



DEVELOPMENT OF MIDDLE CITIES IN ZARAFSHAN REGION

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ANNOTATION

This article discusses the geography of the middle cities of Zarafshan region. The article discusses the role and importance of medium-sized cities in regional geourbanistics. In addition, the history of the formation and development of each city is given in its current state.

KEYWORDS: *Medium city, geourbanistics, city, urban addresses, city network, big city, small town, classification, urban population.*

INTRODUCTION

Today in the Republic of Uzbekistan there are 1204 urban settlements, including 119 cities and 1085 towns. If we pay attention to their location in the classification of cities, we will see that relatively small towns with a population of less than 50 thousand people. However, in the geo-urbanization of Uzbekistan, medium cities (population 50-100 thousand people) play a special role. Because this category is a "bridge" connecting large cities with small cities. In addition, the development of the geography of large cities is also associated with medium-sized cities. This category is mainly one of the second regional centers, so to speak, serves as a kind of "district" centers. For example, Kattakurgan, Denov, Chust, Shahrikhan, Zarafshan, Turtkul, Kogan. Among them, only Gulistan is the regional center. Currently, there are 22 medium-sized cities in Uzbekistan (01.01.2021).

The data show that the number of medium-sized cities in Uzbekistan is growing very slowly. During the last two censuses of the former Soviet Union (1979-1989), the number of such cities was 7 [3]. During the years of independence, the number of cities with a population of 50-100 thousand people increased relatively rapidly. If in 2000 the number of medium-sized cities was 14, in 2021 it will be 22. 4 of them are cities in the Zarafshan valley.

THE MAIN PART

Zarafshan region is located in the central part of Uzbekistan, which includes Bukhara, Navoi and Samarkand regions. The area of the region is 168.1 thousand km², which is 37.4% of the country's territory. The Zarafshan region is home to about one-fifth of Uzbekistan's population.

There are 4 medium-sized cities in the economic region - Kattakurgan, Urgut, Zarafshan and Kagan. Kattakurgan, the largest medium-sized city in the region, was added to the list of medium-sized cities in the 1970s. At the beginning of the XXI century, Kagan and Zarafshan, and later the city of Urgut, joined this category. Currently, Samarkand region has 2 (Kattakurgan, Urgut), Bukhara and Navoi regions have one medium city (respectively, Kagan and Zarafshan).

When analyzing the cities with a population of 50-100 thousand people in terms of administrative subordination, Zarafshan is a city subordinate to the republic, and Kattakurgan and Kogan are cities subordinate to the region. Urgut is one of the cities of the district.

However, the city of Urgut also has the right to be at least one of the cities under the province. This is because the list of cities under the jurisdiction of the region includes cities with a population of at least 30,000, which are of great administrative importance and are considered



promising economic and cultural centers. The role of Urgut in the socio-economic life of Samarkand region and its demographic potential are enough to make it a city of regional significance.

Kattakurgan is located on the left bank of the middle reaches of the Zarafshan River, at an altitude of 485 m above sea level. In the last quarter of the XVII century (1683-1684) the present-day Kattakurgan (its ancient part - the "old city") was founded. Formed 76 km northwest of Samarkand (the regional center), this settlement was included in the list of cities in 1868. Later, at the end of the XIX century, with the construction of the Turkmenbashi (Krasnovodsk) - Tashkent railway, it gained a favorable geographical location. In the 1940s, the

Kattakurgan Reservoir (Sea of Uzbekistan) was built to rationally use water from the Zarafshan River. This served to increase not only the economic and social, but also the recreational significance of the city.

Due to the convenience of its geographical location and proximity to the raw material areas, the city's industries developed rapidly and became one of the middle cities (population 50-100 thousand people). In particular, the city has such enterprises as oil extraction plant, cotton ginning, brick and milk processing plants, meat and flour plants. Currently, Kattakurgan, the "second city" of Samarkand region, has a population of more than 90,000 people.

