

SOI: [1.1/TAS](#) DOI: [10.15863/TAS](#)

**International Scientific Journal
Theoretical & Applied Science**

p-ISSN: 2308-4944 (print) e-ISSN: 2409-0085 (online)

Year: 2025 Issue: 05 Volume: 145

Received: 05.05.2025
Accepted/Published: 30.05.2025 <https://T-Science.org>

Issue

Article



Arislanbay Otebaevich Gulimbetov
Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan
Doctoral candidate of the Karakalpak Research Institute of Humanities.
Republic of Karakalpakstan, Nukus city

TRADE CENTERS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE LOWER REACHES OF THE AMU DARYA RIVER IN THE LATE 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

Abstract: This article is dedicated to the study of the trade centers of the peoples of the Lower Amu Darya region at the end of the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries. This refers to the formation of trade centers and markets in the territory of Karakalpakstan as a result of the internal and external trade and economic relations of the peoples of Central Asia after its conquest by the Russian Empire, as well as the import of local and foreign goods to these markets. In the process of studying the topic, the trade centers in the territory of Karakalpakstan, such as Chimbay, Shurakhan, Petro-Aleksandrovsky (Turtkul), Khojeyli, Kungrad, and later established trade centers such as Sheikh-Abbaz-Vali, Biy-Bazar, Saribiy, were analyzed.

Key words: trade, Amu Darya, Chimbay, Shurakhan, Khojeyli, Kungrad, commodity, market, short market, long market, fish, carp, sturgeon, cotton, cloth.

Language: English

Citation: Gulimbetov, A.O. (2025). Trade centers of the peoples of the lower reaches of the Amu Darya river in the late 19th - early 20th centuries. *ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science*, 05 (145), 58-61.

Soi: <https://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS-05-145-12> **Doi:**  <https://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2025.05.145.12>

Scopus ASCC: 1200.

Introduction

As we know from history, the development of trade, the formation of trading spaces, and domestic and foreign trade relations played a significant role in economic development, improving the living standards of the population, and strengthening political and cultural ties and friendship between peoples.

The peoples living here maintained close trade and economic ties with the peoples living in the neighboring region. At the same time, their political and cultural development grew. As a result, an opportunity arose for the growth of the population's standard of living and the expansion of their worldview.

Trade relations were carried out through land and water routes. Therefore, special attention was paid to the roads and the caravan leaders. From a young age, they encouraged young people to learn science and foreign languages. Along these roads, caravanserais and settlements appeared, which later

developed into trading places. Merchants from Tatar, Armenian, Khiva, Bukhara, and other regions came and traded in the cities of our region.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, cities on the left bank of the Amu Darya, such as Khojeyli and on the right bank, Chimbay, Petro-Aleksandrovsk (To'rtko'l), Shabboz, Biybozor, Saribiy, Nazarxon, and Nukus, held significant trade importance for the Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Turkmens. At the beginning of the 20th century, these mentioned market points became centers not only for local peoples - Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, Turkmens, and Kazakhs, but also for Russian merchants. Among them, the cities of Chimbay, Petr-Alexandrovsk, Khojeyli, and Kungrad were the largest trade centers. For example, due to the passage of land and water routes through the territory of the city of Chimbay during this period, it became one of the main trade centers of the Amu Darya region, becoming a trade center for Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and others. In 1907, Chimbay, along with its alfalfa seeds, supplied carp, pike perch,

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИЦ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

and sturgeon to the United States of America and German markets. It is known that at that time, there were several resellers and manufacturers in Chimbay connected with large Western European trading firms [1, p. 6].

During this period, fish trade also flourished in the Amu Darya region. Fish markets were held in Kungrad, Chimbay, Kilich city in Davqara, and Khojeyli. Every winter, until the Amu Darya froze, 150 to 300 boats loaded with fish were sent from Davqara in the delta to Charjou. Mainly carp, carp, pike perch, and a large quantity of sturgeon were sent. Sometimes, in winter, fish were loaded onto camels and sent to Bukhara.

Merchants who came from the cities here would buy fish wholesale. For example, in a letter sent by the head of the Amu Darya Department to the Khan of Khiva in August 1908, Uralsk residents Konstantin Kupryakhin and Stepan Volnov, residing in Petro-Aleksandrovsk, purchased 80 poods of lightly salted fish, 78 poods of sturgeon fish, and 3 poods of sturgeon roe from a place called Samankol in Chimbay. After some time, news arrived that the hired ships had sunk with their cargo near Lausanne. However, when Kupryakhin and Volnov verified this, they discovered that the boat had not sunk completely, that a man named Akhmet had taken 102 fish to his boat, and that he had sold a pood to Armenian Nikolay Babayev for 3 rubles 80 kopeks, and in addition, he had sold 25 pieces of sturgeon in Mang'it. The victims claim that the Khodjeyli bekligi refused their request to arrest the perpetrators. Regarding this, the head of the Amu Darya Department requested the Khan of Khiva to review the matter according to the laws of Khiva and to recover 4530 rubles, which were the value of the fish, and 470 rubles, which were given as collateral, from Kaljan and Qulmamed, who were guilty of plundering the fish [2, p. 23].

