

## **Some Reflections About the Famine of Turkestan**

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### **Annotation**

In this article, during the reign of Tsarist Russia in the territory of Turkestan, the cotton harvest replaced all agricultural crops, the country's economy turned into a raw material base for Russian industry, which caused huge losses per capita as a result of various historical events. sources. In particular, there is information that in 1917, due to the outbreak of the civil war in Russia, the import of grain from Russian provinces to Turkestan was stopped, and a significant part of the population died of starvation due to famine. shortage of grain in the country.

**Key words:** Turkestan, Fergana, Yettisuv, Syrdarya, Samarkand, Kaspiyorti, Krivoshein, cotton, raw material base, grain imports, food shortages, consequences of famine.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The main occupation of the residents of the Turkestan region was agriculture, which had a certain peculiarity. Agriculture here was mainly based on artificial irrigation. The dry lands were mostly sown with wheat and barley and yielded very little. On irrigated lands, the yield was higher, and the height of crops was much higher. However, among the agricultural crops in the country, the main place was occupied not by crops intended for food, but by cotton. The needs of Russian industry and the demand for raw cotton on the world market have led to the cultivation of cotton on a significant part of all irrigated lands.

As a result of the transformation of Turkestan into a base for the production of cotton raw materials for Russian industry, the rise of lending in the country, up to 100% interest on loans, peasants are in debt, land is taken into debt, and the cotton monopoly in the country artificially created dependence on Russian grain, and as a result, famine , which happened in Turkestan in 1917-1918, led to the destruction of more than a million people - that is, approximately 20-25% of the population. population of the country. This makes it even more relevant.

### **LITERARY ANALYSIS AND METHODS**

The article is covered on the basis of generally accepted historical methods - historicity, comparative logical analysis, consistency, principles of objectivity, and the historiography of this topic is not very rich. Historical research on the history of socio-economic processes in Turkestan on the eve of national-territorial demarcation can be divided into the following three groups: the Soviet period, the years of independence and foreign studies. During the years of Soviet power, ideas about the history of socio-economic processes on the eve of the national-territorial demarcation in Turkestan were reflected in some studies created by state and political figures and historians.

Another series of literature, published in the 20-30s of the twentieth century, tells about the

history of socio-economic processes and the economic situation in Turkestan on the eve of national-territorial demarcation. In addition, there are also articles and speeches by former leaders of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and political figures on this issue.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On average, 25-30% of Turkestan's arable land is occupied by cotton crops. However, in the Fergana region, areas sown with cotton occupy 50-80% of the total sown area [1]. In Andijan district, cotton is sown on 5.9% of the total area of the district, and cotton is sown on 5.4% of the entire area of Skobelevsky (Fergana, Eski-Margilon) district.

In 1911, the ratio of all sown areas to the total area of the districts is as follows:

names of areas	Territory of the region in tithes	Total sown area	Cultivated area as a percentage of the region's territory
Fergana	8 450 624	679 829	8,04
Samarkand	8 104 062	600 174	7,41
Syrdarya	34 413 539	848 302	2,47
Seventies	16 139 686	394 826	2,45

For 9 years in Turkestan - from 1907 to 1915, the growth rate of cotton sown areas amounted to 59%. In some regions it has increased significantly, for example, in the Trans-Caspian region - it increased by 101.1%, and in the Syrdarya region, the area intended for growing cotton almost doubled - to 88.3% [2]. The region with the least growth was the Samarkand region, but even there the area under cotton increased by 45.1%. In the Fergana region it increased exactly 1.5 times - to 50.6%, and in Bukhara and Khiva - almost equally - to 56.2% [3].

For a long time, the Yettisuvsky district was not part of the cotton-growing regions. Because sample cotton crops were planted there in 1914 in very small areas and ended unsuccessfully.

During 1916-1920, the area under cotton cultivation decreased significantly [4]. In connection with the transport problem, the problem of providing the population with bread became very acute for Turkestan; the way of life and the health of the population were seriously affected. During this period, more than 1 million people died from hunger in the country, most of them from the Fergana Valley [5]. Therefore, the inhabitants of the region stopped sowing all other types of agricultural crops and began to grow grain. Now the areas of grain farming have expanded so much that Turkestan has reached the level where it can provide itself with grain without the need to import grain. It seemed that the threat of starvation could no longer threaten Turkestan.

In addition to cotton, vineyards, orchards, and sugar cane are grown in Turkestan. Also in the Turkestan region, villagers do not limit themselves to agriculture. It is possible that in many regions with a well-developed pasture system in the mountainous part of Turkestan and in the valleys of many rivers and lakes, the population was also engaged in animal husbandry.

However, all this was like a drop from the ocean before the cotton harvest. Exports grew steadily in recent years, reaching 18 million pounds of cotton in 1915.

Planning the economic life of the country based on the interests of the metropolis led to a reduction in grain crops. Sowing cotton in irrigated fields is becoming increasingly popular, which is very necessary for the textile factories of the metropolis. Minister of Tsarist Russia A. Krivoshein, justifying this political direction, wrote: "... every additional pound of Turkestan wheat is competition with Russian and Siberian wheat, every kilogram of Turkestan cotton is competition with American cotton, so even if it becomes more expensive, it is better to give the region will receive imported grain, and the irrigated lands in it will be freed up for cotton" [6]. As a result, by 1917 cotton occupied 22% of all cultivated areas in the country [7]. And these numbers are growing. Due

to the reduction in grain crops, Turkestan did not have enough of its own bread, and the grain deficit was constantly increasing, reaching 12 million poods in 1915. The country's population's dependence on Russian grain in 1916 was 22 million poods, and in 1917 - 58 million poods due to crop failure [8]. Back in 1917, famine began in the region.

## CONCLUSION

By 1919, the grain deficit in Turkestan amounted to almost 100 million poods. This was caused by a rapid reduction in the grain areas of Turkestan, as well as a constant decrease in the amount of grain supplied from Russia in exchange for cotton. So, if in 1916, instead of Turkestan cotton, 22 million poods of grain were imported from the inner provinces of Russia, then in 1917 - 1.9 million poods, and in 1919, grain supplies to the country almost stopped. In 1919, only 5.3 million pounds of grain were grown in Turkestan. This meant that per capita there were several kilograms of bread per year. As a result, Turkestan was gripped by an unprecedented famine, over 1 200 000 people died[1].

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