

THE UNOFFICIAL RUSSO-QING TRADE ON THE EASTERN KAZAKH STEPPE AND IN
NORTHERN XINJIANG IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

ХІХ ҒАСЫРДЫҢ БІРІНШІ ЖАРТЫСЫНДАҒЫ ҚАЗАҚ ДАЛАСЫНЫҢ ШЫҒЫС БӨЛІГІ МЕН
ШЫҢЖАҢДАҒЫ РЕСЕЙ МЕН ҚЫТАЙ АРАСЫНДАҒЫ БЕЙРЕСМИ САУДА

НЕОФИЦИАЛЬНАЯ РОССИЙСКО-КИТАЙСКАЯ ТОРГОВЛЯ В ВОСТОЧНОЙ ЧАСТИ
КАЗАХСКОЙ СТЕПИ И СИНЬЦЗЯНЕ В ПЕРВОЙ ПОЛОВИНЕ XIX ВЕКА

by

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The Unofficial Russo-Qing Trade on the Eastern Kazakh Steppe and in Northern Xinjiang in
the First Half of the 19th Century

XIX ғасырдың бірінші жартысындағы Қазақ даласының шығыс бөлігі мен шыңжаңдағы
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Abstract

The Treaty of Kuldja (Ili) signed in 1851 between the Russian empire and the Qing empire marked the start of the official Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. This thesis aims to explore the generally neglected pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade on the Eastern Kazakh steppe and in Northern Xinjiang by examining the trade in three areas: Semipalatinsk, Tarbagatai and Ili. This pre-treaty era Russo-Qing trade was regarded as illegal on the Qing side but legal on the Russian side. By comparing the information from Chinese and Russian sources, this thesis argues that the original legal and official Kazakh-Qing trade established in the 1760s was gradually transformed into an unofficial Russo-Qing trade in the first half of the 19th century. Besides analyzing the motivation and the stance of the Russian empire and the Qing empire, this thesis highlights the role of individual actors such as merchants, nomads, government officials and border guards in forging the trade. This thesis also discusses the commodities of the trade, the myth of silver flow and the discovery of the dramatic price change in the year of 1840. The analysis of travelogues and quantitative archival data of the imports and exports of the Semipalatinsk custom post from the 1820s to the 1840s complement the existing scholarship on this topic. By discussing the above-mentioned themes, the author reaches the conclusion that the pre-Treaty era unofficial trade was already marked by established institutions and diverse commodities, though with a high degree of informality. The 1851 Treaty of Kuldja which officialized the Russo-Qing trade in Ili and Tarbagatai did not establish a new trade, but was a result of the pre-Treaty period unofficial trade and carried many characteristics of the pre-treaty era trade.

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Introduction

There is a general perception that the 19th-century overland trade was in decline with the rise of the sea trade.¹ However, this view has been challenged in the recent decades with the growing number of scholarly works on the 19th century Eurasian overland trade.² This thesis contributes to this debate by studying one particular aspect of it: the unofficial Russo-Qing trade on the eastern Kazakh steppe and in northern Xinjiang in the early 19th century. In previous scholarly works, this topic has generally less discussed compared to the Kiakhta trade, the Kazakh-Qing trade and the post-1851 Russo-Qing trade. This thesis aims to reconstruct the picture of the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in northern Xinjiang and highlight its importance in shaping the official post-1851 trade.

Russia had been trying to establish itself as the intermediary of the trade between Europe and China. After difficult negotiations with China, the first market for Russo-Qing trade was established in Kiakhta near Lake Baikal in 1727. This thesis highlights an alternative trading spot to Kiakhta, though much smaller in terms of trade turnover. Before 1851, these alternative markets in Tarbagatai and Ili in Xinjiang were illegal from the viewpoint of the Qing authorities but legal on the Russian side. This small-scale unofficial trade gradually took over in importance from the Kiakhta trade by the end of the 19th

¹ J. C. van Leur, *Indonesian trade and society: essays in Asian social and economic history* (Hague: W. Van Hoeve Publishers, 1967); Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century, the East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd ed., 1974).

² Morris Rossabi, "The 'Decline' of the Central Asian Caravan Trade," *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World 1350–1750*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 351–70; Stephen Frederic Dale, *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600–1750* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Scott C. Levi, *The Indian Diaspora in Central Asia and its Trade, 1550–1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Erika Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia: Trade in Early Modern Eurasia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016).

century. This thesis aims to discuss the origin of this pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. In this way, it will to some degree contribute to the existing literature on the 19th century Eurasian overland trade.

Previous historiography has dealt with many issues related to Russo-Qing trade, such as Russian and Chinese motivation to trade, the Kiakhta trade, the Kazakh-Qing trade, the post-1851 Russo-Qing trade and the conjuncture of the illegal pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade, and participants and commodities in the Russo-Qing trade. Khodarkovsky³ and Monahan's⁴ works discuss Russian motivation to trade with the east, while Perdue,⁵ Yanagisawa⁶ and Newby⁷ cover Qing motivation to trade with the west. This thesis agrees with the arguments of the above scholars on the role of the states in shaping trade relations by expanding sovereignty and stipulating rules regarding the trade, but at the same time emphasizes the more important role of individuals in shaping the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. Monahan, Burton⁸ and Onuma⁹ highlight the importance of Bukharan merchant networks in Eurasian overland trade. This thesis highlights the role of other individuals (Qing officials, the Kazakhs and other Central Asian merchants) in shaping the pre-1851 unofficial trade in Xinjiang.

³ Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier: the making of a colonial empire, 1500-1800* (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).

⁴ Monahan. 2006.

⁵ Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: the Qing conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

⁶ Akira Yanagisawa, "Some Remarks on the 'Addendum to the Treaty of Kiakhta' in 1768", *Memoirs of the Research Department of The Toyo Bunko* 63 (2016): 65-87.

⁷ L. J. Newby, *The Empire and the Khanate: a political history of Qing relations with Khoqand c. 1760-1860* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

⁸ Audrey Burton, *The Bukharans: a dynastic, diplomatic, and commercial history, 1550-1702* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997).

⁹ Takahiro Onuma, "The Development of the Junghars and the Role of Bukharan Merchants," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, vol. 2 (2011): 83-100.

Perdue and Millward¹⁰ discuss the issue of tributary trade in their works, and how the Qing empire treated tributary trade differently from previous dynasties. This discussion strengthens our understanding of the uniqueness of Qing foreign trade compared with foreign trade of the previous dynasties; Foust's¹¹ work which extensively discusses the Kiakhta trade and Millward's work on Kazakh-Qing trade both help the students of Russo-Qing trade to understand the two forms of official Qing-steppe trade. While Li's¹² work focuses on post-1851 Russo-Qing legal and official trade in Xinjiang, Noda¹³ mentions the existence of an active pre-1851 illegal Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili, and the intermediary role of the Kazakhs in this trade. This argument reflects a new perspective of treating the Kazakh-Qing trade as a broader network of Russo-Qing trade. The result of this thesis supports Noda's view on the intermediary role of the Kazakhs in the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. Foust, Newby, Monahan and Noda all discussed commodities exchanged in Russo-Qing-Central Asia trade which provide valuable information to complement the quantitative data which I collected in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

This research supports Jin Noda's view that the Kazakh-Qing trade was part of a broader unofficial Russo-Qing trade with the Kazakhs as intermediary before the opening of the official Russo-Qing trade in 1851, but aims to deepen the understanding of this topic by analyzing travelogues to show how this trade is influenced by individuals, and by

¹⁰ James Millward, "Qing Silk-Horse Trade with the Qazaqs in Yili and Tarbagatai, 1758-1853," *Central and Inner Asian Studies*, vol. 7 (1993).

¹¹ Clifford Foust, *Muscovite and Mandarin: Russia's trade with China and its setting* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

¹² Sheng Li, *Xinjiang dui su'e maoyi shi, 1600 - 1990* [The History of Trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union and Russia, 1600 - 1990] (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1993).

¹³ Jin Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates between the Russian and Qing Empires: Central Eurasian international relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Boston: Brill, 2016).

analyzing quantitative data to provide more concrete evidence of the existence of the trade and explore characteristics of the trade. The research shows how the alternative Russo-Qing trading spots of Kiakhta in Tarbagatai and Ili were established and developed throughout the years. Although the result of this research shows that the scale of the unofficial pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili was much smaller than that of the Kiakhta trade in the same period, it nevertheless demonstrates that the later official Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang has a precedent. This research argues that the Treaty of Kuldja signed in 1851 did not have a profound influence on the pre-existing trade. The merchants who participated in the trade and commodities exchanged remained similar, with only a change in the scale of the trade. Besides, the research also points to the often-neglected gap between the official and unofficial attitudes of the Qing officials towards the “illegal” Russo-Qing trade. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the importance of silver in the pre-1851 Russo-Qing unofficial trade in Xinjiang, and brings up four hypotheses to explain the possible relation between silver and the trade during the period in concern.

The main research question of this thesis is “what was the situation of the unofficial Russo-Qing trade in the eastern Kazakh steppe and northern Xinjiang before it was legalized in 1851?” To answer this big question, several sub-questions are asked: “What was the political background of Russo-Qing relations and the motivation for the two states to develop the trade?” (in Chapter 1); “What are the characteristics of this trade?”, “What was the official attitude of Russian empire and Qing empire towards this unofficial trade?” and “Who participated in the trade?” (in Chapter 2); and “What major commodities were exchanged?”, “Were there particular commodities that had a strong influence on the trade?” and “How does the trade differ from the post-1851 legal trade?” (in Chapter 3). Discussion

on the political context, the role of governmental officials, the profile of merchants, and the types, quantity and values of commodities can contribute to our understanding of the situation of the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade.

The main hypothesis of this research is that the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili did exist, and was not small in scale. In addition, the hypothesis also suggests that this trade substituted for part of the Kiakhta trade, and even had an influence on the Kiakhta trade. Although the result of my research shows that the quantity and values of goods in pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili was only a small proportion of those in the Kiakhta trade, it nevertheless gives other meaningful results. First, the data on the imports and exports of the Semipalatinsk customs house clearly shows that the trade did exist. Second, although the quantity and values of commodities traded there were much smaller than those of Kiakhta trade, the data nevertheless give two meaningful pieces of information. First, the data show that the types of commodities in pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang remained similar to those of the post-1851 trade and only the scale of trade was bigger post-1851. Therefore, the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851 can probably be seen as less groundbreaking than it is perceived as the start of Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. Second, the data also point out the role of silver in the price of commodities. The decreasing amount of silver that flowed to Semipalatinsk and the depreciation of silver were likely related to the price of other types of commodities. This discussion on silver in this trade can be put into the broader context of the discussion on silver supply of the Qing empire under the influence of the Opium Wars.

The primary source base of this research includes sources in Chinese and Russian. The sources in Chinese can be grouped into four major categories: 1. The scholarly editions

of published works and essays on the politics of Xinjiang: *Xichui yaolue*¹⁴ which contains descriptions of the geography, *karuns*, governmental positions, military settlements and trainings, local ethnic groups and customs of Xinjiang, *Xun Xian Lu*¹⁵ which sketches out information on the geography and history of different towns in Xinjiang and *Xichui zongtong shilue*¹⁶ which is a comprehensive guide that not only covers the themes in *Xichui yaolue*, but also Qing political history, descriptions of towns, irrigation, natural resources, cattle-raising, local manufacturing, education and literature in Xinjiang; 2. published archival documents (mostly correspondence between Xinjiang local officials and the court): *XDLZX*¹⁷ which presents documents on the politics, migration and trade in Xinjiang and documents on the Kazakh-Qing trade and Russo-Qing trade, *Tacheng and Aletai, Yili*¹⁸ which contains collected documents on the Kazakh-Qing trade, cases of illegal trade, the nomination of government officials, and statistics on horses, cattle, food, and cloth; 3. published local chronicles of Xinjiang: *Taerbahatai shiyi*¹⁹ which describes the geography, demography, monetary policies, tax regulations, customs, provisions and funds for troops,

¹⁴ Yunshi Qi, *Xichui yaolue* [Survey of the Western Frontiers], Zhongguo fangzhi congshu: Daoguang, vol. 4 [Collections of Chinese Local Chronicles: Daoguang era, vol. 4] (1837; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1968).

¹⁵ “Xun Xian Lu” [News Acquired while Traveling on An Official Mission] in *Zhongguo bianjiang yanjiu ziliao wenku: bianjiang xingzheng jianzhi chubian*: vol. 3 *xibei he xinan* [Records on the Materials on Chinese Border Studies: First Compilation on Administrative System of the Border Area: vol. 3 Northwest and Southwest] (Beijing: chishi chanquan chubanshe, 2011), 49-50.

¹⁶ Tingkai Wang and Yunshi Qi, “Xichui zongtong shilue” [On the General Issues of the Western Frontier] (1809) in *Qingchao zhili xinjiang fanglue huibian* vol. 23 [Compilation on Strategies of the Qing Governance in Xinjiang vol. 23] (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2006).

¹⁷ *Xinjiang difang lishi ziliao xuanji* [Collections of Xinjiang Local Historical Materials]. ed. Guorong Ma and Bofu Xu (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1987).

¹⁸ *Zhongguo Xinjiang lishi wenhua guji wenxian ziliao yibian* [Collections of the Translated Monographs and Archival Materials on the History and Culture of Chinese Xinjiang] (Atush: Kezilesu Ke'erkeziyu chubanshe; Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2016 and 2017).

(1) *Tacheng* [Tarbagatai] and *Aletai* [Altai]: part 1, vol. 12; part 2, vol. 13

(2) *Ili*: part 2, vol. 4; part 3, vol. 5

¹⁹ Xingzhao, *Taerbahatai shiyi* [On the Issues of Tarbagatai]. (1805; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1969).

the development of different industries, and trade in Tarbagatai. *(Qianlong) Yili shiyi*²⁰ presents information on the geography, demography, military settlements and trainings, local industries and required work for different branches of the government in Ili; 4. published collected materials on the Shanxi merchant group *MQJXLZXB* which contains descriptions of the management of the companies, their activity in different regions, and their connections with the government.²¹ All of the above works in the collections were originally written in the Qing period and were edited later. *XDLZX* and part of *Tacheng and Aletai, Yili*²² and *MQJSLZXB* are contemporary collections of documents which also contain sources from pre-Qing times and the Republican era. All of the above works are highly descriptive and official in nature, and some were written with the same template of language. Besides the correspondence, other descriptions of local situation were also produced to provide information for the central government and for the purpose of archiving.

Sources in Russian include archival data on the imports and exports of Semipalatinsk custom post in the year 1826, 1827, 1830, 1831, 1835, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1843, 1846, 1848 and 1849 (TsGA RK F.I-478 op.2)²³ which I got access to in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan. These data were not used in any secondary literature I have reviewed besides Sladkovskii's work²⁴ which indirectly cited a work that

²⁰ Yongbao, "(Qianlong) Yili shiyi" [On the Issues of Ili (Qianlong era)] in *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng: xinjiangfu xianzhiji* vol. 9 [Compiled Chinese Local Chronicles: Xinjiang vol. 9]. (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2014).

²¹ *Ming Qing jinshang shangye ziliao xuanbian* [Selections of Materials on Shanxi Merchants in Ming and Qing Period]. ed. Zhengming Zhang etc. (Taiyuan: Shanxi jingji chubanshe, 2016).

²² *ZXLWGZYZ*

²³ TsGA RK F. I - 478 Semipalatinskaia tamozhnia Departamenta tamozhennykh sborov Ministerstva finansov op.2 (1731-1868).

²⁴ M.I. Sladkovskii, *Istoriya torgovo-ekonomicheskikh otnoshenii narodov Rossii s Kitaem (do 1917 g.)* [History of Economic Relations between Russia and China] (Moscow: Nauka, 1977).

probably cited part of these data. The *dela* I have examined contain the turnover of trade in each month of a year and tables which include the names, quantity, values and duties imposed on all the commodities imported and exported in a year. All of the *dela* I have examined contain a separate list of cases of smuggling (as defined by Russia) from the official data. Due to the limited time, I was not able to collect all of the data of this section for each year and track the change of it and make comparison with the data on the legal trade. However, the illegal trade mostly focused on two items: tea from China and salt which is described as “from the lakes on the Kazakh steppe.” In the *dela* of some years, there are lists of the names of the merchants who came to or left Semipalatinsk, where they were traveling from, and the amount or value of commodities they brought/took.²⁵ Some *dela* also contain correspondence between the Semipalatinsk custom post and the Ministry of Finance.²⁶ These data do contain errors in calculation, but the difference was clearly a result of miswriting or miscalculation rather than suggesting any meaningful pattern as the difference was often very small. Some parts of the data are illegible or contain massive amount of markings that cross the data out which prevail in the majority of the documents. However, most of the markings are done with pencil while the original numbers are written down in ink. Since most the markings are done systematically without particular attention paid to single entries, it is probably true that the markings were used as a way to tick the data while the data were being aggregated. Therefore the data can still be seen as valuable sources for our analysis.

²⁵TsGA RK f. I-478 op. 2 d. 124 l. 7ob - 23ob (1830). “Godovaia o prishedshikh i otshedshikh karavanakh Semipalatinskoi Tamozhenoi za 1830 god.”

²⁶ TsGA RK f. I - 341 op. 2 d. 10. L. 3, 3ob, 5, 6 (1827). “o vyvoze tovarov kitaiskim perevodchikam Dalantai dlia promeny Ust’-Kamen. Zastave.”

Other primary sources in Russian I have examined are: the collection of documents *TSSPSD*²⁷ which contains reports, correspondence and tables of the Semipalatinsk local trade, trade with Xinjiang and discussions on the custom duties; travelogues of Russian travelers from the Eastern Kazakh steppe to Ili and Tarbagatai including “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova... v 1845 godu”²⁸ and “Opisanie puti... perevodchika Putintsev.... 1811 g;”²⁹ and surveys of the local situation in Semipalatinsk in *OSOZ*³⁰ which contains descriptions and data of the demography, agriculture, cattle-raising, the development of different industries, geography, transportation and trade. Both of the materials in the collection of documents and the survey of the local situation in Semipalatinsk are highly official in nature, and their purpose is to inform the relevant governmental officials and to archive information for each year. The travelogues are valuable ethnographic works that present more information on the behavior of local people. However, as both of the travelers did not know the local language and most information was got through translators, their account may not reflect the real situation. Besides, the different identity of the two travelers might also had an

²⁷ *Torgovye svyazi semipalatinskogo priirtysh'ya (xviii-nachalo xx veka) sbornik dokumentov* [Collected Documents of the Trade Relations of the Semipalatinsk Upper Irtysh Area (From the 18th to the Beginning of the 20th Century)] ed. A. A. Aubakirov, G. T. Kasymova, and K. L. Esmagambetov. Upravlenie arkhivami Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti, Tsentru dokumentatsii noveishei istorii Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti (Semipalatinsk, 2004).

²⁸ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova v Chuguchak i Kul'zhu v 1845 godu pod vidom kuptsa Khorosheva” [The Travel of N. I. Liubimov in Chuguchak (Tarbagatai) and Kuldja (Ili) in 1845 under the name of a merchant Khoroshev], ed. N. I. Veselovskii in “*Zhivaya Starina*” vol. 2 section 1. 1908. 170-189. Accessed on July, 16, 2017. <https://lib.rgo.ru/reader/flipping/Resource-728/RuPRLIB12047272/index.html>

²⁹ “*Opisanie puti po kotoromu khodil perevodchik kollezhskii registrator Putintsev, sostoiashii pri general-leitenante Glazenape, po imennomu vysochaischemu ego imperatorskogo velichestva povelenniu poslannye taino ot kreposti Bukhtarminskoi do kitaiskikh gorodov Chuguchaka i Kul'zhi pri karavane s tovarom kommertsii sovetnika i tarskogo 1-i gil'dii kuptsa Nerpina. 1811 g.*” [Description of the road which the translator Putintsev, from Lieutenant-General Glazenap on behalf of his Imperial Majesty's highest order, was sent secretly from the Bukhtarminsk post to the Chinese towns of Chuguchak and Kul'zha together with the caravan of the commissar advisor 1-st guild Taran merchant Nerpina with commodities. Year 1811] in *Putevye dnevniki i zapiski rossiiskikh chinovnikov i issledovatelei o kazakhskoi stepi xviii - serediny xix veka* [Diaries and notes of Russian officials and researchers of the Kazakh steppe from 18th-middle of 19th century]. ed. I. V. Erofeeva (Astana: Obshestvo invalidov - Chernobylets, 2012), 82-121.

³⁰ *Obzor semipalatinskoi oblasti za 1893; 1898 god* [Overview of the Semipalatinsk Oblast' for the year 1893; 1898] (Semipalatinsk: Tipographia oblastnogo pravlenia, 1894, 1899).

influence on the treatment they received by the local people which is discussed in the second chapter. Nevertheless, the travelogues are highly valuable sources for my research as they complement the official information and statistics, and demonstrate the more individual side of the Russo-Qing trade.

This research is conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative research includes textual analysis of the compilations of archival documents, travelogues and secondary literature; while quantitative research is conducted to analyze and interpret the archival data on the imports and exports of the Semipalatinsk custom house. I transcribed data into spreadsheets and organized the data, created charts and graphs with the data, and tried to analyze and then interpret the data based on the spreadsheets, charts and graphs.

This thesis contains three chapters. The first chapter discusses the political background and motivation for the development of the trade. This chapter includes the motivation for establishing trade relations on the Russian and the Qing side, political events that contributed to the development of the trade, trade in Kiakhta under the Kiakhta treaty system, and the Kazakh-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. The second chapter concerns the unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. This chapter includes the social-economic background of Ili and Tarbagatai, the Russian preparation of trade through expansion and regulations, the different definitions of trade by Russian empire and Qing empire, the attitude of Qing officials on the trade as seen by Russian travelers, and participants of the trade including Russian, Tatar, Central Asian (Bukharan, Khoqandi, Altishahri and Tashkenti) and Chinese merchants and the Kazakhs. The third chapter concerns the commodities exchanged in the pre-1851 trade and its comparison with the

post-1851 trade. This chapter includes discussions on the significance of the year 1840 in this trade including the importance of silver and opium, major commodities in this trade including cotton and silk, woolen products, leather products, tea, food and metal products, and the discussion on the post-1851 trade.

Besides the Kiakhta trade, this thesis limits the discussion about trade in Xinjiang to only northern Xinjiang and eastern Kazakhstan. The trade in southern Xinjiang, though occasionally mentioned, is not discussed extensively to avoid extending the thesis to the enormous discussion of Russian and British rivalry in southern Xinjiang and Central Asia.

Chapter 1: The political background and motivation for the development of the trade

Introduction

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Russian empire had advanced to the Kazakh steppe and the Qing empire had expanded its territory to Dzungaria. They started their expansion project with both similar and different intentions. The expansion of Muscovy started with the combined intention of securing the states frontiers and searching for commercial opportunities. For the Qing empire, their expansion was characterized by the search for security, while commercial interests were secondary.

Initially, when the two empires encountered each other, violent local conflict was the pattern of communication. Russia started expanding into the Amur region in the mid-17th century, and the Qing empire initially resorted to violence to curb the Russian advancement to the east. In 1686, the Qing authorities sieged the Cossack settlement in Albazin as a warning to stop Russian expansion. Gradually, the pattern of Russo-Qing communication shifted from violent conflicts to negotiations. The two parties were able to sign treaties due to the change of political situation in the region, though with great difficulties. The treaties solved some problems, but only temporarily.

After a series of negotiations, Kiakhta was named as the first and the only legal trading point between the Russian empire and the Qing empire in 1727. In the beginning years of trade in the 18th century, the suspension of the market was very frequent when the two parties failed to achieve an agreement when border conflicts rose.

Not long after the establishment of the official Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta, the Qing established trade relations with the Kazakhs in Tarbagatai and Ili in Dzungaria on the northwestern frontier of what today's northern Xinjiang, following the collapse of the Dzungar Khanate in the 1760s. This trade served as an important source for the Qing empire to obtain horses for military uses. However, there were cases of Russian commodities flowing into Xinjiang. The frequent suspension of the Kiakhta trade brought suspicions that the Kazakh-Qing trade was indeed functioning as an illegal Russo-Qing trade while the Kazakhs were intermediaries of the trade before it was eventually legalized in 1851. In this chapter, I divide the Russo-Qing commercial relations into four periods: 1689-1727 is the period following the signing of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) when the Russian empire unilaterally tried to establish trade with the Qing empire but did not succeed; 1727-1851 is the period following the signing of the Treaty of Kiakhta (1727) when the official Russo-Qing trade was established in Kiakhta while the unofficial Russo-Qing trade was developing in Xinjiang; 1851-1858 is the period when the official Russo-Qing trade was established in Tarbagatai and Ili following the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja (1851); and the post-1858 period when the whole of Qing territory was opened for trade with Russia following the signing of the Treaty of Tientsin (1858).

The Political and Economic Settings and Interests of the Two Empires

The Russian Empire

Muscovy has emerged as an influential regional power by the end of the sixteenth century and started its expansion into Siberia. According to Michael Khodarkovsky, the

motivation of Russian expansion to the east was at first “defensive,” but gradually shifted to being “opportunistic.”³¹ The eastward and southward expansion started initially due to security concerns, but later continued due to economic incentives. Erika Monahan partially disagreed with Khodarkovsky’s explanations by highlighting the pragmatic rather than the ideological motivation of the expansion of Russia. Monahan has demonstrated that the incentive for establishing commerce indeed began from as early as the fifteenth century and continued as a pattern throughout the process of Russian expansion to the east in the reign of Peter I. Monahan called Muscovy an “activist commercial state” that “cultivated international trade relations, taxation policies, subsidized commercial activities, instructed privileged merchant ranks” and the state also participated in commerce as well.³²

Under the Tsar Ivan IV, Muscovy had redefined itself as a formidable regional power, and was striving for further autonomy from the already disintegrated Golden Horde. Following a series of expansion projects, in the seventeenth century, Muscovy had grown into an empire under Peter the Great. Russia was able to stop paying tribute to the Crimean Khanate,³³ and introduced the concept of submission to its nomadic neighbors. The nomadic groups took *shert*³⁴ as a way to seek temporary protection, while Russia saw this action as a sign of permanent submission. This misunderstanding created problems when they encountered the Kazakhs, as the Kazakhs would take an oath of allegiance to both the Qing empire and Russian empire.

Parallel with the military expansion to Siberia and the Far East, Russia started searching for natural resources and animal products, especially fur. Fur was later paid as

³¹ Khodarkovsky, 221.

³² Monahan, 50.

³³ Khodarkovsky, 67-69.

³⁴ *Shert*: “a written document stipulating conditions of peace and military alliance,” cited from *Ibid.*, 53.

yasak to Russia by Kazakhs under Russian protection.³⁵ One important factor of not building large-scale settlements until the 19th century was related to fur. This was due to the state's perspective that building large-scale settlements and developing agriculture would destroy the fur trade.³⁶ Nevertheless, fur was not the sole driver for Russian expansion to the east, and other commodities motivated the expansion as well. The international and domestic custom duties paid by merchants constituted a major part of state revenue that incentivized Russian expansion.³⁷ Feeding the population of the newly conquered land was another factor that drove Russia further east to look for more resources.³⁸

Russia also started searching for trade opportunities in the steppe and Central Asia, and established trade networks from Tobol'sk and Tara to Bukhara.³⁹ After accepting the petition of Abulkhair Khan of the Junior Juz⁴⁰ in 1731 for protection against the Volga Kalmyks and Bashkirs, Russia was able to move further east and extended its fortified lines. The building of Orenburg was the first move to increase communications with southern Central Asia, and made Russia an intermediary between Central Asian and European markets. The establishment of Orenburg, and also other towns such as Orsk, Yamysh and Semipalatinsk attracted merchants from Kashgar, Bukhara, Khiva and even Europe.⁴¹ The Kazakhs were also serving as protectors of caravans to make sure the caravans would be safe to cross the steppe.

³⁵ Monahan, 122.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

³⁹ Khodarkovsky, 148.

⁴⁰ The Junior Juz (which covers today's western Kazakhstan) is one of the three tribal and territorial divisions of the Kazakh steppe from the late 16th century to the time of Russian annexation.

⁴¹ *Kazakhsko-russkie otnosheniia v 16-18 vv.*, nos. 139, 142, 144, 149-51. Cited in Monahan, 165; Khodarkovsky. 158.

Russia put Islam “in the service of the empire” by sending mullahs among the Kazan Tatars “who could encourage the Kazakhs’ loyalty and ensure their peaceful intentions.” “Other Muslims, such as merchants of Bukhara and Tashkent residing in Tobol’sk, were exempt from local laws, taxation, or any service ‘in order to attract more of them to settle in the Russian Empire and expand trade with the neighboring peoples.”⁴²

With the increasing control of Kazakh steppe by Russia through the establishment of fortified lines and the control of the economy of the steppe, the “khan” title was abolished in 1822 in the Junior and Middle Juz, and in 1860s the Senior Juz also came under the control of Russia. At this time, Russian empire was able to encounter the Qing empire directly at Qing northwestern frontier. The diplomacy of the two countries changed in a fundamental way as frequent communication was made possible by the expansion of both of the empires, and therefore they no longer needed to rely on sporadic missions as a means of communication as in previous centuries.

The Qing Empire

While Russia was consolidating its power through expanding to the east, the Kangxi emperor advanced westward with the goal of deterring the expansion of the Dzungar Khanate to the east. By the late seventeenth century, the Dzungar Khanate was able to “establish itself on the indigenous combination of two main factors: the military power of the nomads and the economic power of the oasis inhabitants.”⁴³ The Dzungar Khanate, situated in Dzungaria (nowadays northern Xinjiang), had expanded its territory to the

⁴²PSZ (*Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*), vol. 22, no. 16,292, 493-95; no. 16,400, 604-6; no. 16,593, 951-52. Cited in Monahan, 217.

⁴³ Onuma, 96.

Tarim Basin, Tibet and the territory of Khalkha Mongols. The westward expansion of the Qing empire was primarily due to security concerns of its western frontier, and Dzungars' attack on Khalkhas which the Qing empire regarded as its *neifan* (inner vessels).⁴⁴ Emperor Kangxi and Qianlong both had launched costly campaigns against the Dzungars.

However, the Qing concern with the security of its frontiers did not vanish when the Dzungar Khanate collapsed. The Qing empire established its rule in the former territories of Dzungar Khanate including Dzungaria and Altishahr,⁴⁵ after crushing the Ishaqiyya and then the Afaqiyya revolt in the 1760s. Nevertheless, continuous resistance from the Altishahr region, the revolt and emigration of the Dungsans to Semirech'e,⁴⁶ and the rise of the Khoqand Khanate, and later the annexation of Kazakh steppe by Russia all forced the Qing empire to remain in its position and to set maintaining security as its primary goal when dealing with its frontier issues.

In contrast to Russia, the Qing empire did not develop a mercantilist motivation during its westward expansion. Commerce was often used as a tool to gain leverage in negotiations rather than being viewed as bringing real economic benefits. The Qing empire used its trade with the Dzungars as a tool to fulfill the needs of Dzungars who wished to trade with the Qing and to build peaceful relations.⁴⁷

After the collapse of Dzungar Khanate, trade developed with the Kazakhs. Although the primary goal of developing trade with the Kazakhs was not building peaceful relations,

⁴⁴ Newby, 8.

⁴⁵ This term means "six cities" in Turkic languages, and is used to describe the Tarim Basin region (today's southern Xinjiang) in the 18th and the 19th century.

⁴⁶ This term means "seven rivers" in Russian. It denotes the region in Today's southeastern Kazakhstan where rivers flow northwest to the Lake Balkhash.

⁴⁷ Zhongguo Diyi Lishi Dang'anguan (LSDA), comp. "Qianlong 8 zhi 15 nian Zhungar bu zai Suzhou dengdi maoyi" (Suzhou trade with the Zunghars from 1743 to 1750). *Lishi Dang'an 2* (1984): 13; *Da Qing Lichao Shilu* (Historical records of the Qing dynasty). Qianlong reigns. (Taipei: Huawen Shuju, 1970). QSLQL QL5/2 *yimao* j.110. Cited in Perdue, 259.

the building of this trade was again due to security concerns. For centuries, Chinese emperors had been seeking the importation of horses from nomadic populations to the north and the west because the horses were more suitable for warfare than Chinese horses.⁴⁸ The goal of building trade relations with the Kazakhs was to obtain more horses, though the Qing empire had been more relieved from this problem than former dynasties because it could obtain horses from the Mongolian steppe and the newly conquered Dzungaria.

The Qing empire used the opportunity to trade as leverage in negotiations with Russia. The rationale of establishing Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta in the mid-18th century was to make sure Russia would maintain neutrality in the Qing-Dzungar war. Besides, the negotiations with Russia on border conflicts were progressing was reflected in the juxtaposition of the opening and temporary closing of the trade in Kiakhta.⁴⁹ Only later in the mid-19th century when the Russo-Qing trade became official in Xinjiang did the Qing empire lose its ability to use trade as a leverage tool, and instead had to accept it as an existing fact in Xinjiang.

In the early years following the collapse of the Dzungar Khanate, the Qing government was actively involved in the local development in Dzungaria and Altishahr, and in procuring horses and cattle from the Kazakhs more for security reasons than because they sought commercial benefits. At first the settlers in Dzungaria were predominantly soldiers from among Manchu bannermen and Han Green Standard troops who were asked to settle down with their families in the region, but gradually common people from the

⁴⁸ Morris Rossabi, "The Tea and Horse Trade with Inner Asia during the Ming" in *Journal of Asian History*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1970): 136-168, 136.

⁴⁹ Yanagisawa.

inner regions of China moved to this area, especially to Dzungaria, either searching for a better living, or after being exiled as a punishment to officials and commoners due to alleged crimes.⁵⁰ The settlers were cultivating the land and tried to improve their welfare by establishing official shops through which commodities from the inner region would arrive. Nevertheless, this trade from the inner region was costly due to the harsh travel conditions of the Hexi Corridor,⁵¹ and trading with the western neighbors seemed to be a more economically beneficial way of obtaining commodities, although it was largely restricted before 1851.

Negotiations and Treaties

I would like to go back a little bit earlier in time to discuss the establishment of Russo-Qing relations from the 17th century to the mid-19th century. The discussion of the negotiations between the Russian and Qing empires, and the treaties signed by the two parties, reinforce the above-mentioned differences between their intentions of expansion and establishing trade relations. It can serve as the political background for the unofficial Russo-Qing trade which is discussed in the second chapter. Besides, the priorities of the Russian empire and the Qing empire in these negotiations changed over time. When the Qing empire started seeking Russian neutrality and aid in its conflicts with other states, Russia started gaining more leverage in negotiations with the Qing empire.

From the signing of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), then the Treaty of Kiakhta (1727), to the Treaty of Kuldja (1851) and the Treaty of Tientsin (1858), Russia was

⁵⁰ Perdue. 328.

