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DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE ROUTES AND THEIR ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE DURING THE SHAYBANID PERIOD

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Abstract: During the Shaybanid period (16th century), the system of trade routes in Central Asia and Movarounnahr played an important role in the state's economic policy. The research results show that road infrastructure and roadside facilities-such as caravanserais, rabats, sardobas, and bridges-significantly contributed to the development of trade relations. These structures provided merchants with safe movement, storage of goods, and rest facilities. In addition, hydraulic structures built in desert and steppe areas ensured water supply for caravans. As a result, interregional trade relations were strengthened, the volume of domestic and foreign trade increased, and cultural exchange and urban development processes advanced.

Keywords: Shaybanid period, trade routes, caravanserai, rabat, sardoba, bridge, Movarounnahr, economic development.

Introduction. The Shaybanid period (16th century) is considered an important historical era in Central Asia and Movarounnahr. During the rule of the Shaybanid dynasty, in addition to state governance, significant achievements were made in economic development, trade, culture, and architecture. In particular, the construction of road and roadside infrastructure-caravanserais, sardobas, bridges, and rabats-made a significant contribution to the development of trade and economic life. Movarounnahr, as an important part of the Great Silk Road, played a leading role in international trade. Therefore, the increase in markets and caravanserais in its cities stimulated the growth of trade activity. Rabats and caravanserais built during this period served as resting places and storage facilities for merchants and caravans. In addition, bridges were constructed across rivers and streams such as the Zarafshan and Amu Darya. During military campaigns and long journeys, sardobas were built to ensure water supply. These structures were used for collecting and storing water. In particular, during Abdullakhan's campaigns to Khorasan, Dashti Kipchak, Iran, and Khorezm, roadside infrastructure significantly improved logistical convenience. Such structures were widely built along trade routes passing through desert and steppe regions. Their development became especially widespread in the 16th century. The accumulated knowledge and experience in hydraulic engineering led to the creation of special technologies for constructing sardobas. Some researchers have conducted scientific studies in this field. These works analyze the Shaybanid dynasty's historical development, governance system, political and economic activities, and policies regulating trade networks. They emphasize the importance of road infrastructure for trade relations and urban economic activity [1]. The architectural features of caravanserais and roadside facilities, their functions, and their role in trade movement have been analyzed in detail. These studies provide extensive information about caravan routes and conditions created for merchants in the 14th–16th centuries [2].

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Other studies examine trade networks, markets, and caravanserai infrastructure in Central Asia within the context of the Silk Roads. They highlight the role of infrastructure in developing trade relations and its impact on the state economy [3]. Further research focuses on the development of road infrastructure and trade systems in the 14th-16th centuries, which is essential for understanding the Shaybanid economic and transport systems [4]. Historical sources also provide information on Central Asian political and economic history, including the Shaybanid dynasty and its trade activities [5]. Additionally, studies on state economic policy highlight the development of cities, trade centers, and roadside facilities during this period [6]. The sources used in this research comprehensively illuminate the significance of trade routes and roadside infrastructure during the Shaybanid period. They demonstrate that road infrastructure, caravanserais, rabats, sardobas, and bridges were primarily aimed at facilitating trade, strengthening economic relations, and promoting the development of cities. In addition, these sources provide valuable information on hydraulic and transport issues, as well as the development of economic cooperation and cultural exchange between different regions. These scholarly works serve as the main scientific foundation for the article.

Research Results. The research shows that during the Shaybanid period (16th century), the development of trade routes was one of the priority directions of state policy. Improvement of road infrastructure strengthened economic relations between regions and ensured the efficiency and continuity of domestic and international trade. Road infrastructure facilitated caravan movement and increased transport efficiency. Caravanserais, rabats, and sardobas provided temporary accommodation, storage facilities, and opportunities for trade transactions. This contributed to the stability of trade relations and expansion of commodity exchange between regional markets. As a result, economic ties between cities strengthened, domestic trade volume increased significantly, and craft production centers expanded. Roadside facilities also had a positive impact on employment and increased economic capacity. Special attention was paid to water supply systems. Sardobas built along desert trade routes ensured water availability for caravans. These structures served as important hydraulic solutions of their time, enabling safe and stable long-distance trade journeys. Bridges built over rivers and streams ensured uninterrupted transport movement and maintained year-round trade activity. The development of road infrastructure also expanded markets and trade centers, strengthening intercity economic relations. This process contributed to cultural exchange, urban development, and social progress. Thus, the development of trade routes during the Shaybanid period promoted economic growth and strengthened regional integration.

Conclusion. The research results show that during the Shaybanid period, the development of trade routes was an important direction of state economic policy. The construction of road and roadside infrastructure facilitated caravan movement and provided accommodation and storage opportunities for merchants. Hydraulic structures improved water supply, while bridges ensured uninterrupted transport. As a result, intercity trade relations strengthened, domestic and foreign trade developed, and economic and cultural exchange between regions increased. The infrastructure of the Shaybanid period played an important role in the economic and cultural history of the Middle Ages.

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