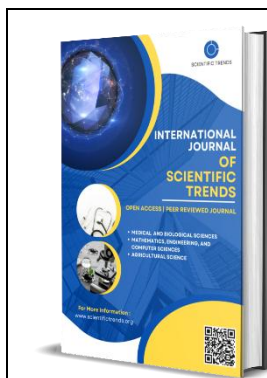


# The Development of Trade Relations and the Importance of Trade Routes During the Reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids

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## Abstract

This article discusses the efforts to develop internal and external trade relations, the establishment of embassy relations with foreign countries, exchanges of letters, and the activities of trade caravans during the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids. At the same time, the role of cities in trade, the development of commodity-monetary relations, and the importance of the Great Silk Road in this regard are also highlighted.

**Keywords:** Amir Temur, trade, caravanserais, embassy relations, Transoxiana, trade routes, caravan, Great Silk Road, Samarkand, Great Silk Road, Shahrukh and Ulugbek

## Introduction

The era of Amir Temur and the Timurids occupies an important place in the history of Central Asian culture. In particular, the fields of architecture, science, literature, and art flourished. Their power was especially manifested in architecture. As evidence of this, the words inscribed on the facade of the Oqsaroy can be cited: "If you do not believe in our power and might, look at our buildings!"

The Timurid state had established permanent trade relations with China, India, Iran, Russia, the Volga region, and Siberia. In further developing these relations with foreign countries, Amir Temur placed great emphasis on embassy relations. In addition, he paid special attention to the construction of various trading posts, markets, and roads. He built new caravanserais on caravan routes and repaired old ones. In particular, he restored trade and craft buildings such as bazaars, tim, toq, and kappon in Samarkand and Bukhara. Samarkand and Bukhara had specialized markets and were distinguished by the vastness of their trading areas. The market was not only a place for handicraft production, but also a place where handwritten books and writing paper were sold, and mirzas who wrote areizas or letters also sat there. The name of each stall was associated with the name of the goods sold there.

In addition, the bazaars were a place where discussions on literature, poetry and science took place, decrees were issued and the guilty were punished.

In the field of caravan routes, places for rest and horse-changing were built for trade caravans, couriers and ambassadors.

In general, by the end of the 14th - 15th centuries, caravan routes of socio-economic, political and military importance connected Maveronnahr with many countries. Caravans connecting the trading port of Maveronnahr with China and other Eastern countries almost always passed through Dizak (Jizzakh) along the following routes: Samarkand - Dizak - Chach - East Turkestan - China; Samarkand - Dizak - Khavas - Fergana - China; Samarkand - Dizak - Zamin - Sabat - Fergana - China.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the passage of important trade routes connecting the East and the West through Movarunnahr created the basis for the involvement of Amir Temur's empire in political, economic, military, and cultural relations and interests not only with Asian countries, but also with several important European countries. At the same time, production in Movarunnahr grew rapidly.

In a letter sent by Amir Temur to the Chinese khan Taizhu, it was noted that "the roads between caravansaries were opened, the bandits on the roads were destroyed, and those traveling to distant lands could feel at ease."<sup>2</sup>

The Spanish ambassador Clavijo, who was in Samarkand, the capital of Timur's empire, observed this place with admiration and described it as follows: "Due to the lack of a special trading center convenient for buying and selling in this city, the owner ordered to build a large street along the city, and on both sides of it stalls and shops for selling goods. The fact that such a large construction was completed in less than twenty days is undoubtedly surprising."<sup>3</sup>

The Spanish ambassador also noted the important role of Samarkand in foreign trade. According to the historian of that time, Ibn Arabshah, Samarkand was brought from foreign countries, in particular, ores from Khorasan, rubies and diamonds from India and Sindh, Chinese atlas, jade, musk and other goods, gold and silver from other countries, and leather and fur from Russian Tatarstan.<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that relations with China were also quite active during the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids. Amir Temur in 1389 conquered Mongolia and eliminated the threat posed by Mongolia to Transoxiana. After that, it became possible to ensure the security of the caravan route passing through Mongolia and East Turkestan and to restore trade and diplomatic relations with China. The Chinese source "Min Shu Li" of the 14th century contains important information about this. In particular, it is noted that in 1389-1398, ambassadors came to China on behalf of Amir Temur 9 times, and in 1395, ambassadors were sent from China to Samarkand under the leadership of Fu An.<sup>5</sup>

Sahibkiran's thoughts in his letter to the French King Francis VI are noteworthy: "You send your merchants to my kingdom. We will warmly welcome them and show them respect. We will also send our merchants to your country. You also show them respect. Do not allow them to be subjected to excessive pressure. I have no other demands from you. After all, the merchants will prosper." These thoughts show that Amir Temur paid special attention to trade-embassy relations