⁵¹ This term refers to the historical route which connects the northern China with the Tarim Basin.

gradually able to gain more and more commercial opportunities, though it initially made some concessions on territory. China was able to use treaties as a way to contain the Dzungar expansion with Russia's promise of neutrality. This pattern eventually changed with the collapse of the Dzungar Khanate and the Qing failure in the Opium Wars later in the 19th century.

Russia had been looking for ways to establish trade relations with China as early as the sixteenth century. Russia was only able to start sending missions to the Qing empire in the 17th century to negotiate possibilities to establish political and commercial relations, and most of them failed to achieve their goal. This was partly due to the different demands and frequent clashes over issues of court rituals. James Hevia has contributed to the discussion of the extent to which accepting or rejecting the Qing court rituals could affect how a diplomatic mission of a nation was treated, and how their demands would be received.⁵² For example, Milesco's mission on behalf of Russia in 1675 was "a campaign to establish permanent diplomatic relations with the Manchu Empire on the basis of accepted European practice."⁵³ This mission largely failed because Milesco did not abide by the Qing court rituals to perform prostrations. The Qing authorities regarded Milesco's envoy as a tributary, while the Russian side regarded Milesco as a diplomat who came to establish diplomatic relations with the Qing empire; trade was only part of the goal. The imbalance of expectations had created many diplomatic conflicts. Besides Milesco's mission, there were

⁵² James Louis Hevia, *Cherishing men from afar: Qing guest ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 118-134.

⁵³ Mark Mancall, *Russia and China: their diplomatic relations to 1728* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971), 65.

several other Russian missions that also failed to achieve their goals due to court ritual issues.⁵⁴

The attitude of the Qing authorities of strictly enforcing court rituals changed due to rising concerns over the activity of the Dzungars. In 1689, the Russian empire and the Qing empire signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk. The treaty temporarily solved the border issues in Amur region and established a trading system by which both Russia and China would nominally abide. This negotiation was made possible mainly because the Qing empire sought Russian neutrality in its conflict with the Dzungars. The Treaty of Nerchinsk enabled merchants from both of the states to trade without hindrance as long as they held proper passports.⁵⁵ Russia aimed to establish itself as a middleman in East-West trade. Although fur resources had depleted in the late seventeenth century, Russia was still able to export less valuable furs to the Qing empire, and the trade with the east in general could make up for the depletion of fur resources.⁵⁶ Russia signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk to obtain the opportunity to trade fur with China with the concession of giving up its settlements in Amur valley.⁵⁷ Monahan commented that “the Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689 demonstrated that Russia prioritized commercial relations with China above the acquisition of territory in East Asia.”⁵⁸

In 1727, the Russian empire and the Qing empire signed the Treaty of Kiakhtha which delineated the border between the two states and opened up Kiakhtha⁵⁹ as the only official trading spot between them. The states found it more profitable to collect customs from

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁵⁶ Monahan, 92.

⁵⁷ Perdue, 88.

⁵⁸ Monahan, 89.

⁵⁹ Another market, Tsurukhaitu, was combined with the Kiakhtha market later.

private trade in Kiakhta than to organize official trade there.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, according to Clifford M. Foust, there might be a gap between trade in theory and in practice in Kiakhta, but Foust did not elaborate on this topic.⁶¹ In addition, Monahan mentioned that “in the 1760s Tobol’sk’s registered foreign trade turnover in ruble values was still more than double Kiakhta’s”.⁶² Therefore, the importance of the Kiakhta needs to be studied by comparing it to other markets of Russo-Qing trade. Besides, the Kiakhta Treaty did not address affairs in Central Asia.⁶³ Russo-Qing relations in Xinjiang after the beginning of Qing rule in the region may need further study to understand more of Russo-Qing relations under the Kiakhta system.

The Treaty of Kiakhta also brought about diplomatic consequences. It solved border issues temporarily, but nevertheless created more complications. Russia refused to return Dzungar fugitives according to the Kiakhta treaty, saying that they were an independent force.⁶⁴ Russia also used the Treaty of Kiakhta as a pretext to prevent Qing missions from coming to the Kazakh Steppe.⁶⁵ The Russian Senate stated that “Because the Kiakhta Treaty declares neither jurisdiction nor border details regarding the Kazakhs, they were in a state of independence” and later used it as a pretext to justify its advance into the Kazakh Steppe.⁶⁶ The specific discussion on the Kiakhta trade will be covered later in this chapter.

The Treaty of 1851/Kuldja (Ili) was signed by the Russian empire and the Qing empire in 1851, mostly due to the Russian conquest of the Senior Juz in 1847. The treaty

⁶⁰ Foust, 361.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁶² V. N. Razgon, *Sibirskoe kupechestvo v XVIII-pervoi polovine XIX v.: Regional’nii aspekt predprinimatel’stva traditsionnogo tipa* (Barnaul, 1999), 185, Table 38. Cited in Monahan, 201.

⁶³ Noda. 2016. 218.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 2016. 127.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 2016. 203.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 2016. 142.

allowed “the opening of two towns in Xinjiang (Ili and Tarbagatai) for Russian merchants. A trade pavilion was also to be opened where tariff free-trade could be conducted”.⁶⁷ Initially, Russia had demanded the opening of trade in Ili, Tarbagatai and Kashgar, but the Qing empire refused the demand on Kashgar trade with the pretext that the British would then demand similar rights in Kashgar as well.⁶⁸ In addition, Jin Noda commented on the broader influence of the Treaty of Kuldja. Noda cited Akira Haneda’s argument that the Treaty of Kuldja was just an extension of the Kiakhta Treaty, which took over elements of the Kiakhta system, but Noda added that it was also a starting point for the negotiations over the demarcation of territory in Xinjiang.⁶⁹

While the Qing empire was drawn into the Second Opium War (1856-1860) and the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), Russia and the Qing empire started negotiating over another treaty. In 1858, Russia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States and the Qing empire signed the Treaty of Tientsin which opened the entirety of China to foreign trade without restrictions.⁷⁰ Besides, the Dungan revolt (1862-1877) and the Russian occupation of Ili (1871-1881) complicated the situation of trade in northern Xinjiang, and the trade only grew after the sign of the Treaty of Saint Petersburg in 1881 when Ili was returned to the Qing empire and the trade between Ili and the rest of Xinjiang and the eastern provinces was reestablished.

In sum, the diplomatic relations between Russia and China from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century were characterized by frequent shifts between

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 2016. 301.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 2016. 298-306.

⁶⁹ Akira Haneda, “Iri tsusho joyaki no teiketsu to sono igi” (The Conclusion of the Commercial Treaty of Ili and Its Significance) in *Wada hakushi koki kinen toyoshi ronso* (Tokyo, 1961), 737. Cited in Noda. 2016. 301.

⁷⁰ Shannon R Brown, “The Partially Opened Door: Limitations on Economic Change in China in the 1860s.” *Modern Asian Studies* 12, no. 2 (1978): 177-92.

cooperation (by establishing Russo-Qing trade relations and Russian neutrality in the Dzungar-Qing war), and small-scale conflicts (in the Amur region and Xinjiang). Neither of the two parties were initially interested in expanding their territories as Russia's main interest was to build security and to establish trade relations, while China's interest was mostly to maintain security. The treaties signed between the two parties between the 17th and the 19th century served as models that temporarily marked the political and trade situations of each period. With the defining of the border between the Russian empire and the Qing empire following their respective expansion projects, trade activities were increasing with the increasing political conflicts and negotiations.

Trade in Kiakhta under the Kiakhta Treaty system

The Treaty of Kiakhta was signed by the Russian empire and the Qing empire in 1727 as Russia was strongly motivated to establish a more stable trade system with the Qing empire. Russo-Qing trade had hitherto been conducted in Beijing and border towns in the Amur river region. However, this trade was small in scale,⁷¹ and conflicts arose due to the ineffective organization of the trade. The treaty of Kiakhta designated Kiakhta and Tsurukhaitu as the only trading posts between the Russian empire and the Qing empire besides the caravan trade to Beijing.⁷² Although in the early stage the private trade in Kiakhta was strictly regulated, it gradually increased in volume and influence. More merchants came to trade in Kiakhta, and the commodities traded increased in number and variety. On the Qing side, as at Nerchinsk forty years earlier, the negotiation in view of the

⁷¹ Caravans to Beijing were permitted only once every three years.

⁷² The Beijing trade was abolished later.

treaty was made possible on the Qing side largely because the Manchus were seeking Russian neutrality in their war with the Dzungars.

The northern part of Kiakhta region, Kiakhta, was under the jurisdiction of Russia. The southern part of the region, Mai-mai-ch'eng, was under the jurisdiction of the Qing empire. Kiakhta was said to be a place for temporary transactions rather than a place to build settlements for merchants to stay for a long time due to its geographical location and climate.⁷³ Merchants from Siberia mostly resided in places like Irkutsk and Selenginsk and went to Kiakhta for seasonal trade. Merchants from China who settled in Kiakhta for a long time were even fewer in number. The Qing government prohibited women from coming to Kiakhta to discourage male merchants from settling down with their families there. If the merchants would be able to settle down with their families, there would be a growing day-to-day communication between Chinese and Russians which the Qing authorities were not willing to see. Nevertheless, the communities in Kiakhta - Mai-mai-ch'eng grew and infrastructure was improving.⁷⁴

According to the treaty, the trade in Kiakhta was intended to be tax-free for both sides. Barter trade became the mode of transaction because Russia prohibited the outflow of bullion and coins. Sometimes the same policy was implemented on the Chinese side as well.⁷⁵ This was a common practice of other early modern mercantilist states, as state

⁷³ Foust, 80.

⁷⁴ Foust, 94. In addition, the opening of Kiakhta to trade was probably not a start of the Russo-Qing trade in that region but rather a concentrate pre-existing trade at that particular place. Selecting Kiakhta as the trading spot was possibly related to the pre-existing small-scale trade in its neighboring area. Before the opening of the official trade in Kiakhta, Russo-Qing trade was already going on in Mongolia in places like Urga and Naun. Merchants who frequented these places were only diverted to Kiakhta trade later after the Treaty of Kiakhta was signed.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 214.

revenue ideally meant specie.⁷⁶ At first, pelts and food were forbidden as articles of trade by private merchants to Kiakhta according to the policy of Russia. Nevertheless, the situation changed gradually. In the second half of the 18th century, the major commodities sold by Russian merchants were pelts and other Siberian goods - “*iuft*’ (hides), some small iron goods, animals, foodstuffs, etc.”⁷⁷

Various suspensions of trade were unilaterally declared from the Qing side during the second half of the 18th century. The first suspension was from 1764 to 1768, as a retaliation to Russian illegal taxation on goods, the mutual stealing of horses, and allegations that Russian merchants had been misreporting the quantity of goods they carried. The second suspension occurred from 1779 to 1780 because Russia was not attentive in pursuing criminals who committed wrongdoings in Kiakhta. The third suspension happened from 1785 to 1792 after allegations that the Russians had robbed Chinese merchants. The suspension was also caused by Russia’s unilateral installation of wooden posts at the border. The Qing empire used the suspensions of the Kiakhta trade as a tool to gain leverage in their negotiations with Russia during the second half of the eighteenth century.⁷⁸ The addendum of 1768 solved the conflict that led to the first suspension of the trade, but did not stabilize the trade and there were further suspensions until 1792 when the Kiakhta International Protocol was signed.⁷⁹

During the frequent suspensions of trade in Kiakhta, Russia was searching for alternative places for exchanging commodities. Russia built a fortress in Bukhatarma in

⁷⁶ Monahan, 51.

⁷⁷ Foust, 208.

⁷⁸ Yanagisawa, “Some Remarks.”

⁷⁹ Zhenbo Mi, *Qingdai zhong’e qiaketu maoyi* [The Kiakhta Trade during Qing Period] (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 2003), 22.

1764, and started focusing on the latter as a trade station during this period.⁸⁰ The issue of illegal trade was also important in Kiakhta. “In 1758 Kiakhta customs house director Piatov reported that the secretive carriage of goods was impossible to prevent because of the great distances between the customs barriers and guardhouses”.⁸¹ Furthermore, illegal trade was going on in Xinjiang during the period when Kiakhta was closed, and Khoqandi merchants were said to participate in the illegal tea and rhubarb trade there.⁸² This possible influence of this illegal trade will be a major topic in the second chapter of this thesis.

The participants of Kiakhta trade were Russian merchants (mainly Siberians, but also Russians from the European part of Russia), Chinese merchants (usually from the northern part of China), and Bukharan merchants (who were various groups of Turkic Muslim merchants from Central Asia).

During the first decades of the open of Kiakhta trade, the merchants were predominantly local⁸³ and their number was small. Some of the merchants who participated in this trade were bounded peasants in the first half of the 18th century.⁸⁴ However, in 1758 the Russian Senate passed a decree to “prohibit peasants from trading abroad, either in their own names or others.”⁸⁵ In 1755 and 1794, another decree by Catherine II was promoted which divided Russian merchants into guilds, and only merchants in the first guild were allowed to trade in Kiakhta. Yet, these policies were not

⁸⁰ V. A. Moiseev. *Tsinskaiia imperiia i narody Saiano-Altaiia v xviii v.* Moscow. 1983. 109-110. Cited in Noda. 2016. 218.

⁸¹ Foust, 229.

⁸² Newby, 131, 135.

⁸³ Most of them lived in Selenginsk or Irkutsk.

⁸⁴ Foust, 208.

⁸⁵ *PSZ (polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii s 1649 goda)*, XV, No. 10862, 243 - 44. Cited in Foust, 211.

carried out successfully in Kiakhta. The petty merchants who were not in the guilds were still actively involved in Kiakhta trade.⁸⁶

Besides the Siberians, there was also a group of merchants who were from the European part of Russia. They mostly did not come to Kiakhta themselves, but hired agents to help them participate in the trade. Even the agents themselves only stayed in Kiakhta for one or two months each year.⁸⁷ However, during the later half of the 18th century, more merchants from European Russia and Europe, especially those from Prussia and the Baltic, came to dominate the Kiakhta market.”⁸⁸

The Chinese merchants, though small in number in the early years of the opening of the Kiakhta trade, were better organized than their Russian counterparts. This, according to Foust, gave them an advantage when trading with the Russians.⁸⁹ They mostly came from northern China, especially Shanxi province. Their network, however, extended much farther than northern China. They obtained tea from Hunan in southern China, and transported the boxes of tea all the way up to Kiakhta.⁹⁰ The Chinese merchant groups were bigger in scale due to the high costs of financing the long trip to Kiakhta. Small-scale merchant groups were mainly native Mongols who “did have the advantage of being the important carriers of rhubarb, silver, and gold, all of which the Russian state in particular was extremely interested in obtaining”.⁹¹

Bukharan merchants, a loosely defined Turkic Muslim merchant group, extended their commercial networks spread through Eurasia. They were also involved in the Kiakhta

⁸⁶ *PSZ*, XX, No. 14327, 145-47; XXIV, No. 17223, 531-32. Cited in Foust, 212.

⁸⁷ *Mi*, 91.

⁸⁸ Foust, 210.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 209.

⁹⁰ *Mi*, 93.

⁹¹ Foust, 212.

trade. By the 1730s, Bukharan merchants had monopolized the rhubarb trade in Kiakhta.⁹² Newby cited the account of a British diplomat Harry Parkes, and stated that they were still enjoying this monopoly in the mid-19th century.⁹³

There were no large-scale companies formed for the purpose of trading in Kiakhta by Russian merchants, and most of the merchants organized their activities on the basis of families or small temporary associations.⁹⁴ By contrast, the Chinese merchants formed eight “companies” and set prices by which every merchant in these companies was supposed to abide.⁹⁵ A document about the “sixteen rules of conduct” for Chinese merchants in the Kiakhta trade stipulated by the “companies” reflected the strict organization of the latter. They tried to limit the amount of supplies of Chinese commodities so that the high prices would be maintained. People who committed wrongdoings against the “companies,” such as disclosing business secrets to Russians, would be temporarily excluded from trade, locked up, or forced to leave Kiakhta forever.⁹⁶ This was very different from what happened among Russian merchants. The more influential Russian merchants were unsatisfied with the behavior of petty merchants, but could not rein them in. The petty merchants kept lowering the prices of their commodities which lead to lower prices and profit margins on Russian commodities.⁹⁷

The major commodities in Kiakhta trade were fur and leather from the Russian side to the Qing, and rhubarb, cotton textiles and tea from the Qing side to Russia.

⁹² Newby, 130.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, on the basis of Parkes, ‘Report on the Russian Caravan Trade with China’, 311.

⁹⁴ Foust, 209.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁹⁶ Mi, 90.

⁹⁷ Foust, 210.

The fur trade was very profitable during this period. The fur traded including squirrel, ermine (winter weasel), fox, sable, domesticated cat, muskrat (desman), beaver, ferret and rabbit skins.⁹⁸ Among all the different types of furs, the most popular was squirrel fur, and the most expensive was sable. The proportion of the value of furs among all the exported commodities to China was declining throughout the eighteenth century. Foust suggests that the increasing amount of European commodities to Kiakhta market contributed to this change.

Besides fur, leather was also sold in Kiakhta market. Leather products includes hides, lambskin and sheepskin. Russian and foreign cloth were sold in Kiakhta as well, and Russian cloth was usually cheaper than foreign cloth. Fur, leather and cloth represented 85 percent of commodities exported by Russia, whilst other products such as ironware, sheet iron, glassworks and mirrors were of smaller quantities. In addition, Bengali and Turkish opium were mentioned among the commodities exported by Russian merchants on the Kiakhta market.⁹⁹

Rhubarb was an important resource that Russia had been seeking from China. Russia tried to maintain its intermediary position to rhubarb trade between China and Europe. In Russia, rhubarb trade was illegal when conducted by private unauthorized merchants. Any offences were to be punished with a capital sentence. And only in the early 18th century were Bukharan merchants able to obtain state permission to acquire rhubarb.¹⁰⁰ In 1736, the Russian state appointed Simon Svin'in as the head merchant of the

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 346-350.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 353.

¹⁰⁰ Monahan, 61.

Kiakhta Rhubarb Commission.¹⁰¹ The latter was responsible for inquiring all along the way from Moscow to Kiakhta about any privately (albeit legally) transported rhubarb that had not yet been turned over to the Treasury or the Siberian Prikaz. In addition, the strict quality-control system for rhubarb built by Russia guaranteed the high prices of the rhubarb it traded.¹⁰²

Cottons textiles of various kinds were also a major export by Chinese merchants. *Kitaika* and *daba* were the most popular cotton products in the Kiakhta trade. Silks textiles came second in volume, and it was traded in the forms of unprocessed, semi-processed and finished silk. There was a decline in the quantity of finished silks during the course of the trade. Foust argued that the reasons for this decline were the deterioration of the quality of silk, the development of the silk industry in Russia, and the more profitable supply from Persia.¹⁰³ Finally, brick tea from China, besides being a popular product demanded by Russian merchants, also served as a unit of transaction in Kiakhta due to its sturdy nature in the dry climate in Mongolia.¹⁰⁴ Cottons, silks and tea comprised 90 percent of Russian imports in the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁵ Other commodities such as tobacco, porcelains, lacquerware and artificial and precious stones made up the rest.

In sum, the Kiakhta system fundamentally changed the informal small-scale Russo-Qing exchange on Mongolian steppe into a large-scale and more regulated commerce. Both the Russian empire and the Qing empire increased their knowledge of each other through

¹⁰¹ Foust, 170.

¹⁰² Monahan, 61. They noted the price, made complete lists of the goods, and took signed letters from the owners that confirmed they would not sell rhubarb to anyone else than the State, otherwise they would face the death penalty. The Commerce Collegium informed Svin'in that this practice was exactly what the Dutch used in the East Indies with cloves and cinnamon. This probably reflected how Russia learned strategies from western Europe to facilitate its mercantilist policies.

¹⁰³ Foust, 357.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 358.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 359.

the more frequent exchanges through both official trade and private trade. The Kiakhta trade system, together with the merchant networks developed around it, and the commodities exchanged in the system, served as a model that influenced another area of the Russo-Qing trade system in Xinjiang, which I will discuss in the second chapter. In the following section, I would like to start the discussion on Xinjiang trade by discussing the Kazakh-Qing trade in northern Xinjiang.

The Kazakh-Qing trade in northern Xinjiang

After having ended the Dzungar war in 1757 and the revolt of the Afaqi Khwajas in 1759,¹⁰⁶ the Qing empire started building its western frontier on the territory of former Dzungaria. The Qing authorities appointed a General of Ili to oversee all affairs in Dzungaria and Altishahr. They also relocated many Manchu, Chahar and Sibo bannermen from the northeastern part of the empire and Han Green Standard Army to the new western frontier to settle down with their families. Han soldiers, together with some Sibe, Chahar and Solon bannermen were farming on these new settlements.¹⁰⁷

As has been discussed earlier, horses had long been an important strategic resource throughout the history of China. Horses for military purposes were always in high demand. The Qing empire faced the same problem as well though not as urgently as in previous dynasties. This less urgent demand was because the Qing empire were able to obtain horses from Mongolia and then Dzungaria. The Qing empire started conducting trade with

¹⁰⁶ Li, 30.

¹⁰⁷ *XCYL (Xichui yaolue)* [Survey of the Western Borders] Qi Yunshi, comp. 1807. 2:13a-30a. Cited in Millward. 2006. 79.

Kazakhs to obtain horses in Urumqi in 1758, then decided to change the trading site. The Qing empire designated Ili a new trading site with Kazakhs in 1761, then followed by Tarbagatai in 1764.¹⁰⁸ A trade pavilion (*maoyi ting*) was established at the outskirts of both towns. Kazakhs often came to trade between summer and autumn every year.¹⁰⁹ They sold horses and cattle at a rate much cheaper than that in inner China. In addition, it was very costly to transfer cattle from inner China to Xinjiang. Therefore, purchasing horses and cattle from the Kazakhs was thus very economically beneficial for the Qing empire. This was the rationale of the Qing decision to establish this horse-silk trade with Kazakhs.¹¹⁰

The Sino-Kazakh silk-horse trade was highly formalised and regulated at first. Qing soldiers were asked to dress up as merchants and pretend to have come individually to the trade pavilions to buy horses from the Kazakhs. Only after the official part of the trade was done; were 'true' private merchants were allowed to come into the trade pavilions to buy leftover commodities. Oirats served as translators to facilitate exchanges between the two parties in this process.¹¹¹ "Every summer and autumn, the Kazakh chieftains brought their cattle, horses, and carpets and the leather got from Andijani merchants to Ili, and sold them for silks and cloths. The same was happening in Tarbagatai. When Kazakhs just entered the *karun*,¹¹² the Qing administrators and soldiers examined [their identities and commodities], and then permitted them to come to trade. Some other administrators and soldiers would take care of the Kazakh chieftains."¹¹³ "Every time when there was heavy

¹⁰⁸ Noda. 2016. 129.

¹⁰⁹ Millward. 1998. 46.

¹¹⁰ Perdue, 401.

¹¹¹ Millward. 1998. 47.

¹¹² "Xinjiang's *karun* were enclosed forts built in frontier zones between territory under close the Qing supervision and the pastures of independent nomads not enrolled in the banners." Cited from Millward. 1998. 46.

¹¹³ Yunshi Qi. *Xichui yaolue*. 145.

snow in the region during the winter, Kazakhs were allowed to live near the *karun* by paying a land rent of one horse out of one hundred.”¹¹⁴

Every year, Xinjiang officials submitted orders to the Imperial Silk Factories (*zhizao chu*) indicating the types, colors and amount of textiles they wanted to trade with the Kazakhs according to the latter’s demand in the previous year. After receiving the orders, the textile factories in southern China would produce the silks and transport them to Xinjiang with the protection of official guards. The silks would arrive in Xinjiang in 18 months after the order was submitted.¹¹⁵ Textile factories in Jiangning, Soochow and Hangzhou in southeastern China were responsible for producing silks for trading with the Kazakhs.¹¹⁶ The Qing empire was also gradually adjusting its supply of silks to the Kazakhs.¹¹⁷ Another type of silk, *jinghuajuan*, was recorded as in highly demand among the Kazakhs according to a report in 1780 therefore the report instructed that more *jinghuajuan* should be produced.¹¹⁸

The Qing empire had been looking for ways to reduce its cost of trade in the first few years after its establishment. A special decree in 1760 imposed a cut in the high quality silk prepared for trading with the Kazakhs by 20-30 percent, while adding 4000 bolts of silk of average quality, in order to save input and gain more benefits.¹¹⁹ Yet in 1766 there were reports indicating that the quality of the silks sold to Kazakhs were declining, so that the

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

¹¹⁵ Millward. 1998. 46.

¹¹⁶ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 10, 69. Quoted in *XDLZX*, 315.

¹¹⁷ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 9, 39. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 312. A report dated 1773 showed that there was a high demand for red cloths but there was not enough in the markets, therefore more red cloths were asked to be produced for trading.

¹¹⁸ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 11, 12. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 316.

¹¹⁹ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 6, 10. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 310.

emperor asked for the establishment of a quality control system on the silks.¹²⁰ The Qing government also started transferring cotton cloths made in Altishahr (*huibu*) to Tarbagatai and Ili to sell to the Kazakhs. This was due to the higher demand for cheaper cloth than more expensive silks by the latter. It was also possible that it was the lower transportation cost (compared with that of transporting from southern China) that induced the Qing government to take the decision to bring more *huibu* than silk to Tarbagatai and Ili. According to a decree of 1826, as the Kazakhs came to Ili with sheep to trade for cloths from March to September every year, it was required that about 90,000 bolt of cloth (*huibu*) should be collected from Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan and transported to Ili for trading with the Kazakhs.¹²¹

Usually, the horses obtained in the trade with Kazakhs were directed to military camps in Xinjiang.¹²² After the Dzungar war, the Qing empire was at peace for a lengthy period (before the revolt of Jahangir Khwaja in the 1820s), and therefore the demand for horses was not as urgent as before. Throughout these years, there was an excess of horses brought by the Kazakhs. The General of Ili asked to send the surplus of horses to places like Urumqi, Barkol and Aqsu for breeding, and even inner China (Gansu first, then Shaanxi, Shanxi, and other northern provinces) if there were still more left.¹²³ For example, more than 2000 horses were allocated yearly to Gansu and Shaanxi.¹²⁴ Therefore, even though the Qing empire was actively seeking horses in the beginning of the trade, it had to adjust its way of distributing the horses when there was a surplus of them.

¹²⁰ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 7, 75. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 314.

¹²¹ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 10, 3. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 316.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 309, 310.

¹²³ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 7, 95. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 312.

¹²⁴ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 13, 97. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 313.

One interesting aspect of Kazakh-Qing trade is that it does not fully fit into the system of tributary trade. The “tributary system” model suggested by J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Teng defined China’s foreign relations throughout its history in the following way: China regarded itself as a central power that is higher in position relative to other countries, and defined its neighbors as tributaries. If a tributary paid tribute to the court of China, the court would grant much more valuable returns to the tributary. This was a way for China to symbolize the superiority of itself relative to its tributary nations, without considering the practical financial returns of this activity.¹²⁵ Many scholars have challenged this model. In the case of Kazakh-Qing trade, both James A. Millward and Peter C. Perdue provided evidence of why Kazakh-Qing relation did not fit into this model. Millward cited the Qianlong emperor’s edict in 1758 which specifically distinguished the Qing trade with the Kazakhs from tribute exchange.¹²⁶

At the same time, however, in many documents contained in the *Collection of Documents on Qing Chinese-Kazakh Relations I & II*, the expressions “paying tribute with

¹²⁵ J. K. Fairbank, and S. Y. Têng, "On The Ch'ing Tributary System." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6, no. 2 (1941).

¹²⁶ James A. Millward "Qing Silk-Horse Trade with the Qazaqs in Yili and Tarbaghatai, 1758-1853." *Central and Inner Asian Studies*, 1993, 10. Cited in James A. Millward, *Beyond the pass: economy, ethnicity, and empire in Qing central Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). Millward argued that the horse trade with Kazakhs in Qing period was different from the horse trade under previous dynasties. Millward discussed the characteristics of Sino-nomad horse trade from Han period to Ming, and argued that the Qing horse trade with Kazakhs did not fit into the model of tributary trade. The model suggests that: first, the trade between China and any other states or tribes had always had a strong ideological content (tributary system); second, the trade was always unequal for one party (goods were traded at less than their real value); third, the exchange always took place in the Chinese capital or around the Great Wall region; and last, the above-mentioned means of horse procurement always failed. Millward then argued that the Qing-Kazakh horse trade did not fit the model because: first, the trade was nominally conducted under the term of tributary system, but indeed conducted differently; second, the trade was based on mutual agreement although the Qing empire chose trading posts regardless Kazakh’s preference; third, the exchange took place in Dzungaria rather than a Chinese capital or around the Great Wall; and finally, the horse and livestock trade with Kazakhs contributed to the Qing conquest of Xinjiang. The tributary system, may apply for previous dynasties, cannot be used as the single model to explain the foreign relations of the Qing empire.

horses” and “coming to trade horses” were both used.¹²⁷ The first one is mostly used when denoting Kazakhs who brought horses to town officials or to the court in Beijing as gifts, and the second one is mostly used when denoting Kazakhs who were conducting border trade. This difference can probably be explained by Perdue’s argument (which was built upon Nicola Di Cosmo’s argument) that “the concept of tribute is an ‘environment’:¹²⁸ [tribute is] “a kind of intercultural language, serving multiple purposes for its participants.”¹²⁹ Therefore, the difference in the use of language “tribute” and “trade” probably indicated the same kind of transactions, but only in different environments (at the border, *yamen*, or court).

The Kazakh-Qing trade on the Qing side was highly formalized and regulated, and private trade between bannermen and Kazakhs was forbidden. An edict in 1761 prohibited private trade between Qing officials and *Jazak* princes with the Kazakhs, so that the settlements in Ili and Urumqi would not run out of horses.¹³⁰ This was just after the war with the Dzungars and the Qing authorities might have been cautious of the supply of horses (which later was no longer a problem until the Jahangir revolt). Another report in 1765 shows that *karun* patrollers privately traded horses with the Kazakhs, and the Qing officials were afraid that this practice would cause the price of horses in official trade grow

¹²⁷M. K. Abuseitova, Yongfu Xing. *Qingdai zhong'ha guanxi dang'an huibian* [Collection of Documents on Qing Chinese-Kazakh Relations] (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 2006 (1) and 2007 (2)).

¹²⁸Nicola Di Cosmo, “Kirghiz Nomads on the Qing Frontier: Tribute, Trade, or Gift-Exchange?” in *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt (London: Curzon Press, 2003); Nicola Di Cosmo, “A Set of Manchu Documents Concerning a Khokand Merchant,” *Central Asian Journal* 41 (1997), 160–199; Nicola Di Cosmo, *Reports from the Northwest: A Selection of Manchu Memorials from Kashgar (1806–1807)* (Bloomington, Ind.: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1993). Cited in Perdue, 403.

¹²⁹Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 191. Cited in Perdue, 403.

¹³⁰*Qing qianlongchao manwenjixindang* 03-129-2-014. Quoted in *Tacheng and Aletai*, 148.

higher than in private trade.¹³¹ Another edict dated 1771 recommended resorting to harsher penalties against private trade, which had become widespread.¹³²

Altishahris were forbidden to come to Ili to trade with the Kazakhs, but trade with Khoqand and Andjian, especially the trade of cattle, was allowed, as “Altisharis were not good at raising cattle.”¹³³ As I have discussed earlier, cotton cloths from Altishahr (*huibu*) were the main supplies to Kazakh-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili as a cheaper substitute for silk from inner China. During the period of the revolt of Jahangir (1820 - 1827), the demand for Kazakh horses for military activities in Altishahr rose in the Qing empire. *Huibu* became no longer available due to the revolts, thus the responsibility of preparing textiles was transferred to Gansu province.¹³⁴

The Qing government was particularly suspicious of the Kazakh-Qing trade during the period of suspension of Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta. The suspicion arose because there were traces of possible illegal Russo-Qing trade going on in Xinjiang. A decree dated 1767 touches upon the Qing’s policy on trade with the Russians in Xinjiang when the direct Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta was suspended. The decree first states that the younger brother of Ablai Khan Sultanmambet’s¹³⁵son Ikeme¹³⁶ came to trade “*yuan* fox skin, average fox skin, otter and smoked cow hide” which were produced in Russia and obtained by the

¹³¹ *Qing qianlongchao manwenjixindang* 03-131-3-060. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 222.

¹³² *Qing qianlongchao manwenjixindang* 03-134-5-005. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 382.

¹³³ *Qing gaozong shilu* vol. 780, 582. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 240; *Qing qianlong manwenjixindang* 03-133-6-002. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 318. The newly returned Torghuts who were living in Tarbagatai and Ili region were also forbidden to trade with the Kazakhs. According to an edict of 1772, the Torghuts were allowed to elect a representative who could come to trade in Ili and Tarbagatai, but only within the *karun* line. According to this edict, the Qing government used this policy to prevent the Torghut from stealing and robbing Kazakh horses. The Torghuts were in severe poverty when they had just returned to Dzungaria, and Qing government had been sending donations to them.

¹³⁴ *Qing xuanzong shilu* vol.103, 700 and *Qing xuanzong shilu* vol.109 820. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 640.

¹³⁵ Transliterated from “Suo-le-tong-ban-bi-te.”

¹³⁶ Transliterated from “Yi-ke-man.”

Kazakhs. Then the decree stated that “nowadays our trade with Russia in Kiakhta stopped. We could trade these Russian products from the Kazakhs, but it is forbidden to trade with the Russians in any places... no matter how cheap the commodities brought by the Russians are.”¹³⁷

However, in a decree in 1788, Kazakhs were no longer permitted to bring Russian products to trade. This new policy is based on a report that described how a Kazakh *taiji*¹³⁸ Toktarkuchuk¹³⁹ brought *duoluoni*¹⁴⁰ and tanned cowhide produced in Russia. “Since trade in Kiakhta stopped, the Kazakhs tried to obtain more profits, and it is obvious that it is the Russians who brought their commodities to Ili [and Kazakhs were trading these commodities]. For example, [we] found several thousand catties of rhubarb from Kashgarian¹⁴¹ merchants. Therefore we should prohibit Kazakhs from bringing Russian commodities...[If bringing Russian commodities is allowed], as time passes, the Kazakhs would bring only *duoluoni* and other commodities, rather than horses...Therefore, what is the difference between stopping Kiakhta trade and continuing Kiakhta trade if Russian goods were allowed to be sold in Ili?... If the Kazakhs bring small quantity of *duoluoni* and smoked cow hide, they are allowed to trade, but not a large amount.”¹⁴² Nevertheless, one year later in 1789, some Manchu bannermen bought 500 pieces of Russian snow weasel fur

¹³⁷ *Qing qianlong manwenjixindang* 03-132-2-038. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 246.

¹³⁸ Probably means “sultan” here.

¹³⁹ Transliterated from “Tuo-ke-tuo-ku-chu-ke.”

