



ABOUT SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE LIVESTOCK FARMING OF THE FERGANA VALLEY IN THE LATE XIX – EARLY XX CENTURY

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| <p>Received: 14th August 2023 Accepted: 14th September 2023 Published: 17th October 2023</p> | <p>In the article, the main features of the settlement process of nomadic and semi-nomadic cattle-breeding population in the Fergana Valley at the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century are highlighted. The data about the formation of permanent settlements, changes in animal husbandry, transformation of household items during the settlement process are covered on the basis of ethnographic materials.</p> |
| <p>Keywords: ethnographic groups, cattle breeders, settlement, nomadic, semi-nomadic, housing, livestock food, livestock composition, migration cycles, veterinary.</p> | |

Another important factor determining the settlement of nomads and semi-nomads is housing. The housing of the livestock breeders of the Fergana Valley before the occupation of the Russian Empire cannot be described in the same way. For example, the Kurama and Kyrgyz people lived in yurts, while some Kipchaks had permanent one-room houses built of mud in the XVII-XVIII centuries. However, building such houses was widespread among the Kipchaks in the late XIX and early XX centuries. During this period of time, the construction of permanent houses also began in Kyrgyzs. At the beginning, most of the Kyrgyz who were settling down were poor, so the houses were very simple, consisting of one or two rooms with packed mud walls, small windows, and flat roofs.

The construction of permanent houses, in turn, caused the formation of villages. Thus, by the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century, the kishtaks (villages) of the livestock breeders began to appear among the nomadic and semi-nomadic settlements. In terms of location and appearance, these villages did not differ much from the villages of the local settled population. Some of the new Kyrgyz villages that began to emerge in the XX century were named after the owners of the land. According to V. M. Ploskikh, such villages include Alimbek-chek, Badalbay-chek, Jarqinbay-chek [1. C. 59].

The basic household items of the settled livestock breeders also changed depending on the changes of houses. Household items made of leather decreased [2. 125]. Because there was no need for the items such as a leather bag, and a bowl cover that were previously used during migration [3. C. 131]. For example, it became customary to keep kumiss in clay pots rather than leather bags [4. C. 126].

It is known that the way of livestock breeding has changed depending on the situation of the time since the ancient times. During the war the main attention was paid to horses, but as the transition to the peacetime, the number of small animals (sheep, goats) increased. Such a process was felt in the other livestock farms of the valley, as it was in the southern Kyrgyzs: as agriculture became the main branch of the economy, more attention was paid to horses, large horned animals and less to small animals [5. C. 26]. While large horned animals and horses were important for transportation [6. C. 143], the high demand for meat, wool and leather in the valley markets prevented the reduction of the number of sheep and goats. However, a decline in livestock was observed in the Fergana valley due to the settlement of nomads and semi-nomads in the last quarter of the XIX century. From 1879 to 1888, the number of cattle in the Fergana region decreased from 220717 to 174396, horses from 213760 to 152447, sheep and goats from 1260138 to 630019, and camels from 38294 to 10187 [7. C. 367].

Thus, for nine years, 21% of cattle, 29.7% of horses, 60.1% of sheep and goats, and 73.4% of camels decreased. The Kipchaks were mainly engaged in camel breeding in Fergana [8. C. 192]. The camel was used not only as a means of transport, but also for its milk and meat. By the second half of the XIX century, the importance of camels as a means of transport declined, and their number rapidly decreased. By 1913, camels made up only 1.16% of the total livestock [9. C. 21]. Moreover, there was also a share of agricultural farms in the available animals. 2/3 of all livestock in the region, including 3/4 of large horned animals, 59% of small animals belonged to these farms [10. C. 373].

The Kyrgyz people did not use modern veterinary services at first, following their centuries-old customs of animal husbandry. It was even noted in the "Статистический обзор Ферганской области за 1910 год" (Statistical survey of the Fergana valley in 1910) that "veterinarians are known as officials who interfere in everyday life [11. C.

165]. But, soon, livestock breeders realized the benefits of veterinary services. It was especially helpful in preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

Due to migration cycles, forage for livestock was not almost laid in stock in ancient times. By the end of the 19th century, Kyrgyz people began to save a small amount of fodder for horses, young or sick animals that had to go on a journey [12. C. 28]. According to U. S. Abdullaev, mowing hay was learned from the experience of settled Uzbek and Tajik neighbors [13. C. 25]. At the same time, the influence of the Russians was also noticeable in food storage. In addition, there is information that they learned to make sickles and tools from the Russians [14. C. 59]. Oats, barley and hay became important fodder for horses and later for other animals as well.