Table 1.
Population dynamics of middle cities of Zarafshan region

| Tr | Name of cities | Population, thousand people | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | 1926 | 1939 | 1959 | 1970 | 1979 | 1989 | 2000 | 2010 | 2021 |
| 1 | Kattakurgan | 14.5 | 25.9 | 34.1 | 44.0 | 53.0 | 58.3 | 66.1 | 77.8 | 91.7 |
| 2 | Zarafshon | | | | 14.7 | 35.3 | 47.4 | 53.3 | 72.5 | 85.1 |
| 3 | Urgut | 3.7 | 16.5 | 10.5 | 14.7 | 20.4 | 36.9 | 49.4 | 58.8 | 69.2 |
| 4 | Kogon | 10.4 | 17.6 | 21.1 | 34.1 | 41.8 | 47.9 | 52.9 | 55.3 | 61.5 |

Note: The table is based on population censuses and data of the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The city of Zarafshan is located in the central part of the country, in the Kyzylkum desert. The city is one of the developing settlements in typical desert conditions, and its natural conditions and climate are closely connected with the surrounding Kyzylkum desert [8]. The city of Zarafshan is located 200 km northwest of the regional center (Navoi). It is one of the two administratively subordinate cities of the region (the second is Navoi). The formation of the city is closely linked with the discovery of a nearby gold mine. The further development of Zarafshan took place in connection with the extraction of this natural resource and its supply for the development of the country's economy.

The settlements created by the development of mineral *resources are called "resource cities" in the scientific literature*. A clear example of this is the town of Zarafshan, which was established in 1967 as a center for mining and development of the Muruntau deposit. Many non-ferrous metallurgy and mining enterprises have been built in the city. As a result, the demographic and economic potential of the city increased, and in 1972 it became one of the cities of Uzbekistan.

Today Zarafshan is one of the largest industrial centers of the republic. There are many industrial enterprises, small businesses, construction and transport organizations in the city. In particular, the main enterprise of the city is the Central Mining Administration of Navoi MMC. It has at its disposal

the Muruntog deposit 2-GMZ, Kyzylkum phosphorus complex and other divisions. In addition, there is the Zarafshan Construction Department, which is part of the Navoi MMC.

The Zarafshan branch of the Navoi State Mining Institute, secondary special educational institutions, secondary schools and preschools have been operating in the city since 2007. In addition, there are medical institutions, houses of culture, farmers and markets for the population of the city.

The population of Zarafshan has grown rapidly in the last quarter of the 20th century. During the 1970 census, Zarafshan had a population of 14.7 thousand. Over the next decade, the city's population increased more than 2.5 times. If in 1970 the population of Zarafshan was 14.7 thousand people, by 1979 the population of the city reached 35.3 thousand people (see Table 1). In the 70s of the last century, the city's population increased by 20.6 thousand people. After the 1980s, however, urban population growth slowed somewhat. However, between 1979 and 1989, the city's population increased by 12.3 thousand people.

During the years of independence, as in all cities of the Republic, external migration from Zarafshan has increased. As a result, urban population growth has slowed dramatically. If in 1989 Zarafshan had a population of 47.4 thousand people, by 2000 the city's population had grown to 53.3 thousand people, which means that over the past 11 years the city's population has increased by only



5.9 thousand people. From the 21st century onwards, urban population growth accelerated again. Currently, the city of Zarafshan has a population of 85.1 thousand people (see Table 1).

The city of Kagan is located in the territory of the Bukhara agglomeration, 12 km from the regional center (Bukhara). Kagan is the second largest city in Bukhara region in terms of administrative and economic significance. Kagan was founded in 1888 as a railway station. During the study, there was a slight revival in the economic life of Bukhara region. The development of the industry here was positively influenced by the railway passing through its territory. Therefore, the industrial development is mainly the railway station - New Bukhara^[1]. On the eve of 1917, the economic potential of New Bukhara increased and it became a major industrial center. At that time, there were 15 industrial enterprises in the area.

During the 1926 census, a new form of urban settlement emerged, urban-type settlements (sh.t.p). According to the preliminary census, there are 17 sh.t.p. New Bukhara (Kogon), the only settlement in the Bukhara region, was registered. At that time, the city's population did not exceed 5,000 people.