Such situations are common in the trade sector, but they do not negatively impact trade development. For example, the population of Chimbay reached 2,619 between 1912 and 1913, becoming the trade center of nine districts. In the autumn, nearly 2,000 people came to the Chimbay market for trade, and the market turnover reached 30,000 rubles. There were about 80 manufacturing and 100 bakeries, 10 bakeries, and 10 yogurt and milk shops here. By this time, Chimbay had become a center for the wholesale of alfalfa seeds, cotton, and livestock, connecting with agents of major European firms. For example, livestock products such as leather, karakul, oil, and wool were exported and sold. Every year, 3000 poods of butter were exported and sold from the Chimbay district alone [3, p. 11].

The second most important trade center of the Karakalpaks was the city of Petro-Alexandrovsk, whose population reached 2,659 in 1914. At the beginning of the 20th century, a significant portion of

exported and imported goods passed through Petro-Alexandrovsk. The city of Petro-Alexandrovsk was not only a trade center but also an administrative center of the Amu Darya Department. Because the administrative institutions of the Amu Darya Department were located in this city. In the city, merchant Manuilov owned cotton ginning, beer, soap, and butter factories, as well as several small businesses and craft workshops. During this period, the trade turnover of the Petro-Alexandrovsky market amounted to 5,000 rubles per day, less than the trade turnover of the Chimboy market [4, p. 152].

In addition, trade centers such as the Shurakhan Market, Shayx-Abboz-Vali, Biy-Bozor, and Saribiy were established in the Amu Darya region. For example, engaging in the chit trade at Shabboz and Biy-bozor, the trade turnover in 1916 was 18,000 rubles, while the profit was 2,160 rubles. In 1910, the trade turnover of the markets in the Shurakhan district was as follows. In Petro-Alexandrovsk - 700 thousand rubles, in Sheikh-Abbaz-Valid - 400 thousand rubles, in Biy-Bazar - 200 thousand rubles, in Saribiy - 200 thousand rubles. In the Chimboy district, marketplaces were located in Nazarxon, Nukus, and Chimboy. [36-37]. According to data from 1915-1916, four merchants with financial turnover ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 rubles, 22 merchants with turnover from 5,000 to 10,000 rubles, and 90 merchants with turnover from 2,000 to 5,000 rubles traded in the city of Chimboy. Among them was Ubaydulla Kamalov, a textile merchant, who maintained contact with major Orenburg merchants and trading firms. [6, p. 57-58].

According to statistical data from the Amu Darya Department on annual trade and commodity turnover as of January 1, 1886, 290 tons were exported to Petro-Aleksandrovsk (Turtkul), 160 tons to Shurakhan, 145 tons to Shayx-Abboz-Vali, and 65 tons to Biy-Bozor, totaling 660 tons. From the Chimboy district itself, goods worth 80,669 rubles were brought in, and goods worth 60,588 rubles were taken out or exported to foreign markets [7, p. 16-18].

During this period, waterways played a significant role in the foreign trade relations of the trade centers of the Amu Darya region. After the conquest of Central Asia by the Russian Empire, the Amu Darya Flotilla was formed to transport the raw materials from there to Russian territories. The ships of the Amu Darya flotilla transported agricultural products from the coastal regions to Russia, while importing industrial goods from Russia to the local markets. For example, in 1914, the ships of the Amu Darya flotilla transported 45,7620 poods of cargo, including 21,937 poods of raw cotton, 1,627 poods of leather, 250 poods of karakul pelts, 1,679 poods of sheepskin, 5,213 poods of flax seeds, 3,391 poods of wool, 408 poods of silk cocoons, and other cargoes. Russia was the main consumer of these goods. From Russia, 252 poods of agricultural implements, 16,538

Impact Factor:

ISRA (India) = 6.317
ISI (Dubai, UAE) = 1.582
GIF (Australia) = 0.564
JIF = 1.500

SIS (USA) = 0.912
ПИИЦ (Russia) = 0.191
ESJI (KZ) = 8.100
SJIF (Morocco) = 7.184

ICV (Poland) = 6.630
PIF (India) = 1.940
IBI (India) = 4.260
OAJI (USA) = 0.350

poods of kerosene, 27,363 poods of forest materials, 2,292 poods of various manufactures, 15,383 poods of sugar, and other goods were imported to the Bukhara, Khiva, and Amu Darya regions [8, p. 64].

