

The Participation of The Population from The Villages on The Northern Slope of The Nurota Range in The Development of The Mirzachol Region: A Historical-Ethnographic Analysis

Azamat Abdiyevich Berdiyev

Assistant, Tashkent University of Humanities, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article analyzes the historical and ethnographic aspects of the participation of the population from villages located on the northern slope of the Nurota Range in the development of the Mirzachol region during the 20th century. It focuses on the reasons for the population's migration, their labor in establishing new agricultural enterprises, their contribution to the development of cotton cultivation and irrigated farming, and the formation of a socio-cultural environment in these new settlements. The study highlights the significance of utilizing scholarly literature, archival documents, and field notes, and examines the role of the inhabitants of the Nurota villages in the history of Mirzachol within the context of local history and migration processes.

Keywords: Nurota Range, Mirzachol, Forish, Sintob, Ej, Okhum, Mojrum, Porasht, migration, resettlement, cotton cultivation, irrigated farming, labor activity, historical memory, ethnography.

Introduction: In the history of Uzbekistan, the processes of reclaiming new lands, constructing irrigation infrastructure, and developing agriculture have brought about significant changes in the territorial distribution of the population and in social life. One such process is the gradual reclamation of the Mirzachol region. This process was not limited merely to irrigating new lands and expanding cultivated areas; it also involved the migration of people from various regions, the formation of new villages and agricultural enterprises, the evolution of labor relations, and shifts in the local cultural environment.

Research on the history of the reclamation of Mirzachol covers topics such as the development of irrigation systems, the expansion of cotton cultivation, the resettlement of populations to new areas, and the establishment of new agricultural units. Notably, the study by J. Jorayev—which focuses on the reclamation of new lands in Mirzachol and the territorial distribution of the population in the post-Second World War period—is significant for understanding the socio-demographic aspects of this process. [1]

However, explaining the history of the development of Mirzachol solely through policies and economic initiatives at the national level is insufficient. It is also essential to study—based on local sources—the populations of specific villages that participated in this process, the reasons for their migration, their labor experience, and their lives in the new territories.

In this regard, examining the migration and labor activities related to Mirzachol among the inhabitants of villages such as Sintob, Ej, Okhum, Mojrum, and Porasht—located on the northern slopes of the Nuratau Range—is of particular scholarly significance. This approach allows for an integrated analysis of the region's socio-economic history, population mobility, and historical memory.

The objective of this article is to provide a historical-ethnographic account of the participation of the inhabitants of the villages on the northern slopes of the Nuratau Range in the development of Mirzachol, and to identify the factors driving their migration, the nature of their labor activities, and the characteristics

of their social life in their new settlements.

Historical Conditions for the Development of Mirzachul

The development of the Mirzachul region took place throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries under various political and economic conditions. During the era of the Russian Empire, initiatives were undertaken to study the territory, assess irrigation potential, and foster the growth of cotton cultivation. In the Soviet period, the reclamation of new lands became inextricably linked to policies aimed at expanding agriculture—specifically, cotton production.

The natural conditions of Mirzachul necessitated extensive land reclamation and irrigation efforts to facilitate irrigated farming. Consequently, the development process involved critical tasks such as excavating canals, establishing water supply systems, leveling land, combating soil salinity, and creating new agricultural enterprises. This economic transformation of the region also drove a greater need for population settlement and labor resources.

Scholarly literature on the history of Mirzachul frequently highlights the connection between the reclamation of new lands and policies regarding the resettlement of the population. Research by J. Jumaev, for instance, analyzes the key stages of both land development and resettlement policies, using Mirzachul as a case study. [2]

The resolution adopted on February 2, 1946—aimed at restoring and further developing cotton cultivation in Uzbekistan—is cited as a key document in the post-war policy of expanding cotton production. This policy intensified efforts to bring new lands into agricultural use and to supply them with the necessary labor resources.

However, the migration of people to the Mirzachul (Hungry Steppe) was not limited to the post-war period alone. Local field data indicate that connections between the villages of the Nurata Range and the Mirzachul region (along with its adjacent areas) existed as early as the first decades of the 20th century. These findings suggest that interregional migration should be examined as a long-term historical process.

Key factors driving migration from the villages of the Nurata Range

In the villages located on the northern slopes of the Nurata Range, the lives of the inhabitants were intrinsically linked to natural-geographical conditions, water sources, available cropland, and opportunities for livestock farming. In foothill and mountainous regions, the limited availability of land suitable for agriculture, the seasonal nature of water supplies, and

disparities in economic opportunities may have influenced some families to relocate to other areas.

When analyzing the factors behind migration, it is necessary to distinguish between several distinct scenarios. The first involves families or groups of relatives migrating independently in search of new land and sources of income. The second entails individuals being recruited—at the initiative of the state or agricultural organizations—to work on newly established farms. The third involves families relocating to join relatives or fellow villagers who had migrated previously.

