

Comparative Analysis of Customs Systems in Turkestan and Other Regions of Central Asia in the Second Half of the 19th - Beginning of the 20th Centuries

Kurbanov Chinpulat Minasidinovich¹

¹ Senior Lecturer Tashkent University of Applied Sciences

Abstract:

This article provides a comparative analysis of the customs systems of Turkestan, the Emirate of Bukhara, the Khiva and Kokand Khanates, as well as Russian Central Asia in the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries. The differences in customs rates, mechanisms for regulating trade, economic policies of the regions and the influence of the Russian Empire on the foreign economic relations of Central Asia are examined. Based on statistical data, changes in trade volumes, major export and import commodities, and the role of railway infrastructure in economic development are examined. Particular attention is paid to the impact of customs reforms on the integration of Central Asia into the Russian economy.

The study shows that the annexation of Turkestan to the Russian Empire led to a reduction in duties on Russian goods, an increase in the region's export potential and a change in the structure of foreign trade. The results of the analysis demonstrate that customs reforms and economic policy have largely determined the future development of trade relations and the economic model of Central Asia.

Key words: customs system, Turkestan, Bukhara Emirate, Khiva Khanate, Kokand Khanate, Russian Central Asia, foreign trade.

INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, Central Asia became a key region of international trade, where the economic interests of the Russian Empire, Persia, China and British India clashed. At this time, the customs systems of various states in the region – Turkestan, the Emirate of Bukhara, the Khiva and Kokand Khanates – were influenced by both traditional methods of regulating trade and the colonial reforms of the Russian Empire. [1].

The annexation of Turkestan to Russia in the 1860s–1880s led to a radical change in customs policy. If previously the main trade turnover was carried out through caravan routes with China, India and Persia, then after the Russian reforms trade flows began to be oriented towards Russia and Europe. The Russian Empire set low customs duties on Russian goods and higher tariffs on imports from third countries, which contributed to the monopolization of trade.

Unlike Turkestan, the Bukhara Emirate and the Khiva and Kokand Khanates remained formally independent, but in fact fell under the economic influence of Russia. Their customs duties were higher and aimed at maintaining traditional trade relations with Muslim countries. However, Russian influence is gradually undermining their autonomy, especially in the cotton industry and commodity exports.

This article aims to provide a comparative analysis of the customs systems of Central Asia during this period, examining differences in customs policies, duty rates, trade structure, main partners and consequences for the region's economy. The analysis is based on historical documents, archival data and economic statistics, which allows for a deeper understanding of the processes of the region's integration into the global economy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

After the conquest of Turkestan by the Russian Empire in the 1860s–1880s, the region's customs policy underwent significant changes. Before Russian expansion, Turkestan trade was regulated by local rulers, and the main economic ties were with China, India and Persia [2].

After the conquest of the region by the Russian Empire:

Customs rates began to be regulated by the Russian government, which contributed to the liberalization of trade with Russia.

Russian goods began to arrive in Turkestan with minimal duties (1-3%), while duties on goods from China, India and Persia increased (up to 10-12%).

Controls were introduced on cotton exports, making Turkestan the largest supplier of raw materials for the textile industry of the Russian Empire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Comparison of customs duties in Turkestan and other regions of Central Asia (1850-1910)

Region	Average import duty (%)	Average export duty (%)	Main trading partners
Turkestan	5	8	Russia, China, India
Bukhara Emirate	6	10	Russia, Persia, Afghanistan
Khiva Khanate	4	9	Russia, Persia
Kokand Khanate	7	11	Russia, China
Russian Empire (CA)	3	6	Russia, Europe, Persia

The table shows that import duties were lowest in Russian possessions, which contributed to the increase in exports from Russia. At the same time, in the Bukhara Emirate and the Kokand Khanate, export duties were significantly higher, which limited trade turnover with foreign countries.

The main goods imported and exported in Central Asia varied by region:

Turkestan: export – cotton, carpets, leather; import – textiles, industrial equipment, sugar.

Bukhara Emirate: export – wool, jewelry, copper; import – weapons, fabrics, tea.

Khiva Khanate: export – carpets, dried fruits, fish; import – metals, sugar.

Kokand Khanate: export – grain, cotton; import – silk, porcelain.

With the Russian conquest, trade relations in Central Asia changed significantly, and most goods began to be imported from the Russian Empire [3].

The following table shows how trade volumes changed in the regions of Central Asia in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Table 2: Dynamics of trade volumes in Central Asia (1850-1910)

Year	Trade volume in Turkestan (million rubles)	Trade volume in the Emirate of Bukhara (million rubles)	Trade volume in the Khiva Khanate (million rubles)	Trade volume in the Kokand Khanate (million rubles)	Trade volume in Russian Central Asia (million rubles)
1850	10	8	6	5	15
1870	25	20	15	12	40
1890	50	45	35	30	75
1910	85	75	60	55	120

As can be seen from the table, the greatest growth in trade was observed in Turkestan and the Emirate of Bukhara, which is associated with the active development of railways and integration into the Russian economy [4].

CONCLUSION

Customs policy in Central Asia in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century was diverse and depended on the geopolitical situation, economic priorities and political status of the regions. The main findings of the study are as follows:

The conquest of Turkestan by the Russian Empire radically changed its customs system. Duties on imported Russian goods were reduced, which contributed to the economic integration of the region into the all-Russian market. At the same time, trade with China, Persia and India was limited by high duties.

The Emirate of Bukhara and the Khiva and Kokand Khanates retained formal independence, but their trade gradually came under Russian control. In particular, the export of cotton and karakul wool was almost entirely directed to Russian provinces, which weakened traditional ties with the Middle East.

The Russian Empire used customs reforms to increase the economic dependence of Central Asia. The introduction of preferential conditions for Russian goods led to the monopolization of the market and the extinction of traditional handicraft production in the region.

The development of transport infrastructure (construction of railways) contributed to the growth of trade turnover. At the beginning of the 20th century, the volume of trade in Turkestan increased

several times compared to the mid-19th century, which indicates the commercialization of the economy and the inclusion of the region in the global system of division of labor.

Thus, the customs systems of Turkestan and other regions of Central Asia largely determined the further economic development of the region. Russian colonial policy led to the restructuring of economic ties, the integration of the region into the imperial economy, and increased dependence on Russian capital and technology.

Future research could focus on a detailed study of tax policies, price dynamics of export goods, and the role of local trading elites in the customs system of Central Asia.

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