



Agriculture of Karakalpakstan and the Social Status of Farmers in the 1960 Year

Madreymov Esnazar Dauletnazarovich

*Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the republic of Uzbekistan,
Karakalpak Scientific Research Institute of Humanities, Nukus, Uzbekistan*

Abstract: *The 1960s in the history of agriculture in Karakalpakstan are the most interesting and important for research. As is known, agriculture of the period under study specialized in the production of cotton, rice, alfalfa seeds, astrakhan skins, wool, and silkworm cocoons.*

Keywords: *agriculture, irrigation, farms*

Introduction

Agriculture in our republic was based on artificial irrigation. The structure and effectiveness of the agricultural management system largely depended on the administrative-territorial division of Karakalpakstan. Of course, here it was necessary to take into account the most important factors that determine the nature of the economy and social sphere of each of the fifteen regions of Karakalpakstan, but, however, in practice the uniqueness of many of these regions was not taken into account. The three-stage system of territorial-production management of agriculture - "farm - district - republican bodies" - restrained the prompt solution of the issue of financing, material and technical support for farms, and excessively bureaucratically regulated their activities.

In order to centralize management and strengthen control over agricultural production, in the 1950s and early 1960s, a campaign of unjustified consolidation of collective farms, state farms and districts of Karakalpakstan unfolded. Collective farms with small acreage and unable to effectively use powerful agricultural machinery hampered the development of the productive forces of agriculture. The costs of maintaining the administrative and managerial apparatus of such collective farms of the autonomous republic were large. During these years, on the basis of economically weak collective farms, new state farms were created in virgin lands and old farms were enlarged. During the construction of new and consolidation of old state farms, the entire system was restructured, its structure became more complex, the machine park was updated, and the direction of many farms changed.

Providing food to the population of the republic determined the development of the agricultural sector of the economy, which formed the basis of the food complex of the republic. In the 1960s, cotton plantings expanded in Karakalpakstan and rice farming developed. Cotton growing, being a technical sector, was at the same time one of the main suppliers of vegetable oil - one of the main types of food products in the region. Economists have calculated that each ton of raw cotton is not only 3 thousand meters of fabric, but also 90 types of valuable products, including 170 kg of vegetable oil, at least half a ton of cotton cake, husks - valuable feed for livestock. By feeding livestock with cake and husk, the autonomous republic annually received more than 50 thousand centners of cattle weight gain. And on the basis of cleaning raw rice, a cereal industry was created in Karakalpakstan. In 1960-1965, 13,399 thousand tons of rice were harvested, 435 thousand tons were processed, and 373.6 thousand tons of rice cereal were obtained [1].



The total irrigated area by the beginning of the 1960s in Karakalpakstan was about 230 thousand hectares. The cotton growing industry accounted for 2/3 of the irrigated area; most collective and state farms were specialized in cotton production. At the same time, cotton was cultivated in our region even before the establishment of Soviet power, but it did not play a significant role in the agricultural economy. For example, if in 1913 the share of cotton in the total sown area accounted for only a little more than 10%, or about 12 thousand hectares [2], then by the end of the 1960s, about 70% of the total sown area, or about 120 thousand hectares. True, by this time the yield of this crop had increased: if in 1963 it was 15.8 centners per hectare, then in 1970 the yield increased to 27.7 centners [3], and by 1975 it was already 31 centners per hectare. This was due to a sharp expansion of the scope of reclamation work, as well as due to the widespread use of pesticides and chemicals. Although the disadvantages of excessive chemicalization of agriculture were obvious, it remained one of the components of agricultural policy until the early 1990s.

In 1966, a department for irrigation and construction of state farms was created in the autonomous republic - "Karakalpakirsovkhosstroy" under the Glavsredazirsovkhosstroy of the Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources of the USSR. The nine state farms mentioned above were transferred to the new management. Work on further comprehensive construction of new farms and land development was launched on a broad front. During 1967-1968, Karakalpakirsovkhosstroy completed capital construction work on state farms in the amount of 30 million rubles. 8,000 hectares of engineered rice systems were introduced, 62 thousand square meters. m of living space, summer cinemas for 1600 seats, schools for 2352 seats, kindergartens for 470 seats, bathhouses for 52 people/hour, etc. Work has been carried out on the organizational and technical strengthening of rice-growing state farms, on the creation of rice-growing brigades and on assigning land, hydraulic structures and agricultural equipment to them. As a result, compared to 1966, rice production in the republic in 1967 increased by 5,300 tons or 18%, 35.1 thousand tons of raw rice were produced against the plan of 26.5 thousand tons [4].

