly.

The crossings were always under state control. Payments and fees were different everywhere, they were set depending on the previous regulations or the wishes of the beks. However, archival sources from the late 19th century record that the price for transporting goods and passengers on the crossings was set by the emir of Bukhara, the kushbegi, and it was controlled. For passing through the crossing, the boatmen received a fee of 15 ts from each person, 5 ts from sheep and goats, and 15 ts from horses, camels, and cattle [4]. This is also confirmed by Captain Bykov. He noted that a single price was set for the transportation of passengers and goods on all crossings in the Bukhara emirate: 20 ts for a camel or horse, 10 ts for a donkey, 5 ts for a passenger, and 2 rubles for 100 sheep [1, P.4-5].

Sources of this period, reports of Russian military personnel indicate the cost of transporting passengers and cargo differently at different times and crossings .

For example, according to the memoirs of Captain Arkhipov, who conducted observation work in the country in the 1880s, the fee for boat passage through crossings was a quarter (1/4) coin per passenger, half a coin per donkey, 1 coin per cart, and 1 coin per horse and camel [5, P.195]. Another Russian military report notes that at the Kalif crossing, a loaded camel was charged 1 Bukhara coin or 20 Russian coins, a loaded horse was charged half a coin, and an unladen horse was charged 6.5 Russian coins or 20 Bukhara coins; at the Chochkaguzar crossing, 1 coin was charged for horses and camels, half a coin for a donkey, and 16 checks per passenger, that is, 6.5 coins [6, P.80].

The fare on the passes between the Bukhara and Khiva Khanates was as follows: 30-35 coins for a loaded camel, 20-23.5 coins for a loaded horse and a mounted passenger, 5-10 coins for small livestock, 20 coins for each 16 pounds of cargo. It follows that the cost of transporting 500 pounds of cargo through the pass was from 6 rubles 25 coins to 7 rubles 35 coins. In another pass, Karki, the following fare was set for the transportation of passengers and cargo: 20-23.5 coins for a loaded camel, 15 coins for an unladen one, 10-15 coins for a horse, 3-5 coins for a donkey, 2 coins for a passenger, and 3 coins for each batman of cargo [7, P.11,20].

In the late 1890s, the Chardzhou pass charged 8 pul (2-2.1 coins) for each person, 1 coins (16-17 coins) for a horse passenger, 1 coins (16-17 coins) for a camel, and 16 pul (4 coins) for a donkey. The Chochkaguzar pass charged 5 pul (1.2 coins) for each person , 1.25 coins (1 coins and 4 coins) for a horse and camel, and 40 pul (10 coins) for a donkey. The Akburun pass charged 1 coins (16-17 coins) for a horse and camel, and the fee was different if the load was loaded. A higher price was set for wool and karakul, and a lower price for grain. During the Karki Pass, each person was charged 8 coins (2 coins) or more, and at least 1 coin (16-17 coins) for a loaded horse [3, P.57-58] .

At the end of the 19th century, ferries were also used on the lower Amu Darya crossings, especially on the Amu Darya section. The following prices were set for crossing the crossing: 1 person – 2.5 coins, horse – 10 coins, laden horse – 15 coins, camel – 10 coins, laden camel – 20 coins, donkey – 5 coins, laden donkey – 8 coins, cattle – 5 coins, small livestock – 2.5 coins [8].

As noted above, control over the Bukhara crossings was carried out by beks. The amount of the "duty" collected on goods transported along the river during this period was also not uniform: mainly 1 coins (15 coins) was collected for a load loaded on one camel, 7 coins for 100 sheep [9, P.8]. The dues were usually divided equally



between Afghans and Bukharas. In particular, at the beginning of the 20th century, the dues for local boats on the crossings of the Bukhara Emirate were as follows: for a passenger – 8 pul (2 coins), for a horse passenger – 15 coins, for a camel – 15 coins, for cattle – 6 pul (1.5 coins), for a donkey – from 16 to 40 pul (4-10 coins) [10, P.56-57].

the beks received a good income from the toll collection at the crossings, they did not pay attention to improving the conditions at the crossings. This negatively affected the movement of goods and passengers. For example, small boats could travel along the Panj River from the village of Saray, but freight transport was still carried out by rafts consisting of gupsars. This method was dangerous for people and goods. Passengers were charged the same fee for boats and gupsars at the crossing [9, P.8].

Captain Bikov studied the passes of Qabadiyon, Pattakesar, Sho'rab, Cho'chkaguzar, Karakamar, Kalif, Khoja Salor, Oqqum, Khatab, Karki, and Khoja Chambaz, and divided them into three categories based on their importance in trade relations:

– The first category includes the following passes that connect the northern and southern cultural regions of the Amu Darya basin: Qabadian, Pattakesar, Shorab, and Chochkaguzar. They are located on the roads leading to northern Afghanistan.

