LAND AND WATER REFORM IN 1925-1929 AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE IN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE OF FERGHANA REGION

**Abstract:** Based on scientific, historical and archival sources, the author of the article shows the historical picture of the land-water reform carried out in 1926-1929 and the state of irrigated agriculture in the Ferghana region. And also the article analyzes the essence of the socio-economic measures undertaken by the Soviet government on the development of irrigated agriculture in the valley.

**Key words:** Ferghana Valley, agriculture, irrigation, riverbed, aqueduct, teapot, sharecropper, ketmen, shovel, sickle, cubic meter, irrigation, land reclamation, daker, canal, dekhan, construction, reform, government, area, wakuf lands, collective farm, tithe, large tenure, usurer, merchant, allotment.

**Language:** English


**Scopus ASCC:** 1100.

**Research methods.**

Indeed, in the mid-20s of the 20th century, there was an economic inequality in the rural areas of Uzbekistan that has developed for thousands of years. In Ferghana region, for example, 82.3% of irrigated land is owned by large landowners, and 42.6% by medium-sized dekhan farms. Farmers and day laborers worked on these lands on the basis of a mutual agreement, cultivated agricultural crops [2, p.46]. Farmers are farmers who have little or no land, who, by mutual agreement with the landowner, rent and cultivate some land for the future harvest.

During the period under review, the main tools of dekhan farms were plow, cotton, hoe and sickle, and even the simplest primitive labor tools were not available to all dekhan farms. For example, 35.2% of dekhan farms in the Ferghana region did not have their own plow [3, p.56]. This percentage is even higher in a number of volts in the province. For example, 91.2% of dekhan farms in Tulkiabad village of Balykchi volcano, 76.3% of dekhan farms in Kumtepa village, and 66.4% of Khodjabad village did not have their own plots [4, p.61].

Indeed, large landowners, property owners, traders, and representatives of religious institutions,
who own land, labor, and animals in their hands, have begun to use them based on their material interests. Another important aspect of land and water reform is that large landowners do not use their own land suitable for farming, despite the high demand for land by farmers in the region. Examples of this are first of all objective and subjective reasons, such as the lack of confidence in Soviet policy and instability in the political situation in the valley. This attitude of the landowners in relation to the land suitable for cultivation, of course, was, to a certain extent, a negative factor in the socio-economic development of the Fergana region, where there was a large amount of cheap labor resources for the densely populated and in need of cultivated land.

In the course of land and water reform, the Soviet government set the following goals: First, to abolish the centuries-old rules of land and water use, and secondly, to confiscate large property in the form of private property, large property traders and religious institutions, and, thirdly, confiscate some of the confiscated land. Fourth, the creation of dehkan collective farms of relatively high yields, and the fifth, full-fledged economic activity of collective farms. Sixthly, to carry out the necessary organizational work for the development of the road infrastructure, including the development of new lands and agricultural turnover [4, p.89].

In the course of land and water reform, over 1,500 farms, including large landowners, traders, and foundations of religious institutions throughout the Uzbek SSR, were confiscated and seized from the state [5, p.235]. The government has set up split funds at the expense of confiscated new farmland. In the Fergana region alone, 143,100 hectares of irrigated land were cultivated. Out of these funds, only 10% of small dehkan farms provided with land are provided with various tools of labor, livestock [6, p.34]. Dehkan farms with individual land allotted land on average 2 deciatin [7, p.61].

**Research results.**

Taking into account the inability of land-less, low-income farms to meet the demand for land due to land confiscated by the state during land and water reform, the Soviet government also planned to reimburse the landowners for their newly acquired agricultural land. One of the measures undertaken in the Fergana region during the period under review was the construction and commissioning of an irrigation facility now known as the Ahunboboev Canal.

In December 1925, Yuldash Akhunboboev, chairman of the Uzbek SSR, proposed to withdraw water from the central Fergana desert between northern Kuva and Shahrikhon by expanding and extending the river leading to Asaka, built in the 60s of the 19th century [8, p.6]. At this point, it is appropriate to give some insight into the history of the saint Jesus and the history of the channel he has created. Jesus was a learned scholar, entrepreneur, financier of his time. For a time he was in charge of the financial institution of the khanate during the period of Khudoyarkhan Kokand. During the construction of the canal, Jesus was governor of Saint Shahrihan. The purpose of the canal was to minimize the risk of floods in the spring and summer months of Shahrihonsy for Asaka and to cultivate new farmland along the canal [9, p.66].