Rice growing was an important branch of agriculture. Back in the 1960s, a state program was drawn up, according to which Karakalpakstan was supposed to produce an average annual production of raw rice of 1 million tons. However, the implementation of this program turned out to be unrealistic. To implement such a grandiose program in Karakalpakstan for rice crops, it was necessary to develop an additional 202 thousand hectares of land, expand the total area of engineered rice systems to 280 thousand hectares, which was equivalent to the fund of arable land introduced into agricultural circulation throughout the history of development irrigated agriculture in the republic [5]. In addition, a huge volume of water was needed, with a shortage of which it was generally impossible to achieve the planned indicators.

Nevertheless, the volume of rice cultivation in the republic increased. If in 1960 rice production amounted to 3.6 thousand tons, then in 1965 it amounted to 27 thousand tons, in 1970 - 59.1, and in 1975 - 169.2 [6]. Therefore, the volume of rice in the food supply system has increased significantly compared to other regions of Uzbekistan. Rice was usually ground on mechanized machines; there were also so-called. "Karaz" is a device for peeling rice from husks. Typically, in rural areas, such mini-enterprises for grinding grain, as well as in the suburbs, operated on private farms. The townspeople bought rice at the bazaar, where there was a choice, and also in stores in bags. In the cities and regional centers, grain was purchased most of all, then the rice was dehusked on its own at the above-mentioned private mini-enterprises - "Karaz".

However, the prevalence of the cotton and rice orientation of the region's agricultural industry led to the fact that it turned from an agricultural producer to a consuming one. The uncontrolled use of the waters of the Amudarya and Syr Darya led to a global change in the drainage: if the average annual flow of the latter into the Aral Sea in 1961-1970. was 42.9 cubic kilometers, then in the early 1980s it decreased to 4.2 cubic kilometers [7]. This became one of the main reasons for the Aral Sea



tragedy. The Amu Darya in its lower reaches has completely dried out, and its delta has turned into a saline desert. Precious in an arid natural environment, water has turned into an almost free resource in an extensive non-market economy. Thousands of its cubic meters spread over numerous irrigation structures, flooding cotton and rice fields, not so much irrigating them as covering them with a crust of evaporated salt. Therefore, by the end of the 1960s, not only grains, but even potatoes and some types of vegetables and fruits began to be imported into the republic.

During this period, the production of meat and meat products, milk and eggs, a mandatory product in the food basket of every consumer, decreased. This is especially clear in the 1970s, when the production of meat, milk, and eggs sharply decreased [8]. The older generation remembers how in the 1960s, during the reign of N. Khrushchev, mass slaughter of livestock began. The fact is that in 1957 N. Khrushchev proclaimed the slogan “Catch up and overtake America in 3-4 years,” including in agricultural production. The traditional “socialist competition” of farms for exceeding previously adopted plans began, traditional for the Soviet system. Many farms adopted new plans for meat production, and in 1960 the country’s meat procurement plan was fulfilled, but by what methods!? The famous Russian historian R. Medvedev wrote that in 1960, “the number of cattle increased over the year on collective and state farms by 5 million heads, and in private ownership decreased by 2 million, which indicated a massive purchase of livestock from private owners” [9]. In many farms, the Soviet party authorities put pressure on collective and state farms and private livestock owners. A significant part of the main herd and dairy cows were sent to the meat processing plant; livestock was taken from private owners under fictitious receipts, which also went to the meat processing plants. As a result, many farms, including private ones, were left without livestock, be it a cow, goat or sheep, and state collective and state farms lost productive livestock. In 1965, compared to 1960, the number of cattle decreased by 18%, goats by 1.7 times, and poultry by 51% [10].