¹⁴⁰ “A woolen material of wide width which was said to be imported from the west.” Cited from Ni Yibin, 2012, “Material Culture Matters in *The Story of the Stone*.” Accessed at: http://niyibin.org/ni_article/the_story_of_the_stone.html

¹⁴¹ Since rhubarb is not consumed locally in Xinjiang, it is very possible that the Kashgarian merchants (who are indigenous merchants in Altishahr) were selling these rhubarb to either the Russians, Kazakhs or Khoqandis to obtain Russian goods.

¹⁴² *Qing qianlong manwenjixindang* 03-139-4-066. Quoted in *Tacheng and Aletai*, 485.

from Kazakhs, and the Qing authorities requested that they be severely punished.¹⁴³ In 1792, a new decree stated that Kazakhs who did not bring horses and cattle but only commodities were not allowed to come to trade.¹⁴⁴ These reports and decrees show how the Qing empire feared Russian influence in the Kazakh-Qing trade, and the possible loss of opportunities to obtain horses and cattle from the Kazakhs.

In sum, it is important to consider the role of Russia in Kazakh-Qing trade, especially in the later period of the trade before the official Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili began. To what extent can we say Kazakh-Qing trade is indeed Russo-Qing trade with Kazakhs serving as intermediaries? These questions will be discussed in the following chapters.

Conclusion

Russia and Qing China had both grown into empires by the end of the eighteenth century, and their interaction was intensified in this process. Their communication started with different intentions: Russia was looking for opportunities to trade with the Qing empire, while the Qing empire was only using trade as a negotiation leverage. The Qing court was not interested in obtaining Russian goods at that time, only horses from the Kazakhs which were seen as a strategic resource. The sporadic diplomatic missions and then large-scale trade in Kiakhta facilitated communication between the two empires and the growth of conflicts.

¹⁴³ *Qing qianlong manwenjixindang* 03-140-3-030. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 496.

¹⁴⁴ *Qing qianlong manwenjixindang* 03-141-1-035. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 533.

The Qing empire was able to use trade as a negotiation leverage with Russia until the mid-19th century when Russia expanded to the Kazakh steppe. While the Qing empire was trying to cultivate their trade relations with the Kazakhs, they increasingly lost control of the trade in the beginning of the 19th century as Russian influence started prevailing in this trade. Smuggling of Russian goods started becoming a widespread phenomenon. At the same time, the different motivation to trade on the Russian and Qing side would continue being reflected by their strategies regarding this unofficial trade in Xinjiang before the signing of Treaty of Kuldja (Ili) in 1851. This will be the main topic of the next chapter

Chapter 2: The unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang



Source: Kazakh Khanates during eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. Cited from Noda.

2016, 20.ⁱ¹

Introduction

The war-torn Dzungaria was left as a vacuum following the end of the Dzungar-Qing warⁱⁱ in 1757. The Qing government started its massive settlement project in northern Xinjiang in the 1760s and the demand of commodities rose with the project in this area. Although goods were transported from the eastern regions of the Qing empire to the frontier, the transportation took a long time because Tarbagatai and Ili were far from the core regions where the goods were produced. Soldiers with their families and exiled officials and criminals were the main groups of people being relocated to this area. The

¹¹ J. Noda, *Roshin teikoku to kazafu hankoku* (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2011). Cited from Jin Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates between the Russian and Qing Empires: Central Eurasian international relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Boston: Brill, 2016), 20. The border shown in the figure corresponds to the modern territory. The broken lines show approximately the border of the three Juz, and the dot-dashed line shows the territory claimed by the Qing Empire.

relocated Manchu community started building “official shops” which connected Xinjiang to the core regions of the empire. Managing these official shops contributed to finance for the community and diversify the types of goods available in the area. Gradually, however, some of these official shops started serving as marketplaces for foreign goods, including those from the Russian empire which were supposed to be contrabands according to the understanding of the Qing empire. For the Qing empire at that time, the trade with Russia was not supposed to exist in Xinjiang.

The Qing empire and Russian empire defined this Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili before 1851 differently. For the Qing side, the importing of Russian goods should be completely banned formally due to two reasons: first, by banning Russian goods, the Kazakhs would continue bringing enough horses and cattle, which the Qing government needed, rather than bringing Russian goods for trade. Second, opening another Russo-Qing trade post in Xinjiang was also opposed by Chinese merchants who frequented the Kiakhta market. They were concerned that the opening of the trade in Xinjiang would cause fewer Russian merchants to visit the Kiakhta market, and many of them would have to travel much farther. I propose two additional reasons for this prohibition: first, some local authorities in Xinjiang, who were illegally allowing the trade of Russian goods and received custom duties from the merchants, were not willing to see the open of the official trade which would transform the trade into a duty-free trade. Second, the horse supply of Xinjiang had accumulated over the years and the surplus were even sent to the eastern provinces, but they were still afraid of the potential lack of horses in Xinjiang in case of warfare or revolts (which therefore could reflect the Qing empire’s attitude regarding its governance in Xinjiang.) The Russian government, however, had unilaterally enacted

regulations on trading with Xinjiang. They had built custom houses in Semipalatinsk, Ust'-Kamenogorsk and Bukhtarminsk. The only trade with Xinjiang they considered to be illegal was smuggling goods without paying tax at the Russian custom houses (such as the illegal trade through the Siberian line.²) Even with the Qing opposition of this Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang, the trade grew gradually in the first half of the 19th century. The Qing officials who seemed to oppose the trade strongly in their reports to the emperor, were described as very welcoming to Russian merchants in the travelogues of Russian travelers who visited Tarbagatai and Ili.

The post-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang is extensively discussed in the previous scholarship. The pre-1851 trade, however, was generally described merely as existing without much further information. This chapter and the following chapter aim to discuss the scale, the official attitude and regulations and the participants in the generally neglected unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili before the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851. Exploring more about the pre-treaty era trade can contribute to the understanding of why the treaty was signed, and how the entire Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang developed from its origins. In addition, comparing the pre-treaty and post-treaty era trade also furthers our understanding of how the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja made an impact on Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang as a whole.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the social and economic situation of Ili and Tarbagatai in the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, then I will discuss the preparation of the unofficial trade with Xinjiang through the establishment of posts and the enactment of regulations on the Russian side. After that, I

² The "Siberian Line" refers to the line of fortresses built in the southern Siberia by the Russian Empire in the 18th century. The line stretches from Petropavlovsk, to Omsk, then Semipalatinsk till Biisk.

will discuss the formal and informal attitude of Chinese officials towards this trade. At the end, I will describe the actors who participated in this trade, directly or indirectly through interacting with each other. Through the discussion of the above aspects, I will present how official and legal Kazakh-Qing trade gradually gave way to unofficial Russo-Qing trade in the first half of the 19th century, and try to construct the whole picture of Russo-Qing unofficial trade in Tarbagatai and Ili before 1851.

The location and socio-economic background of Ili and Tarbagatai

Dzungaria is situated in today's northern Xinjiang. It is a plain surrounded by the Altai mountains to the north and the Tianshan mountains to the south. The region was under the control of the Oirat Dzungars before the Qing conquest in the early 18th century. The Qing empire aimed to build a stronghold in the Dzungaria region after the collapse of the Dzungar Khanate, and therefore started building fortresses in Ili in 1761 and then in Tarbagatai in 1764. The two fortresses were not new foundations of the Qing empire, however. Both of them had served as bases for Dzungars during their control of the territory.

Both Tarbagatai and Ili were located at the westernmost frontier of northern Xinjiang neighboring the Kazakh steppe. "Tarbagatai was located around 800 *li*³ to the west of Ulungur river near Khobdo, 380 *li* to the northwest of Kurkalaus in the Urumqi region, 380 *li* to the north of *Qin-da-lan* mountain in the Ili region, around 400 *li* to the east of the

³ "Li" is a measure unit for length used in China. 1 *li* equals 500 meters.

territory of the Ayaguz Kazakhs,⁴ and 600 *li* to the south of Irtysh river bordering Khobdo.”⁵ The region is endowed with rivers and mountain ranges. The Ili region is 1430 *li* to the southwest of Tarbagatai, and it consists of nine towns.⁶ Ili is the convergent point and political center of the towns in northern and southern Xinjiang. The General of Ili governed the entire region of Xinjiang.

The massive settlement project of the Qing government featured two main groups of people: soldiers with their families, and exiled officials and criminals. As soon as the conquest of the Dzungar Khanate was completed in 1764, six hundred Han Green Standard soldiers were sent to Yar (a town in the Tarbagatai region) to cultivate the land and build the town.⁷ The Qing government, which aimed to establish military control of the region, ordered Manchu, Sibe, Solun and Chahar bannermen, as well as Han Green Standard troops to move to the area with their families. Unlike the Altishahr area, the Dzungarian plain was left as a vacuum due to the sharp decline in the Dzungar population. This decline was a combined result of warfare and epidemic disease. To compensate for this loss, many of the resettled population were asked to cultivate local land. Furthermore in 1761, Altishahr⁸ from southern Xinjiang and Han Green Standard soldiers were ordered to resettle in Ili and

⁴ Refers to Middle Juz here.

⁵ Xingzhao, *Taerbahatai shiyi* [On the Issues of Tarbagatai]. (1805; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1969), 15.

⁶ “Xun Xian Lu” [News Acquired while Traveling on An Official Mission] in *Zhongguo bianjiang yanjiu ziliao wenku: bianjiang xingzheng jianzhi chubian*: vol. 3 *xibei he xinan* [Records on the Materials on Chinese Border Studies: First Compilation on Administrative System of the Border Area: vol. 3 Northwest and Southwest] (Beijing: chishi chanquan chubanshe, 2011), 49-50.

⁷ Xingzhao, 21.

⁸ The Altishahr who were ordered to resettle in northern Xinjiang by the Qing government were called “Taranchis,” meaning “farmer” in Turkic.

devote themselves to agriculture.⁹ Besides them, many criminals and relegated officials were exiled to northern Xinjiang as well. The relegated officials worked in bureaucracy or serving as the heads of copper mines, lead factories and the mint, while the criminals were laborers in the above places. The resettled Manchu bannermen were the most privileged among all the settlers. The Han Green Standard soldiers and some other Sibe bannermen engaged in agriculture, while the Manchu bannermen were never obliged to do so, and were mostly involved in military training. Manchus participated in land cultivation only in Ili, although many of them rented out the land to non-Manchus to cultivate.¹⁰

Since the start of the resettlement program, financing for the provisions of the troops became a major problem for the Qing authorities in Xinjiang. Because the products sold by merchants were regarded as too expensive, the authorities proposed the opening of official shops, so that soldiers and officials would be able to buy necessary goods at a low prices.¹¹ The first attempt to build official shops was not successful because the Emperor Qianlong strongly opposed the idea. He insisted that the Manchu bannermen who were sent there were “Hanized”¹² before in the places they lived and had lost their military spirit. Therefore, it was necessary to send them to the border to undergo training in harsh environment in northern Xinjiang without getting “unnecessary” social benefits.¹³ Finally in 1802, under the Emperor Jiaqing, it was finally possible for the local Manchu settlements to build such official shops. The local organizers collected fees from the soldiers and officials

⁹ Yongbao, “(Qianlong) Yili shiyi” [On the Issues of Ili (Qianlong era)] in *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng: xinjiangfu xianzhiji* vol. 9 [Compiled Chinese Local Chronicles: Xinjiang vol. 9]. (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2014), 479.

¹⁰ James A. Millward, *Beyond the pass: economy, ethnicity, and empire in Qing central Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). 50.

¹¹ Xingzhao, 78.

¹² Han is the predominant ethnic group in China.

¹³ Qingshun Qi, “Qingdai xinjiang de guanpu he duiwai maoyi zhengce” [Qing Xinjiang Official Shops and Foreign Trade Policy]. *Xinjiang Social Sciences*. (1990):3. 75-76.

to buy staples, tea, textiles and medicine from Urumqi, through which commodities from inner China transited. Official shops used these funds for buying necessities in the eastern regions. After selling the products in Tarbagatai, the rest of the funds were to be used for supplying more horses when their numbers became depleted.¹⁴ The profits from the official shops were also used as social benefits for the living expenses of widows and orphans in the Manchu community.¹⁵ Some official shops were actually rented out for merchants to manage rather than managed by the community.¹⁶ Historian Qi Qingshun pointed out that official shops as an institution only existed in Manchu communities, while other communities were only supplying themselves through their own productions.¹⁷ Qi also argued the fact that many Manchus participated in financing the official shops was one of the reasons that contributed to the decline in the military capability of Manchu bannermen.¹⁸

Exiled criminals were a major working force in Tarbagatai and Ili. Many of them worked in lead, copper and iron factories. They would return their civilian status after working for five years, and would be allowed to go back to where they had originally come from after working for eight years.¹⁹ Besides criminals and Han Green Standard soldiers, Altishahris were also digging iron and submitted it for military uses to the government. Oirat prisoners were also asked to cultivate the land and dig coal.²⁰

¹⁴ Xingzhao, 78.

¹⁵ Yongbao, 394-395.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 588.

¹⁷ Qingshun Qi. 79-80.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁹ Yongbao, 312.

²⁰ Xingzhao, 189-196, 211; Some Torghuts who returned to Dzungaria from Russian Empire were recruited to cultivate the land as well.

The remote location of the region and the lack of the governmental ability to oversee it gave rise to illegal activities, which sometimes included deliberate collaboration between the officials and the criminals. The illegal procurement of resources was a problem in Ili and Tarbagatai, especially illegal mining and tree cutting in the region. In Tarbagatai, a *karun* was established in *Da-er-da-mu-tu* for inspections to avoid illegal diggings of gold sand.²¹ In Ili, a special *karun* was established where illegal gold digging was present. The soldiers patrolled every year in spring when the snow started melting and stopped in October when snow blocked the way to the mountain.²² However, it was not clear how effective this measure was. The illegal activities were generally loosely controlled by the local government of Xinjiang.

In sum, the trade in Ili and Tarbagatai initially took place in a highly planned economy under which commodities were annually transported from the eastern regions. The highly controlled economy gradually came to play a secondary role to the increasing activity of official shops. The managers of official shops purchased goods not only from the eastern regions of the Qing empire, but increasingly from the neighboring nations as well. The remoteness of the area from the core regions also enabled more illegal activities such as unregistered gold digging and tree cutting, as well as illegal trade and corruption.

The active role of Russia in establishing the trade

While the Qing empire was working on its settlement project, Russia was looking for ways to reopen its trade with Xinjiang. Russian Empire had already started trading with the

²¹ *Ibid.*, 36.

²² Yongbao, 510.

Dzungars as early as the 17th century at the Lake Yalmysh.²³ Russian preparation for the trade with Dzungaria started long before the Qing conquest of the region.

Orenburg already served as a center of Russo-Kazakh trade and indirect Russo-Qing trade since the founding of the post in 1735. From mid-June to mid-November, when cattle were most fattened, hundreds of Kazakhs came to trade in Orenburg.²⁴ Because of the restriction of trade in Xinjiang on the Chinese side after the Qing conquest of the region, Russian merchants were limited to buying Chinese goods at the Tobol'sk and Nizhnii Novgorod markets²⁵ brought from Kiakhta. As Sladkovskii claimed, to open trade in Xinjiang was important because tea here was much cheaper than in Kiakhta, and it could be transported to Central Asia and the Volga river region much quicker than from Kiakhta.²⁶

Before the Qing conquest of Dzungaria, Russia had already started establishing more posts along the Irtysh river. The post of Semipalatinsk was founded in 1718, and Ust'-Kamenogorsk was founded the following year. By 1743, a trade quarter was already built on the banks of the Irtysh where Tashkentis, Bukharans and Kazakhs congregated.²⁷ In 1792, the trade quarter was moved to a new site which was named the "Tatar quarter."²⁸ This name probably reflected the major group of merchants that frequented this market. The quarter later became the southern part of the city of Semipalatinsk. Semipalatinsk became a commercial center in the 18th century. Foreign caravans from Yarkand, Kashgar, Ili led by Bukharans, Chinese and Mongols came to trade. According to Kasymbayev,

²³ Monahan, 175-207.

²⁴ Sheng Li, *Xinjiang dui su'e maoyi shi, 1600 - 1990* [The History of Trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union and Russia, 1600 - 1990] (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1993), 33.

²⁵ M.I. Sladkovskii, *Istoriya torgovo-ekonomicheskikh otnoshenii narodov Rossii s Kitaem (do 1917 g.)* [History of Economic Relations between Russia and China] (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 210.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁷ Zhanuzak Kasymbayev. *Istoriia goroda Semipalatinska 1718-1917 gg* [History of the City of Semipalatinsk] (Almaty: Olke. 1998), 52.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 53.

merchants made up a big portion of the population in Semipalatinsk region, but many were petty merchants with little capital.²⁹ In 1797, Bukhtarminsk fortress was established for trading with the upper Irtysh region and Tarbagatai and Ili.³⁰ In the same year, Russia unilaterally announced regulations for trade between Bukhtarminsk and Tarbagatai and Ili, and established custom houses in Bukhtarminsk in 1803 to collect tax.³¹ Therefore, by the end of the 18th century, the Russo-Qing trade from eastern Kazakh steppe to Xinjiang was unilaterally established by the Russian government.

There were three main Russian posts in Russo-Qing trade with Xinjiang. Among them, Semipalatinsk was the most important. It was situated at the conjunction of the Tomsk fortification lines, Central Asia and Qing Xinjiang. The Bukhtarminsk post seemed too far from the Tomsk post, and the posts in Irtysh and Ust'-Kamenogorsk were both playing a small role, even if one of the original goals of the establishment of these posts was to trade with the Qing empire.³² According to a report by V. V. Grigoriev³³ in the "Journal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs" in 1845, "the most important center of [Russo-Chinese trade in the western frontier of China] is Semipalatinsk, much less in importance is Ust'-Kamenogorsk, and the least important is the place near the confluence of rivers Naryn and Irtysh which is 350 verst east of Bukhtarma if one travels on road through the Altay mountains."³⁴ Due to the difficult roads in the surrounding mountains and the rapid flow of

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97. 107; "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova v Chuguchak i Kul'zhu v 1845 godu pod vidom kuptsa Khorosheva" [The Travel of N. I. Liubimov in Chuguchak (Tarbagatai) and Kuldja (Ili) in 1845 under the name of a merchant Khoroshev], ed. N. I. Veselovskii in "*Zhivaya Starina*" vol. 2 section 1. 1908. 170-189. 178.

³⁰ Sladkovskii, 211.

³¹ Li, 38.

³² Kasymbaev, 106.

³³ V. V. Grigoriev (1816-1881) is a historian who worked as a professor at the Imperial St. Petersburg University. He had also worked as a chief censor for the Russian state.

³⁴ No. 94. 1845. "Memo by Professor V. V. Grigoriev from *Journal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs* about the trade between Russia and western China." p.126-128 (RGIA, R-853, op.2, d.178, l.14-28) in *Torgovyve svyazi*

the river Irtysh, communications between Bukhtarminsk, Russia and the Kazakh steppe were equally difficult. “Therefore not a single merchant settled in Bukhtarma, and trade caravans never directed their way to this fortress.”³⁵ However, this statement was not entirely true, as the travel notes of the translator Putintsev proved that his caravan had indeed departed from Bukhtarminsk to Tarbagatai and Ili. This statement made by Grigoriev was equally contradicted by Sheng Li’s conclusion that Bukhtarminsk became a center of Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang in the early 19th century.³⁶ Although Li did mention that there were actually caravans that departed from Bukhtarminsk to Ili and Tarbagatai, Li derived the conclusion that “Bukhtarminsk became a center of Russo-Xinjiang trade” only by listing the caravans that had departed from Bukhtarminsk, but did not compare the amount of imports from Xinjiang to Bukhtarminsk with those to other posts such as Semipalatinsk and Ust’-Kamenogorsk. Although I was not yet able to confirm that Semipalatinsk was the most important trading post on the eastern Kazakh steppe that participated in trade with northern Xinjiang, the much larger number of documents of the Semipalatinsk custom posts in TsGA RK compared with the that of the Ust’-Kamenogorsk and Bukhtarminsk custom posts may indicate the more important role of Semipalatinsk in the trade on the eastern Kazakh steppe compared with the other two posts.

The journey from the Semipalatinsk and nearby posts to Tarbagatai and Ili and back could last up to a year. The caravans directed to Tarbagatai and Ili often departed from Semipalatinsk and Petropavlovsk from July to August, and arrived at Tarbagatai and Ili in

semipalatinskogo priirtysh'ya (xviii-nachalo xx veka) sbornik dokumentov [Collected Documents of the Trade Relations of the Semipalatinsk Upper Irtysh Area (From the 18th to the Beginning of the 20th Century) ed. A. A. Aubakirov, G. T. Kasymova, and K. L. Esmagambetov. Upravlenie arkhivami Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti, Tsentri dokumentatsii noveishei istorii Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti (Semipalatinsk, 2004).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Li, 38.

50 to 60 days. Then they spent the winter there and came back to Semipalatinsk in March the following year.³⁷

There were several trade routes that linked the Kazakh steppe with Xinjiang. In the 1840s, there were mainly three ways from western Siberia to northern Xinjiang: the first, ran from Petropavlovsk to Ili through the Kokshetau mountains along the Ayaguz river through Kopal; the second ran from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai through Ayaguz and Kokchektan districts; the third, from Semipalatinsk to Ili and Kashgar through Ayaguz district and Kopal.³⁸ Liubimov, however, mentioned that the main route to Tarbagatai was the one passing through Kokbetinsk district and Tarbagatai ranges where a place called *Sai-asu* was located. "Few people would take the road through Ayagoz district even if the road was more comfortable. This was because the Baijigits who lived outside of Tarbagatai were posing a threat [to the caravans]."³⁹

Although Ili was at the end of two routes, but Tarbagatai was still preferred. Comparing with Ili, Tarbagatai became more attractive for Russian merchants according to the memo by V. V. Grigoriev written in 1845. More cattle were sold in Tarbagatai than in Ili by Kazakhs (despite the Qing effort to make the price of cattle lower in Ili to divert more merchants to Ili). First, Tarbagatai was closer to the Russian border, the transportation expense from Semipalatinsk to Ili was about 5 rubles, but only half of that if traveling to Tarbagatai. Second, merchants who traded in Tarbagatai could make three times the

³⁷ Sladkovskii, 213. Liubimov, the vice-director of the Asia Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia in 1845, gave a slightly different time frame. According to him, merchants from Semipalatinsk departed starting from May and ended in late autumn. "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 178.

³⁸ Kasymbaev, 126.

³⁹ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 178.

turnover of their capital, while no more than two times in Ili. Third, Tarbagatai was closer to Urumqi which was an important stock place for Chinese products.⁴⁰

However, this impression had probably changed by the time of the journey of N. I. Liubimov. During the time when Liubimov was traveling to Tarbagatai and Ili in 1845, trade in Tarbagatai seemed to be less formal than in Ili. Liubimov recounted that the merchants were able to trade with Chinese merchants in Tarbagatai, while in Ili, they could not trade with Chinese merchants directly, but only through the treasury. In 1845, however, the government in Ili adopted the same measure as in Tarbagatai and merchants could trade with Chinese merchants directly. The Tashkentis were not satisfied with the new measure. They often sold goods of poor quality, and the opening of direct trade with the Chinese merchants in Ili would therefore increase competition. Therefore, Liubimov and his fellow travelers in the caravan petitioned for the reduction of custom duties in Ili. Their demand was eventually accepted by the Chinese custom officials. The result, according to Liubimov, was that trade in Ili became much cheaper than in Tarbagatai.⁴¹

Silver played an important role in the Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta was barter trade, and the same was supposed to be the case in Kazakh-Qing trade as well. Interestingly, the silver flow was two-sided even though both Russian empire and Qing empire prohibited the export of silver. In 1709, the export of gold and silver abroad was prohibited in Russia.⁴² At the same time, transactions in *maoyiting* (trade pavilions) in Ili and Tarbagatai (and later in official shops in Kashgar) were barter trade, and no silver was allowed to be exchanged to prevent it from flowing out of the Qing

⁴⁰ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev, 127.

⁴¹ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 181.

⁴² TsGA RK, f. i-478, op.2, d.15, l.31. Cited from *Ibid.*, 68.

empire.⁴³ Sladkovskii argued that the method of payment by Russian merchants was in silver or gold, while some took Chinese credit.⁴⁴ The evidence of the outflow of silver from China is more concrete in the data of the imports and exports of the Semipalatinsk customs house in the archival documents which will be discussed in the third chapter.

Silver from China flowed to Russia through the Kazakhs. According to Grigoriev, “trade with Kazakhs was advantageous, gives us an large quantity of a very strong paper product called *datoyu*, and silver ingots, known as *yambo*.”⁴⁵ One excerpt dated in 1829 in a journal of the Senate discussed that the Tsar Nikolay I permitted Russian merchants to accept Chinese silver in the form of bullion, *yambo*, or splinters as means of payment from the Chinese side. The report urged for assessing the silver value imported from China. “Our merchants sell the imported silver from China at the Irbit fair. However, they encounter obstacles to convenient and break-even sales, and even suffer from losses, because the value of the silver was not assessed.”⁴⁶ He worried that this inconvenience of determining the true value of the silver would cause merchants to be more reluctant in accepting payment by Chinese silver when exchanging goods.⁴⁷ Until the early 1830s, Russian goods were widely sold for silver. In the future, as the barter trade expanded, the export of silver from Xinjiang fell sharply, and then was completely discontinued.⁴⁸

Besides the prohibition on the export of silver, Russia started propagating another trade protection policy in the 1760s: all glass, mirror and crystal products produced in

⁴³ Newby, 143-44.

⁴⁴ Sladkovskii, 215.

⁴⁵ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev. *Yambo* is a type of silver a gold ingot used in imperial China from Qin dynasty to the end of Qing dynasty. The *yambo* discussed in this chapter only refers to silver ingots.

⁴⁶ No. 91. May, 1829. “Excerpt from the journal of the Administration of Senate about the approval by the Emperor Nikolay to assess the value of payment.” p.123-124. (GA00, f.3, op.1, d.803, ll.224ob-225) in *TSSPSD*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Sladkovskii, 212.

Russian factories were prohibited to be imported back into the empire. This policy was directed against Chinese merchants who were engaging in this reimportation of Russian goods.⁴⁹ This piece of information shows that not only Chinese merchants were trading with Russian merchants,⁵⁰ but that Russian manufactured products were sold back to the empire by these merchants.

Besides the trade protection policies, there were other policies that were aimed to bring more merchants to the fringes of the empire to trade. In 1770, the trade regulations at the Orenburg, Troitsk and Semipalatinsk were renewed: imported silk, fur and large horned cattle were exempt from tax.⁵¹ In 1845, it was then permitted that Asian merchants who came to trade in western Siberia were exempt from paying duties.⁵²

Throughout the 18th century when the Qing empire was trying to build the infrastructure of Xinjiang and was only interested in obtaining cattle and horses from the Kazakhs, Russia had been actively preparing its trade with Xinjiang. By building custom posts, unilaterally enacting trade guidelines and setting up protection policies against the export of silver and re-import of Russian manufactured goods, and encouraging foreign merchants to come to trade, Russia built up its capability to trade with Xinjiang with a well-organized plan. The Qing empire had been denying the existence of the trade until it built up. As a result, they had to declare this trade to be official to enforce control of the region.

⁴⁹ TsGA RK, f. i-478, op.2, d.15, l.67 and TsGA RK, f. i-478, op.2, d.15, l.65. Cited from Kasymbaev, 68.

⁵⁰ Though could not be determined if it was direct trade or not.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 128.

The Different Definitions of the Trade on the Russian and Qing Sides

The trade between Russian and Chinese merchants was growing steadily, and only started developing when Russia started influencing the Kazakh steppe. The shift from Kazakh-Qing trade to direct Russo-Qing trade did not take place immediately after the establishment of the Kazakh-Qing trade, but was rather a gradual process. Sladkovskii argued that the steady increase of Russian imports to western China gradually undermined the Qing monopoly of trade in which the Qing empire was able to unilaterally set the price when trading with Kazakhs.⁵³ This is indeed the direct reason that led to the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851.

Besides the prohibition on trade from the Qing side that discouraged Russian merchants from coming to Xinjiang to trade, they were also discouraged by the prevalence of robbery on the road.⁵⁴ Kasymbaev argued that the reason why trade with western China increased later was the increasing cooperation between Russia and the Kazakhs which ensured safer routes for the merchants.⁵⁵ The travelogues of Liubimov and Putintsev both supported this argument.

In the 1840s, unofficial Russian-Qing trade was already a regular phenomenon in northern Xinjiang.⁵⁶ The Qing prohibition against the coming of Russian merchants seemed to be ignored. “The authorities of this city are so used to seeing Russian merchants there that they hardly ever ask their nationality, and if this happens, they are always satisfied

⁵³ Sladkovskii, 212.

⁵⁴ N. B. Bogoyavlenskii, *Changcheng waide Zhongguo xibu diqu: qi jinxi zhuangkuang ji Eguo chenmin de diwei* [The Western Regions of China outside the Great Wall: its past and present and the role of Russian civilians] (Beijing: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1988), 177. Cited in Li, 37.

⁵⁵ Kasymbaev, 117.

⁵⁶ Sladkovskii, 212.

with the answer.”⁵⁷ “Chinese authority patronizes the import of Russian goods, and they seem as if they do not notice that the trade in Ili was carried out by Russian civilians.”⁵⁸ Goods were delivered under the name of a Kazakh sultan with a letter on behalf of the sultan. The Qing empire did not try to interfere with the trade with Russians at first, and only during the period of the suspension of the Kiakhta trade (and later, during the embargo against Khoqand) did the Qing empire start prohibiting the carrying of Russian goods by Kazakhs to trade.⁵⁹ By the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, the Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang was so prevalent that there was no longer any need to bring a letter from a Kazakh sultan to trade. In addition, “the Kazakhs were engaged in relaying activities between the Irtysh fortified line and Xinjiang by carrying Russian products to Xinjiang or buying Qing products for the Russian side.”⁶⁰ The unofficial Russo-Qing trade became less and less restricted.

Several written accounts reveal the existence of unofficial Russo-Qing trade. In 1795, five Russian merchants who intended to trade at Tarbagatai were seized by *karun* guards.⁶¹ In 1804, a caravan from Semipalatinsk was sent to Ili, Tarbagatai and Aqsu.⁶² In 1807, a Russian caravan from Semipalatinsk which consisted of 500 camels led by the merchant Mortajin arrived in Tarbagatai.⁶³ In 1811, Putintsev who was the translator of the collegiate registrar travelled secretly to Tarbagatai and Ili from Bukhtarminsk with the

⁵⁷ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Qing gaozong shilu*. vol. 580. 20. Cited from Li, 33.

⁶⁰ Noda. 2016. 239.

⁶¹ Wumiwuxun etc. sent Russian merchants who crossed *karun* to Khuree, 1795. (Qing qianlong manwen jixindang. 03-141-4-035). Quoted in *Zhongguo Xinjiang lishi wenhua guji wenxian ziliao yibian* [Collections of the Translated Monographs and Archival Materials on the History and Culture of Chinese Xinjiang] (Atush: Kezilesu Ke'erkeziyu chubanshe; Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2016 and 2017), 543.

⁶² Kasymbayev, 118.

⁶³ Li, 44.

agent of the commercial advisor and the 1st guild Taran merchant Nerpin in 1811.⁶⁴ In 1813, the Siberian regional government dispatched an official caravan⁶⁵ headed by a Tashkenti and a Kazan merchant carrying goods worth 321,000 rubles from Semipalatinsk, crossing the Kazakh steppe and arrived in Aksu and Kashgar, and came back the following year carrying tea worth 1,000,000 rubles, rhubarb and textiles. At the same time, merchants in Xinjiang also started going to Bukhtarminsk to trade with Russian merchants.⁶⁶ In 1845, the vice-director of the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, N. I. Liubimov, traveled secretly from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili under the name of a 2nd guild merchant called Nikolay Ivanov Khoroshev, aiming to investigate the markets and looking for the possibility of establishing formal trade relations with China.⁶⁷ Both Putintsev and Liubimov left valuable accounts of their journey which will be discussed in the following section.

On the Qing side, the trade was always mentioned as smuggling. In 1790 alone, one Chinese merchant was found to have smuggled 21,200 pieces of hides of squirrel, otter, sea dragon, turtle and marten.⁶⁸ Some companies such as Wanchanghao were operating a

⁶⁴ "Opisanie puti po kotoromu khodil perevodchik kollezhskii registrator Putintsev, sostoiashii pri general-leitenante Glazenape, po imennomu vysochaishemu ego imperatorskogo velichestva povelenniu poslannye taino ot kreposti Bukhtarminskoi do kitaiskikh gorodov Chuguchaka i Kul'zhi pri karavane s tovarom kommertsii sovetnika i tarskogo 1-i gil'dii kuptsa Nerpina. 1811 g." [Description of the road which the translator Putintsev, from Lieutenant-General Glazenap on behalf of his Imperial Majesty's highest order, was sent secretly from the Bukhtarminsk post to the Chinese towns of Chuguchak and Kul'zha together with the caravan of the commissar advisor 1-st guild Taran merchant Nerpin with commodities. Year 1811] in *Putevye dnevniki i zapiski rossiiskikh chinovnikov i issledovatelei o kazakhskoi stepi xviii - serediny xix veka* [Diaries and notes of Russian officials and researchers of the Kazakh steppe from 18th-middle of 19th century]. ed. I. V. Erofeeva (Astana: Obshestvo invalidov - Chernobylets, 2012), 82-121.

⁶⁵ As regarded by the Russian government.

⁶⁶ Li, 45.

⁶⁷ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova."

⁶⁸ *Chouban yiwu shimo*, Xianfeng era. vol. 1, 1-7. Cited in Li, 38.

smuggling business in Russian goods. Smugglers transported rhubarb through holes in the Great Wall at Jiayuguan.⁶⁹

The western border served as an illegal alternative spot for the rhubarb trade when the Kiakhta market was suspended due to diplomatic conflicts. “Merchants transported rhubarb to Ili and Kashgar, where Kazakhs, Buruts (Kirgizs) and Andjianis obtained and traded with Russians later. And the same groups of merchants would thus obtain smoked cow hides, *duoluoni* and other Russian products to sell in Ili, Kashgar etc.”⁷⁰ In early 1789, several thousand *jin* of illegally traded rhubarb were found among the merchants. In the same year, the Generals of Ili, and other officials in Xinjiang and northwestern provinces were all informed that the export of rhubarb and the sale of rhubarb to Andijan (who would sell them to Russia) were forbidden. This was a must for the embargo of products to work in the Kiakhta market.

Russia viewed the trade in Xinjiang as legal but not official because no contracts were signed with the Qing empire on guiding the trade. The only trade they considered to be illegal near Xinjiang was the smuggling through the Siberian lines and importing without paying taxes at the custom houses of Semipalatinsk, Ust'-Kamenogorsk or Bukhtarminsk. Although the the Qing empire treated the trade as illegal, they only made attempts to enforce a trade prohibition when Kiakhta was closed or during and after the Jahangir revolt. Even with their claim, the enforcement was still not so effective.