It would be inaccurate to categorize all these instances as "forced migration." The timing of each relocation, the party that initiated it, the legal circumstances, and the extent to which the decision was made by the families themselves must be examined on a case-by-case basis.

The field data provided also mentions factors such as drought, water shortages, crop failures in certain years, and locust infestations. Specifically, it is noted that hardships associated with the years 1905, 1917, and the 1930s have been preserved in local historical memory. While this information may be significant in explaining the reasons for migration, it must be cross-referenced with archival documents and other independent sources.

Consequently, the migration of residents from the villages of Nurota to Mirzachul cannot be attributed to a single cause. Natural conditions, economic interests, kinship ties, employment opportunities in new agricultural settlements, and state policy each played varying roles at different times.

Initial Migrations and Inter-village Connections

The materials provided for this article contain information regarding specific dates and the number of families that migrated from villages in the Nuratau Range to the Mirzachul (Hungry Steppe) region and its adjacent areas. Specifically, there is information about migrations in 1924 linked to the "Pakhtaorol" agricultural enterprise, noting that certain families from the villages of Porasht, Hayot, Mojrum, and Sintob relocated there.

These data are significant for determining the geography of the initial migrations. However, it is necessary to verify details—such as the administrative status of Pakhtaorol, the official name of the agricultural entity, the exact number of migrating families, and the dates of their relocation—against archival documents. Therefore, for the time being, it is appropriate to present these figures as preliminary data derived from the sources.

Field research materials also contain the names of families and individuals who migrated toward the Mirzachul region from various villages, starting in the 1930s. The scholarly value of such information lies in the fact that it allows for the study of broader migration processes through the histories of specific individuals and families.

When reconstructing the history of these migrations, one should not merely provide a simple list of names. It is necessary to determine which village each individual originated from, when they migrated, what kind of agricultural enterprise they worked in, and whether they subsequently encouraged their relatives to migrate as well. Such an approach helps to link individual biographies to the history of regional migration.

Participation of residents from Sintob, Ej, Mojrum, and other villages

The provided materials contain information regarding the involvement of residents from Sintob, Ej, Mojrum, Porasht, and other villages in agricultural operations within the Mirzachul and Syrdarya regions. These data allow for an analysis of migration from the villages of the Nuratau Range, broken down by individual families and specific villages.

Records concerning the village of Sintob detail the families that migrated in 1941 and their subsequent settlement in agricultural enterprises within the Saykhunabad district. Some records mention 150 families, while other sources refer to more than 235 individuals who migrated from the villages of Sintob and Ej. The relationship between these two figures is unclear; they may represent different migration cohorts, reflect different methods of calculation, or pertain to different time periods. Consequently, it is not possible to consolidate them into a single figure.

Materials concerning the village of Mojrum note the migration of 55 households to the "Bolshevik" collective farm in 1940, as well as the relocation of 72 families to the Piskent area in 1952. Furthermore, there is evidence indicating that the number of families from Mojrum residing in the Piskent region increased during the subsequent period. However, since the dates and the scope of the subsequent figures are not clearly defined, they require further verification.

The significance of this data lies in the fact that it demonstrates that the migration process involved not only individuals but also entire families and groups of fellow villagers. Such group migrations may have created favorable conditions for maintaining mutual support, kinship ties, and shared cultural traditions in the new territory.

At the same time, it should be noted that the migration process varied from one village to another. Some families may have moved to the new area for temporary work before eventually returning, while others migrated for permanent settlement. To clarify these distinctions, it is necessary to examine the subsequent generations of these families, their marital ties, and the history of their places of residence.

Labor Activities and the Development of Cotton Farming in New Agricultural Enterprises

One of the key aspects of the reclamation of the Mirzachul (Hungry Steppe) was the expansion of irrigated agriculture and cotton cultivation. Transforming new lands into arable fields required bringing in water, excavating irrigation ditches and canals, leveling the terrain, preparing the soil for planting, and establishing agricultural infrastructure.

People who migrated from villages in the Nurota region were engaged in farming and other agricultural tasks in these new territories. When examining their labor, it is necessary to look beyond mere cotton cultivation and also consider activities such as irrigation, construction, livestock farming, horticulture, and the general organization of agricultural operations.

Works by A. Razzoqov on the history of cotton farming in Uzbekistan, as well as the study titled "History of the Development of Cotton Farming in Uzbekistan" (История развития хлопководства в Узбекистане), can be used to provide a broad context for the historical evolution of the sector. However, one cannot automatically assume that these works contain information about specific individuals who migrated from the Nurota villages. Evidence concerning particular individuals and agricultural enterprises must be verified through archival documents or field records.

The materials you provided contain the names of several individuals in connection with their professional activities. Before including these names in the article, it is necessary to verify their correct spelling, the village to which each person belonged, the specific farm or enterprise where they worked, and the period of their activity. If any awards, professional achievements, or the status of an "exemplary worker" are mentioned, this information must be supported by relevant documentation or a reliable oral source.