Chemicalization of agriculture was carried out on a large scale in Karakalpakstan. In 1960, collective and state farms of Karakalpakstan received 172 thousand tons of mineral fertilizers, and in 1970 - more than 347 thousand tons. In pursuit of the cotton boom, the earth was saturated with chemicals in huge quantities. Along with the use of a large group of pesticides, pre-harvest removal of leaves from cotton was widely carried out to facilitate its mechanized harvesting. Penetrating deeply into the soil, defoliants seeped into groundwater and contaminated it. This led to an increase in cancer and acute respiratory diseases in Karakalpakstan, turning people into doomed hostages of the Soviet extensive economy.

This led to an increase in the incidence rate of the population of Karakalpakstan. For example, in the Kungrad region, although diseases such as typhoid and typhus, diphtheria, and malaria had disappeared, the incidence of tuberculosis was still high, the percentage of stillbirths and mortality among children was high. Dystrophy and rickets were common among children. Health care institutions were located in old, unsuitable clay buildings [11]. In the Khojeyli region, the number of patients with active tuberculosis, trachoma (mainly among teachers and children), epidemic hepatitis, and acute intestinal diseases has increased significantly. There was a high mortality rate among women in labor and the number of stillbirths [12].

It is known that a characteristic feature of crisis phenomena in any state is the urbanization of the population and a decline in living standards. According to the 1959 census, there were 510 thousand people living in the republic as a whole. In the 1950s, in Karakalpakstan there was an outflow of the rural population to the city, the need for everyday goods increased, and the wage level was lower than the cost of the population’s consumer basket [13]. First of all, this was due to the policy of the Soviet state, which revised the norms for personal plots for rural residents. Thus, until 1950, the norms for household plots were determined for irrigated fields in the range from 0.15 to 0.25 hectares, and since January 1950, a reduction in the size of household plots and livestock numbers



was carried out. The size of household plots was reduced to 0.12 - 0.15 hectares. Irrigated lands, orchards, vineyards, and livestock cut off from dekhkan farms were transferred to collective farms [14]. The return of land by collective farmers worsened the already difficult food situation.

True, there were other reasons why the population left their homes. For example, due to flooding in the 1950s, 600 farms (18 collective farms) of the Karauzyak region moved to new lands and neighboring areas. For many years these households lived in dugouts “zher tole” and “kahra” because they did not have the opportunity to build houses.

Another reason was the attempt to consolidate settlements carried out in the 50s, which led to the forced relocation of farmers from their usual places. Then, in just three years (1949-1951), 9,080 farms were resettled from farmsteads to collective farm settlements [15].

The third reason we can point to is the development of new lands in the republic to expand the area under cotton in the Turtkul, Shumanay, Kungrad, Kegeyli and other regions.

At the same time, during the resettlement, voluntariness in making the decision to move and choosing a place of resettlement, as well as guaranteed receipt of permanent housing and work for all able-bodied members of resettled families, obtaining loans and household equipment, medical care, living and working conditions, education, should be strictly observed. For children of immigrants, etc. It turned out that these guarantees were not always fulfilled; in many cases, collective farmers-migrants were left to their own devices. In many areas, loans were not provided for the construction of houses and for the purchase of livestock. The required food loan of 300 kg of grain (per household) was issued late and not in full (100 or 200 kg per family). Collective farmers built their own houses and even schools with their own efforts [16]. The rural and part of the urban population had a custom of hashar (“komek” - help) when building a house. Relatives, fellow villagers, and friends gathered and helped lay the wall, knead the clay, coat and plaster the walls. During the period we are considering, pakhsa houses (pakhsa wall) were built. Typically, construction began in the summer, when there was no heavy load on the collective farm, and in addition, in hot weather, the plow dried out quickly [17].

In 1965, the population of the republic reached 618.5 thousand people, the urban population increased from 27% in 1959 to 32% in 1965. In the 1950-1970s, the population of Karakalpakstan increased by 85%, including urban residents by 3.3 times. This indicator is one of the highest in Uzbekistan. So, if in 1959-1972. The urban population in Uzbekistan increased by 76.8%; during this period, the population of the cities of Karakalpakstan increased almost 2 times, that is, the urban population of our region amounted to 37% of the total population of the republic. At the same time, the provision of housing for the population of the republic has always remained one of the complex social problems. In the housing complex of the republic, forms of traditional individual housing construction based on local building materials were more common. Most of the republic's population lived in rural areas, where the bulk of people still lived in inadequate, unsanitary living quarters. In Karakalpakstan at the turn of the 1960s, per 1 sq. km. land accounted for 7.5 people, which was 2.5 times lower than the indicators for the USSR and 6.2 times lower than the indicators for the entire Uzbekistan.