Local settled population widely used horses in agricultural work, as a means of transport, for moving mills and carts [15. C. 28]. Besides, horses had their place in folk games such as kupkari and racing. In general, horses played a big role in social life. Also, due to the importance of both large horned animals and small animals in the household, Uzbeks and Tajiks kept horses and other domestic animals in covered buildings.

Livestock breeding nomads, unlike the settled population, did not build covered buildings for livestock until the conquest of the Russian Empire. Even during winter storms, they were kept in an open area with a simple fence of branches at the foot of rocks and gorges to protect from the wind. Despite many years of experience and efforts, there was no way to save the livestock when the winter was hard. This means that livestock breeders were dependent on natural phenomena. One of the most important achievements in animal husbandry was the beginning of constructing the covered buildings for keeping livestock for a longer period of time [16. C. 190]. It is not difficult to feel the influence of neighboring Uzbeks, Tajiks and Russians in the construction of such buildings.

The acceleration of the settlement process had an impact on the handicrafts and traditional customs related to livestock breeding. The construction of permanent houses led to a decrease in the demand for yurt equipment. In general, most leather and wooden items in the household were not as important as before. Although horses had not completely disappeared, the demand for saddles, saddle cloth, bridles, whips, and horseshoes decreased [17. C. 19]. The decline of the herds caused the disappearance of the stamps which were put on the horses. According to M. F. Gavrilov, the descendants of Turkish livestock breeders do not understand the meaning of the stamp now [18. C. 13]. The most important changes were related to the psychology of the livestock breeders, that is, neighborhood relationships began to prevail over the age-old blood kinship.

U. S. Abdullaev wrote in his article "From the history of inter-ethnic relationships in the Fergana Valley" that "the ethnographic groups such as Turks, Kipchaks, Kuramas, Yuzs, Mings, Naimans can be identified as sub-ethnic groups that have relatively well preserved their ethnic characteristics in the conditions of the valley in this period of time [19. C. 13]. However, the consolidation process did not bypass them. For example, S. S. Gubaeva wrote about the Kuramas that "the density of the population in the center, the lack of opportunities for animal husbandry caused their relatively quick settlement and mixing with the local population [20. C. 66]. M. F. Gavrilov noted that until the recent years, Turks were known as excellent livestock breeders, but the conquest of the Russian Empire, especially as a result of wars and famines, agriculture became their main form of economy [21. C. 40].

It can be seen that the settlement process took a mass form among the livestock breeding Kyrgyz people during the period being studied. According to S.S. Gubaeva, about 480 people settled in Osh district per year, and as a result, the number of settled Kyrgyzs increased to 2791 from 1880 to 1892. Statistics shows that in 1900, 65% of the 300,000 Kyrgyzs living in Fergana region settled, and their main occupation was agriculture [22. C. 13]. As a result, while the regions inhabited by the Kyrgyz people were previously noted as nomadic volosts, in the collection "Статистический обзор Ферганской области за 1907 год" (Statistical survey of the Fergana Valley in 1907), Naiman, Yakesak-Buston of Margilan uezd, Yassi, Kugart, Bozorkurgan, Noqat, Uzgan of Andijan uezd and Kurshob of Osh uezd were noted as mixed volosts [23. C. 16] and the indicator changed year by year.

The political or economic influence of the government on the lives of the settlers living in the Fergana Valley was noticeable. For example, during the 150-year rule of the Kokand Khanate, even during the time when Kyrgyz lands were often seized, Kyrgyz people did not settle down or change their economic activities. However, in the late XIX and early XX centuries, the settlement process took on a mass character. The seizure of the lands belonging to the nomads by the Russian government, the reduction of pastures due to the development of cotton monoculture, and the resettlement of the resettled population in pastoral areas can be cited as the main reasons for the settlement process.

As a result of the forced settlement of the livestock breeders, the long-term trade relations between the settled population and the livestock breeders in the valley was negatively affected. Although livestock was rapidly reduced, the demand for livestock products had to be met. The growing demand for meat in Fergana caused to herd the sheep from places like Avliyoota, Tokmok, and Verni. 1/4 or 1/3 of the sheep which were brought was by the contribution of Ettisuv and Western Siberia [24. C. 8]. In 1906, 25,000 animals and in 1910, 106,000 animals were brought through the Siberian railway, in 1906 74500 animals and in 1912, 120 000 animals were brought via Tashkent [25. C. 34].

Although the need was covered by importing livestock products from abroad, the damage caused to livestock owners could not be compensated. As a result of the settlement, the livestock breeders of the valley had to abandon the agricultural activities they had been engaged in for centuries [26. C. 223]. The change in the type of economy led to a change in the material culture associated with animal husbandry, household life, customs and traditions characteristic to nomads, and most importantly, the change of psychology of animal husbandry.

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