On January 9, 1926, excavations were started on the canal under the canal to be constructed by KN Sinyavskiy, a well-known irrigation engineer in the Fergana Valley. Landless, chamber farmers of the region are actively involved in the construction of this canal, hoping to have their land. Initially, 150 people were involved in soil works at the canal, and 1,000 by January 15, and by the end of January, about 3,000 dehkans were present [10, p.174]. In accordance with this amount, the rate of excavation was initially estimated at one cubic meter per cubic meter, followed by two cubic meters by the end of January and three meters at the end of January.

By the end of February 1926, work on the expansion and extension of the Sacred Canal was completed. Subsequently, a new canal has been dug for irrigation of the Yazan-Javanese Dash of the Central Fergana Desert. A total of 305 cubic meters of soil has been excavated at the channel. The total length of the canal was 50 km [11, p.314], with 19 bridges, 16 waterways, four dukes, 6 reinforced concrete waterfalls and other small hydro structures. The government of the Uzbek SSR allocated 440 thousand rubles for the construction of the canal [12, p.2]. For the first time the canal water was used to irrigate 7,500 hectares of new land in the Central Fergana Desert. The construction of the canal, in turn, has begun a new phase in the history of irrigated agriculture in the Fergana Valley, namely the development of protected areas of the Central Fergana Desert. With the construction of the canal, part of the newly acquired land was distributed to poor dehkan farms of 1.78 desyatinas [7, p.61].

After land and water reform, the social structure of the rural population in Fergana was changed. For example, after land and water reform, the number of low-income dehkan farms has tripled. The number of dehkan farms with 1-4 land plots in the region increased by 6 times.

As a result of the reform, large-scale farms in Fergana region and the farms of large investors and traders, who do not directly own land but own certain land, were seized and liquidated for the state benefit. Water resources and irrigation facilities of the region are owned by the state. In the meantime, it should be noted that most of the methods of land and water reform have been implemented through violence and coercion. This situation caused serious confrontation among rural peasants. At the last stage of the reform,
the situation was compounded by the need for dehkan farms to abandon their land shares and to voluntarily transfer them to kolkhozes instead of providing them with livelihoods, livestock, labor, and loans. A total of 522 collective farms were established in the Ferghana region during land and water reform. This was the case with the establishment of state-owned collective farms [4, p.236].

The kolkhozes formed during this period were mainly of laborers and landless farmers who united small farms. One kolkhoz is made up of 10-15 dehkan farms with an average of 28.8 decyats. In some areas land owned by the collective farms was even smaller. For example, in 1926 there were 116 kolkhozes in Andizhan district with an average land area of 10 decy [4, p.285].

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The value of the goods produced by the kolkhozes during the economic year was not enough to feed their members and their families. Therefore, most collective farms would be forced to feed their members with their fixed assets.

The disadvantages of the creation of collective farms and the economic inadequacy of their material resources were also reflected in their adverse impact on their production capacity. The majority of collective farms established in the Ferghana region in 1926-1929 had very low rates of cotton production compared to individual small farms. In 1928, only 8,411 tons of raw cotton had to be delivered under a contract with the Cotton Committee. However, in practice collective farms produce only 4,431 tons of raw cotton and give half of the cotton specified in the contract. During the same period, individual dehkan farms fulfilled their obligations to supply the raw cotton specified in the contract with the cotton committee by 92% [13, p.44].

**Conclusion.**

To sum up, the land reform carried out by the Soviet government in 1925-1929 was a logical continuation of the “new economic policy” of 1921 and the first land reform in 1921-1922. To end social and economic relations with water, to achieve socialist economic relations in every possible way in the agrarian sphere of economic life. Before the Soviet government ended its land reform, by 1929 mass dehumanization of peasant farms with a single indicator of economic profitability, by introducing a policy of collective collectivization in the region, violated the balance of agriculture in the region. began to form the cotton monopoly as a raw material base.

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