In 1960, in rural areas of Karakalpakstan, dekhkan farms prevailed, located at a certain distance from each other. During this period, 68% of the republic's population lived in rural areas. The government measures introduced, for example, taxation of citizens who own livestock above the established norms, had a negative impact on the lives of rural residents. Thus, on November 3, 1963, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the UzSSR “On a cash tax from citizens - owners of livestock who are not engaged in socially useful work and keeping livestock for the purpose of personal enrichment” was adopted, according to which rural residents were prohibited from keeping more than three sheep on their farms. offspring and one goat and in general



the quality of life in the countryside led to internal migration, which they tried to regulate through administrative measures. In the period from 1964 to 1968 alone, 31,608 people moved from rural areas to the cities of Karakalpakstan, and 2,934 people from cities to rural areas [18].

Cultural services to the population also required investment. For example, on September 27, 1963, the Karakalpak regional party committee and the Council of Ministers of the KKASSR adopted a joint resolution, which noted a decrease in the number of cultural and educational institutions, and the existing premises were used for other purposes. Libraries and clubs were often located in unsuitable premises [19].

Thus, we can point out that the standard of living of the rural population was much lower than the urban population. The post-war period was accompanied by total control by the administration of the local settlement. Analysis of the production of essential products and satisfaction of needs allows us to establish a close connection between politics, economics and the social sphere in Karakalpak society, and to trace how the organization of the economy affects the culture of everyday life.

References:

1. Рзаев К.Р. Вопросы реализации продовольственной программы в Каракалпакской АССР // Вестник КК ФАН УзССР, 1987, № 2, С. 48.
2. ЦГА РК. Ф. 322, оп. 3, д. 103, л. 45.
3. Народное хозяйство ККАССР за 60 лет. - Нукус, 1984, С.37.
4. Таджиева Р. Из истории развития рисоводства в Каракалпакской АССР // Вестник ККФ АН УзССР, 1990, №2. С. 126.
5. Рзаев К., Медетуллаев Ж. Развитие аграрной политики партии XXVI съездом КПСС // Вестник КК ФАН УзССР, 1981, № 3, С. 46.
6. Курбаниязов А.Б. Развитие торговли в Каракалпакской АССР в условиях зрелого социализма. Ташкент, 1982, С. 45.
7. Алимова Д., Голованов А. Узбекистан в 1917-1990 годы: противоборства идей и идеологии. - Ташкент, 2002. С. 71.
8. Курбаниязов А.Б. Развитие торговли в Каракалпакской АССР в условиях зрелого социализма. Ташкент, 1982, С. 46.
9. Медведев Р. Н.С.Хрущев. Политическая биография. – Москва, 1990. С. 172.
10. Курбаниязов А.Б. Развитие торговли в Каракалпакской АССР в условиях зрелого социализма. Ташкент, 1982, С. 46.
11. ЦГА РК, ф. Р-322, оп. 1, д. 2641, л. 2.
12. ЦГА РК, ф. Р-322, оп. 1, д. 2497, л. 213.
13. Каракалпакстан жана тарийхы. – Нукус, 2003. СС. 302-305; Шамамбетова Г. Социальная политика в Каракалпакстане. Автореф. дисс...к.и.н. – Нукус, 2004. С. 6.
14. Сарыбаев М. История хлопководства Каракалпакстана во II половине 40-х гг. XX века.// Вестник ККО АН РУз. Н. 2006. № 3. С. 81.
15. ЦГА РК, ф. 1, оп. 7, д. 596, л. 14.
16. ЦГА РК, Ф. Р-551, оп. 7, д. 596, л. 213.
17. Шалекенов У.Х. Казахи низовьев Амударьи. – Ташкент, 1966. С. 218.
18. Шамамбетова Г. Социальная политика в Каракалпакстане (1950-1985 гг.). Автореф. дисс. к.и.н. – Нукус, 2004. С. 8.
19. ЦГА РК, ф. Р-322, оп. 1, д. 2497, л. 91.