The Attitude of Qing Officials to the Trade as Perceived by Russian Travelers

⁶⁹ Newby, 131.

⁷⁰ “Prohibition of the export of rhubarb to Andijan and other Muslim merchants who would sell to Russia, 1789” p.486-487. (Qing qianlong manwen jixindang. 03-140-1-003). Quoted in *ZXLWGZY*

In official documents in Chinese, such as those mentioned in the previous section about the smuggling of Russian goods, the Qing officials seemed to be strongly opposing Russo-Chinese trade in Xinjiang. However, the travelogues of the Russian translator Putintsev in 1811 and the vice-director of the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Empire N. I. Liubimov in 1845 reflect different perspectives on the attitude of Qing officials concerning this trade. Although they were officially opposing the trade, the Qing officials treated the coming Russian merchants generously, and secretly permitted their petition to trade, of course, only with some bribes. Comparing the travel notes of these two travelers may well reflect how the Qing officials treated the trade and the experience of Russian merchants traveling on the road to Tarbagatai and Ili had changed in the first half of the 19th century.

The journey of Putintsev in 1811 was sponsored by the General-Lieutenant of Siberia, but the purpose of his travel was not mentioned in his travel notes. He served as a translator to the Bukharan merchant Rahimbek Reshev, who was an agent of the 1st guild merchant and a commercial advisor Nerpin in Tara. His fellow travelers also included (though some of them joined the group later): the head of the caravan, the son of a sultan, a Kalmyk called Dunduk and a Tatar merchant called Asmii who was an agent of the Tatar merchant Halit Amirov from Kazan. Putintsev departed from Bukhtarminsk in the beginning of June in 1811, arriving first in Tarbagatai and then Ili, and came back to Bukhtarminsk in mid-November. The journey of N. I. Liubimov was rather different. As the vice-director of the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Empire, he volunteered to travel to look for the possibility to develop official trade relations with

western China. He pretended to be a 2nd guild merchant under the pseudonym of Nikolay Ivanov Khoroshev. He departed with his translator Kostromitinov in mid-May in 1845 from Semipalatinsk, traveled to Tarbagatai and then Ili, and returned to Semipalatinsk in mid-December of the same year.

It seemed that it was important for Russian travelers to hide their Russian identity. Both Liubimov and his translator Kostromitinov were dressed in Asian costumes, and Kostromitinov also took the pseudonym “Feizulla Ibragimov” which was written on his passport. Although Liubimov and his translator prepared for hiding their identity, they did not conceal the fact that they were Russian when they were in Tarbagatai and Ili, and this did not cause them any problems⁷¹ The practice of taking pseudonyms and dressing in Asian costumes was not mentioned in Putintsev’s travel notes, however, he did mention that the head of the caravan claimed that Putintsev’s father was Tashkenti when they were presenting themselves in front of Chinese officials at the border. If Putintsev was not dressed in Asian costume, it was probably because of the fact that he was traveling with Asian merchants, bringing a letter from a Kazakh sultan, or being a translator but not a merchant helped to make him more acceptable to the Qing officials.

During the first half of the 19th century, the necessity of carrying a letter from a Kazakh sultan to Tarbagatai and Ili by Russian merchants was gradually diminishing in importance. Putintsev mentioned that he brought a letter from a Kazakh sultan called Kambar in Ketkent when they were crossing the land,⁷² while Liubimov did not mention that they brought a letter from a sultan. This fact may confirm Li’s statement that by the

⁷¹ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 183.

⁷² “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 83.

beginning of the 19th century, there was no longer any need to carry a letter from a Kazakh sultan.⁷³

The process of the initial reception of the merchants by the Qing officials was similar for both Putintsev and Liubimov. According to Putintsev, when they arrived at the customs house of Tarbagatai, they presented the letter and gifts to the *amban*⁷⁴, and then their goods were examined and then they were brought to the trade pavilion.⁷⁵ As for Liubimov, he recorded that their caravan was escorted by karun guards when they crossed the border, and they then declared the inventory of goods in front of the Chinese customs officials.⁷⁶ The process was the same when he came to Ili.⁷⁷ When the caravan which Liubimov joined arrived in Tarbagatai, they stayed in a trade quarter called “kurgan.”⁷⁸ During the day, they were able to go to the steppe or buy food from petty Chinese traders, however, they could not enter the city, unless the Chinese authority allowed and they were accompanied by servants at the custom house. At night, everyone including goods and cattle were locked up.⁷⁹

Both Putintsev and Liubimov seem to have been well-treated by Chinese officials. However, bribery did play an important role in this. When Putintsev was in Tarbagatai, he got acquainted with the Chinese customs officers, and they often invited each other for

⁷³ Li, 44.

⁷⁴ “Amban” literally means “high official” in Manchu. It is a title for governors of provinces in the China proper. In Xinjiang, Mongolia and Tibet, *ambans* are governors of different regions. For example, in Xinjiang, there were four ambans: Amban of Tarbagatai, Amban of Ili, Amban of Urumqi and Amban of Kashgar.

⁷⁵ “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 89.

⁷⁶ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 177.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁷⁸ Possibly the same as “trade pavilions” in post-1851 documents.

⁷⁹ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 178.

tea.⁸⁰ While in Ili, he described an encounter of their caravan with two Manchu officials at the border of Ili who gave him instructions on how to be accepted to trade there:

“Both of the Manchus treated us very generously. They invited us for tea, but only gave the answer that Russian goods were prohibited to pass the border according to the decree of the *Jiangjun*.⁸¹ Although this statement made it difficult for us, the official told us that we could bring a letter from a sultan and a horse as a gift to the *Jiangjun*. If he would [still] not allow us to come with those goods, he would return [the gift].”⁸²

Then he vividly described the process of how bribery was conducted to a Qing translator with Russian watches in Ili the next day. He described that a translator came to their caravan with a letter from the *Jiangjun* and asked the chief of Putintsev’s caravan to find someone to translate for him. The chief asked Putintsev to translate, and introduced Putintsev to the translator as his nephew who was born of a Tashkenti father. After completing the job, the translator asked Putintsev and the chief if they had Russian watches or not. The chief said that they were supposed to sell the watches, but they would be delighted to give these to their friend, the translator, as a gift. At first, the translator insisted on paying. However, with the solicitation of the chief, he took the watches for free and told Putintsev that he “wanted to befriend him [Putintsev] just like his ‘uncle.’” The other agents in the caravan later told Putintsev of their worse experience which happened

⁸⁰ “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 89.

⁸¹ Meaning the “General of Ili” here

⁸² “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 99.

last time when they came. They said that the Qing border officials just took their unbleached white calico of the best quality without even asking them.⁸³

On the third day, they were allowed to come to be heard by the General of Ili. Putintsev gave a valuable account of how he was treated at the “ceremony” (as he called it). He described how their caravan was escorted to the court of *jiangjun* by officials and proceeded in the order of their position in the caravan. They brought gifts, kneeled down in front of the *Jiangjun*, and expressed their demand to trade. Everytime they were asked a question, they needed to kneel down and bow once. The *jiangjun* satisfied their demand and said that he would send a new border official to ensure no secret exchange would happen on the road. The *Jiangjun* then served everyone in the caravan tea and various fruits and sweets according to the custom and then gave them gifts. Throughout the ceremony there were three *ambans*, up to twenty officials and two translators.⁸⁴

This account not only shows how the Russian translator’s caravan was treated by the General of Ili, but also the court ritual of how foreign merchants were treated in the Ili General Prefecture. Ironically, this excerpt also mentioned the *jiangjun*’s decision to cut secret exchanges by the border officials, without which the caravan actually would not be able to come to meet the *jiangjun*.

Only on the fourth day did an interpreter allow them to come to the town of Ili to trade. However, according to the order that the interpreter was carrying, only two from the caravan were able to come to trade, so they sent Reimbak and Dunduk on behalf of them, and waited for eight days for them to come back.⁸⁵

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁸⁴ “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 106-107.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 107.

Liubimov's account of his meeting with Chinese officials was rather short. Here is his description of how he was received by the Qing officials, and how the Qing officials viewed the Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang: namely that they were permitting the trade because it benefited them:

"I was honored to be invited by the *amban* of Chuguchak [Tarbagatai] who heard that a Russian merchant had come to the town. He invited me with my clerks. I was pleasantly received by the *amban*, so I took the opportunity to ask if it would be possible for Russian merchants to come to China in the future without dressing in Asian costumes. the *amban* answered that the trade to Chuguchak was only opened to Andijan (i.e. Tashkentis and Khoqandis), therefore Russian merchants needed to come in Asian costumes. I found the answer very strange but it also showed how the Chinese authority wished to maintain this trade with us though it is illegal, since they could receive significant benefits from it. A large portion of the commodities were taxed by the Chinese authority. And the tax, according to some Chinese merchants who informed me, all went to the pockets of the *amban* and customs officials."⁸⁶

The strange policy of allowing Russian merchants to come to Xinjiang to trade as long as they were wearing Asian costumes was probably because that this Russo-Chinese trade was not meant to be so obvious for common people there. Though it might still sound

⁸⁶ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 179-180.

obvious when Russian merchants could come to trade while merely wearing Asian costumes, at least it seemed that the merchants were hiding their identity.

Liubimov also mentioned his practice of bribing that allowed him to discover a new route to travel between Semipalatinsk and Ili. When Liubimov was about to depart from Ili later after his mission, he was planning to take a different road which passed through the Semirech'e region, rather than along the difficult road that passed over the Tarbagatai ranges. At first this petition was rejected by the Chinese officials, however:

“The Chinese long insisted on their rejection, but in the end, they were persuaded by our arguments which were reinforced by some gifts, so that they bent before our solicitation.”⁸⁷

Compared with Putintsev's experience, Liubimov's seemed to be more influential. Putintsev's caravan was only able to petition for their crossing of the border and acceptance to trade, while Liubimov was not only able to do the two things Putintsev did, he was also able to petition for the reduction of custom duties in Ili on behalf of their Tashkenti merchants which made trade in Ili become much cheaper than in Tarbagatai.⁸⁸ Besides, as mentioned above, he was also able to petition for returning back to Semipalatinsk through a new route across Semirech'e which the Qing officials had never allowed. The more powerful role of Liubimov than Putintsev in their negotiation with the Qing officials probably showed how the Russian merchants were gradually becoming more important and were more able to assert their own rights. This difference, however, might

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.

also be due to the fact that Liubimov disclosed his affiliation with the Russian government when he was negotiating with the Qing officials.

Putintsev described his meeting with the General of Ili as a “ceremony,” it seemed that this meeting was an important event because three *ambans* of Xinjiang all attended. These were informal meetings, however, because no trace of them is to be found in the Chinese documents I have examined.

Besides the relatively generous attitude of Chinese officials towards their need to trade, the officials were actually actively involved in this unofficial trade. They forced the coming merchants to exchange only for certain types of commodities according to Putintsev:

“Since the Chinese officials owned the Kazakhs *shan* and *sarybus*’ unbleached calico,⁸⁹ they forced our merchants to buy coarse unbleached calico produced in Koikamp, Kamkara and Khotan factories, which they received and gave away to the contractors in order not to weaken the trade. This measure is used for the benefits of state treasuries because unbleached calico [produced in these three factories] are much cheaper than *shan* and *sarybus*’ unbleached calico. Since the government had yet to receive enough *shan* and *sarybus*’ as *yasak*, they only allowed the merchants to come trade for these coarse unbleached calico. It was said that a flood in factory that produced *shan* and *sarybus*’ unbleached calico drowned 300 people, and that was why they were

⁸⁹ “Shan and Sarybus’ calico were received as *yasak* from the Muslim population in Yarkand, Kashmir, Khotan, Kunda-Turfan, Turfan and Aksu.” Cited from “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 107. These two types of unbleached calico were better in quality than the coarse ones produced in the factories in Koikamp, Kamkara and Khotan.

not able to deliver them. However, we heard that this flood was not so serious, and it was the government that wanted to keep money for themselves.”⁹⁰

If the government was “keeping money for themselves,” it was more possible that they were financing the local government than really accepting the money for their personal benefit. This was because that there were far fewer categories and an inferior quality of commodities available at the border than in the eastern provinces. However, it is still possible that some officials were indeed trying to accumulate as much money as possible while serving in Xinjiang. This was because of the loose control over misbehavior and the frequent rotation of the positions there which enabled them to return to the eastern regions in just a few years.

The experience of Putintsev and Liubimov reflects the ambivalent attitude of different levels of Qing officials towards the pre-1851 Russo-Qing unofficial trade in Xinjiang. This ambivalent attitude is not reflected at all in the official documents of the Qing government which always carries a tone of decisive prohibition. In addition, the difference in the experience of the two travelers also reflects how the attitude towards Russian merchants by the Qing government was changing throughout the first half of the 19th century: while Putintsev’s caravan had to kneel down in front of the *jiangjun* to petition for trade, Liubimov was able to negotiate with the Qing government and successfully persuaded the Qing authorities to cut down custom duties. However, this difference in their experience might also be a result of their different titles.

⁹⁰ “Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev,” 108.

Actors in the trade

Besides the officials mentioned above, merchants, guards and robbers were all important participators in the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. Russian, Tatar, Bukharan, Tashkenti, Khoqandi (Andijani), Altishahri and Chinese merchants all played different roles in the trade, though some were more engaged in the trade than others. Some Kazakhs were merchants as well, but many played a double role of guards or robbers. By cooperating or competing with each other, they had built up a network that linked the regional trade to the broader Eurasia world.

Russian and Tatar merchants

Russian merchants often entrusted trade to their agents who were Tatar, Tashkenti, or Bukharans rather than coming to trade by themselves.⁹¹ There were more than 300 Tatars who came from different parts of the Russian Empire and worked as agents of Russian merchants in Semipalatinsk. Some were paid by other Tatars who traded as agents of the 1st guild merchants.⁹² Liubimov recalled that many of “our Tatars,” (among them many fugitives), came to the steppe and lived under the name of “Shala-Kazakh.”⁹³ “Agents went to Xinjiang and Central Asia on behalf of the chief merchants registered in the guild,” which means that “Russians could be indirectly involved in the trade without actually going to Central Asia themselves.”⁹⁴ In 1809, a 1st guild merchant from Tara Nerpin sent a

⁹¹ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 178.

⁹⁴ Noda. 2016. 224.

caravan to Tarbagatai which carried goods worth 5000 rubles, exchanged there, and then came back to Bukhtarminsk. In 1810, the very same merchant sent out another caravan to Xinjiang carrying goods worth 10,000 rubles.⁹⁵ The caravans were not led by him, but agents who worked for him. In 1811, he sent another agent, Reimbak Reshev, who was a Bukharan living in Tara to Tarbagatai and Ili, and his caravan was the one that Putintsev joined in his journey to Tarbagatai and Ili.

In the 1840s, the most important Russian merchant in Russo-Qing trade in Ili was Samsonov “whose agents bought goods worth 20,000 rubles in silver per year.”⁹⁶ Liubimov in his report to the State Councilor also mentioned that his journey was carried out through the medium of Samsonov, who was “quite trustworthy” according to the Governor-General of Western Siberia.⁹⁷ He mentioned that as soon as he arrived in Tarbagatai, he established relations with Samsonov.⁹⁸

The Tatar merchants still outnumbered Russian merchants even till the end of the 19th century in Semipalatinsk. In 1897, Russian merchants and Tatar merchants still dominated trade in Semipalatinsk and Akmolinsk region. In 1897, there were 630 Russian merchants and 335 Tatar merchants in Akmolinsk, while in Semipalatinsk the percentage of Tatar merchants was higher. There were 452 Russian merchants and 521 Tatar merchants in Semipalatinsk in 1897. The rest were 45 Kazakh merchants and 15 European merchants.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Li, 44.

⁹⁶ Sladkovskii, 214.

⁹⁷ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 176.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁹⁹ G. M. Akhmetova, “Kupechestvo severo-vostochnogo Kazakhstana na rubezhe xix-xx vekov.” Vestnik KazNU. Seriya istoricheskaya. No.1(32), 2014. 50-55.

Central Asian merchants

The Central Asian merchants consisted of Altishahris, Tashkentis, Bukharans, and Khoqandis (mostly Andijanis). Sometimes it is hard to distinguish one from another, and a sometimes their names were used collectively as “Muslim merchants” in archival documents (with the exception of Altishahris which were mentioned as “our Muslim merchants” on the Qing side). Unlike Russian merchants, they often came to trade by themselves rather than hiring agents since they were more familiar with the environment, culture and languages of the region. The term “Russian merchants” and “Chinese merchants” have the same problem. They may indicate either the nationality or the subjecthood of the merchants.

Starting from 1767, after Altishahr became part of the territory of the Qing empire, Altishahri merchants were prohibited from traveling to the territory of the Kazakhs to trade so that there would not be a lack of horses and cattle in Tarbagatai and Ili. However, they were still permitted to trade in Khoqand and Andijan.¹⁰⁰ However, it is not clear how effective the policy was. Millward mentions that they played an important role in trading with the Kazakhs, Kirghiz and the Tarim basin region, and some even went as far as Ladakh.¹⁰¹ At the same time, other Central Asian merchants were allowed to come to trade in Ili and Tarbagatai.

Khoqandi merchants became important in Russo-Qing trade particularly after the 1822 Regulation because of the diminishing role of Kazakhs in the trade.¹⁰² The Khoqandi community extended their network from western Siberia to southern Xinjiang thanks for

¹⁰⁰ “Prohibiting the Altishahris to travel to the land of the Kazakhs to trade, 1767” (Qing gaozong shilu. vol.780) Quoted in *ZXLWGWZY*, 240

¹⁰¹ Millward. 1998. 155.

¹⁰² Noda. 2016. 248.

their independent and liminal status and the protection from the Russian government that allowed the Khoqandi communities to select *aqsaqals* that would manage their issues.¹⁰³ Khoqandi merchants were active transporters of rhubarb and tea before the period of Jahangir revolt, and Khoqandi merchants who accompanied envoys from Khoqand were often granted tax exemption.¹⁰⁴ Since the collapse of the tea license system in the late 18th century and early 19th century,¹⁰⁵ Russians controlled the tea trade in Kiakhta, but the Central Asians started smuggling through the western border of the Qing empire. By the 1820s, according to Newby, large quantities of tea were sold in Xinjiang without licenses at high prices, and the Khoqandis were the major player in this illegal trade.¹⁰⁶ After the breakout of the Jahangir revolt in 1820, the Khoqandi merchants were prohibited from coming to Xinjiang to trade, and their assets were confiscated and many of them were repatriated as a way to push the Khoqandi government to hand over the rebels. By 1831, the expulsion was estimated at several thousands.¹⁰⁷

The Bukharans had started monopolizing the rhubarb trade in the border market from the 1730s, and still remained so until the mid-19th century.¹⁰⁸ Bukharans were still welcomed to trade when the embargo against Khoqand was active.¹⁰⁹ The Bukharans, formerly heavily taxed by the Qing officials, tried to improve their position in trade with the Qing empire when they started enjoying “special treatment” when Khoqandi merchants were prohibited to come. Some Bukharan officials even came to trade as merchants, which

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 254.

¹⁰⁴ Newby, 128.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 134, 138.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

showed the importance of this trade for them. To avoid suspicion, they started travelling via Darvaz and Qarategin rather than through the territory of Khoqand.¹¹⁰ In Kashgar, the trade by Bukharan merchants was often done in the following divisions: “40% of the trade was done for tea and textiles from official shops, 30% with merchants from the interior, and 30% with Altishahri Muslims.”

Tashkenti merchants lived at the outpost of the Qing empire with peasants and Kazakhs. They came there for service, catching fish, hunting or trade.¹¹¹ In Tarbagatai, the most influential merchant was a Tashkenti called Ibrahim Amirov who resided in Semipalatinsk. “He brought goods that were worth 15,000 rubles in silver per year.”¹¹² Tashkenti merchants and Siberian Bukharans bought manufactured goods from the Irbit or Nizhny Novgorod markets and sold in Ili.¹¹³ According to the report by Liubimov, most of the merchants in Tarbagatai were Tashkentis who lived on the steppe and in Semipalatinsk,¹¹⁴ and many of them participated in trading goods of poor quality.¹¹⁵

The subjecthood of the Central Asian merchants was important in how they were treated by the Qing authorities. According to a report of a Russian merchant cited by Noda, Russian merchants were better treated by the Qing officials after the expulsion of the Khoqandis in the late 1820s. This, according to him, “resulted in an increase in power for Muslim merchants who were Russian subjects, and also led to further gains in power within Xinjiang for Russia itself.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

¹¹¹ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev.

¹¹² Sladkovskii, 214.

¹¹³ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev.

¹¹⁴ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 178.

¹¹⁵ No. 94. 1845. Memo from the writing of V. V. Grigoriev.

¹¹⁶ Noda. 2016. 252.

The Kazakhs

Kazakhs played a double role in the Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. Some served as guards of the caravans while others were raiders. Raiding on the trade route was a serious problem. Fur products from Kashgar were transported to Semipalatinsk in the 1820s. These products were obtained by barter from the Kazakh people, and the trade was interrupted by the looting of the same group of people.¹¹⁷ Many merchants pledged to the Semipalatinsk government to protect the caravans. The government had to collaborate with Kazakh sultans to solve the problem, however, it was not only was it hard for the Kazakh side to regulate the problem, but the Kazakh caravans even asked for guards from Semipalatinsk government when they sent caravans to Xinjiang.¹¹⁸

The experience of Putintsev and Liubimov provided a different picture of how Kazakhs were perceived. Both of them heard rumors of how dangerous it was to pass the territory of Kazakhs, but they were actually well-treated by them.

When Putintsev's caravan came to the land of Kambar sultan in Ketkent, the Kazakhs there helped to feed their sheep, and gave them a letter that would be used when they arrived in Tarbagatai.¹¹⁹ They asked the sultan to send a son as a guide to make their journey safer, but the sultan said that his son was sick. Therefore they went to seek help from the sultan Yuchi to send a son to guide in case sultan Kambar's letter alone would not work. He agreed to send his son to guide the caravan.¹²⁰ The only time that Putintsev faced

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Kasymbayev. 1998. 114.

¹¹⁹ "Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev," 83, 86.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

displeasure from the Kazakhs was when four horses were stolen, and nothing else according to him.¹²¹

Liubimov heard that the Baijigits¹²² often posed threats to merchants, but their caravan did not have any unpleasant experiences when they were travelling through the land of the Middle Juz, and they were treated by the Baidzhigits just like their peers.¹²³ What is interesting is that Liubimov mentioned that the road through Semirech'e region was not as scary as he was told in Semipalatinsk. Again, he was well-treated by the Baidzhigits there: "The Kazakhs did not do anything to offend us, and they accepted [us] with a special expression of friendship."¹²⁴

Both Putintsev and Liubimov's travel notes described how Kazakhs were more disposed toward Russian authorities, while their Chinese civilian status was nominal. Putintsev mentioned that on his way back to Bukhtarminsk, a Kazakh Tilyamysh gave him a horse worth 30 rubles. Although Putintsev did not accept without paying, Tilyamysh convinced Putintsev that he was not exchanging this horse for any goods, but only out of zeal for the Russian authorities.¹²⁵ Liubimov mentioned that the Baidzhigits considered themselves Chinese citizens, but this claim was only nominally.¹²⁶ When he was crossing the territory of the Senior Juz, he also mentioned that the Kazakhs there, though considered themselves Chinese civilians, extremely strongly wanted to become Russian civilians.¹²⁷

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹²² The Baidzhigits were a group of Kazakhs who were nomadizing near Tarbagatai outside the *karun*. They were living both in the territory of the Middle Juz and the Senior Juz.

¹²³ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 178.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹²⁵ "Opisanie puti perevodchika Putintsev," 117.

¹²⁶ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 177.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

Liubimov recounted that during the time of his journey, the authority of the Yusunty¹²⁸sultans fell and many *batyrs* had become more powerful than their sultans.¹²⁹ There were, certainly, sultans who did not like the Russians, but still allowed the Russian caravan to pass through their territory.¹³⁰ This piece of information shows not only how divided the Kazakh Khanate was at that time, but how important trade was for the steppe.

It is interesting that both Putintsev and Liubimov were warned about Kazakhs threats to merchants on the road, but both were actually well-treated. Liubimov heard the rumor in Semipalatinsk, which was supposed to be the most important town on Russian side in the Russo-Qing trade in Central Asia, and there were supposed to be quite a number of caravans going back and forth between the town and Tarbagatai and Ili. This information may reflect that only a small number of merchants from Semipalatinsk were actually traveling through this road to western Xinjiang. Another reason might be that Putintsev was travelling with the son of a sultan which ensured his safety. While in the case of Liubimov, they were still well-treated by the Kazakhs even if they were not accompanied by the son of a sultan. Therefore, it might be the case that it was used to be dangerous to travel through the territory of the Kazakhs and only having the son of a sultan can ensure the safety of the merchants. However, gradually, by the 1840s, Kazakhs were becoming more acceptable of Russians traveling on their territory. This explanation can be problematic as Liubimov's journey was done during the period of the Kenesary revolt. It might be that the Baidzhigits were more friendly towards the Russian authority. However, this hypothesis needs further explanation.

¹²⁸ The Yunsuntsy were spread in many Kazakh tribes, among them the major one was Dulat.

¹²⁹ "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova," 185.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 187.

Chinese karun officials and Chinese merchants

Besides the Qing officials, *karun* guards were also secretly trading with Kazakhs for Russian goods. In 1789, it was reported that three Manchu *karun* guards traded for 500 pieces of ermine from the Kazakhs through a Chinese merchant. As a punishment, they were all removed from the banner level, and were sent to Altishahris in Ush and Yarkand as slaves.¹³¹ Relating their experience with the Qing officials, their motivation might be to finance for themselves rather than for the government, otherwise this information would not be disclosed.

The Qing government only officially allowed the foreign merchants (except Russian merchants in the pre-1851 era) to come to trade in Tarbagatai and Ili, but there was no mention of how Chinese merchants were treated in this unofficial Russo-Qing unofficial trade. During my fieldwork in the archive, I found that there was a lack of source about the activity of Chinese merchants who were trading in Tarbagatai and Ili and crossed the border to the Kazakh steppe and further. I was only able to find one source that directly relates to the trans-border activities of Chinese merchants. According to a letter, in 1827, one Chinese merchant and translator called Dalantai¹³² traveled to Ust'-Kamenogorsk through Bukhtarma with mostly brick tea and little amount of other commodities. The Ust'-Kamenogorsk custom post tried to decide what to do, and finally allowed him to come to trade. The letter reflects that the coming of Chinese merchants to Ust'-Kamenogorsk was a rare case. Linking this finding to the records of merchants who traveled to and out of

¹³¹ "Yongbao sends soldiers who privately exchanged Russian goods to Ush, 1789" (Qing qianlong manwen jixindang, 03-140-1-030). Quoted in *ZXLWGWZY*

¹³² Probably Manchu judging from the name

Semipalatinsk which do not show any trace of the coming of Chinese merchants, it is possible that the travel of Chinese merchants to the Kazakh steppe was quite infrequent.¹³³

The Chinese merchants in Xinjiang in the pre-1851 trade can be categorized as the north bend traders and west bend traders. The north bend traders were mainly merchants who were from Shanxi province, Beijing and Ordos and traveled to Mongolia, to Kiakhta or through Mongolia to Xinjiang. The west bend traders were mainly Dungan merchants or Han merchants who were from southern China below the Yangtze River who would travel across the Gansu corridor to Xinjiang.¹³⁴ Compared with the north bend traders who were more organized by working for companies, the west bend traders were often petty traders who sold “snacks, food and tiny and un-united hardware.”¹³⁵ The Dungan merchants were influential in the trade in Altishahr as well, as they played an intermediary role between Altishahr and Han Chinese by being familiar with both cultures and could have a closer relation with the Altishahr as they were Muslims and some had learned the local languages. Millward points out that this situation suggests a possible division of labor in which Han firms shipped commodities to Xinjiang, and Dungan merchants with less capital directly traded with local residents.¹³⁶

The Shanxi merchants were one of the largest groups of merchants who participated in the Kiakhta trade. According to several sources in Chinese, the Shanxi merchants were also quite active in Xinjiang. This merchant group had a close relationship with the Qing authorities, and was engaged in various forms of business from remittance banking,

¹³³ TsGA RK f. I - 341 op. 2 d. 10. L. 3, 3ob, 5, 6 (1827). “o vyvoze tovarov kitaiskim perevodchikam Dalantai dlia promeny Ust'-Kamen. Zastave.”

¹³⁴ Millward. 1998. 160.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 175, 177.

pawnbroking, and specialization in various goods such as tea and dried goods, to money-lending.¹³⁷ Although I was not yet able to find sources on their trade with foreign merchants in Xinjiang, I would nevertheless like to discuss how their activities in Xinjiang were recorded.

The most important piece of information about the Shanxi merchants is the trading companies they set up. These companies engaged in various businesses and their networks and branches extended across the Mongolian steppe. The biggest company was Dashengkui. It was founded in 1696 and the headquarter was in Guihua. In its heyday the company had about 6000 to 7000 personnel and 16,000 to 20,000 camels. Their business concentrated on the Mongolian steppe and Xinjiang: the territory of the Khalkha Mongols, Tannu Uriankhai, Khobdo, Uliastai, Khuree, Kiakhta, the territory of Tumed Mongols, Urumqi, Kucha, Ili and Tarbagatai. Their business also stretched to Siberia and even Moscow.¹³⁸ One very interesting phenomenon is that many of the personnel of the company took positions in the government. This probably explained why it was very difficult to regulate illegal trade in Xinjiang. The Shanxi merchants were also financing for the local government. Later in the 1860s, Shanxi merchants were well-known for their wealth, and together with Shaanxi merchants, were urged in decrees that asked for donating for military expenses.¹³⁹

I only found very scanty materials on the activities of these Chinese merchants who were trading with the foreign merchants in Xinjiang in the pre-1851 era, and mostly they were recorded in cases about illegal trade. Relating this to the one source I found in the

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹³⁸ Xiangyi, Kong. "The Largest Trading Company in the Northern Qing Empire - Dashengkui." Quoted in *MQJSZX*, 752-756.

¹³⁹ Excerpt from *Qing muzong shilu*, vol.120, Tongzhi 13, November in *MQJSZX*, 265.

Almaty archive - the letter about the arrival of a Chinese merchant in Ust'-Kamenogorsk cited above - suggests that the Chinese merchants were largely refused to go abroad through Xinjiang even though foreign merchants were illegally coming to Tarbagatai and Ili to trade. My discussion about the above Chinese merchant groups are still useful however, as they were very likely the ones who also traded with the foreign merchants illegally in Tarbagatai and Ili or legally in official trade after the Qing soldiers who pretended to be merchants finished their trade.

Ethnicity	Number of caravan heads
Kazakh	28 (from Tarbagatai)
Tashkenti	7 (from Tarbagatai) 5 (from Ili)
Bukharan	2 (from Tarbagatai) 2 (from Ili)
Khoqandi	1 (from Tarbagatai)
Russian	1 (from Tarbagatai)
Unknown	1 (from Tarbagatai)
Total	47

Number of caravan heads that came to Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili in 1830

Source: TsGA RK f.I-478 op.2 d.124 l.7ob-23ob (1830). "Godovaia o prishedshikh i otshedshikh karavanakh Semipalatinskoi Tamozhenoi za 1830 god"

Although this table does show that there were more Kazakhs serving as caravan heads during their journey from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk in 1830, it cannot reflect that there were more Kazakh merchants traveling on this road. The accounts of Putintsev show the importance of having a son of a Kazakh sultan to accompany the trip to ensure the safety of the caravan, as this was still important in the early period of the trade. At the same time, his account highlights the multiethnic nature of caravans. Therefore, the

fact that the Kazakhs served more frequently as the heads of caravans is likely more due to safety reasons than indicating that there were more Kazakh merchants traveling on this road. This result does not necessarily contradict with my argument that the Kazakhs were mainly intermediaries of the trade. In addition, the primary and secondary materials I have examined did not mention the importance of the Kazakh merchants as an influential merchant group. At the same time, more Central Asian merchants (Tashkentis, Bukharans and Khoqandis) and Tatars are more frequently mentioned in the above sources. However, this conclusion is preliminary, and more research is needed to find out the role of different groups of merchants in the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to reconstruct the picture of the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. The socio-economic situation of the region and the Russian preparation for the trade through establishing posts and setting up regulations in the 18th century are inseparable as a cause that contributed to the creation of the specific characteristics of the trade: different definitions on illegality, ambiguous attitude by the Qing officials, no formal contracts, arbitrary imposition of the amount of tax by the Qing officials, the Kazakhs gradually becoming intermediaries of the trade, and the importance of Tatar agents and Central Asian merchants in the trade. In the following section, the commodities exchanged in this trade will be discussed to show a fuller picture of the trade, and will also be used to compare with the situation of the post-1851 official Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili.

Chapter 3: The commodities exchanged in the pre-1851 trade and the change of the trade after 1851

Introduction

Despite the unofficial nature of the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili, the commodities exchanged in this trade were quite diverse. This section makes use of archival documents on the data of the imports and exports of the Semipalatinsk custom post in 1826, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1835, 1838-1840, 1843, 1846, 1848 and 1849 to highlight the major trend of the quantity, total values and price of different types of commodities. Among all of the commodities, several types dominated the trade: cotton and silk, silver, tea, opium (before 1840), woolen, hides, food and metal. Semipalatinsk mainly exported cotton fabrics, opium, wool, hides and metal while Tarbagatai and Ili mainly exported silk, silver, tea and food products. One important commodity in the Kiakhta trade, fur, was of less importance in Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang, where metallic materials were more important.¹ However, the commodities in this trade were of mediocre quality and which were probably mostly for local consumption.²

¹ M.I. Sladkovskii, *Istoriya torgovo-ekonomicheskikh otnoshenii narodov Rossii s Kitaem (do 1917 g.)* [History of Economic Relations between Russia and China] (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 215.

² No. 94. 1845. "Memo by Professor V. V. Grigoriev from *Journal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs* about the trade between Russia and western China." p.126-128 (RGIA, R-853, op.2, d.178, l.14-28) in *Torgovye svyazi semipalatinskogo priirtysh'ya (xviii-nachalo xx veka) sbornik dokumentov* [Collected Documents of the Trade Relations of the Semipalatinsk Upper Irtysh Area (From the 18th to the Beginning of the 20th Century)] ed. A. A. Aubakirov, G. T. Kasymova, and K. L. Esmagambetov. Upravlenie arkhivami Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti, Tsentr dokumentatsi noveishei istorii Vostochno-Kazakhstanskoi oblasti (Semipalatinsk, 2004). ; Zhanuzak Kasymbayev. *Istoriia goroda Semipalatinska 1718-1917 gg* [History of the City of Semipalatinsk] (Almaty: Olke. 1998), 137; "Poezdka N. I. Liubimova v Chuguchak i Kul'zhu v 1845 godu pod vidom kuptsa

By tracking the change in the quantity, total value and the price of each individual commodity, we are able not only to understand which commodities were popular and which commodities were valuable, but also how political events between the countries, such as the embargo against Khoqand and possibly the Opium Wars, had an influence on the trade. This influence of the political events is a continued theme from the first chapter.