Furthermore, evaluating the work experience of the residents of Nurota's villages solely through production output metrics is insufficient. Aspects such as adaptation to new conditions, practices regarding water usage, agricultural skills, mutual assistance, and the dynamics within local labor collectives also constitute significant areas for historical-ethnographic research.

Migration Geography and the Formation of New Settlements

The provided data outlines migration patterns for the inhabitants of villages in the Nurata Range, tracing their movement toward the Saykhunabad, Guliston, Oqoltin, and Sirdaryo districts, as well as certain districts within the Jizzakh region and parts of present-day Kazakhstan.

Analyzing this geographical information through maps makes it possible to identify migration routes, the distances between settlements, and the connections between villages. In this context, it is important to distinguish between historical administrative boundaries and those that exist today, as the names or administrative status of certain areas may have changed over time.

As migrant families established permanent residences in these new areas, their social networks expanded. The proximity of relatives and former fellow villagers likely strengthened mutual support systems. Furthermore, the coexistence of people from diverse regions within these new agricultural holdings and villages fostered the development of new social relationships.

Research focused on the spatial distribution of the population in the Mirzachol region helps in understanding the broader scope of this process. [1] However, to determine the precise locations of families who migrated from the villages of Nurota, it is necessary to cross-reference lists of households, population records, archival documents, and the recollections of subsequent generations.

The Social and Cultural Life of Migrant Populations

The process of migration is not merely a change of residence; it is a complex phenomenon intertwined with family life, kinship ties, customs, and a sense of local identity. Families who migrated from villages in the Nuratau Range may have preserved certain traditions while adapting to the labor and daily living conditions of their new environment.

To determine this, it is essential to examine aspects such as wedding ceremonies, funeral and mourning customs, mutual aid among relatives, the celebration of holidays, culinary traditions, dialects, and family memories. However, concluding that specific customs have been preserved specifically within these migrant families requires field interviews and ethnographic observation.

Oral sources—such as a field interview with Amina Momo—can be instrumental in uncovering facets of migration history that are not reflected in official documents. Such conversations yield information regarding ancestors who migrated, the process of

adapting to a new location, relationships with fellow villagers, and family recollections.

When analyzing oral history materials, it is necessary to distinguish whether the interviewee participated directly in the events described or whether they acquired the information from previous generations. For instance, if an interviewee recounts an event they personally witnessed, this constitutes direct memory; if they relate a story heard from their grandfather or parents, it represents historical memory transmitted across generations. Both types of information are valuable, yet their distinct natures must be clearly identified in scholarly analysis.

The Importance of Cross-Referencing Historical Sources

To fully document the participation of the Nurata Range villagers in the development of the Mirzachul region, it is essential to cross-reference various types of sources. Scholarly literature explains the broader historical process; archival documents can provide specific data regarding dates, households, and families; and field notes reveal details of local memory and daily life.

For example, if field notes record the number of families that relocated in a particular year, it is advisable to verify this figure against the relevant settlement records, collective or state farm rosters, and census data. Should the figures differ, the reason for the discrepancy must be determined rather than simply conflating the data.

The document held in the Gulistan District State Archive—specifically in Fond 125, inventory 1, file 263, sheets 14–15—could serve as a key primary source for the article, provided its content relates to this resettlement process. It is necessary to verify the document's title, date, issuing organization, and content.

Furthermore, information regarding the resolution dated February 2, 1946, should be cross-checked against the official text or a reliable scholarly publication. Consulting the original text whenever possible, rather than relying on secondary sources for the resolution's title and content, enhances scholarly accuracy.

Thus, cross-referencing sources strengthens the reliability of the facts presented in the article and allows for connecting local historical memory with broader historical processes.

CONCLUSION

The participation of residents from villages on the northern slopes of the Nurata Range in the development of the Mirzachul region represents a

significant aspect of Uzbekistan's history regarding migration, agriculture, and territorial development in the 20th century. Studying this process offers a deeper understanding of the economic and social ties between the foothill villages and the newly developed territories. Existing preliminary data indicate that certain families and individuals from villages such as Sintob, Ej, Mojrum, and Porasht migrated to Mirzachul and adjacent areas. However, specific details—such as migration dates, the number of families, the official names of settlements, and figures related to labor activities—require further clarification through archival research and additional fieldwork.

It is important to study the development of Mirzachul not merely as a history of irrigation and cotton cultivation, but as a process involving human lives, family destinies, work experiences, and cultural adaptation. In this regard, analyzing local historical memory and oral sources alongside written documents enhances the research's scientific value.

Future research should delve deeper into the genealogical histories of families migrating from the Nurata villages, their migration routes, economic activities in the new settlements, and intergenerational cultural ties. Such an approach allows for an understanding of Mirzachul's history not only within the framework of state policy but also through the lived experiences of the local communities and families involved.

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