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THE IMPACT OF COCONUT GROWING ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMY IN THE TURKISTAN ASSR AND THE UZBEKISTAN SSR IN 1920-1925

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Annotation

This article analyzes the impact of cocoon production on the national economy of the Turkestan ASSR and the Uzbek SSR during 1920–1925. The study examines the economic significance of sericulture, its role in the agricultural system, and the formation of production processes in this period. Particular attention is paid to the impact of cocoon production on employment, sources of income, and the export potential of the region. The article also evaluates the measures of Soviet economic policy aimed at developing the sector and their outcomes.

Kalit so‘zlar: cocoon production, sericulture, Turkestan ASSR, Uzbek SSR, national economy, agriculture, employment, export, economic policy, Soviet period.

Introduction

One of the important areas of activity of the "Turkshelk" society was to provide the industry with qualified specialists. This was necessary, first of all, for the development of the industry on a scientific basis. Because before the revolution,



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the population was engaged in sericulture mainly based on traditional experience and customs, and selection, incubation and care work were not sufficiently scientifically based. Therefore, starting from the 1920s, special attention was paid to training personnel, establishing specialized education and establishing scientific institutions.

One of the first important stages of this process was the organization of two-year special courses at the Central Asian Silk Road Station on the basis of the Regulation approved by the People's Commissariat of Education on April 23, 1924. M. Poshshakhodjayev, a member of the Turkshelk board, was appointed head of the course. His creation of scientific manuals on silk road in the Uzbek language played an important role in the formation of national specialized literature. Considering the lack of scientific materials on silk road in the Uzbek language before the revolution, these manuals are considered the first national scientific sources in the field.

The main part

I. K. Dieterikhs, the head of the Central Asian Sericulture Station, and later a teacher at the Central Asian State University (SAGU), also taught at these courses. His scientific and organizational activities served to develop the industry. Later, he worked in the "Turkshelk" system and headed the Central Asian Sericulture Station. This indicates that some specialists invited to Moscow by the central authorities preferred to work directly in the region and contributed to the development of the local industry.

The two-year courses were taught by such scientists as E. Poryakov, A. I. Fedorov, M. I. Slonim, K. D. Platov, A. A. Kyunfeld. Among the first students, such cadres as S. A. Minosyan, G. A. Pokrovsky, A. Juraev, P. A. Kovalev, I. A. Shcherbakov, who later became major specialists, were trained. This fact indicates the practical



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effectiveness of the organized courses and their significant importance in training local and regional specialized personnel for the industry. Since 1925, the opening of three-month instructor courses at the silk-growing stations in Tashkent and Fergana further popularized the personnel training process.

In 1926–1927, the training of sericulture agronomists was further expanded. In 1927, special departments on sericulture and silk technology were established at the Central Asian State University. In the same year, based on a government decree, the Central Asian Institute of Sericulture and Silk Production, and later the Central Asian Research Institute of Sericulture (SANISH), was established on the basis of the Central Asian Sericulture Station and the Department of Sericulture Culture of Turkshelk. This institution was the first specialized research center in the region and served to develop sericulture on a scientific basis.

The Tashkent Seed Plant and the Jarariq Nursery were attached to the Institute as auxiliary enterprises. A. A. Kyunsel was appointed director of the Institute, and N. S. Zykina was appointed head. Professors E. F. Poyarkov, A. I. Fedorov, M. I. Slonim, YE. N. Mikhailov and other scientists participated in the activities of the Institute. During this period, the branch was provided with scientific personnel, and research took on a systematic character.

In the scientific and institutional development, the bulletin, which was previously printed in manerograf, began to be published as the periodical "Shyolk (Ipak)" on February 19, 1928, based on the decision of the joint-stock company "Turkshelk Bulletin". The editor-in-chief of the journal was M. L. Spiegel, and the editorial board included such specialists as I. Vinokurov, M. Markovich, K. Pinkevich, K. Platov, P. Pokrovsky, N. Sktishvili, M. Yurovetsky. The journal regularly covered scientific results, practical experiences and materials on the development of the industry in the field of sericulture. It served not only as a scientific platform, but



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also as a means of popularizing achievements in the field. The fact that the journal celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1978 confirms its long-term scientific significance.

Results and discussions

The revival of the industry and institutional strengthening were also reflected in economic indicators. For the first time in the post-revolutionary years, Uzbekistan exported 10,000 boxes of worm seed to Kalkar in 1924. By this time, the sale of worm seed within the Turkestan Republic began to be controlled by the state: 5.8 percent of the total sales went directly to worm breeders, while the share of private individuals was 12.8 percent.