One important pattern appears in the data of the above years: the year 1840 seems to be a critical year for the Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. The price of most of the commodities declined significantly in 1840, but remained stable from then. At the same time, the flow of silver to Semipalatinsk dropped substantially between 1831 and 1838, and again on a smaller scale in 1840, and then remained stable. And the price of silver followed the same pattern with a sharper decline in 1840. This section provides several hypotheses to explain this phenomenon.

In addition, the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja (Ili) in 1851 marked the start of the official Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. This event, however, did not fundamentally change the types of commodities exchanged in this area, and mostly only changed the scale of trade. Eventually, the small-scale trade in Tarbagatai and Ili started growing larger in scale and replaced Kiakhta market as the center of Russo-Qing trade by the end of the 19th century.

Khorosheva" [The Travel of N. I. Liubimov in Chuguchak (Tarbagatai) and Kuldja (Ili) in 1845 under the name of a merchant Khoroshev], ed. N. I. Veselovskii in "*Zhivaya Starina*" vol. 2 section 1. 1908. 170-189. 178.

The major commodities of the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang³

Opium

Indian opium was smuggled into China through Canton and Macao in exchange for dollars or other commodities from the late 18th century.⁴ The trade in raw cotton and illegal opium from India to Canton provided funds for British merchants to purchase tea and sell it back to Europe or the Atlantic world. This illegal trade in opium continued despite repeated efforts to prohibit the trade, and the boycott that caused the Opium Wars with Britain in 1839-1842 and 1856-1860. The First Opium War from 1839 to 1842 may have had a direct influence on opium trade and the silver supply in Xinjiang which will be discussed in the next section about silver.

Opium, however, did not enter China by sea only. According to a report, opium started being exported from Semipalatinsk into Qing China after 1834.⁵ In Xinjiang, opium was predominantly consumed by exiled criminals and officials who had already started consuming opium when they were in interior China. The local people, however, were not major consumers.⁶ In 1839, the Qing government started prohibiting the trade in opium to Xinjiang. In the same year, about 160,000 *liang* of opium were confiscated, mainly from South Asian merchants, but Han and Dungan merchants as well.⁷ The Qing government carried out an investigation of the opium trade, and found that only a small portion of

³ Other categories of commodities which are not discussed in this chapter can be found in the appendix.

⁴ Holden, Furber, *Rival empires of trade in the Orient, 1600-1800*. (New Delhi: Oxford U.P, 2004), 292.

⁵ M. Krasovskii, *Oblast' sibirskikh kirgizov (Materialy dlia geografii i statistiki Rossii, sobrannye ofitserami general'nogo shtaba. t. 16)*. ch.2. SPb., 1868. 258. Cited from Jin Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates between the Russian and Qing Empires: Central Eurasian international relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Boston: Brill, 2016), 231.

⁶ L. J. Newby, *The Empire and the Khanate: a political history of Qing relations with Khoqand c. 1760-1860* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 217.

⁷ James A. Millward, *Beyond the pass: economy, ethnicity, and empire in Qing central Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 191-192.

opium was flowing into Xinjiang from the interior of China, while poppies were growing in remote regions of Xinjiang. At the same time, large quantity of opium were transported to Xinjiang through Central Asia and India.⁸ Jahangir Khwaja's family was also participating in opium production and transportation, which helped to sustain the trade relations between the mountain area and the oases.⁹

The new regulation by the Qing government on the prohibition of opium trade was intended to be harsh: the death penalty would be used as a form of punishment for all traffickers of opium. However, there was no evidence of any Khoqandis being punished by death for smuggling opium after the first year and a half of the enforcement of the regulation.¹⁰ Even though this new regulation was set up, the control was rather loose. Since the embargo of goods to Khoqand was lifted and the new tax-free trade was established in 1831, the Qing authorities had no longer been searching the baggage brought by Khoqandi merchants at the *karun* unless they suspected the merchants were bringing in prohibited items. This rather loose measure of control was done to avoid any outburst of conflicts with the Khoqandis (which the Qing authorities thought contributed to the declining economy of Altishahr since the 1840s). To make sure the process would proceed smoothly, this check was done by local hakim beks and aqsaqals. This measure brought high possibilities for bribery to take place.¹¹

⁸ Newby, 216.

⁹ Kwangmin, Kim. 2017. *Borderland capitalism: Turkestan produce, Qing silver, and the birth of an eastern market* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017), 110.

¹⁰ Newby, 217.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

The Russian empire started prohibiting the export of opium into the Qing empire in 1841,¹² which was two years after the Qing prohibition had started. However, a letter by the Semipalatinsk custom post to the Ministry of Finance in 1841 points out that merchants in Semipalatinsk smuggled opium and tea from Tarbagatai to Khoqand, and at the same time the letter speculated that merchants in Semipalatinsk were smuggling opium produced either in Russia, or “British opium through Bukhara” (therefore probably those produced in India).¹³ Noda also mentioned that there were still cases of opium smuggling after 1841.¹⁴ According to Liubimov’s report, opium was still exported from Irbit to northern Xinjiang around 1845.¹⁵ Besides, in 1846, “200 poods of opium were imported from Troitsk and Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai for 3,600 rubles.”¹⁶ In addition, Chinese merchants were also obtaining opium for silver from Tatar merchants outside Ili and Tarbagatai.¹⁷ Besides, even with the prohibition, the amount of opium imported by Kashmir and other Himalayan countries increased in the fifteen years since the prohibition. Opium became a staple article of trade in the 1840s with 210 maunds (about 7,854 kilos) of yearly shipments to Yarkand, and they were flowing to Gansu and other northwestern provinces.¹⁸

The Khoqandi merchants were the major players in the illegal trade of opium into Xinjiang. There was one case when Khoqandi merchants were seized for smuggling a large

¹² Jin Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates between the Russian and Qing Empires: Central Eurasian international relations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Boston: Brill, 2016). 231.

¹³ TsGA RK f. i-478 op.2 d.154 l.15, “o zapresheniiem po vysochaischemu poveleniyu vvoza v Kitai opiuma,” 1840-1847.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹⁵ “Poezdka N. I. Liubimova,” 292 and 302. Cited in Noda. 2016. 231.

¹⁶ A. Ianushkevich, *Dnevnik i pis'ma puteshestviia po kazakhskim stepiam* (Pavlodar: EKO, 2006): 190. *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Millward. 1998. 191-192.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

amount of opium through Tarbagatai.¹⁹ However, the Khoqandi merchants were more active in smuggling opium into the Altishahr area than into northern Xinjiang. The export data of the Semipalatinsk custom posts show that opium was the most profitable commodity among all the commodities exported by Semipalatinsk in all the years for which data on opium are available (1835, 1838 and 1840). However, since 1840, there was no record of the export of opium from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili. This lack of data corresponds with the Russian prohibition of the export of opium in 1841. The Ministry of Finance also specifically instructed the Semipalatinsk custom posts not to allow opium to be exported to China,²⁰ even if the whole trade was seen as illegal on the Qing side. This probably indicates that Russia complied with the state-level regulation of the Qing empire on the prohibition of opium trade to make sure the secret trade of other commodities in Xinjiang would continue with the consent of local government.

Silver

Silver is the most important commodity traded from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk in this period. Variations in the supply and value of the silver may have had a fundamental influence on the post-1840 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. I proposed four hypotheses in this section to explain how the quantity and the price of silver may have influenced the trade. First, I discuss the background of silver supply and demand in China as a whole in the early 19th century, and then I move to the discussion specifically about silver in Xinjiang.

¹⁹ Brook, Timothy, *Opium regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). Cited in Newby, 216.

²⁰ TsGA RK f. i-478 op.2 d.154 l.15.

China had been a major demander of silver since the mid-Ming time in the late 16th century. A large amount of silver flowed into China from America because silver was used as the predominant medium of exchange by Portuguese and Spanish merchants. The same situation continued until the early 19th century when the East India Company and merchants from Japan and the United States also started bringing silver in exchange of Chinese goods.

A reversal of the silver flow started in the early 19th century when the silver that flowed out of the Qing empire surpassed the amount that flowed in. Consequently, there was a sharp increase of the price of silver due to its scarcity. There are several explanations for that. As for the cause of the increasing outflow of silver from China, the common view is that the opium trade and the subsequent compensation based on silver by the Qing government to the British Empire drained silver in China and caused the price of silver to increase.²¹ Another view on the cause of the increasing outflow of silver is not that opium trade caused the silver drainage, but that a corrupt army and bureaucracy together with slowed economy that led to this result.²² Lin argues that the reduction in the textile exports of Qing China in the beginning of the 19th century contributed to the decreasing silver influx into the country.²³ Concerning the inflow of silver into China, one explanation is that there was a shortage of supply of silver from Latin America that led to the silver drainage in China. According to this view, the Napoleonic Wars from 1796 to 1815 and the independence movement of Spanish America from 1810 to 1830 weakened the ability of

²¹ Vilar, Pierre. *A History of Gold and Money, 1450 - 1920*. Translated by Judith White. (London: Verso, 1984), 61. Cited in Manhong Lin. *China upside down: currency, society, and ideologies, 1808-1856*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 101.

²² James M. Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992) 104. Cited in Chris Feige and Jeffrey A. Miron, "The Opium Wars, Opium Legalization and Opium Consumption in China. *Applied Economics Letters* 15(12) (2008): 911-913. 3.

²³ Lin, 86-100.

governments in Latin America to support the cost of silver mining.²⁴ Irigoien challenges this view by saying that there was not a shortage of the silver supply from America, but a change on the demand side in China. She argues that the coins minted in the different regions of the newly independent Spanish America from the 1820s to 1850s began to lose their standardized quality which resulted in a lower demand for silver by China.²⁵ Temin also mentioned that the Chinese started demanding bills on London to pay for opium from India.²⁶

Both the Russian empire and the Qing empire imposed protective policies against the outflow of silver. Russia had been actively seeking bullion abroad, and forbade the export of precious metal at least by the 1660s when Bukharan merchants were prohibited from leaving the country with silver.²⁷ The Qing empire also set up protective policies regarding the outflow of precious metal. However, until the 1830s, the Qing empire seemed to only use silver for buying Russian goods.²⁸ Even if the Kazakh-Qing trade was permitted only in the form of barter trade, *yambo* was still obtained by the Kazakhs and flowed to Siberia.²⁹ Kazakhs had even appealed to the Russian authorities to pay *yasak* in *yambo* silver instead of livestock.³⁰ It was clear that the Kazakhs were receiving silver through

²⁴ Lin, 324-327.

²⁵ Alejandra Irigoien. "The End of a Silver Era: The Consequences of the Breakdown of the Spanish Peso Standard in China and the United States, 1780s-1850s." *Journal of World History* 20, no. 2 (2009): 207-243. 232-237.

²⁶ P. Temin, "The Economic Consequences of the Bank War," *Journal of Political Economy* 76, no.2 (1968): 257-274. 270. Cited in *Ibid.*, 227.

²⁷ Erika Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia: Trade in Early Modern Eurasia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016). 52.

²⁸ Fletcher, Joseph, "Sino-Russian Relations, 1800-62." Chapter. In *The Cambridge History of China*, edited by John K. Fairbank, 10:318-50. *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 328. Cited in Noda. 2016. 230.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Report by Office of Siberian Kirgiz, 11.19.1843, IA00 (Historical Archive of Omsk Oblast'): f. 3, op. 12, d. 17723, l. 1. Cited in *Ibid.*, 239.

trade with the Qing empire, and the amount received was enough for the Kazakhs to use it as a stable form of payment to the Russian government.

According to the data of the Semipalatinsk customs house, the year 1840 seems to be very critical during the period of the trade from 1827 to 1849. After 1841, the most valuable commodity in this trade, opium, was prohibited to enter into China. Before that, the quantity of silver exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk dropped sharply from 1831 to 1838, and again in 1840 but not so substantially. The total value of silver mostly corresponds to the quantity transported - it was not a consequence of lower prices. In other words, the value of silver was stable until 1838. The total value was decreasing during the period from 1831 to 1838, but had remained relatively steady since 1840. The price of silver followed the same pattern, but there was a sharper decline of the price of silver in 1840. The price of silver in 1840 was only $\frac{1}{4}$ of that in 1838. Like silver, the price of other commodities sharply decreased in 1840, but remained stable thereafter.

Year	Quantity (pood)	Value (ruble)	ruble/pood
1827	156	623637	3998
1830	166	664323	4002
1831	224	876782	3914
1838	93	370800	3987
1840	60	65968	1099
1846	39	43040	1104
1848	6	6725	1121
1849	9	8517	946

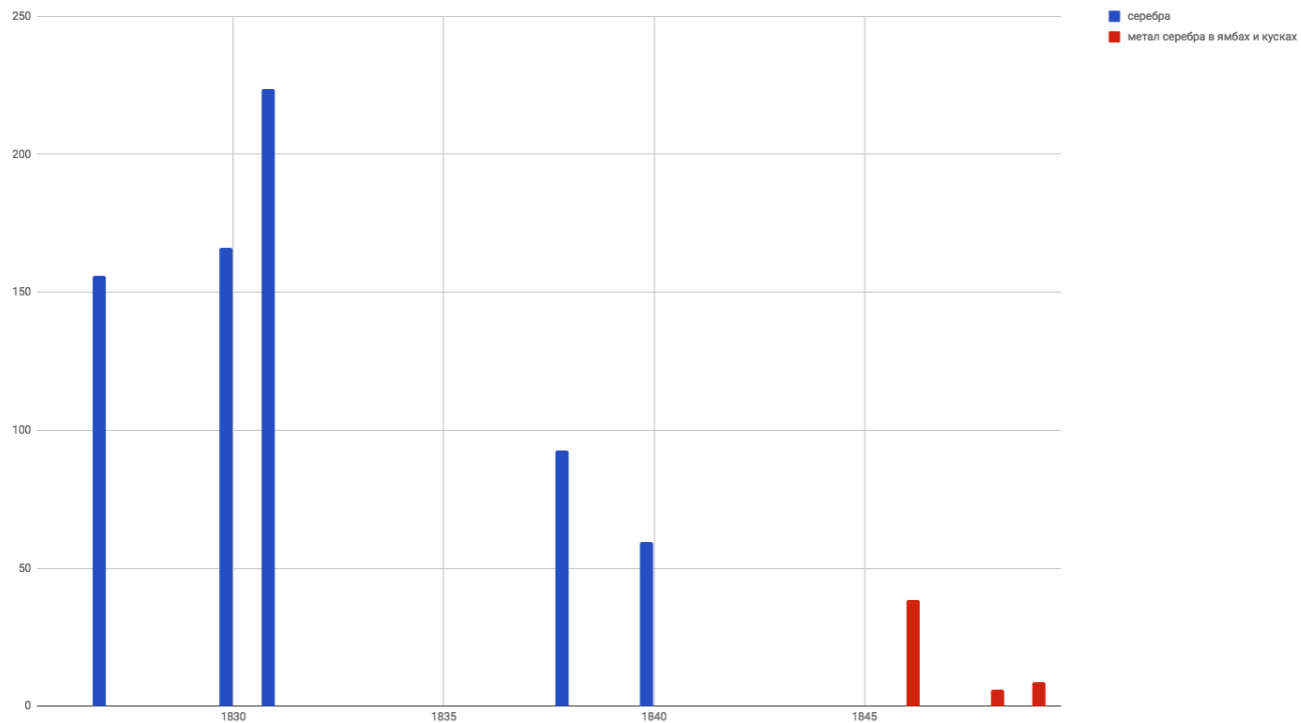
Silver flowed into Semipalatinsk from Xinjiang (1827-1849, for non-consecutive years)

Source: TsGA RK f. i-478 op.2 (The complete list of *dela* is in the Appendix section)

Note: The data are approximated to pood from pood/pound/zolotnik, and to ruble from ruble/kopeck. The ruble/pood value is also approximated to the digit in ones.

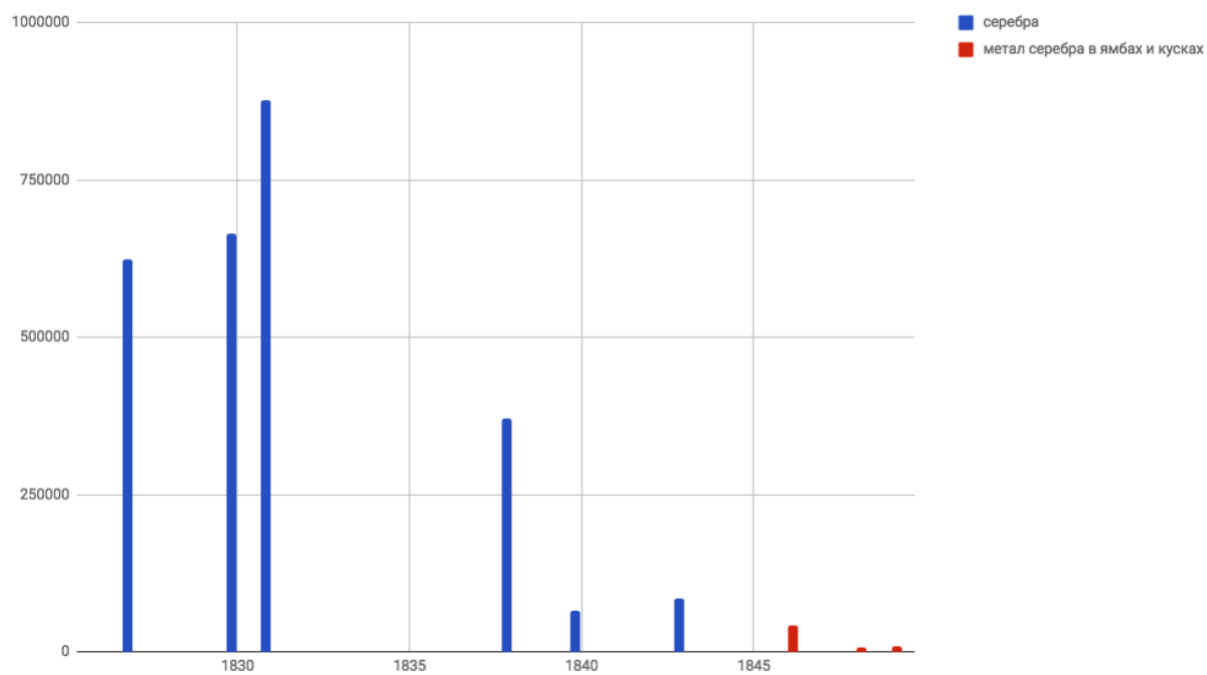
1.1

Quantity of silver (by pood)



1.2.1

Total value of silver (ruble)



1.2.2

Price of silver (ruble)



In Qing Xinjiang, the situation with silver seemed to be quite different from the general trend in the whole country. During the early years of the settlement project, the Qing government had shipped a large amount of silver that caused silver to devalue in Xinjiang, especially at the time and during the immediate aftermath of the Jahangir revolt. When the Qing government shipped 8 million *liang* of silver to Xinjiang, the value of *pul*³¹ suddenly rose in relation to silver. Millward mentions that: “In 1830, an official in Karashahr reported that fodder and similar items had to be procured with *pul* - with silver

³¹ The copper currency used in southern Xinjiang since the Qianlong era. The original *pul* to silver ratio was 50:1 (official) and 100:1 (in practice).

rapidly falling in value, merchants would not accept it as payment.”³² Therefore, because of the influx of silver from the Qing government, silver in Xinjiang in the 1830s did not follow the appreciation of silver across the whole country. The price of silver in Ili was still lower than the statewide average in 1840, and much lower than that of the coastal provinces.³³ The argument on the increasing silver flow into Xinjiang in the 1830s was also supported by Kwangmin Kim.³⁴ He mentions that increasing silver transfer from inner China was one effort by the Qing government to “support increased troop level without increasing the level of burden imposed on the oasis population.”³⁵ Kim cites Millward and Hori Sunao’s discussion on silver, and summarized that the silver transferred from the imperial coffers to Xinjiang was 60,000 *liang* per year from 1759 to 1827, and the number rose to 200,000 *liang* per year from 1828 to 1852.³⁶ Therefore, both Kim and Millward’s analysis does explain the devaluation of silver price in Xinjiang, but not the subsequent fall in the quantity of silver that flowed into Xinjiang from other parts of China.

Kim argues that this silver flow to Xinjiang virtually stopped by 1853. This was not even caused by the first Opium War as the Qing government was still trying to maintain its level of silver transfer to Xinjiang during the Seven Khoja War. This discontinuation only

³² HJTZ (He-ning, ed. *Huijiang tongzhi* (Comprehensive gazetteer of Altishahr. 1804) 10:2b; Tie-bao, ZPZZ (Gongzhong zhupi zouzhe. Rescripted palace memorial) MZSW (minzu shiwu. Nationality Affairs) 0080-7, JQ16.4.5; Forsyth, Sir. T. D. *Report of a Mission to Yarkund in 1873, Under Command of Sir T. D. Forsyth, K. C. S. I., C. B., Bengal Civil Service, with Historical and Geographical Information Regarding the Possessions of the Ameer of Yarkund*. Calcutta: The Government Press. 1875. 43. Cited in Millward. 1998.

³³ *Zhongguo jindai maoyishi ziliao* [Materials on the Monetary History of the Modern Era]. compilation 1. The period of Qing rule. vol. 1 ed. by the financial history material group of the consulting office of the headquarter of Peoples’ Bank of China. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), 79-82, Cited in Lin, 113.

³⁴ Kwangmin, Kim. *Borderland capitalism: Turkestan produce, Qing silver, and the birth of an eastern market*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 157.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 135.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

happened later with the spread of the Taiping Rebellion in 1851.³⁷ The drain of silver across the whole country and the inflation of *pul* in Xinjiang disincentivized another major source of silver - the Chinese merchants - to come to trade in the oasis.³⁸ According to an official report in 1844 from Ili, the amount of *pul* coins that could be exchanged with the same amount of silver doubled. Before, one *liang* of silver could be exchanged for 200 *pul* but in “recent years,” one *liang* of silver could be exchanged for 400 *pul*.³⁹ Kim argues that the shortage of silver transfer was detrimental to oasis capitalism in Central Asia. The Qing authorities and local begs started employing more people to work in copper mining, and this concentration of the workforce, combined with the growing economic stratification, contributed to local revolts. These revolts, combined with more Khoja attacks, contributed to the fall of the Qing and beg regime in 1864.⁴⁰ In addition, the shortage of silver also had an influence on Khoqand. Kim argues that the timing of the decentralization of political authority of the Khoqand Khanate overlaps with the shortage of the exports of silver from Kashgar to Khoqand. Kim summarized that silver “drew the oasis begs into the political orbit of China,”⁴¹ while it also caused the fall of the Qing regime in southern Xinjiang. At the same time, copper coins were depreciating rapidly and cannot effectively substitute silver.

This is the background against which one should consider the sudden drop of the quantity of silver exported to Semipalatinsk via Tarbagatai and Ili in 1835 and the substantial drop in the prices of most of the commodities in 1840. A shortage of silver in China in general began in the early 1800s. However, in Xinjiang, there was an oversupply of

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 159.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁰ Kim, 157

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

silver from the late 1820s to the early 1850s. By incorporating the findings of Millward and Kim, we could argue that there was a slow diffusion of the silver drain to Xinjiang only till the early 1850s. Therefore, to relate this argument to the discussion about the theme of this thesis, it was not that a silver drain in Xinjiang caused a sharp decrease of the silver flowing into Semipalatinsk in the 1830s and later again in a smaller scale in 1840.

By not seeing demand as rigid, we may be able to explain the simultaneous decline in the quantity and price of silver to Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili. Here, I would like to propose several hypotheses to explain this transition:

Hypothesis 1: there was an oversupply of silver to Xinjiang in the 1830s from the Qing government, and probably also in Semipalatinsk therefore silver was less demanded in Semipalatinsk since the 1830s. Therefore, there was a decrease in both the quantity and price of silver imported to Semipalatinsk from Xinjiang. (However, this hypothesis cannot explain the second decline in 1840)

Hypothesis 2 (which can support Hypothesis 1): The transition from assignat to credit ruble⁴² in Russia in 1840, during which more gold coins started entering circulation,⁴³ which influenced the flow and price of silver in this trade as gold probably became more desirable than silver. (However, the mechanism of this influence needs to be explored.)

Hypothesis 3: The opium trade, though it was legal on the Russian side until 1841, probably comprised a more extensive underground trade that was not formally

⁴²The assignat paper ruble was created by Catherine II in 1768. Its value decreased from 97.09 silver kopeks in 1787 to 66.23 in 1800. Thomas C. Owen, "A Standard Ruble of Account for Russian Business History, 1769-1914: A Note." *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 3 (1989): 699-706. 699-700.

⁴³ Ian Blanchard, *Russia's "age of silver": precious-metal production and economic growth in the eighteenth century*. (London: Routledge, 1989), 210. Cited in Owen, 700.

documented. This possible burgeoning underground trade may have absorbed a large quantity of silver from Xinjiang during the 1830s. Therefore, there might have been a shift of revenue from the official, documented trade to the underground trade. Because of this, the evidence could account for the decrease of silver flowing into Semipalatinsk in official documents. (However, this hypothesis cannot explain the second fall in the quantity and price of silver in 1840. In addition, there could be another hypothesis that much of the silver trade went underground in the 1830s as well.)

Hypothesis 4: There might had been a lack of demand for silver during the Kenesary revolt on the Eastern Kazakh steppe. Considering the fact that the quantity of commodities did not fall during this period (1830s) and the relatively smooth journey of Liubimov (1845) during the time of the revolt, the trade volume does not appear to have been affected by the revolt and the merchants who were participating in the unofficial Russo-Qing trade there probably just shifted to barter trade rather than continuing to use silver. (Hypothesis 3 could only explain the myth of 1840, while this hypothesis could address the gradual decline of silver flow to Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili in the 1830s.)

More research is needed to trace what actually caused these changes. Nevertheless, we can claim that there was a decrease of the quantity and price of silver exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk during most part of the 1830s and again on a smaller scale in 1840. In addition, the price of most of the commodities in this trade on both side decreased substantially in 1840.

Cotton and silk

The price of cotton fabrics exported by Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili also followed this trend of sharp decrease in 1840 and remained stable thereafter. In this section, I would like to discuss the major types of textiles that dominated this trade and the background of the development of the industry.

The rapid population growth from the 1750s to the 1800s in Russia generated more demand for diverse, cheap and comfortable fabrics. In addition, this growth of population generated the elasticity of demand (“making it responsive to a fall in the cost of the product, and therefore stimulated Russian textiles.”)⁴⁴ These cheap, diverse, and comfortable fabrics are the types that dominated the Tarbagatai and Ili market in the first half of the 19th century. While the workforce in the cotton industry exceeded 1/20 of the workforce in linen industry, the value of the output of the cotton industry was ½ that of the linen industry. Gatrell explained that this progressive substitution of cotton was due to “a mixture of new technology, organizational changes that shifted part of the burden of competition on to the domestic weavers, tariff protection and favorable market conditions (due to the growing population and urbanization).”⁴⁵ Besides, European fabrics, which were traded greater in volume as Russian exports before, gradually decreased as a share of the total exports of fabrics from Russia by the end of the 18th century.⁴⁶ This also shows that the European fabrics which was sold by Russia in the Russo-Qing trade in the 18th century (like in Kiakhta) were substituted with cotton fabrics produced by Russian workshops and factories.

⁴⁴ Peter Gatrell, *The tsarist economy*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 146.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁶ Clifford Foust, *Muscovite and Mandarin: Russia's trade with China and its setting* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 231.

Different groups of population demanded different types of textiles: “In Turkestan and Kashgar, the population preferred crimson and padded chintz, *byaz’*, cretonne and *tik*; in Ili, the Dungan population demanded silk products: damask, satin, *lastik*, *nanbuk*,⁴⁷ brilliantine and demicotton; while Kalmyks liked textiles with yellow, red and brown color.⁴⁸” Most of the above types of textiles can be found in the record of imports and exports from 1820s to 1849 in the Semipalatinsk custom house.

Among the fabrics that were transported from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili from 1826 to 1849, the one type which was transported in the largest quantity throughout the years was *nankeen*. The quantity of *nankeen* exported was much higher than that of any other type of fabrics.⁴⁹ This type of cotton was said to be originally produced near the city of Nankin in China, from which was derived the name “nankeen” (it is also called *kitaika* in some Russian sources). It became a popular good in the 19th century. *Nankeen* was “a lustrous fabric, strong and durable, and came in many colors, the best in blue or azure.”⁵⁰ According to Burton, *nankeen*, though durable, was not very good in quality. It is described as likened to “the worst type of taffeta.” It was widely used for clothing, and was very popular in Siberia.⁵¹ The low price of *nankeen* probably could account for its popularity in Tarbagatai and Ili. It is also interesting how the most popular Chinese cotton product was indeed also the most popular export of cotton product from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai

⁴⁷ Probably nankeen.

⁴⁸ Sladkovskii, 276.

⁴⁹ Nankeen took up 42% to 66% of the yearly total amount of fabrics transported from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili from 1826 to 1849.

⁵⁰ Foust, 355.

⁵¹ Audrey Burton, *The Bukharans: a dynastic, diplomatic, and commercial history, 1550–1702* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997), 368.

and Ili. Were these *nankeens* re-exported to China? Or were they produced by Russian factories? These are important questions that need to be answered.

Besides *nankeen*, the next most important cotton product by volume exported from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili was half-calico. The other fabrics which were transported frequently were velvet, calico, half-cotton, muslin, canvas, *tik*, brocade and Chinese-Moscovite.

Most of the different types of fabrics show a steady change in quantity throughout the period in Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade, except Chinese-Moscovite which increased sharply from 1846 to 1849. This was lesser true of velvet and calico which fluctuated throughout the period. The other types of fabrics mostly followed the same pattern. All of the other types of fabrics showed a decrease in 1839 and rose again in 1840. *Nankeen*, velvet and calico followed the exact same pattern throughout the period, even the amounts by which they rose were parallel to each other. *Tik* and half-cotton also followed a similar pattern. All of the five types of fabrics had critical change point in the year 1843, 1846 and 1848.

Although *nankeen* made up the bulk of the value among all types of fabrics in the Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade, the price of it was cheap compared with velvet and half-velvet, and to a lesser degree, brocade especially before 1840. After 1840, there was a sharp decrease in the price of the aforementioned types of fabrics, and all of the fabrics started to follow a similar pattern with little fluctuation. The prices of all fabrics suddenly all decreased in 1840.

Unlike Russia, where most cotton production was dispersed in different villages, most of the Chinese cotton production was concentrated in Jiangnan region. In addition,

most of the cotton circulated in regional markets and only a small amount was exported abroad.⁵²

Chinese Cotton was in high demand from people living in Siberia and European Russia. "Eastern Siberians continued to use more Bukharan and Chinese cotton than Russians until the end of the 19th century."⁵³ Some cotton goods which were shipped to European Russia "were transshipped to Poland or distributed in Belorussia, Ukraine, Cossackdom, or the gubernii around Azov and Novorossiisk."⁵⁴

Silks in different forms were highly demanded in Russia, and some of those exported by the Qing empire to Russia were re-exported to Europe. The silk exported from China to Russia declined throughout the second half of the 18th century because of the efforts made by Russian factories to produce silks, the high tariff on raw silk and the competition from Italian silks.⁵⁵ In addition, Trusevich argued that another reason was the decline in the quality of Chinese silks.⁵⁶ The cotton fabrics were larger in volume compared with silks exported to Russia.

With the growing textile industry in Russia, the textile industry in the Qing empire was declining in southern China according to Zurndorfer. In the early Qing period, farmers in Fujian and Guangdong had found out ways to grow two crops of rice each year, and at the same time started planting more sugar cane and tea. Local people were less willing to

⁵² Ti-hsin Hsü, and Cheng-ming Wu, *Chinese capitalism, 1522-1840* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000), 170. Cited in Harriet T. Zurndorfer, "The Resistant Fibre: Cotton Textiles in Imperial China," *The Spinning World : A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press : Pasold Research Fund, 2009), 61.

⁵³ Foust, 355.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 232.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

produce cotton, and they traded raw cotton from Jiangnan with the sugar they produced.⁵⁷ They shifted to importing cotton from India in the 18th century due to the less expensive transportation costs.⁵⁸ However, by 1800, cotton still remained as the second most important commodity (after grain) exported by China in international trade.⁵⁹ From 1820 to 1850, the Daoguang Depression, when the internal markets collapsed, devastated the textile industry. The same situation also combined negative climate changes including “sharp drops in temperature, heavy summer rain, and frequent floods which destroyed cotton crops.”⁶⁰ Besides, foreign cotton cloth started competing with that produced in Jiangnan, and their price was about $\frac{1}{3}$ of those produced in Jiangnan.

The most popular Chinese cotton export was *nankeen* in the 19th century. In Tarbagatai and Ili, the situation was different. Although *nankeen* was exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk from 1826 to 1849, the quantity was much less than several other fabrics. The price had dropped substantially from 1820s to 1831, rose again to exceed all the other types of fabrics from 1831 to 1840, and then returned to a level close to other types.

The greatest quantity of fabric exported by Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk from 1826 to 1849 was *daba*. *Daba* is a “calico of a strong description, and generally dyed blue, red, or some bright color.” This type of cotton was coarse, and tend to be confused with

⁵⁷ Chu Hua, Mumian pu [Treatise on Cotton] (1784), in Congshu jicheng [Collected Collectanea], vol. 975. (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1937), 11. Cited in Zurndorfer, 61.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Ti-hsin Hsü and Cheng-ming Wu, *Chinese capitalism, 1522-1840* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000), 170-174. *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ti-hsin Hsü and Cheng-ming Wu, 395. Cited in Bozhong Li, “Involution and Chinese Cotton Textile Production: Songjiang in the Late Eighteenth Century and Early Nineteenth Centuries,” *The Spinning World : a Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850*. 61.

Bukharan cottons⁶¹ *Daba* took up of 80% to 90% of all the fabrics traded in each year which the data are available except 1831 and 1849. (Appendix import 3.1.2a) The quantity of *daba* exported dropped substantially throughout the period, though it remained as the largest item of trade.

The second most exported fabric from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk was *byaz'*. *Byaz'* was "plain, strong and warm and could be glazed or unglazed." "It was either bleached pure white or dyed in seven or more single colors, including black, purple, grey and brown, but not red. It was commonly used for caftans, shirts and linings, but it was also thought ideal for maps."⁶² When dyed, *byaz'* could also be used to make "tablecloths, sheets, bags, bandages and bedspreads, and if embroidered with gold, it became the elegant wrap (*shirinka*) worn by Moscovite women."⁶³ *Byaz'* was similar to *daba*.⁶⁴ The quantity of *byaz'* exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk also dropped substantially throughout the period. (Appendix import 3.1.2b)

Although the other types of fabrics were only a small part of the trade, the types of fabrics were becoming more and more diverse throughout the period. The major ones besides *daba* and *byaz'* were *kanf* (big and small), *chancha*, *kancha*, big foulard (*fanza*), *dalyamba*, and *lyanza*.