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<sup>1</sup> Pardayev M. On the location of the city of "Dizak" on the Great Silk Road // Cities of Central Asia on the Great Silk Road. Samarkand 1994. 49-50b

<sup>2</sup> Khojaye A. "The Great Silk Road: Relationships and Destinies". Tashkent. 2007. 199b

<sup>3</sup> Muhammadjonov A. "History of Uzbekistan". Tashkent. 2000. 213b

<sup>4</sup> Muminov I. "The place and role of Amir Temur in the history of Central Asia". Based on written sources. Second edition. Tashkent. 1993.30b

<sup>5</sup> Mavlonov O'. "Ancient roads of Central Asia: stages of formation and development". Tashkent. 2008. 183b

in foreign policy matters and sought to develop them in all respects. And he was eager to create sufficient conditions in this regard. In particular, in matters such as establishing standards of justice among ordinary people and full observance of order and discipline, the following words of Amir Temur indicate how much the principles of justice were followed in the territory of the empire: "I have established such order and discipline that no child from one end of my empire to the other carrying a plate of gold on his head will be harmed." It can be seen from this that in the development of the country, the growth of trade, the establishment of good diplomatic relations, and in the prosperity of the empire in all aspects, such characteristics as trust, equality and justice among the population are of great importance. Amir Temur was a ruler who understood this very well. During his 35 years of rule over the country, Sahibkiran carried out many military campaigns during these years. As a result, he created a large empire that covered a huge territory from India, China to the Black Sea and from the Aral Sea to the Persian Gulf. In addition, he subjugated Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt and the Lower Volga, the Don, Lake Balkhash and the Ili River, as far as Northern India. However, Amir Temur's campaigns should not be limited to taking booty. He aimed to capture more world caravan routes. At the same time, he did not neglect to ensure the safety of caravans on these routes, clear the roads of robbers, build new caravanserais, repair old ones, and create sufficient conditions for trade.

Sources testify that Amir Temur was categorically against imposing taxes on the people for various reasons and excuses. In addition, he exempted the people from paying some taxes several times. When a difficult situation arose, he paid the people's taxes at his own expense, and even added his wife's jewelry to the missing part. It must be admitted that this is an economic reality that has not happened in history, but Amir Temur dared to do so. This policy had a double positive effect in improving the economy of the empire. First, the well-being of the working people increased, their incomes increased, their satisfaction with state policy strengthened, and they were encouraged to work even more. Secondly, the increased incomes of the population gave a great impetus to revive the market and increase demand, as a result of which an extremely important multiplier effect for economic development arose. In the 15th century and the first quarter of the 16th century, economic life was manifested in the development of crafts and commodity-money relations. The volume of production increased. Broad strata of the urban and partly rural population were involved in commodity-money relations. The sources emphasize that before and after the Timurid era, until the annexation of Central Asia to Russia, commodity-money relations were not as developed as in this period.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, numismatic studies of coins from the era of Amir Temur and the Timurids show that two main types of monetary units were produced: small miri coins, weighing 6 grams of silver and a quarter of a 1.5 gram vase coin (the word "miri" comes from Amir Temur's title "Amir")<sup>7</sup>.

Amir Temur minted gold, silver, and copper coins. However, gold coins were minted only occasionally and in very small quantities. The monetary system was mainly based on silver coins.<sup>8</sup> During the reign of Shahrukh and Ulugbek, good neighborly relations were also established with Tibet and India. In 1421, ambassadors from Tibet arrived in Bukhara and Samarkand. In 1441-

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<sup>7</sup> Rakhmatullayeva O, Salomova J. Numismatics. T., 2012, 87b

<sup>8</sup> Ernazarova T., Kochnev B. Coins are the messengers of the past. T.: "Science", 1977,28b

1442, Shahrukh sent ambassadors to India under the leadership of historian Abdurazzaq Sammarkandi to the Bijanagar palace. He wrote about his journey to India via Karman, Hormuz, and the Persian Gulf.<sup>9</sup>

In conclusion, we can say that the era of Amir Temur and the Timurids was the final stage of the development of the Great Silk Road. The importance of these roads, which connected many regions of great importance for trade through trade relations and, on the one hand, prevented various conflicts, was incomparable. At the same time, the growth of trade was supported and encouraged by the state, and all efforts to increase the role of cities as trade centers led to the development of internal and external economic and cultural relations. Now the northern routes of the Great Silk Road, which passed through the Dashti-Kipchak lands, lost their significance, and the cities of Maveraunnahr and Khorasan began to play an important role in international economic and cultural relations along the central routes of the Great Silk Road.

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