Sericulture is a specialized branch of agriculture, which includes the stages of establishing silkworm farms, the silkworm seed industry, breeding and primary cocoon processing. In the conditions of Uzbekistan, the main biological object is *Bombyx mori*, which has a short development cycle and high productivity. The fact that the worm can increase its weight by 8-14 thousand times during its one-month development period and the ability to obtain products during an intensive labor period of 18-20 days has made the industry a rapidly rotating economic sector. The possibility of producing up to 100-140 meters of silk fabric from one centner of cocoon has formed it as a sector that creates high added value. These features have made sericulture an export-oriented and important sector for state economic policy.

Worm seed was prepared mainly in 8 special factories located in Kokand, Fergana, Namangan, Khujand, Tashkent, Andijan, Samarkand and Poltoratsk. These enterprises became the main production base for centralized supply of the industry. After Lenin's decree on sericulture was put into practice, measures were taken to expand the feed base of sericulture in the republic. At the initial stage,



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the main task was to grow worm seed and widely distribute it among the population. However, the existing mulberry plantations were not enough to organize large-scale worm farming.

In order to bring cocoon production closer to pre-war levels, the issue of strengthening the feed base became a priority. In this regard, measures were taken to introduce economically efficient mulberry varieties that could produce leaves within 1–2 years and to increase the mulberry leaf fund. Only these measures could increase the volume of wormwood production. By 1924, there were only 4 mulberry nurseries in Central Asia, with a total area of 6 hectares. This situation created the need to create new nurseries to expand the feed fund.

Uzbekistan took a leading position in the process of restoring Central Asian sericulture. In 1922, the gross cocoon harvest in the republic reached 74.7 thousand pounds, and 47.4 thousand boxes of silkworm seed were sold. By 1924, the gross cocoon harvest reached 142.5 thousand pounds, and the sale of silkworm seed reached 96.9 thousand boxes. Thus, in two years, both the harvest volume and sales indicators almost doubled.

The establishment of the first sericulture industry was an important stage in the development of sericulture, which led to the transition of the industry to an industrial stage. In 1918, by decision of the Soviet government, the construction of a sericulture factory began in Fergana. This was the first attempt to solve the problem of selling the crop. The factory was commissioned in 1920. It was a small enterprise with 40 spinning machines. In the same year, additional equipment was brought to Fergana on the initiative of Moscow workers. Thanks to this event, the production capacity of the sericulture factory was reconstructed and increased to 96 machines, and later by another 40 machines. The complete reconstruction of the enterprise was completed in September 1921.



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After the establishment of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, the sericulture and silk processing industry developed further. The leadership of the republic adopted V. I. Lenin's decree on sericulture as a programmatic basis for the restoration of sericulture. Due to the establishment of agricultural cooperatives and their subordinates, the processes of selling silkworm eggs and preparing cocoons, and later contracting cocoons, became more active.

During the period of national economic reconstruction and the first years after the establishment of the young Republic of Uzbekistan, the importance of sericulture and its economic prospects were also emphasized. The All-Union Textile Syndicate noted this: “The Board of the All-Union Textile Syndicate notes that sericulture is of exceptional importance in the economy of Uzbekistan. Sericulture, which creates highly valuable and marketable products, is a prerequisite for the transition to higher forms of peasant farming and the industrialization of the republic through the establishment of the silk industry and the development of our export opportunities...[1]”. This assessment indicates that the sericulture sector was given strategic economic importance at that time.

Conclusion

In agriculture, including the silk industry, certain stabilization processes have been observed since the mid-1920s. This situation was associated with the state's reorganization of agrarian relations and the implementation of land and water reform. The Soviet authorities aimed to reform agriculture by ensuring the interests of landless and land-poor peasants in the agricultural sector, limiting large land ownership, and redistributing land resources.

The land and water reform was carried out on the basis of the principles of Leninist agrarian policy. In the party documents of the period, this reform was highly appreciated from a political and ideological point of view. In particular, at



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the II Congress of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, the Secretary of the Central Committee Akmal Ikramov interpreted the content of the land reform as “paving the way for the construction of socialism”[2]. This assessment was given within the framework of the political discourse of the period, and in practice, the land and water reform meant the process of transferring agrarian relations to state control and integrating agriculture into a centralized economic system. During the implementation of the land and water reform, a number of important measures were taken, which allowed for the further development of sericulture. One of these measures was the abolition of private production of silkworm seed. In 1926, private production of silkworm seed was abolished in Uzbekistan.

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