The quantity of all types of fabrics remained stable throughout the period except *kancha* and big foulard (*fanza*). There is also a general trend that the quantity of all the fabrics decreased after 1845. Another trend is that the fabric types are more diverse in later years than at the beginning of the period.

⁶¹ Foust, 356.

⁶² Burton. 365.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 365-366.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 369.

As for price, big *kanf* had the highest price, followed by small *kanf*. Although they still remained the most expensive fabrics throughout the period, the price dropped substantially after 1840, and remained stable throughout the 1840s. (Appendix import 3.2.2a)

One important thing that needs to be noted is the frequent mention of *huibu* in Chinese sources as an important commodity in Kazakh-Qing trade. *Huibu* is a type of cheap cotton cloth produced in Altishahr which served as a substitute for the fabrics transported from the East, and had been used as a form of tax payment in Altishahr. By exchanging *huibu* rather than textiles from the eastern region with the Kazakhs, the Qing government was able to save on production and transportation costs, while the Kazakhs also preferred cheaper textiles. According to Millward, the official silk shipments to Xinjiang had been declining from 1765 to 1853.⁶⁵ According to Kim, in 1858, a new tax on a type of cotton cloth called “big cotton cloth” from Kashgar started being levied.⁶⁶ This “big cotton cloth” is very likely a direct translation of *dabu* in Chinese, and therefore very likely the word *daba* in Russian sources. Therefore we can say that *daba*, the cotton cloth that comprises 90 percent of the total annual volume of fabrics exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk was indeed *huibu* from Altishahr which was collected as a form of tax.⁶⁷ Therefore, if we have the data on how much *daba* was exported each year, we may know how much *huibu* was collected as a form of tax by Altishahris. From 1826 to 1849, the amount of *daba* exported declined gradually. What was the reason behind this? This

⁶⁵ Millward. 1998. Figure 2.

⁶⁶ Kim, 173.

⁶⁷ The value of *huibu* had been decreasing over time since the second half of the 18th century because the value of it was tied to *pul'* (the copper currency used in Altishahr which was declining in value compared with silver.) Millward. 1998. 72.

observation contradicts the general perception that more *huibu* were collected since the end of 1820s because the Jahangir Revolt had ended and therefore the Qing government were able to gain more *huibu* as a stable form of taxation. In addition, if we accept that *daba* is *huibu*, it means that 90% of the textiles exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk were produced locally rather than a result of long-distance trade from the east.

Tea

The price of tea also followed the pattern of sharp decrease in 1840, and remained stable since then. However, this only holds true for *baihao* tea. The price of brick tea did decrease, but the decrease was in much smaller scale compared to that of *baihao* tea.

Tea was the second most important good after silver among the exports of the Qing empire from Tarbagatai and Ili from 1826 to 1848. Tea took up 94.6% of the total value of exports from China in 1850.⁶⁸ However, it was only after the end of the 18th century that the value of tea exported by the Qing empire to Russia surpassed that of cotton.⁶⁹ Although people in Central Asia had been drinking tea since at least the 15th century, it was only in the 18th century that tea became a regularly consumed drink in Russia and Europe even though it was traded at the beginning of Russo-Qing trade.⁷⁰ Bukharan merchants bought both black and green tea from China, and sold it in different places including Siberia and Moscow. Tea was thought to have many functions: it “serves as a stimulant against cold weather, purifies water, stays fresh longer than mare’s milk, prevents drunkenness, dispels

⁶⁸ Sladkovskii, 272.

⁶⁹ Fous, 232, 358.

⁷⁰ Newby, 133.

bad breath etc.”⁷¹ The Qing government believed that people in other countries were gastronomically dependent on tea and people from other countries “could not get along for a single day without them.”⁷² Therefore the suspension of Kiakhta trade among which tea was one of the most important export goods was seen by the Qing authorities as having a detrimental effect on Russian civilians.

There were mainly two types of tea exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk: brick tea and *baihao* tea. In Xinjiang, *baihao* tea was not preferred by the local Chinese settlers, Mongols and Turkic Muslims because it was considered to have a cooling effect on people.⁷³ The above groups of people mostly only consumed brick tea.⁷⁴ Brick tea was also widely consumed by the natives in Siberia, and they “infused it with rye-meal, mutton fat, and salt.” Green tea and black tea were insignificant in demand compared with brick tea.⁷⁵ This was partly because brick tea was packed solid and could resist the dry climate of the steppe. After *nankeen*, brick tea started serving as the monetary unit in Kiakhta in the early 19th century until being replaced by silver in 1854.⁷⁶ According to the record of the imports of Semipalatinsk, about 90 percent of the tea imported from Tarbagatai and Ili in 1826, 1827, 1835 and 1838 was brick tea; it only became a smaller share after 1840 ranging from 59 percent to 86 percent. (Appendix import 2.1.1)

⁷¹ Burton, 383.

⁷² Ssu-yü Teng and John King Fairbank, *China's response to the West; a documentary survey, 1839-1923* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 25. *Ibid.*, 132.

⁷³ “Negotiation on the establishment of regulations on the inspecting the export of tea and rhubarb against foreign nations” (Qing xuanzong shilu [Veritable records of the successive reigns of the Qing dynasty - Daoguang reign]. vol.137. p.101) in *Zhongguo Xinjiang lishi wenhua guji wenxian ziliao yibian* [Collections of the Translated Monographs and Archival Materials on the History and Culture of Chinese Xinjiang] (Atush: Kezilesu Ke'erkeziyu chubanshe; Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2016 and 2017), 650.

⁷⁴ Newby, 139.

⁷⁵ Foust, 232. 358.

⁷⁶ Mark Mancall, ‘The Kiakhta Trade’, *Economic Development of China and Japan: Studies in Economic History and Political Economy*. ed. By C. D. Cowan. (“Studies on Modern Asia and Africa,” No. 4.) (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), 29-30. Cited in Newby, 134. However, it is not clear if brick tea also served as a currency in Xinjiang or not.

Since the Ming time, all merchants who intended to transport their tea to the frontier were required to purchase a license (*yin*). In Lanzhou, half of the tea they brought was taxed and sold as “official tea” (*guan cha*) while the rest could be sold as “supplementary tea” (*fucha*). However, the license system, although still in use in Lanzhou after the conquest of Dzungaria when Lanzhou was no longer at the frontier, was very loosely controlled. By the 1820s, a large amount of tea without license was sold in Xinjiang at very high prices.⁷⁷ The Khoqandis profited greatly from the tea and rhubarb trade.

An embargo against Khoqand by the Qing empire started in 1828 to push Khoqand to hand over the family members of Jahangir. This measure was also used to ensure the Altishahris would not be burdened by the high tea price. The rationale was that the tea price in Altishahr would be lowered if the Khoqandi merchants were not involved in the tea trade.⁷⁸ As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Khoqandi merchants demanded *xicha* (fine tea) and *zacha* (mixed tea), while they did not demand cheaper tea widely consumed in Xinjiang like *dacha* (big tea) and *jinchā* (catty tea). Therefore, the Qing government started prohibiting the transporting of *xicha* and *zacha* to Xinjiang to ensure that the embargo was effective. Newby notes that it was very hard for the Qing administration to effectively enforce the embargo due to the language barrier and the difficulty of distinguishing Khoqandi merchants from Kazakhs and other Central Asian merchants.⁷⁹ There were cases in which Kazakh and Khoqandi merchants were seized when Khoqandi merchants were smuggling goods through Kazakh caravans.⁸⁰ The Altishahris and

⁷⁷ Newby, 135.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁸⁰ Noda. 2016. 229.

Khoqandis continued smuggling tea which undermined the effective functioning of the system.⁸¹

However, the data on the export of tea from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk reflect the possible effectiveness of this embargo. In 1826 and 1827, though brick tea took up the predominant majority of the tea exported, *baihao* (which was categorized as *xicha*) still took up a small share (ranging from 3 percent to 6 percent). The embargo started in 1828 and was lifted in 1831.⁸² In 1830 and 1831, there was no record of any *baihao* tea being exported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk. Only after the lifting of the embargo did *baihao* tea appear again in the data of the export of Tarbagatai and Ili. Therefore, it seems that the embargo of Qing authorities was effective in northern Xinjiang, although there might have been cases of smuggling through the *karun* as well.⁸³ After the lifting of the embargo in 1831, *baihao* tea had again been a small share of the total amount of tea transported from 1835 to 1849 in each year for which data are available. (Appendix import 2.1.1) Although the share of *baihao* tea of all the tea traded was smaller (only 1 percent) than in the pre-embargo years in 1835 and 1838, in 1840 the share of *baihao* tea suddenly increased to 40 percent. Then throughout the 1840s, the share fluctuated between 10 and 30 percent. The volume of the tea trade was growing gradually from 1826 to 1840, and suddenly increased substantially during the 1840s, with a decline in 1848 and grew higher again in 1849. (Appendix import 2.1.2) The price of brick tea dropped a little bit from 1826 to 1841, and remained the almost the same until 1840. The price of *baihao*

⁸¹ Kim, 117.

⁸² Millward. 1998. 178.

⁸³ It should also be noted that the whole tea trade with Russia was supposed to be illegal in Xinjiang in this period.

tea which was much higher than brick tea was fluctuating before 1840.⁸⁴ Starting from 1840, the price of brick tea dropped a little bit and remained stable, while the price of *baihao* tea dropped substantially and remained stable as well. (Appendix import 2.2.2)

The types of tea traded were increasing throughout this period, with green tea and *sabet* taking small shares. Foust argued that the dominance of demand for brick tea was over green and black tea had been reversed by the end of the 18th century when green tea and black tea started dominating the trade.⁸⁵ However, the data on imports of the Semipalatinsk custom posts did not reflect this change. The change that Foust was discussing was probably taking place in Kiakhta. The quantity of the two other types of tea: *sabet* and green tea, were still much less than the share of brick tea and *baihao* tea. It was possible that most of the tea was sold locally or in Siberia due to the popularity of brick tea in this area. The small share of *baihao* tea were probably demanded by Khoqandi merchants.

The impact of the Jahangir revolt on the tea trade must also be ascertained. Nayanceng, the Councillor or Kashgar, claimed that the cause of the Jahangir revolt was the presumed high prices of tea set up by Chinese and Dungan merchants.⁸⁶ Millward mentioned that the market price of tea before the embargo against Khoqand was high, and the price was even higher in official shops, which reached 0.8 *liang* per *jin* in 1829.⁸⁷ The record of the tea imports at the Semipalatinsk custom house shows that the price of brick

⁸⁴ The price of *baihao* tea was fluctuating between 120 rubles/pood to 200 rubles/pood from 1826 to 1838, while the price of brick tea was about 40 rubles/pood throughout the 1830s. The price of the two converges since 1840 and remained stable before the officialization of the trade. (The price of the *baihao* tea remained 50 rubles/pood and the price of brick tea remained 12 rubles/pood.)

⁸⁵ Foust, 232.

⁸⁶ NWYGZY (Nayanceng. *Nawen yigong zouyi* [Memorials of Nayanceng]. Rong'an, ed. 1830) 7r45a, DGS-7.19. Cited in Millward. 1998. 107.

⁸⁷ XZSL (*Daqing lichao xuanzong shilu* [Veritable records of the successive reigns of the Qing dynasty - Daoguang reign]) 157:26, DG9.6 jichou. Cited in Millward. 1998. 96.

tea imported in 1830 was 48.87 rubles per pood, which was about 1.37 *liang* per *jin*. In addition, unlike other areas of Xinjiang where “private” tea⁸⁸ started being traded more, in Ili and Tarbagatai, official tea still dominated the area until the 1850s.⁸⁹ Since the price of “official” tea was higher, it was possible that the price of tea in Ili and Tarbagatai was actually higher than in Altishahr.

Millward further mentioned that the market price of tea dropped substantially starting from the fourth month of 1829 after the embargo started because there was excess supply of tea in the absence of Khoqandi buyers. The merchants who transported tea all tried to sell their tea quickly and sought only small profits. Jalungga, the successor of Nayanceng as the Councilor of Kashgar, mentioned that it was forbidden to carry tea beyond the *karun*, and that the local tea market was limited.⁹⁰ Another interesting phenomenon is the gap between the data provided by Millward and the data of Semipalatinsk custom post. Millward mentioned that an 1828 estimate showed that there “between 100,000 and 300,000 *jin* of mixed and fine teas were exported from Ili and Tarbagatai in a year, which comprised ‘70%’ of the tea brought north by Chinese merchants.”⁹¹ The records of imports of Semipalatinsk, however, shows that only 1.87 pood (about 27.3 *jin*) of *baihao* tea and 62.91 poods (about 1692.67 *jin*) of brick tea were imported in 1828, and only 228.7 poods (about 6224.44 *jin*) of brick tea were exported in 1830. It was only in 1846 that the amount of imported tea started matching this figure of 100,000 *jin*. Can we say that this huge gap in the figures suggests that most of the tea

⁸⁸ Tea which is sold without *jin*.

⁸⁹ Millward. 1998. 176.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁹¹ De-ying-a, Rong-an, LFZZ MZSW (*Junjichu lufu zouzhe. Minzu shiwu*. [Reference copy of palace memorial stored in the Grand Council. Nationality Affairs]; 1451-5, DG8.7.2; Yu-lin, Bu-yan-tai, ZPZZ MZSW (*Gongzhong zhupi zouzhe*. [Rescripted palace memorial]) 558-1, DG10.12.19. Cited in Millward. 1998. 176.

exported to Semipalatinsk was unrecorded by the Semipalatinsk customs? Or was the tea exported by Tarbagatai and Ili carried to places other than Semipalatinsk? I was not yet able to test these hypotheses in this thesis. It is also possible that the tea exported by Tarbagatai and Ili entered the Kazakh steppe illegally from the Russian side without passing through the Semipalatinsk custom post. This hypothesis, if true, would undermine the hypothesis that Nayanceng's embargo was effective.

Although the Qing empire's embargo against Khoqandis was lifted in 1831, by 1837 the Qing authorities set up a regulation that forbade the tea trade through Tarbagatai into Russia, which tightened control on the Kazakhs traveling to Tarbagatai.⁹² Noda cited the data provided by Korsak which shows that 1800 poods of *baihao* tea and brick tea were exported to Russia through Central Asia in 1840. And the number reached to 5160 poods (of *baihao* tea) and 8528 poods (of brick tea) in 1849.⁹³

In addition, in 1829, a regulation was enacted in Ili to set the price of tea and determine the tax based on the quality of the tea. This measure was used to counteract the "high prices" set up by private merchants according to the Ili administration.⁹⁴ However, I was not able to trace the influence of this regulation by examining the data of the exports of tea from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk in this period.

The above discussion on the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang reflects how critical the year 1840 was for the period of trade from 1826 to 1849. The decrease of the supply of silver from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk coincided with the decrease of the value of silver exported by Tarbagatai and Ili. At the same time, the price of almost all

⁹² JHLF (*Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe*): 8295–29/605–1884 (Minzu lei). Cited in Noda. 2016. 230.

⁹³ Korsak, *Istoriko-statisticheskoe obozrenie torgovykh snoshenii Rossii s Kitaem*.440. Cited in *Ibid*.

⁹⁴ "Requirement in Ili on setting up tax according to the quality of tea" p.661. (Qing xuanzong shilu [Veritable records of the successive reigns of the Qing dynasty - Daoguang reign]. vol.152. p.341) Quoted in ZXLWGWZY

commodities had decreased. However, even if the supply of silver kept decreasing since 1840, the price of silver and other commodities remained stable after the sharp decline in 1840.

On the comparison of the volume of trade between Semipalatinsk-Tarbagatai and Ili trade and the Kiakhta trade

The following tables show the total value of commodities in Russo-Qing trade in Kiakhta in 1847 and 1850, and the total value of commodities in Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili in 1842 and 1850. It is clear that the total value of the Kiakhta trade in the pre-1851 period is still much higher than the Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade. Therefore, my hypothesis that the Semipalatinsk-Tarbagatai and Ili trade had influenced the Kiakhta trade is not correct. However, the discussion of the Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade is still important. First, it shows a different aspect of the Russo-Qing trade: an unofficial one as opposed to an official one in Kiakhta, and its specific characteristics such as the importance of individual actors over the states. Second, the commodities traded in the two markets have some differences. While fur and rhubarb are important commodities of the Kiakhta trade, fur is less important in the Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade in terms of the percentage of total value and the rhubarb trade did not exist in the official documents of the Semipalatinsk custom post.⁹⁵ Third, by studying the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Ili and Tarbagatai, we can understand how the later official trade in Ili

⁹⁵ According to Jin Noda, the rhubarb export through places other than Kiakhta had been prohibited since 1822. However, there were cases of rhubarb trade in 1820 through Tarbagatai and Ili. Noda. 2016. 230.

and Tarbagatai were developed from the beginning, and what characteristics remained and what were new following the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851.

Commodities	1847 (in thousand ruble)	1850 (in thousand ruble)
Total	6800	6924
Woolen and cotton fabrics	4167	4515
Fur	1840	1640
Processed and unprocessed leather	455	706
Food (flour, grain)	45	48
Cattle	15	15

The total value of Russian export to China through Kiakhta in 1847 and 1850
Source: Sladkovskii. 206.

Commodities	1847 (in thousand ruble)	1850 (in thousand ruble)
Total	6800	6919
Tea	6628	6527
Finished goods	74.6	85.7
Hard candies	62	93.3
Silk, cotton cloth and other raw materials	15.2	11.5

The total value of Russian import from China through Kiakhta in 1847 and 1850
Source: Sladkovskii. 208.

Commodities	1842 (in thousand ruble)	1851 (in thousand ruble)
Total	143.6	228.7
Cotton fabrics	71.2	118.2
Broadcloth	29.3	12
Woolen fabrics	0.3	2.4
<i>iufts'</i>	8.8	27.8
Processed leather	0.2	1.7
Metal materias	41.4	30.8
Gold and silver		2.1
Corals	0.7	0.6
Fur	0.4	1.3
Other products	8.6	14.5

The total value of Russian export to China through Tarbagatai and Ili in 1842 and 1851

Source: Sladkovskii. 216.

Commodities	1842 (in thousand ruble)	1851 (in thousand ruble)
Total	151.3	605.8
Baihao tea	21.2	484.2
Brick tea	38.4	95.6
Silk	42	11.6
Cotton fabrics	18.9	5.8
Woolen fabrics	0.1	1.5
Fur		0.4
Other products	30.8	7.6

The total value of Russian import to China through Tarbagatai and Ili in 1842 and 1851

Source: Sladkovskii. 216.

The Post-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang

The Treaty of Kuldja signed in 1851 established legal and official Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. The driving factor for the Qing to agree to sign the treaty was to reassert their control over Xinjiang, as the trade would still continue anyway even without

agreement by the Qing empire. By agreeing to sign the treaty, the Qing empire could reassert its control over the region and stipulate rules to manage the trade.⁹⁶

This trade was designed to be mutually duty-free for the Russian empire and the Qing empire. Besides, Russia was allowed to send consuls to Tarbagatai and Ili, build a trade pavilion, and oversee all the Russian merchants who came to Tarbagatai and Ili to trade. In addition, caravans which consisted of less than 20 camels fully loaded with goods were prohibited from coming.⁹⁷ Kashgar was also opened later in 1859. and trade with Kashgar developed following Russian annexation of Tashkent and Samarkand in the 1860s. Even with Kashgar opened for trade, the trade in Tarbagatai and Ili was still larger in scale than that of Kashgar.⁹⁸

The signing of the treaty had an influence on the existing unofficial Russo-Qing trade. It was probably true that the Qing officials in Tarbagatai and Ili were worse off as they were no longer able to collect duties from the Russian caravans. In addition, the rule that limited the minimal size of caravans would ensure only the larger caravans would be able to come to trade. Although events such as the destruction of Russian trade pavilion by Chinese civilians in Tarbagatai in 1855, the Taiping rebellion, and the Dungan revolts in the 1860s and the occupation of Ili by Russia which cut the trade with inner China from 1871 to 1881 before the signing of the Treaty of St. Petersburg all led to the unstable development of the official trade in the early stage, the Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang was able to grow gradually and eventually surpassed the trade in Kiakhta in value.

⁹⁶ Li, 58.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁹⁸ Chart 9. *Obzor vneshnei torgovli Rossii po evropeiskim i aziatskim granitsam za 1893 god*, SPb., 1895. Cited in Sladkovskii, 277, 278.

Since the mid-19th century, Russian woolen fabrics exported to the Qing empire dwindled significantly due to the competition from British ones, and had almost disappeared by 1893.⁹⁹ This general trend, however, was not observable in Xinjiang market. While the quantity of hides, cotton fabrics, woolen and metal products exported by Russia to China was declining in Kiakhta, it actually increased in Xinjiang (except hides which declined). In 1850, the amount of woolens exported from Russia to Xinjiang was 30.9 thousand *arshin*. The amount was increasing annually, and reached 119.6 thousand *arshin* in 1854. Cotton fabrics and metal products exported by Russia to Xinjiang were increasing as well. In the 1890s, almost three-quarters of the value of Russian exports to China transited via Xinjiang.¹⁰⁰ Relating this large share of trade and the increasing volume of most of the Russian exports to Xinjiang with the declining amount of goods traded to Kiakhta, we can safely say that the center of Russo-Qing trade had shifted to Xinjiang from Kiakhta by the end of the 19th century.

After the signing of the treaty, Russia started building factories in Tarbagatai and Ili. Nevertheless, most of the manufactured goods in Semipalatinsk still seemed to come from the European part of Russia even if manufacturing sector was also growing in Semipalatinsk.¹⁰¹ In Xinjiang, Russian manufactured goods were traded for local goods produced in Xinjiang. The quantity of manufactured goods from China was decreasing since Russian ones were more competitive in Xinjiang market.¹⁰² I have not yet been able to compare what quantity of manufactured goods were transported from inner China to

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 265.

¹⁰⁰ Chart 7. Korsak, A. *Istoriko-statisticheskoe obozrenie torgovykh snoshenii Rossii s Kitaem*. Kazan. 1857. 436-437. *Ibid.*, 273, 279.

¹⁰¹ *Obzor Semipalatinskoi oblasti za 1898 g.* [Overview of the Semipalatinsk Oblast' for the year 1898] (Semipalatinsk: Tipographia oblastnogo pravlenia, 1899).

¹⁰² Sladkovskii, 276.

Xinjiang before and after the signing of the treaty, but one thing that can be confirmed from the data of the export of Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk was that Tarbagatai and Ili did not export manufactured goods to Semipalatinsk.

The types of commodities in post-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang followed the pre-1851 pattern. The only difference was that by 1893 Xinjiang became a major exporter of woolen fabrics, unprocessed hides and fur and animal fat which had not been part of the Xinjiang exports earlier. I was not able to calculate whether it was Xinjiang that exported more woolen to Russia or vice versa due to the different forms of measurement (Russian ones by length and Chinese ones by weight). The Russian side continued exporting more manufactured goods which were present in the pre-1851 trade as well: processed hides, shoes, window glass, mirrors etc. It also remained as an exporter of iron, cast iron, steel and ironware,¹⁰³ which followed the pre-1851 pattern, only with an increase in scale. Xinjiang became more like a location that provided raw materials for Russia and a marketplace for Russian manufactured goods. A trade surplus on the Russian side was also finally achieved as late as 1893.¹⁰⁴ This was probably because the value of manufactured goods exported by Russia was finally large enough for Russia to counter the trade deficit in previous decades.

One interesting observation is that although the amount of tea exported by the Qing empire was increasing, the proportion of the quantity of brick tea was decreasing. In 1840, brick tea accounted for 7189 poods out of the 17470 poods of tea exported (41%); by 1854,

¹⁰³ Chart 10. *Obzor vneshnei torgovli Rossii po evropeiskim i aziatskim granitsam za 1893 god*, SPb., 1895. Cited in *Ibid.*, 278.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 275.

brick tea made up just 7940 poods out of the 34595 poods of tea exported (23%).¹⁰⁵

Therefore we can say that the type of tea for local and neighboring consumption decreased as a percentage of the total amount of tea exported. This is probably a result of the price convergence of brick tea and *baihao* tea since the 1840 according to the data of tea imports from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk.

Conclusion

The pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili was characterized by several types of commodities that dominated the trade: cotton and silk, silver, tea, opium (before 1842), woolen, hides, food products and metal. Semipalatinsk mainly exported cotton textiles, opium, woolen, hides and metal while Tarbagatai and Ili mainly exported silk, silver, tea and food products.

The supply of silver to Xinjiang had a profound influence on the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. The Opium War significantly lowered the supply of silver to Xinjiang which caused the local population to resort to copper mining. At the same time, the price of silver had declined which caused the price of most types of commodities to decline as well. However, the year 1840 seems to have been critical because the price of most commodities remained at the same level from 1840 to 1851 following the sharp decline in 1840 even if the supply of silver to Semipalatinsk from Xinjiang continued declining from 1840 to 1851.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 272.

The post-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang continued to show the same spectrum of commodities as the pre-1851 trade. The only difference was that more animal products were exported from Xinjiang. Russian manufactured goods and metal products were present in the pre-1851 trade as well, and the post-1851 trade mainly just showed an increase in the scale of trade. With the increasing volume of trade, Xinjiang started becoming the center of Russo-Qing trade. At the same time, the importance of the Kiakhta trade was declining.

Conclusion

This thesis aims to discuss how the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade in Ili and Tarbagatai was gradually developing in the first half of the 19th century. It examines several aspects of this topic: the Russian and Qing motivations behind the establishment of the trade, the socio-economic situation of Ili, Tarbagatai and Semipalatinsk, the only legal trading post at Kiakhta, the Kazakh-Qing trade, the participants of the Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili, and the commodities exchanged in this trade.

This thesis adds to the existing scholarship by incorporating the views of individuals who had participated in the unofficial Russo-Qing themselves, and recorded their experiences and observations while participating in the trade. The analysis of their observations can complement the existing scholarship on the actions and policies of states. This thesis also adds to the existing scholarship by incorporating the analysis of quantitative data that support the existence of the trade and reflect its specific characteristics. I would like to summarize my findings in the following paragraphs.

Although the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili was originally shaped by the differing motivations of the Russian and Qing empires, the actual practice was more influenced by individuals than by states. While Russia was aiming to establish itself as the intermediary of trade between the East and the West, the Qing empire only used trade as a leverage tool to fulfill political demands and had no interest in profiting from the trade. This pattern continued throughout the interaction between the Russian empire and the Qing empire before the 19th century. However this official attitude of the two states did not represent the practice of the people. The travelogues of the Russian travelers Putintsev and

Liubimov portray the Qing officials as having a very generous and lenient attitude towards the illegal trade. This generous attitude regarding the trade was held by officials with a wide range of titles from the border guards to the General of Ili. While the official attitude of the Qing empire was condemned all the practices of illegal trade with Russia or the obtaining Russian goods through the Kazakhs, the Qing officials who were controlling the import and export of goods were indeed encouraging the trade and profiting it. This finding also points to another possible reason for the prohibition of the trade when it was already prevalent: the official trade in Kiakhta was a duty-free trade. Therefore, the local officials in Xinjiang were possibly afraid that the legalization of the trade could transform the trade into a duty-free trade, and that therefore they would not profit it. The same rationale may apply to Russian local officials in Semipalatinsk.

This research confirms Noda's view that the Kazakhs served as intermediaries of the pre-1851 unofficial Russo-Qing trade. This is an alternative way to describe the Kazakh-Qing trade, especially in later period of the trade. Although the Kazakh-Qing trade was established in 1760s and then later was replaced by the official Russo-Qing trade in 1851, the gradual replacement of the main participants of the trade had already started by the beginning of the 19th century when Russia began playing a bigger role in this trade than the Kazakhs. It was the fact that the Russian presence in the trade was so enormous that pushed the Qing government to reluctantly sign the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851 to officially open the trade to Russia. The Qing government had to acknowledge Russia's legal status in the trade to reassert its control over trade in Xinjiang.

The influence of the Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili on the Kiakhta trade in the same period was not as significant as in my original hypothesis. The Kiakhta trade

played a much bigger role in Russo-Qing trade before the late 19th century. However, although the quantity traded in Tarbagatai and Ili trade was much smaller than in the Kiakhta trade, the types of commodities traded were similar. This means that the need for the diversity of the goods in Tarbagatai and Ili was no less than that in the Kiakhta trade. At the same time, some commodities which dominate the Kiakhta trade do not appear to be that important in the Tarbagatai and Ili trade, notably rhubarb. Besides, the comparison of the official and unofficial trade also enables us to analyze different aspects of the Russo-Qing trade. In addition, by comparing the types of commodities traded in pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili and the trade after 1851 before the 20th century, the research found out that the types of commodities remained similar. Therefore, we could conclude that the Treaty of Kuldja signed in 1851 was not the beginning of Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang. This treaty only changed the volume of the trade, but not the types of commodities.

Besides discussing the role of the states, this research also highlights the importance of local actors in this trade. Although Russia participated in this trade, the Russian merchants mostly were not directly trading with the Chinese merchants. The task was done by their Tatar agents and other Central Asian merchants. The Central Asian merchants, in particular the Khoqandis, made a great impact on cross-border trade between Xinjiang and Central Asia. They also monopolized the trade of certain commodities such as tea and rhubarb. Their status was influenced by the political conflicts between their home country Khoqand and the Qing empire. The conflicts raised the status of another merchant group - the Bukharans - in this trade. The Kazakhs were the ones who forged the trade through playing the double roles of guards and helpers or robbers. The caravans that traveled on

the steppe were accompanied by Kazakhs who would guard the caravan against robbers who were also Kazakhs. The caravans also relied on the Kazakhs for rest, fodder and the exchange of livestock. Therefore, although the Kazakhs did not emerge as a major merchant group, they nevertheless were significant to the facilitation of the trade. At the same time, I have also found that there was a lack of information on the participation of Chinese merchants in the trade. The Chinese merchants who traded with the Kazakh and Russian merchants were mostly contained in cases of illegal trade in official documents from Chinese sources. Or they were briefly mentioned in the discussion of the Kazakh-Qing trade during which they would be able to trade with the Kazakhs only after the official trade was done. At the same time, there was also only one case in which a Chinese merchant traveled to the Ust'-Kamenogorsk custom post, while there were no records of Chinese merchants travelling to the Semipalatinsk custom post in the years conveyed by the *dela* I have examined. It was probably true that the Qing officials were less strict with foreign merchants coming into the Qing empire than allowing their citizens to go out.

The year 1840 is significant in the discussion of the commodities exchanged in the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Ili and Tarbagatai. In 1840, there was a concurrent decrease of the price of silver and of most other types of commodities. During the period from 1831 to 1838, the quantity of silver that flowed into Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili dropped substantially and again, to a lesser extent, in 1840. One year later in 1841, opium, the most profitable article of trade, was prohibited for export from Semipalatinsk. The mechanism of what happened in 1840 is unclear in my findings. However, I have proposed four hypotheses that might be able to explain what exactly caused the change in 1840: 1) there was an oversupply of silver to Xinjiang in the 1830s from the Qing government and

there was also an oversupply of silver in Semipalatinsk, therefore silver was less in demand in Semipalatinsk; 2) The transition from the assignat to the credit ruble in Russia in 1840, during which more gold coins started entering circulation, had an influence on the flow and price of silver in this trade as gold probably became more desirable than silver; 3) The opium trade, although it was legal on the Russian side till 1841, was probably largely an underground trade. This possible burgeoning of underground trade may have absorbed a large quantity of silver from Xinjiang during the 1830s. Therefore, there might have been a shift of revenue from the officially documented to underground. Thus, the evidence could account for the decrease of silver flowing into Semipalatinsk in official documents. It is also possible that the silver trade went underground as well. 4) The Kenesary revolt might have caused a lack of demand of silver on the eastern Kazakh steppe, and the trade shifted to barter trade. However, all of these hypotheses have limitations, and further research is needed to solve the puzzle. Nevertheless, the most important finding is that the amount and price of silver that flowed to Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili decreased in the most part of the 1830s and again in 1840, and there was a decrease of price of many types of commodities (including silver) in the year 1840 according to the official data.

I would also like to add more findings about the commodities in the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. Several types of commodities dominated this trade: cotton and silk, silver, tea, opium (before 1840), woolens, hides, food and metal. Semipalatinsk mainly exported cotton fabrics, opium, woolens, hides and metal while Tarbagatai and Ili mainly exported cotton fabrics, silk, silver, tea and food products (millet and fruits). One important article in the trade between Altishahr and Central Asia, rhubarb, does not appear in this trade according to the official data.

Both the Russian empire and the Qing empire exported cotton fabrics to each other, while silk was not a major commodity in this trade. Semipalatinsk exported *nankeen*, which was once a specialty of Chinese production, to Tarbagatai and Ili. Tarbagatai and Ili exported *daba* produced locally in Altishahr to Semipalatinsk rather than incurring high costs by transporting silk from the eastern regions. This is different from the pattern of the early period of the Kazakh-Qing trade when officials would note down the order of silk from the Kazakhs, inform the Imperial Silk Factories in Jiangnan, and then the order would only arrive three years later.

I have found that the embargo of fine tea against Khoqandis in 1828 according to Nayanceng's plan was probably effective in the markets of Tarbagatai and Ili according to the data of the Semipalatinsk custom post. During the years of embargo, there was no trace of fine tea being sold to Semipalatinsk from Tarbagatai and Ili according to the official data. However, the huge gap between the data on the tea export by Tarbagatai and Ili provided by Millward and the data of tea import from the Semipalatinsk custom house shows that much of the tea exported from Tarbagatai and Ili did not end up traveling via the Semipalatinsk custom post. Either the tea was sent to other places, or there was a burgeoning illegal tea trade (as defined on the Russian side). More research is needed to examine the data on illegal trade as defined by the Russian side in the Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili. For now, I would say that tea from China and lake salt from the Kazakh steppe were the main smuggled articles (as defined by the Russian side) to pass the Semipalatinsk custom posts. This finding demonstrates the popularity of the two items in this trade.

In conclusion, the evidence in the discussion above shows that the pre-1851 Russo-Qing trade in Tarbagatai and Ili did exist. Although it is much smaller in scale compared with the official Kiakhta trade, it shows patterns and characteristics of the trade which differ from the Kiakhta trade. This trade cannot be treated as an insignificant factor that is discussed briefly as a background note to the discussion of the post-1851 official Russo-Qing trade in Xinjiang, It is a predecessor of the latter trade that needs to be examined in order to understand how influential (or not) the 1851 Treaty of Kuldja (Ili) signed in 1851 really was.