– The second category includes the following crossings located on ancient trade routes: Chardzhou, Kalif, and Karki. The cities of Bukhara were connected to Afghanistan and Kabul through Kalif, and to Maymana, Herat, and Kandahar through Karki.

– The third category includes the remaining settlements, which mainly met the needs of the local population [1, P.1-2].

CONCLUSION. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Amu Darya crossings, despite their simple use, became important in the region's internal and external relations. This is because the control of the region's growing internal and external trade relations, the transportation of rich raw materials from the Amu Darya regions, and the protection of the borders with Afghanistan directly depended on the Amu Darya waterway and crossings. As a result of the establishment of a single customs system (line) along the Amu Darya on the border of the Bukhara Emirate and Afghanistan, The trade of the regional states, including the Amu Darya River crossings, was subordinated to the interests of the Russian Empire.

REFERENCES:

1. Kapitan Bikov. Oчерk pereprav cherez reku Amudari (rekognossirovka 3- Zapadno-Sibirskogo Lineynogo batalyona Shtabskapitana Bikova). – Tashkent, 1879. – 83 s.
2. Mazov S. Vostochnaya Buxara, Badaxshan i severniy Afganistan // Turkestanskiy sbornik. Tom 404. – SPb., 1883. – S. 5-26.
3. Grulev M.V. Nekotoriye geografiko – statisticheskiye danniyе, otnosyashiyesya k uchastkam Amu-Dari mejdu Chordjuyem i Patta-Kissarom // Izvestiya Turkestanskogo otdela russkogo geograficheskogo obshestva. Tom 2, Vipusk I. – SPb., 1900. – S. 5-87.
4. NA Uz, I-126-Fund, List 1, Case 1096, Sheet 1; Same Fund and List. Case 1088, Sheets 1-2.
5. Kapitan Arxipov. Voyennaya rekognossirovka ravninnoy chasti Buxarskogo xanstva, proizvedennaya v 1883 g. // Sbornik geograficheskix, topograficheskix i statisticheskix materialov po Azii. Vipusk X.- SPb., 1884. – S. 171-238.
6. Ashurovich A.S. The role of the Amudarya in trade relations of the Emirate of Bukhara (based on the documents of the National archive of Uzbekistan) //Current Research Journal of History. – 2023. – T. 4. – №. 09. – C. 9-15.
7. Kapitan Gintillo. Svedeniya po intendantskiya chasti, sobranniye v Buxare // Sbornik geograficheskix, topograficheskix i statisticheskix materialov po Azii. Vipusk XXI. – SPb., 1886. – S. 1-53.
8. NA Uz, I-7-fund, list 1, case 163, sheet 31.
9. Remez I.A. Vneshnyaya torgovlya Buxari do mirovoy voyni. – Tashkent: SSU Turkrespubliki, 1922. –72 s., pril. – 45 s.
10. Logofet D.N. Buxarskoye xanstvo pod russkim protektoratom. Tom II. – SPb.: V.Berezovskiy, 1911. – 354 c.
11. Allamuratov Sh.A. Amudaryo suv yo'li va kechuvlari tarixi (XIX-XX asr boshlari). Monografiya. – Toshkent: – "Innovatsiya-Ziyo", 2023. – 220 b.
12. Ashurovich A. S. Military-strategic goals of the Russian Empire on the Amu Darya //American Journal of Language, Literacy and Learning in STEM Education (2993-2769). – 2023. – T. 1. – №. 7. – C. 151-155.
13. Allamuratov S. Buxoro amirligining ichki savdo-tranzit aloqalarida Amudaryo suv yo'lining o'rni //Ижтимоий-гуманитар фанларнинг долзарб муаммолари Актуальные проблемы



World Bulletin of Social Sciences (WBSS)

Available Online at: <https://www.scholarexpress.net>

Vol. 57, April 2026

ISSN: 2749-361X

социально-гуманитарных наук Actual
Problems of Humanities and Social Sciences. –
2025. – Т. 5. – №. 9s. – С. 44-49.

14. Allamuratov S. Amudaryo suv yo 'li bo 'ylab
mintaqa davlatlarining savdo va tranzit aloqalari
//«ACTA NUUZ». – 2025. – Т. 1. – №. 1.5. 1. –
С. 8-11.

15. Allamuratov S. Amudaryo suv yo 'lining
shakllanishiga doir ayrim mulohazalar
//Tamaddun nuri jurnali Учредители:"
Tafakkur-Tamaddun" LLC. – 2024. – Т. 11. –
№. 62. – С. 84-86.