The trade centers of the Khiva Karakalpaks were Kungrad, Khojeyli, Old Urgench, and Yangi-qal'a (the Shumanay bekstvo). People from the surrounding area would come to the market twice a week to trade. That is, the market on the third day of the week was called the "short market," and the market on the seventh day of the week was called the "long market" [9, p. 221].

Another major city of the Lower Amu Darya region during this period was Khojeyli. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, until 1920, the city of Khojeyli was part of the Khiva Khanate and served as an administrative, trade, craft, and cultural center on the left bank of the Amu Darya River. 23]. The city of Khojeyli is known for its large market, where not only local people, but also people on the right bank of the Amu Darya, engaged in livestock trade, came to trade. The city of Khojeyli holds a special place in trade relations with neighboring regions, exporting hides, horses, agricultural products, fish, and other goods to foreign markets. They were sent to the fairs of Nizhny Novgorod and Moscow. Merchants from Tatar, Armenian, Khiva, Bukhara, and other regions traded in the cities of our region.

In Khojeyli, trade in agricultural and livestock products was held twice a week in markets. On the left bank of the Amu Darya, the Khodjayli market was not only one of the most bustling markets but also a major trading center. In the markets, agricultural products passed through the hands of farmers and herders and were concentrated in the hands of large traders. Later, before being exported from the region to the foreign market, it was collected in a large warehouse and sent through wholesale trade. It is known that transport routes play an important role in the economic development of Karakalpakstan, including the city of Khojeyli. In this direction, the Nukus-Khojeyli-Kungrad roads, connecting Khojeyli with other cities, served as the main internal communication routes [11, p. 76].

Valuable information is also provided in the scientific works of Academician S. Kamalov regarding the existence of roads connecting Khojeyli's central market and neighboring regions during this period. He writes that, along with other cities, there was also a large fish market in the city of Khojeyli. According to Russian researchers, 150-300 boats filled with fish were sent from Dawqara to Charjaw annually during the winter until the Amu Darya's water froze. Most of them were carp, catfish, and other fish species. Sometimes, in winter, camels were sent with fish to Bukhara. Furthermore, boatmen passed down from father to son from ancient times served at the Amu Darya crossing connecting Khojeyli with

Nukus. The work of the boatmen, who distributed the rafts, was especially difficult. Ivan Letnikov, a Kazak who was held captive in Khiva, says that 5 people brought 400 pounds of cargo from Kungrad to Khojalik in 6 days. Information about this is also provided in the works of Kaulbars. There were also caravan routes connecting Xo'jayli, Old Urgench, Kungrad, and other cities in the Khiva Khanate [12, p. 194, 208].

Many Russian travelers, scientists, and geographers who visited the city of Khojeyli at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, including Statkevich in 1889, Taranova in 1885, Maeva in 1873, M. Gahana and Landstala in 1882, Mirza Riza Kuli in 1875, Mirza Abdurakhman and A.N. Samoylovich in 1908, and Grichfeldler in 1903, provided information about the city. Their written materials are of great importance for the scientific understanding of the socio-economic and cultural significance of Khojeyli as a trade and administrative center on the banks of the Amu Darya. For example, the Russian Turkologist A.N. Samoylovich visited the Xo'jayli market in 1908 and reported purchasing souvenir knives, manuscripts, "Xorazmnoma," and "Asxon-Sheikh or Korkut Ota" there [13, p. 31].

One of the major trade and cultural centers in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya is the city of Kungrad, which has been conducting cultural and trade relations with the peoples of Kazakhstan, Russia, and the Caucasus since ancient times along the old highway passing through the Ustyurt Plateau. Because a caravan route connecting the areas on the left bank of Karakalpakstan with the nomadic households of the Ustyurt Plateau passed through Kungrad, it became a trade center in the north, and various tribes - Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tatars, and Turkmens - lived here. [14, p. 42-43].

The first market for ambassadors, merchants, and other travelers from European countries was the city of Qo'ng'iro't, through which they traveled to major Central Asian trade centers such as Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand, and others. In turn, artisans and merchants from the city of Qo'ng'iro't traveled to Russia, especially to the cities of the Urals and the Volga region, to conduct trade. Furthermore, the city of Qo'ng'iro't has been of great importance for the mutual trade, economic, and cultural friendship of the local peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. The local population transported fish, cotton, and livestock products, including leather, wool, butter, and other goods, across the Amu Darya by ship, as well as by land routes and by cart caravans, to the cities of Old Urgench and Khiva. On their way back, they brought back textile products such as satin, calico, calico, and other goods. This situation transformed the city of Kungrad into a major center of trade and industry [15, p. 11]. According to information from that period, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, and Uzbeks exported cotton, dried fruits, rice, and fur coats to Russia through the

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИИ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

Kungrad market. In turn, metal tools and equipment, fabrics like calico, floral scarves, and leather goods were imported from Russia. This market in Kungrad was called the "Russian Market." Because this market played an important role in the Khiva Khanate's trade with Russia, especially in land trade. [16, p. 69-72].