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Op.2 (1731-1868)

d.112 l.12-17 (1826) Otchety o privoznikh i otvoznikh tovarakh, denezhnikh i summakh i dr. za 1826 godu

d.114 l.5-9ob (1827) 1827

d.129 l.30ob-33 (1831) 1831

d.142 l.23-27 (1835) 1835

d.147 l.12-25 (1838) 1838

d.152 l.11ob-22 (1839) 1839

d.157 l.17ob-26 (1840) 1840

d.162 l.9ob-16 (1843) 1843

d.167 l.8ob-14 (1846) 1846

d.171 l.3ob-10 (1848) 1848

d.173 l.24ob-32 (1849) 1849

Exports from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk:

F. I-478 Semipalatinskaia tamozhnia Departamenta tamozhennykh sborov Ministerstva finansov

Op.2 (1731-1868)

d.112 l.7-10 (1826) Otchety o privoznikh i otvoznikh tovarakh, denezhnikh i summakh i dr. za 1826 godu

d.114 l.1-3ob (1827) 1827

d.124 l.25ob-32 (1830) 1830

d.129 l.24-29 (1831)..... 1831

d.142 l.29ob-38 (1835) 1835

d.147 l.1ob-10 (1838) 1838

d.152 l.1ob-10 (1839) 1839

d.157 l.7ob-16 (1840) 1840

d.162 l.1ob-8 (1843) 1843

d.167 l.1ob-6 (1846) 1846

d.171 l.12ob-18 (1848) 1848

d.173 l.16ob-23 (1849) 1849

Opisanie puti po kotoromu khodil perevodchik kollezhskii registrator Putintsev, sostoiashii pri general-leitenante Glazenape, po imennomu vysochaishemu ego imperatorskogo velichestva povelenniu poslannye taino ot kreposti Bukhtarminskoi do kitaiskikh gorodov Chuguchaka i Kul'zhi pri karavane s tovarom kommertsii sovetnika i tarskogo 1-i gil'dii kuptsa Nerpina. 1811 g. [Description of the road which the translator Putintsev, from Lieutenant-General Glazenap on behalf of his Imperial Majesty's highest order, was sent secretly from the Bukhtarminsk post to the Chinese towns of Chuguchak and Kul'zha together with the caravan of the commissar advisor 1-st guild Taran merchant Nerpin with commodities. Year 1811] in *Putevye dnevniki i zapiski rossiiskikh chinovnikov i issledovatelei o kazakhskoi stepi xviii - serediny xix veka* [Diaries and notes of Russian officials and researchers of the Kazakh steppe from 18th-middle of 19th century]. ed. I. V. Erofeeva Astana: Obshestvo invalidov - Chernobylets, 2012.

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(2) *Ili*: part 2, vol. 4; part 3, vol. 5

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Appendix

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TsGA RK (Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvenyi arkhiv Respubliki Kazakhstan) f. I-478 op.2

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Imports from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk

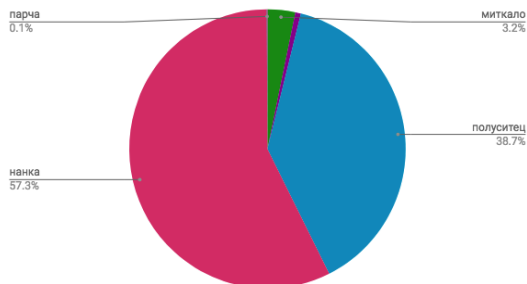
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Exports from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili:

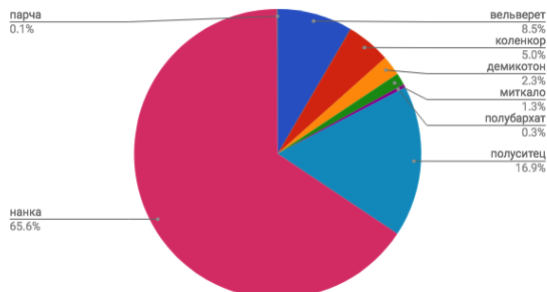
1. Cotton and silk products:

1.1.1

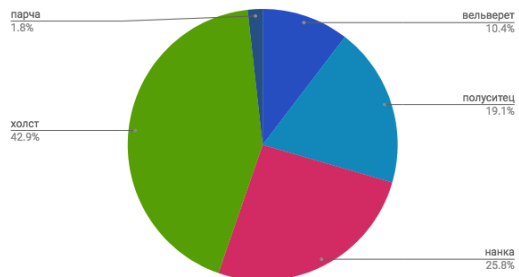
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1835



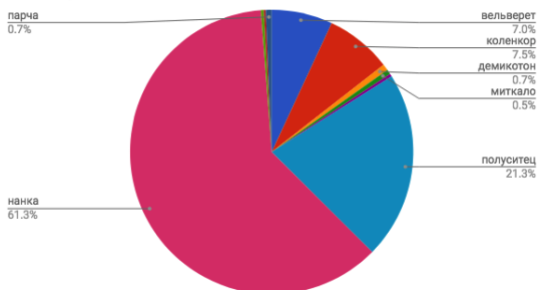
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1838



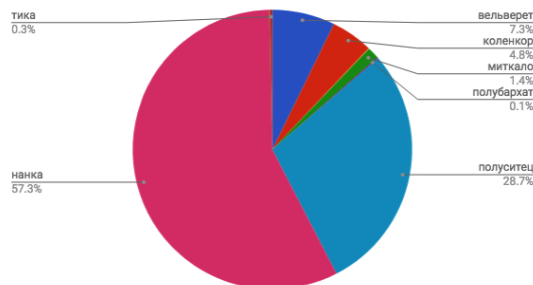
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1839



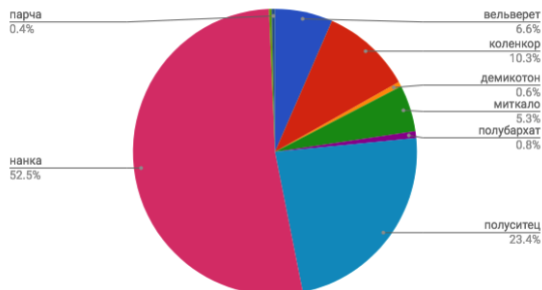
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1840



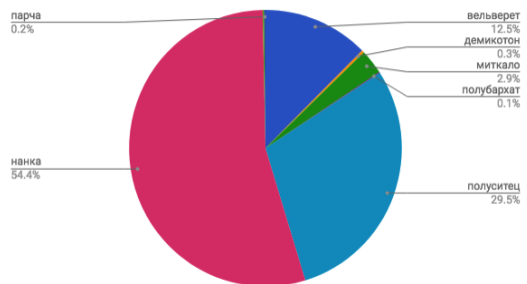
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1843



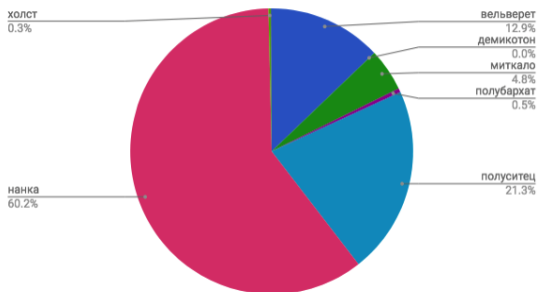
Quantity of cotton and silk products 1846



Quantity of cotton and silk products 1848

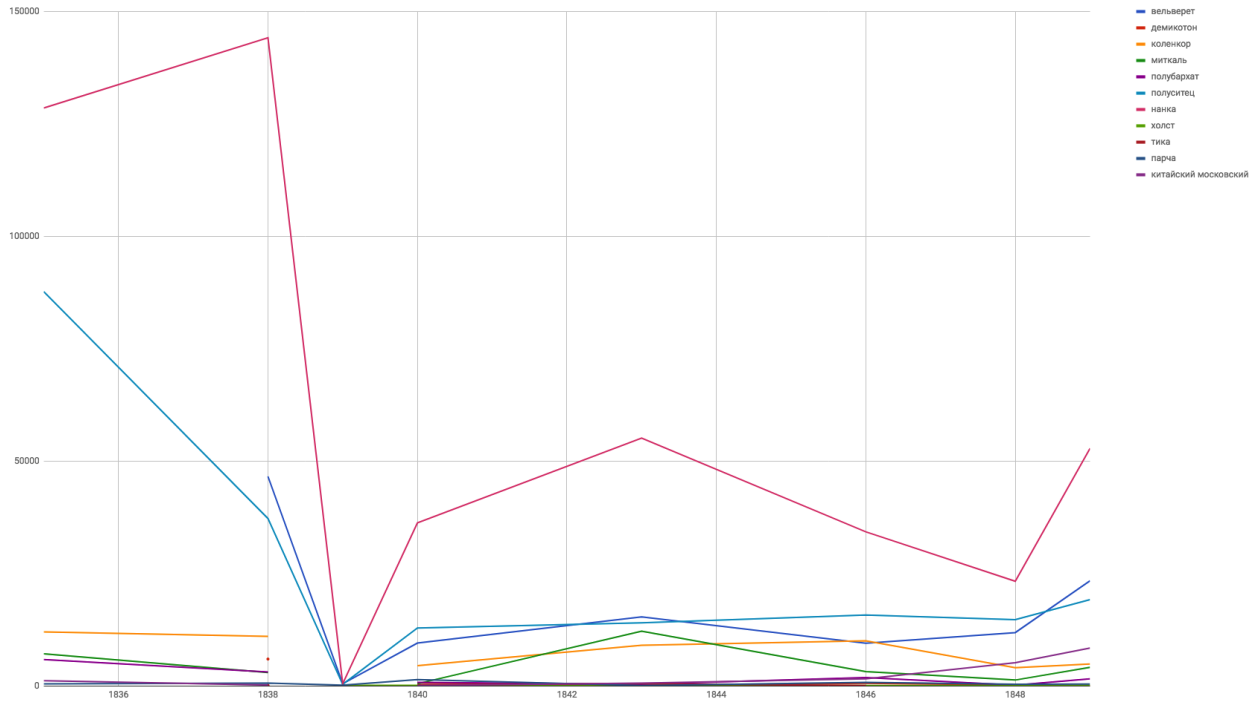


Quantity of cotton and silk products 1849



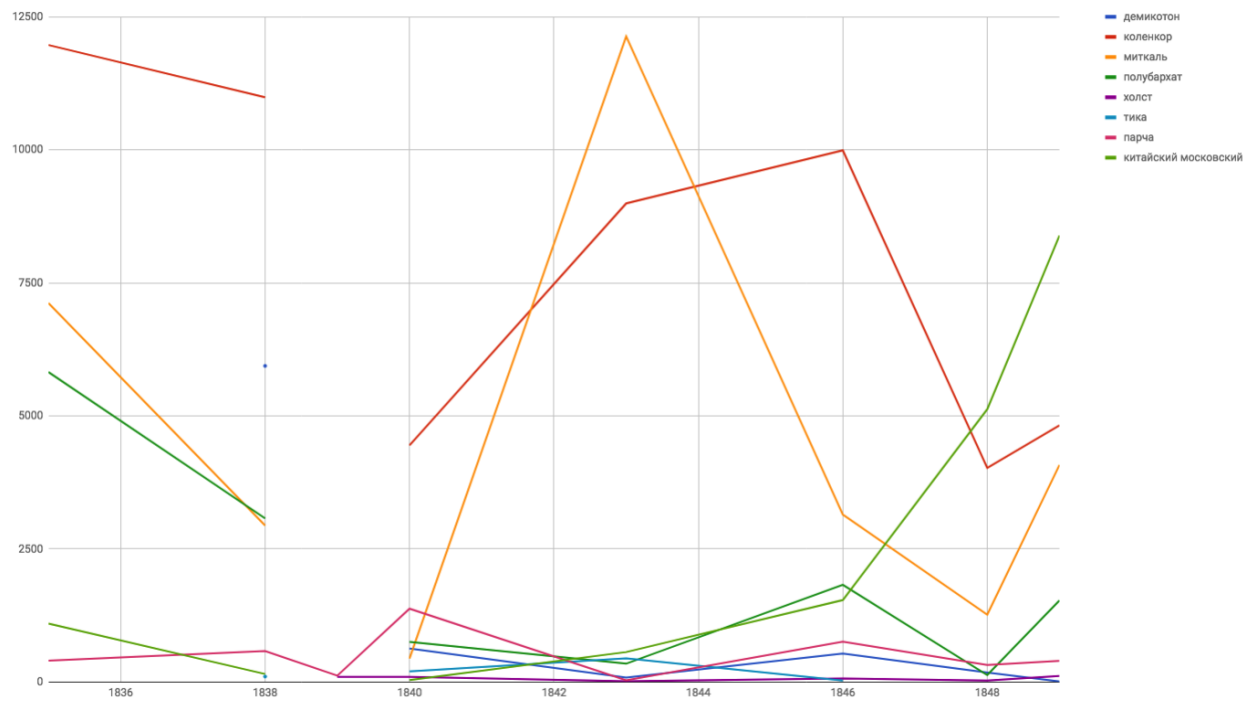
1.2.1.a

Total value of cotton and silk products (ruble)



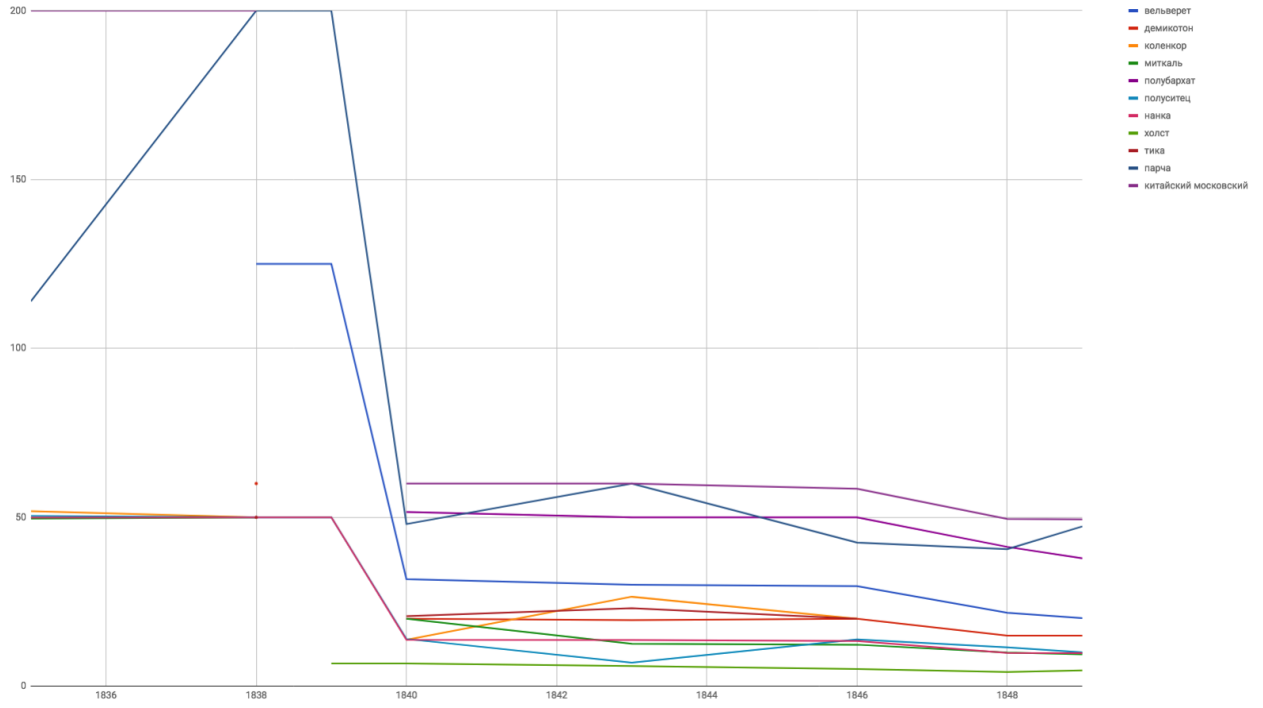
1.2.1.b

Total value of cotton and silk products (excluding nanka, half-chintz and velvet) (ruble)



1.2.2

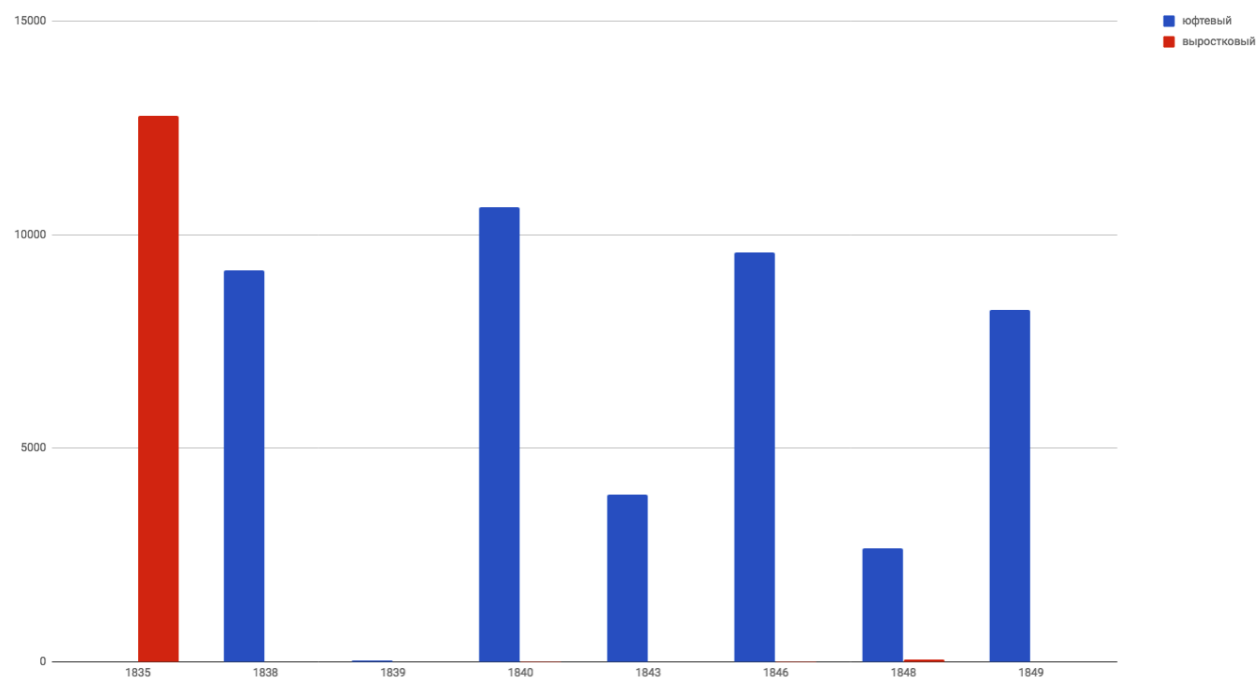
Price of cotton and silk products (kopek)



2. Leather products:

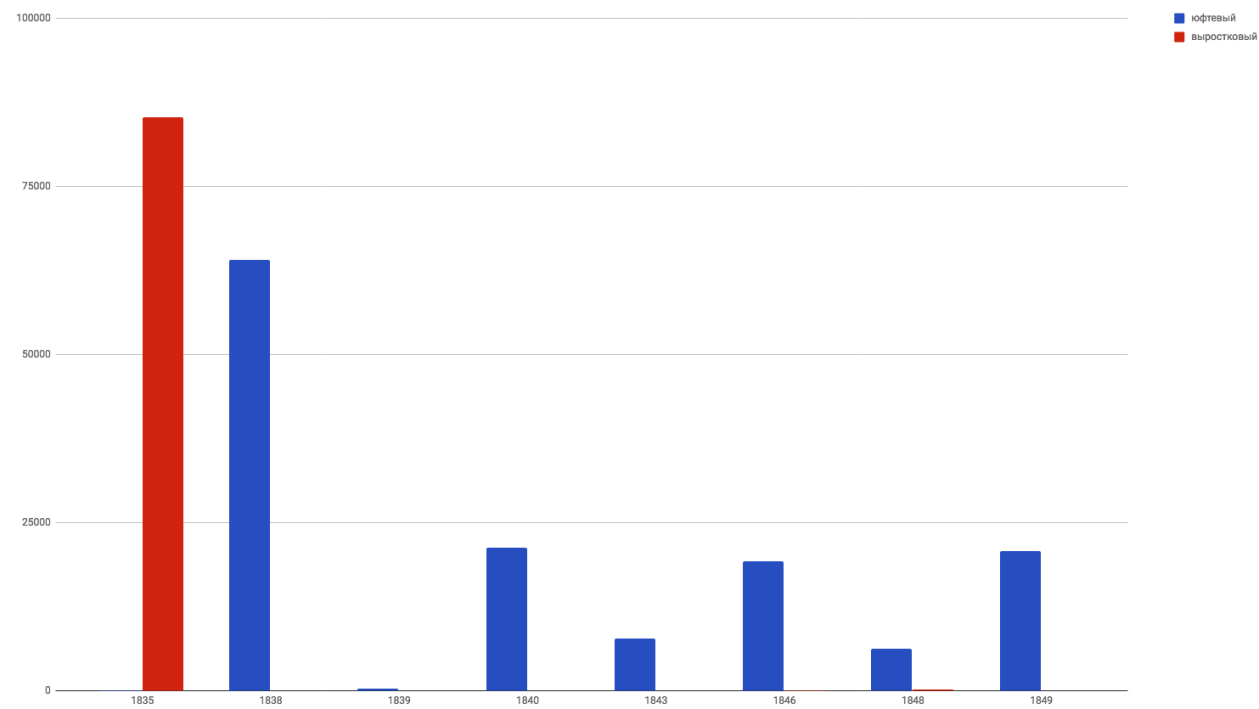
2.1

Quantity of leather products (by pound)



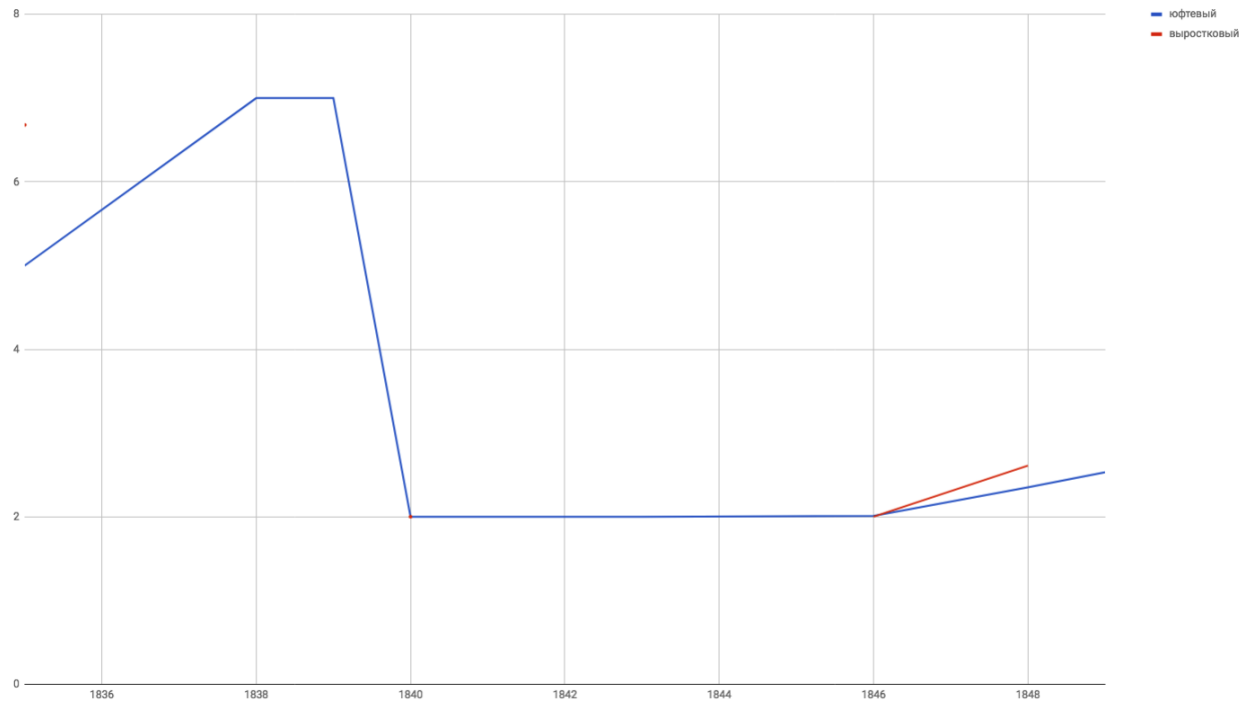
2.2.1

Total value of leather products (ruble)



2.2.2

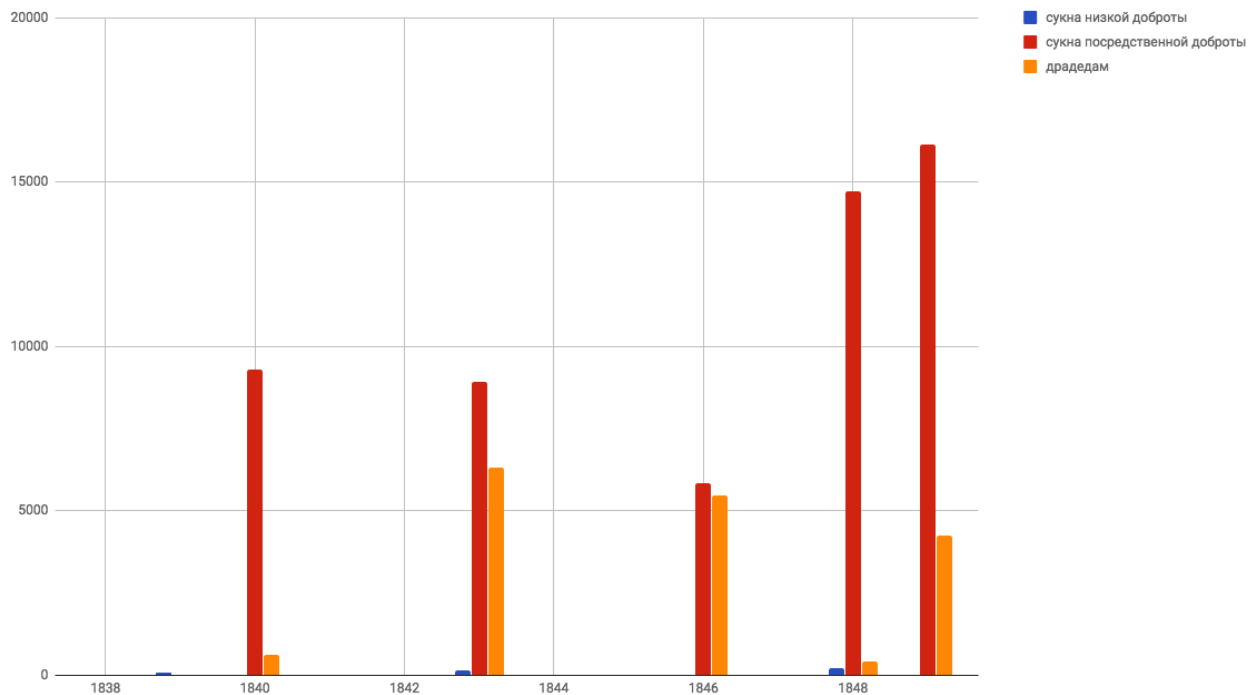
Price of leather products (ruble)



3. Woolen products:

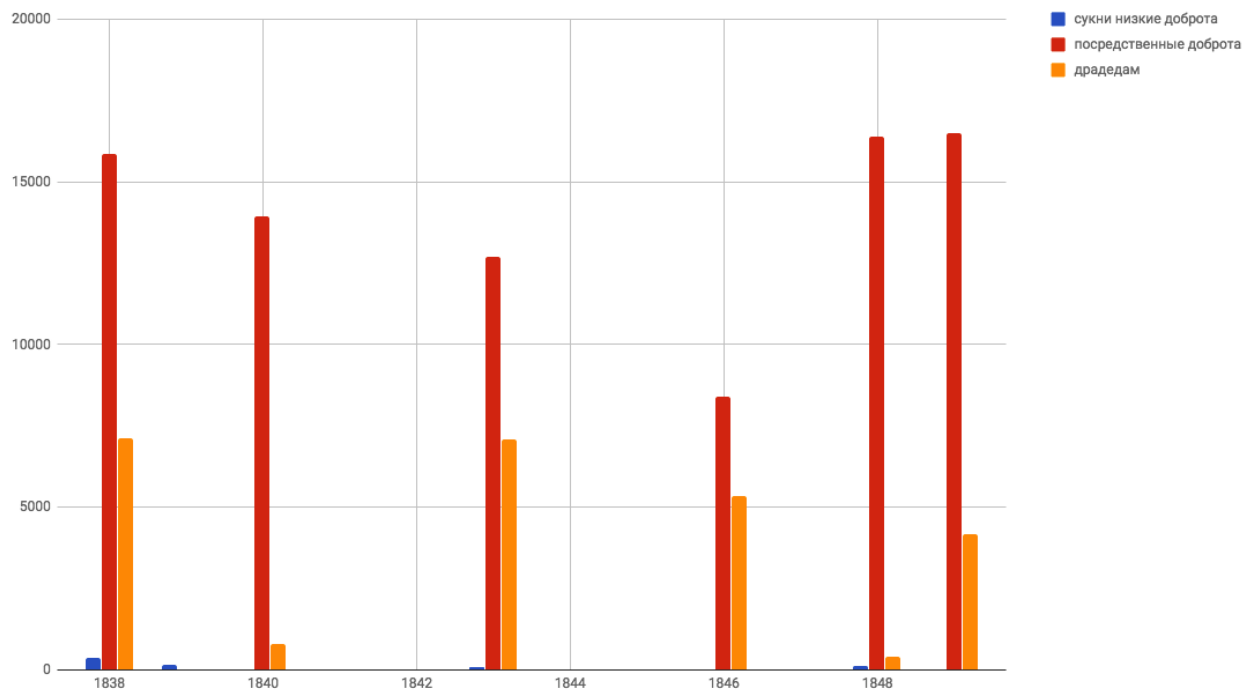
3.1

Amount of woollen products (by arshin)



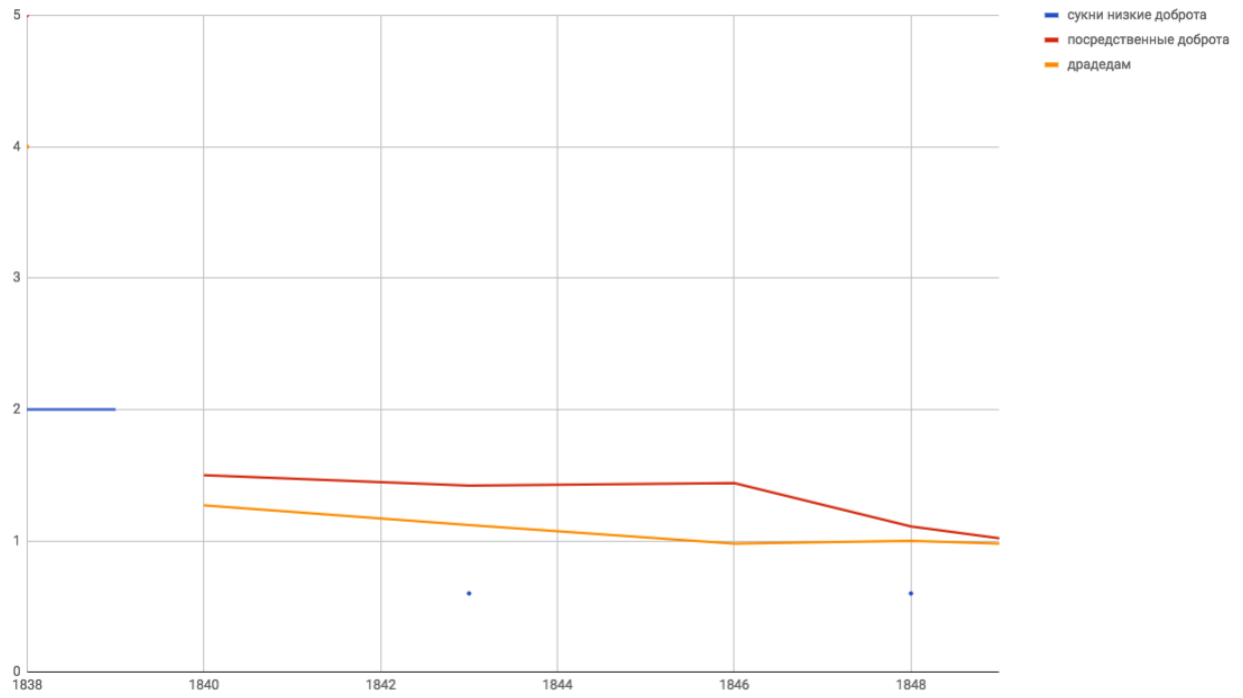
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Total value of woollen products (ruble)



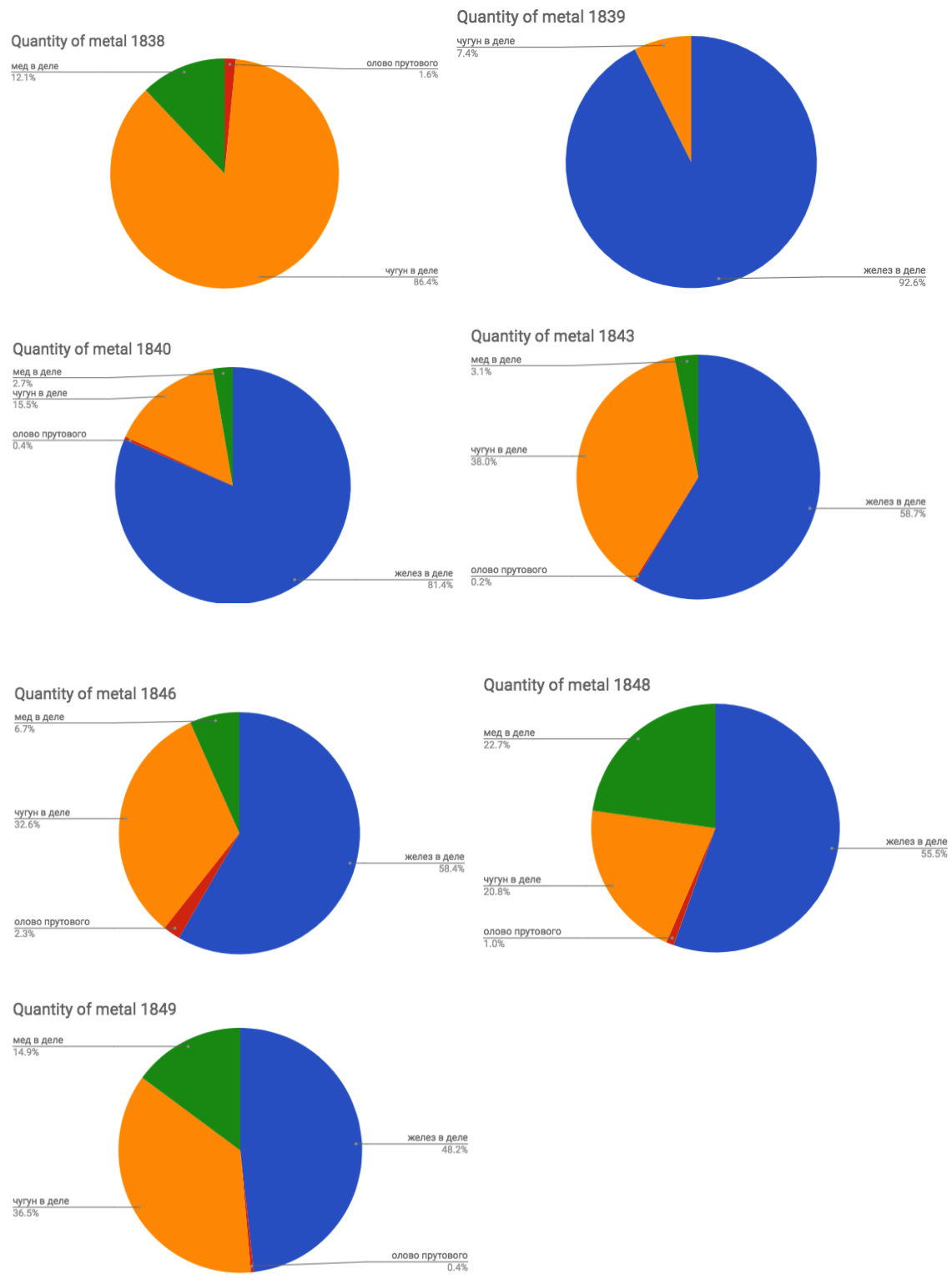
3.2.2

Price of woollen products (ruble)