In 1929, New Bukhara (Kagan) joined the ranks of cities. The construction of the Kagan-Karshi-Termez-Dushanbe railway increased the importance of the settlement as a transport hub and gave it the status of a city. Since then, many industrial enterprises have been launched in the city - oil refineries, cotton gins, lime factories and car repair shops. As a result, not only the transport importance of the city, but also the importance of industry has increased. Currently, the city of Kagan is a major industrial and transport center with a population of 61.5 thousand people (01.01.2021). The population of Kagan, the main railway hub of the region, is 8.6% of the total urban population of the region (3.2% of the total population of the region).

The convenience of the geographical location of the city of Kagan can be explained by the following:

- ❖ The Tashkent-Turkmenbashi (Krasnovodsk) and Moscow-Dushanbe railways of international importance pass through Kagan;
- ❖ Bukhara-Karshi, Denau-Urgench, Termez-Nukus highways pass through the city;
- ❖ regional center - close to the city of Bukhara;
- ❖ The main industrial region of Bukhara region is Bukhara-Karavulbozor;

- ❖ Proximity to tourist and recreational facilities such as Jayron nursery and Tudakul reservoir [7];
- ❖ The presence of various building materials and other mineral deposits around Kogan, etc.

The above features indicate that Kagan is located in a convenient geographical location. Of course, the geographical location of the city's transport is important among them. In addition, this factor was the main factor in the formation of the city of Kagan. International and national roads passing through the Kagan region have had a positive impact on the socio-economic development of the city. As a result, Kagan became the main gateway not only to the Bukhara region, but also to the south-west of Uzbekistan.

Urgut is located in the eastern part of the Zarafshan valley, between Turkestan in the north and Zarafshan ridges in the south, at an altitude of 1000 m above sea level. Urgut is the center of the district of the same name, formed 45 km east of Samarkand. Although the city is quite ancient, it has never served as an important center in history. The city developed mainly during the twentieth century. In 1973, Urgut became one of the cities due to the assignment of the functions of the district center and the integration of industrial and service facilities.

The city has long been one of the largest centers of trade and crafts in the region. Urgut is the largest market in the Samarkand region. A number of rastas of national handicrafts are formed around the market. Urgut's favorable geographical location, production infrastructure and investment attractiveness were the basis for the formation of a free economic zone (FEZ). Currently, one of the FEZs in Uzbekistan operates in Urgut. The effective operation of FEZs plays an important role not only in the socio-economic life of the city, but also in the region and the region.

In addition, Urgut has great tourism and recreational opportunities. The city and its surroundings are famous for their beautiful nature, beautiful places, sacred springs and other attractions. In particular, the millennial plane trees, in particular, the Chor Chinor monument, are a permanent object of domestic and foreign tourism. In addition, the city's world market and craft stalls also attract local and foreign tourists. Therefore, in the future development of Urgut, special attention should be paid to the factor of tourism and recreation [7].

At present, the ancient cities of Gijduvan in Bukhara region and Aktash in Samarkand are very close to the "threshold" of the middle cities of the Zarafshan economic region. Today, more than 40,000 people live in each of these cities. In the near future,



it is expedient to further improve the development of these district centers and develop a "road map" for their integrated development.

CONCLUSION

In general, in the geurbanistics of the Zarafshan region, medium-sized cities have their own characteristics:

- The study of 4 cities in this category shows that some of them are developing on the basis of FEZ (Urgut), industry (Zarafshan) and transport (Kogon);
- The number of medium-sized cities in the Zarafshan economic region is relatively small;
- Although Urgut is a relatively ancient city, it still does not fall into the category of large cities;
- Due to the slow population growth, cities like Kattakurgan have been in this category since the 1970s;
- Apart from Kattakurgan and Zarafshan, the other two medium-sized cities in the region are administrative centers. That is, Urgut and Kagan are district centers;

Studies show that the pace of development is not uniform in all medium-sized cities. Therefore, the development of a comprehensive program of measures for the future socio-economic development of each city is an urgent task today. The comprehensive development of cities will lead to the sustainable development of the country and regions and the improvement of living standards.

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