Thus, as we have seen above, the development of trade, domestic and foreign trade relations, created the opportunity for the emergence of well-known trade centers of that time.

Today, the scientific study of trade centers with their own rich historical path in the development of our country, as well as the sphere of trade and entrepreneurship here, and at the same time the creation of artistic works, is of great importance in understanding our past history, thereby comprehensively enriching our thinking. As we saw above, every city and shopping center plays a significant role in studying this area. Since ancient times, the cities of Kung'it, Khojeyli, Kipchak, Mang'it, and To'rtkul, situated in a convenient

location, have fostered the development of trade and, through this, the growth of local merchants and entrepreneurs.

In conclusion, after the conquest of Karakalpakstan by the Russian Empire, the influx of Russian goods into these lands, the construction of new trade routes, and the development of trade led to the emergence of new settlements and the formation of trade centers in the territory of Karakalpakstan. This, in turn, created an opportunity for the development of trade, economic, and cultural ties with neighboring peoples, in cooperation with the peoples living here.

Therefore, in the future, if we conduct research on the history of trade and entrepreneurship in the shopping centers along the Lower Amu Darya River based on archival data and recollections of industry workers, and publish the results in print, we will make a great contribution to a deeper understanding of our history.

References:

1. Abdullaev, B. (1995). *Shimbay qalasini keshegi tariyxi, bugingi ham keleshektegi rawajlanishi haqqida*. Tezisi dokladov nauchno-prakticheskoy konferensii «ShAXTEMIR - ChIMBAY». (p.6). Nukus.
2. (n.d.). *National Archives of Uzbekistan*, fund - I-125, inventory - 1, file - 295, 23 p.
3. Ubbiniyazov, J. (1972). *Qaraqalpaqstan XX asirdi basinda*. (p.11). Nókis: «Qaraqalpaqstan» baspası.
4. Qosbergenov, R.Q. (1972). *Qaraqalpaqstanni Rossiya qosilishi*. (p.152). Nókis: «Qaraqalpaqstan» baspası.
5. Dosumov, Ya.M. (1960). *Ocherki istorii Karakalpakskoy ASSR 1917-1927*. (pp.36-37). Tashkent.
6. Qudiyarov, A.R. (2021). *Shimbay tariyxinan*. (pp.57-58). Nókis.
7. (n.d.). *National Archives of Uzbekistan*, fund - I-125, inventory - 1, file - 271, pp.16-18.
8. Ubbiniyazov, J. (1980). Amudarinskaya flotiliya i ee znachenie v torgovix otnosheniyax Xorezmskogo oazisa. *Vestnik KKO AN Ruz*. 1980, № 4, 64 p.
9. (1958). *Trudy Xorezmskoy arxeologo-etnograficheskoy ekspeditsii*. Pod obshhey redaksiy chlena korrespondenta AN SSSR. S.P.Tolstova III, (p.221). Moskva.
10. Esbergenov, X. (1994). *Nekotore dannie k istorii Mizdaxkana - Xodjeyli*. Tezisi Dokladov nauchno-prakticheskoy konferensii «Xodjeyli - drevneyshiy gorod respubliki Karakalpakstan», (p.23). Xodjeyli.
11. (2003). *Qaraqalpaqstanni jaña tariyxi*. (p.76). Nókis.
12. Kamalov, S.K. (1968). *Karakalpaki v XVIII-XIX vekax*. Toshkent, 1968, 107, 111 p.
13. Mámбетullaev, M., Turebekov, M., & Yusupov, O. (2010). *Qaraqalpaqstan tariyxi*. (p.194, 208). Nókis.
14. Yusupov, O.J. (1994). *Arxivnye dokumenti po istorii Xodja eli (Xujayli)*. Dokladov nauchno-prakticheskoy konferensii «Xodjeyli drevneyshiy gorod Respubliki Karakalpakstan», (p.31). Xodjeyli.
15. Dautov, N., & Seydametova, G. (2015). Traditionne formi zanyatosti gorodskogo naseleniya nizovaya Amudari (kones XIX - nachalo XX vv). *Vestnik KKO AN RUz*. 2015. № 1, pp.42-43.
16. Esbergenov, X. (1993). *Qoñurat tariyxi ham madeniy yestelikleri*. (p.11). Nókis.
17. Jalilov, O. (1986). *XIX-XX asr boshlaridagi Qoraqalpoq tarixidan*. (pp.69-72). Toshkent, O'zbekiston SSR "FAN" nashriyoti.