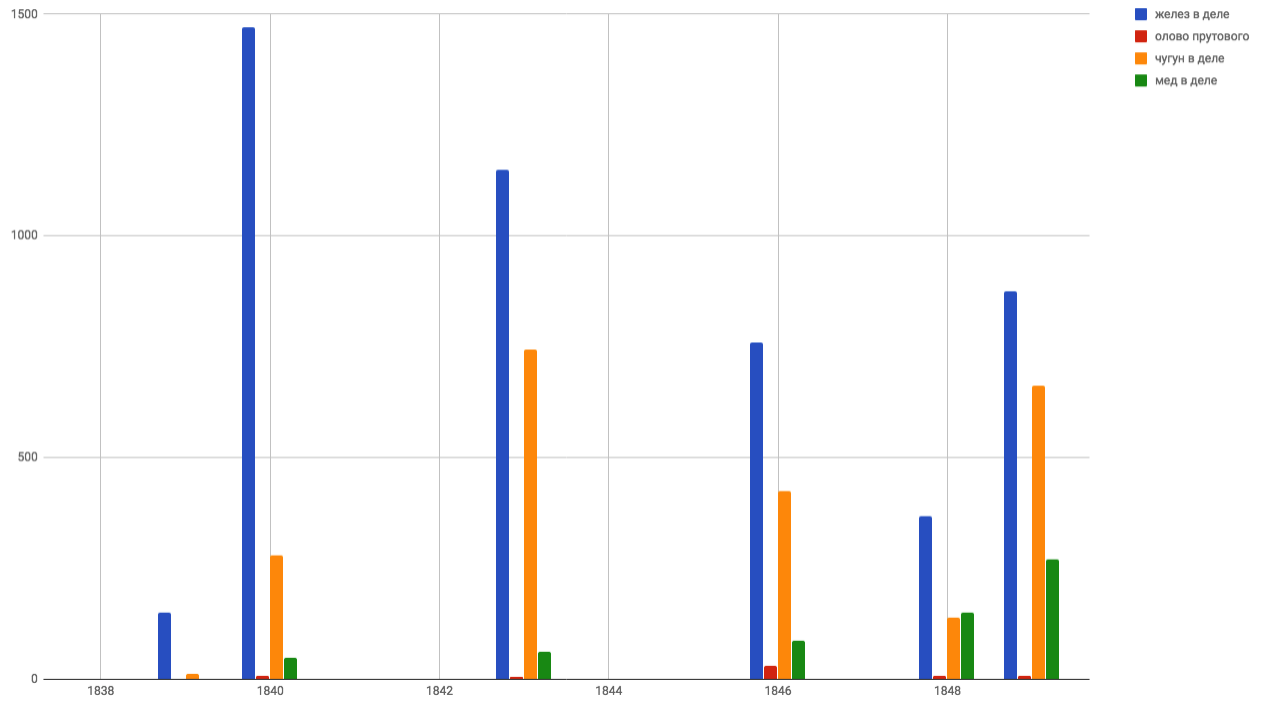
4. Metal:

4.1.1



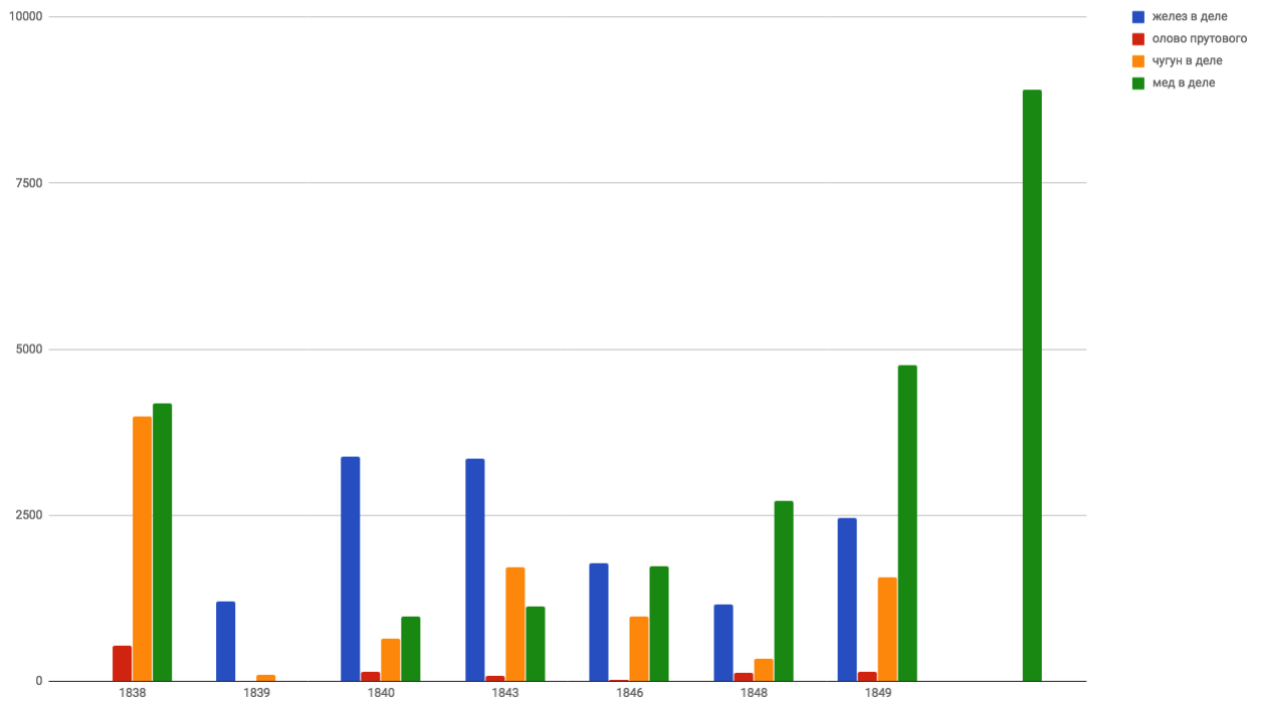
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Quantity of metal (by pood)



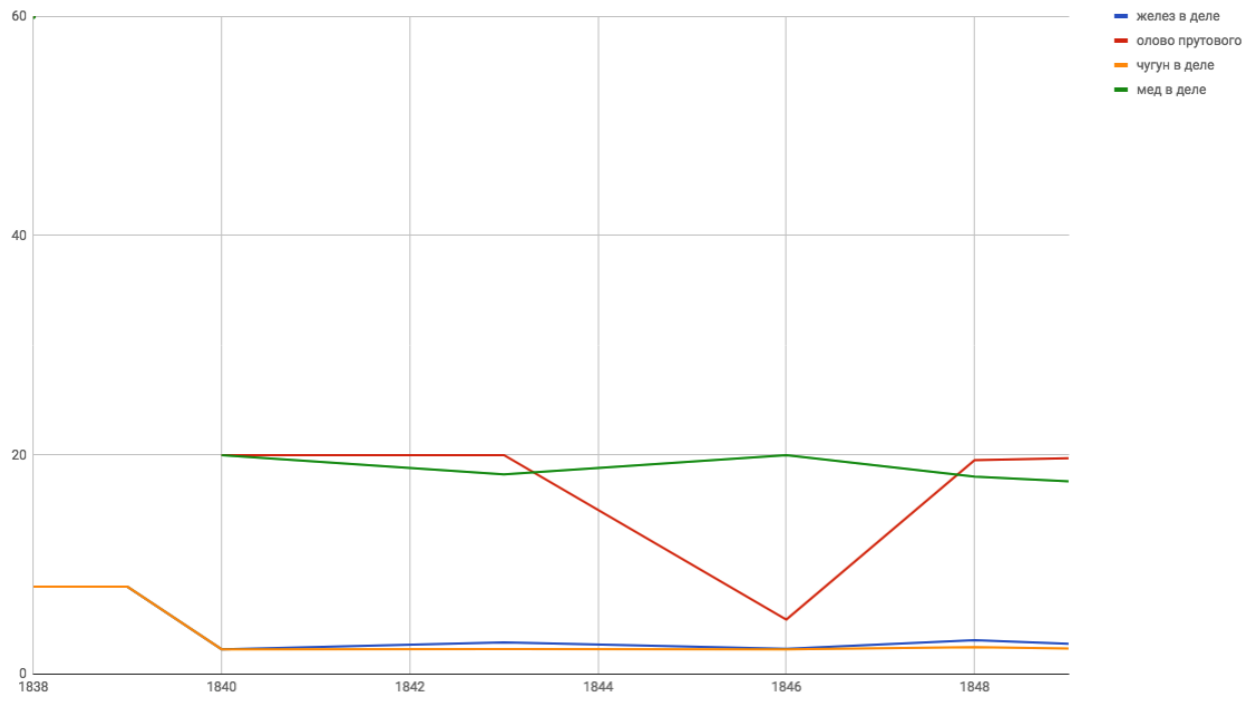
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Total value of metal (ruble)



4.2.2

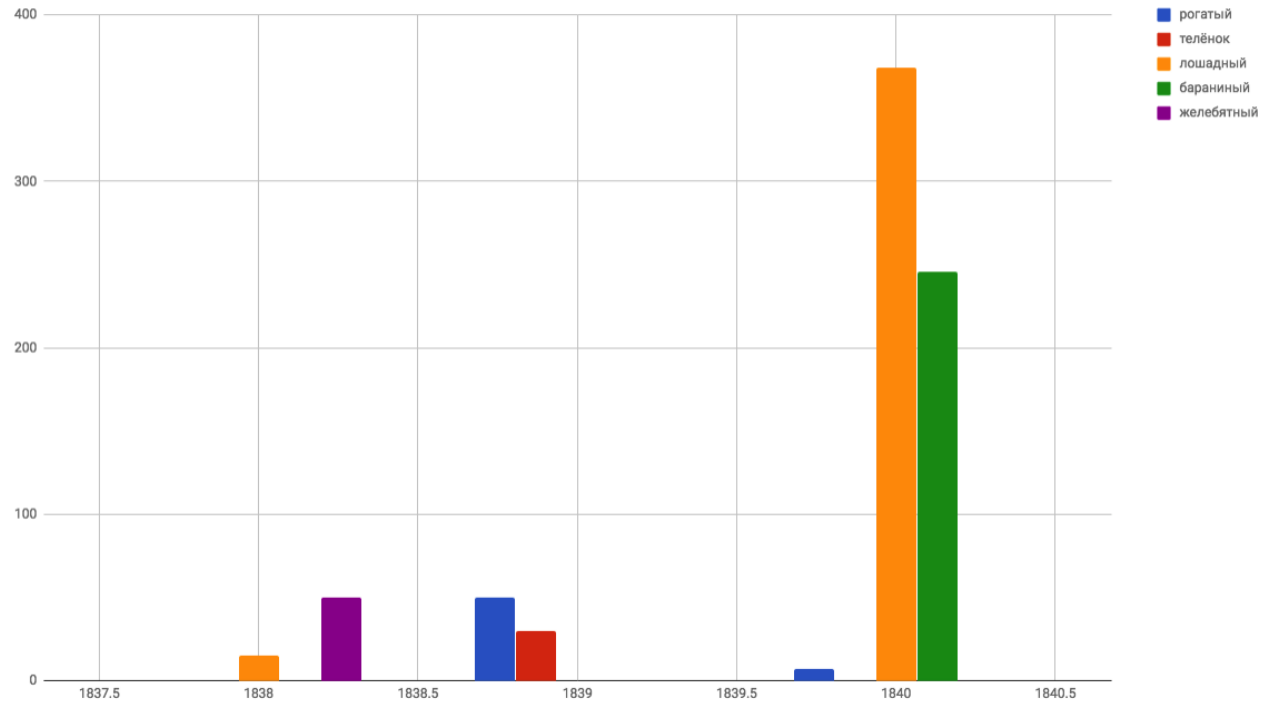
Price of metal (ruble)



5. Cattle:

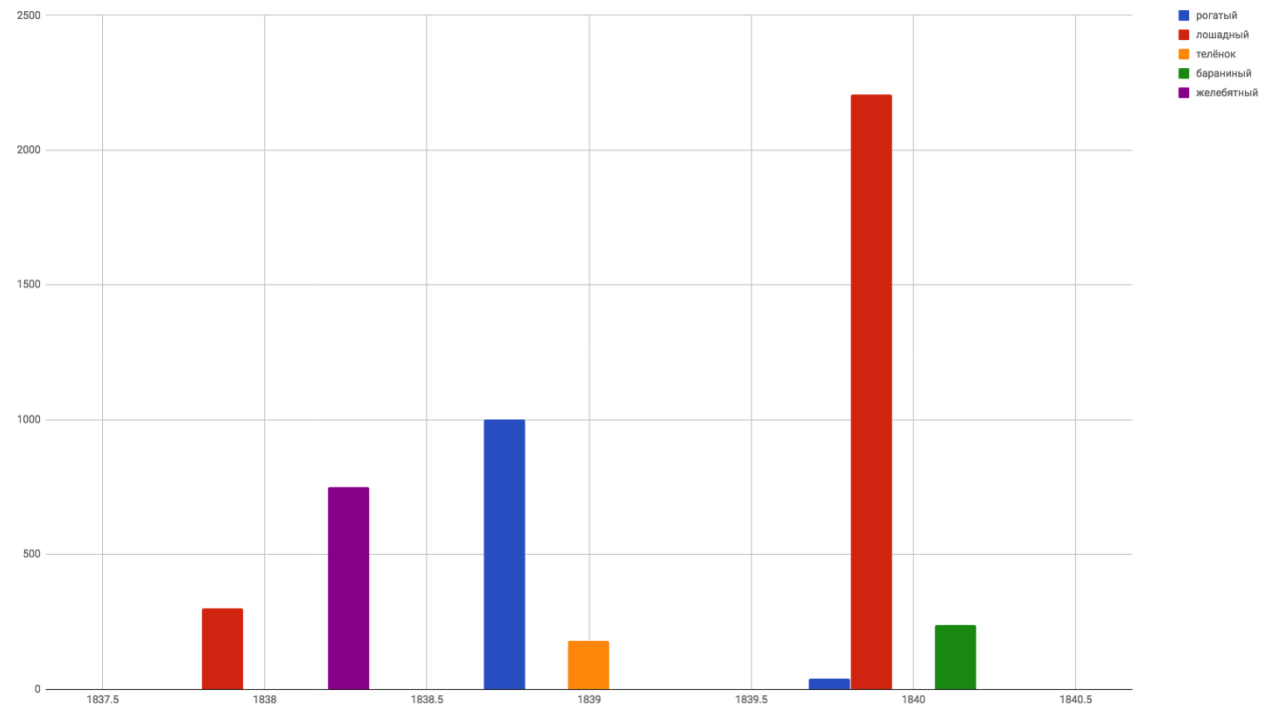
5.1

Quantity of cattle



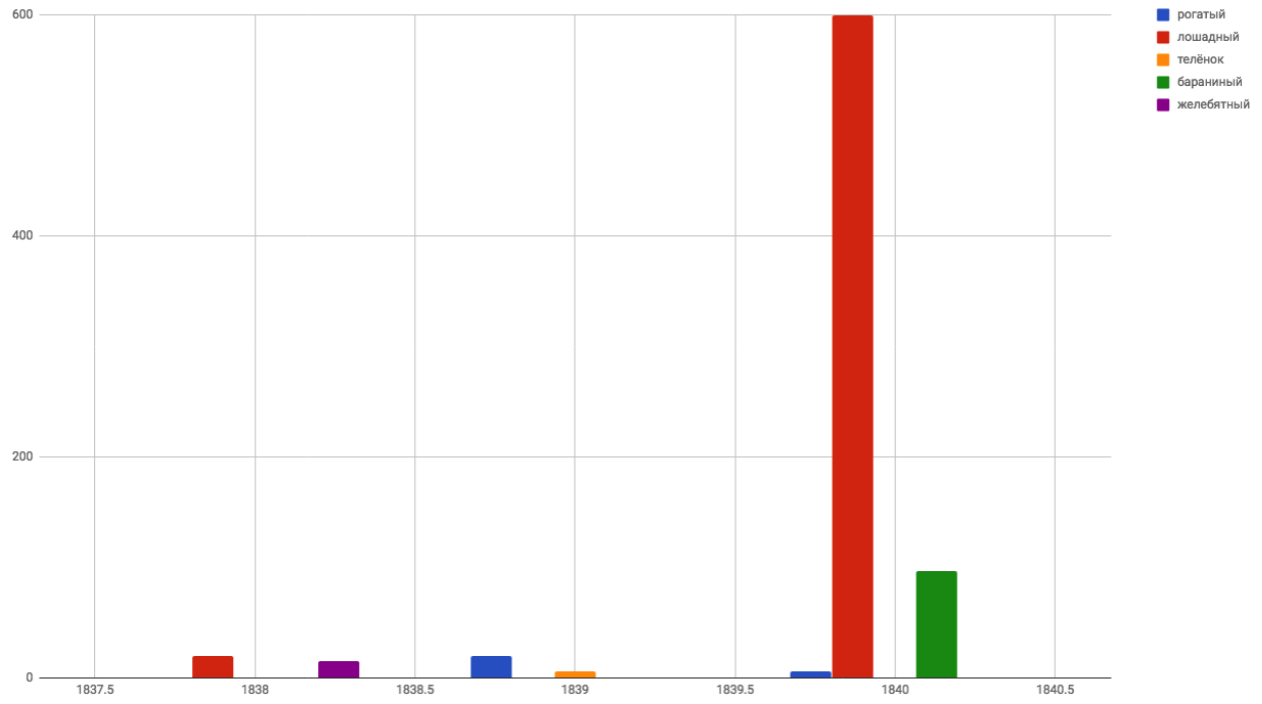
5.2.1

Total value of cattle (ruble)



5.2.2

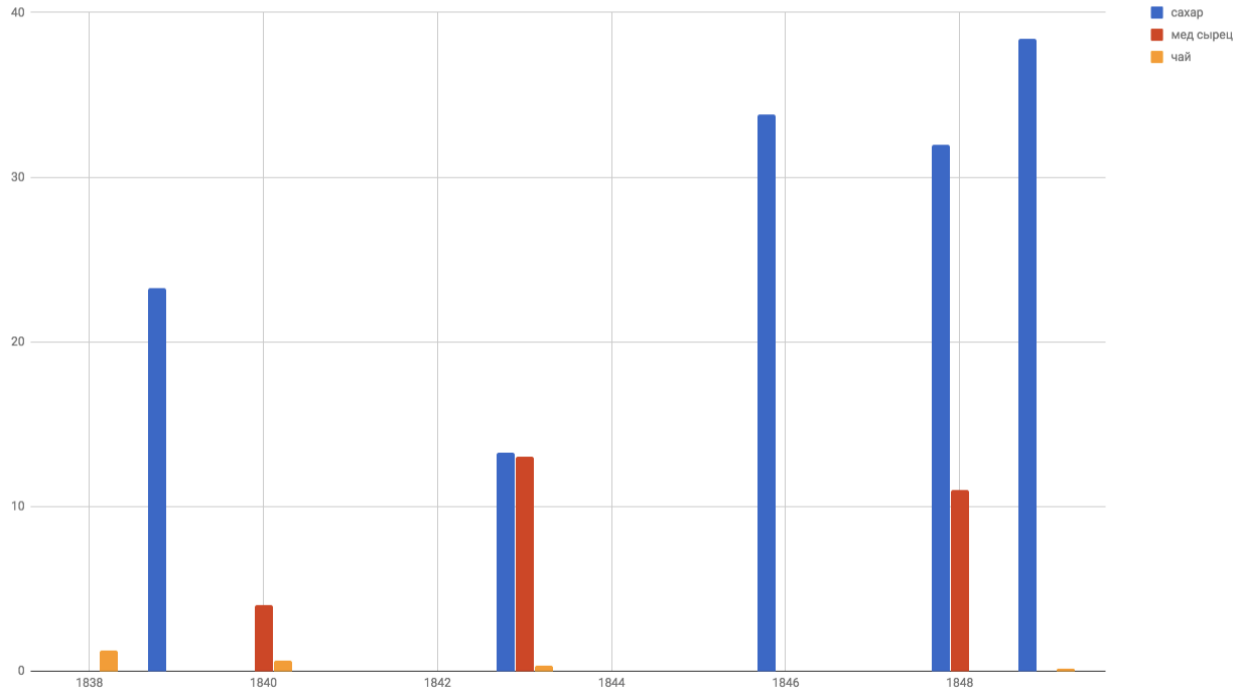
Price of cattle (ruble)



6. Food

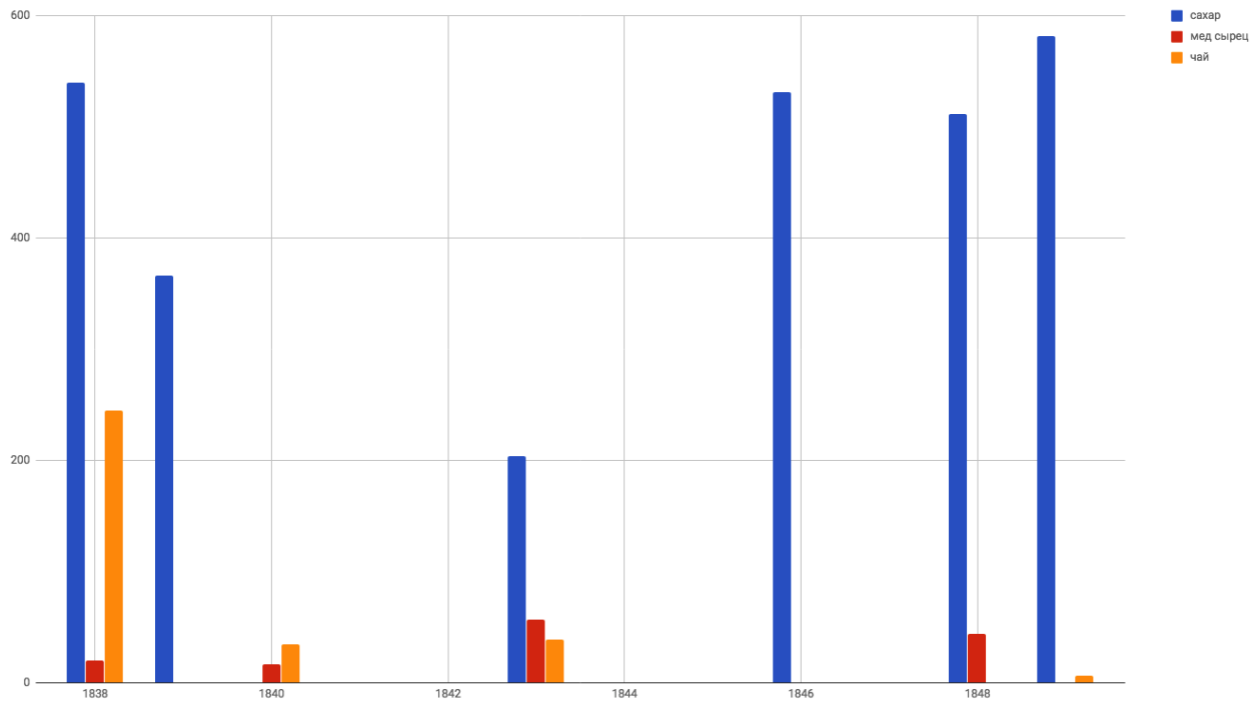
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Quantity of food products (by pood)



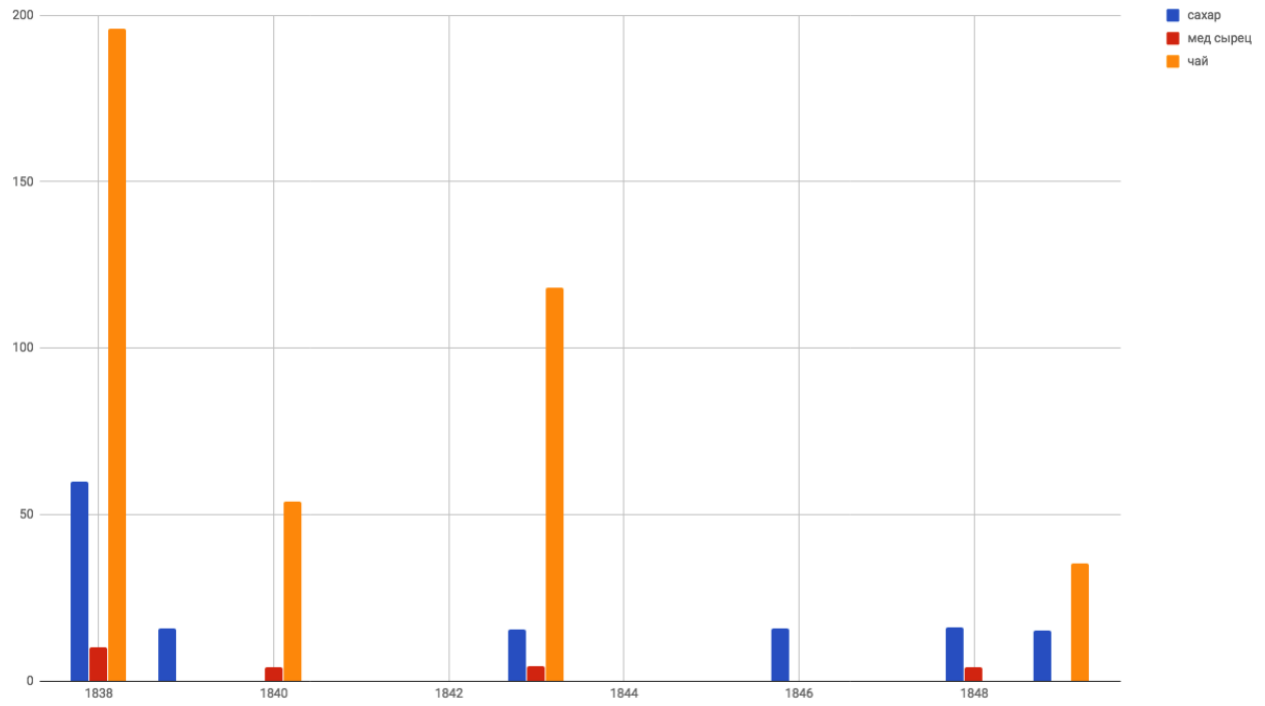
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Total value of food products (ruble)



6.2.2

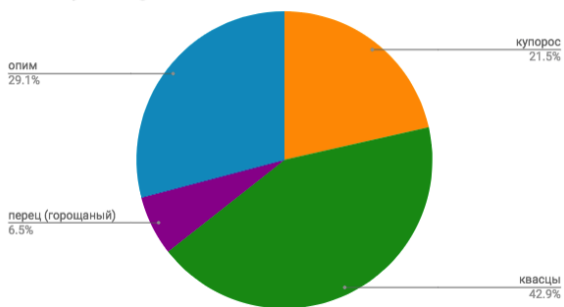
Price of food products (ruble)



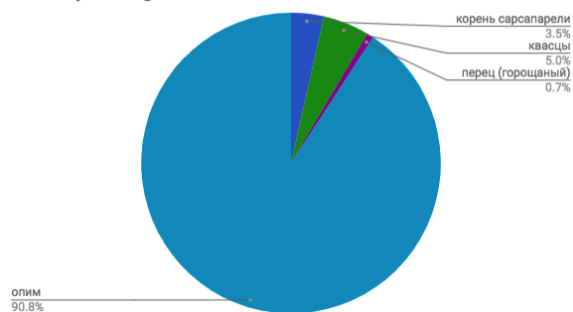
7. Drugs

7.1.1

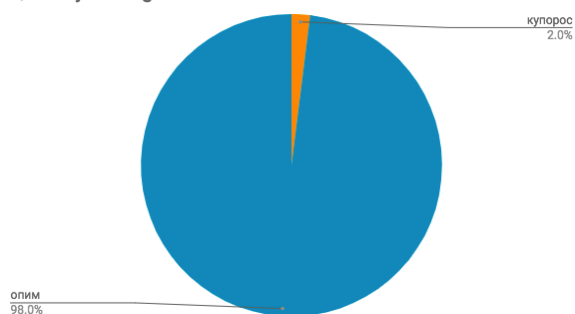
Quantity of drugs 1835



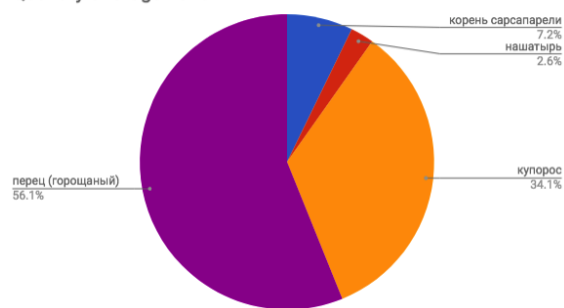
Quantity of drugs 1838



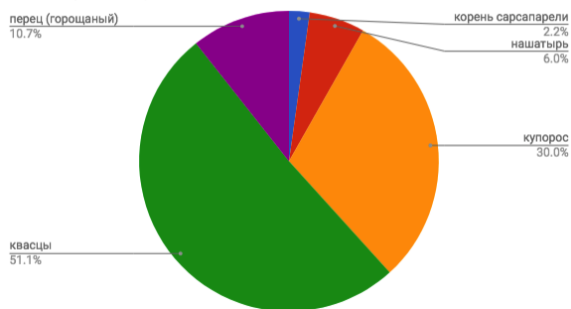
Quantity of drugs 1840



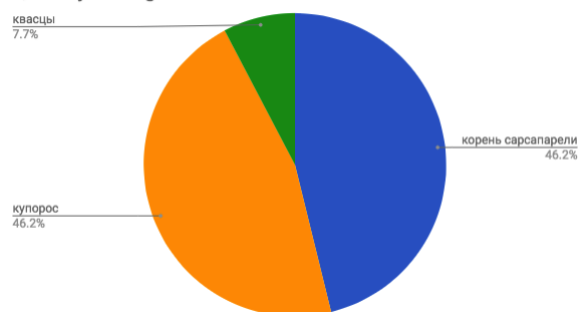
Quantity of drugs 1843



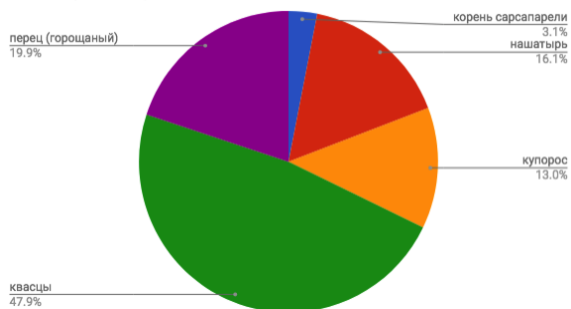
Quantity of drugs 1846



Quantity of drugs 1848

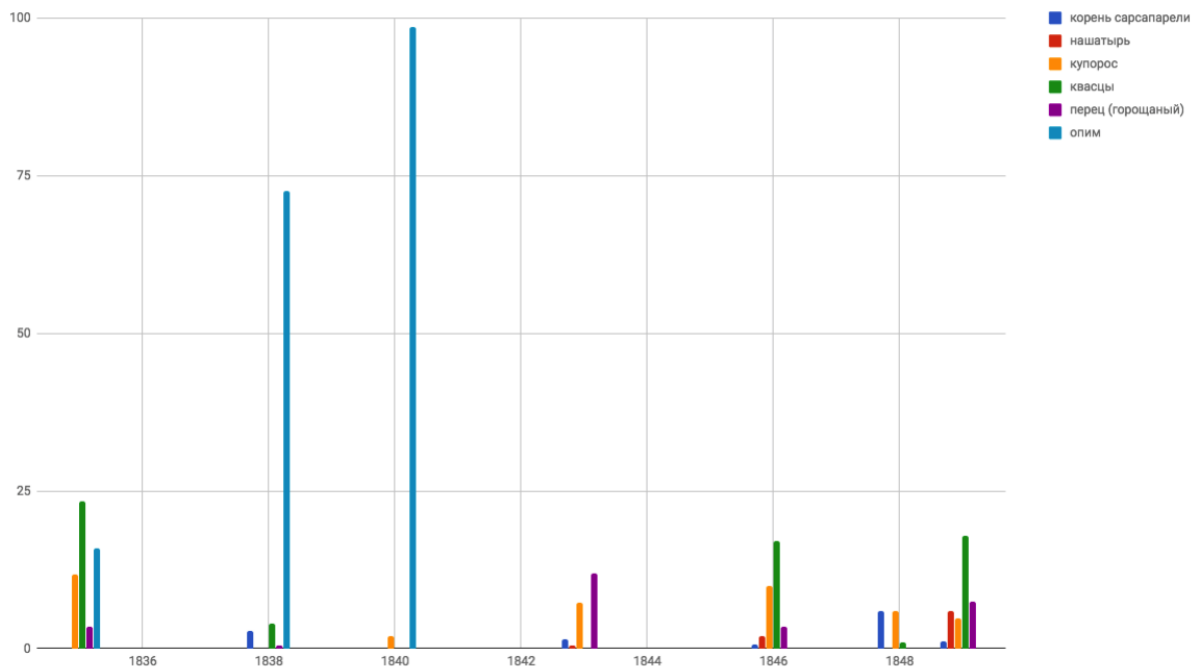


Quantity of drugs 1849



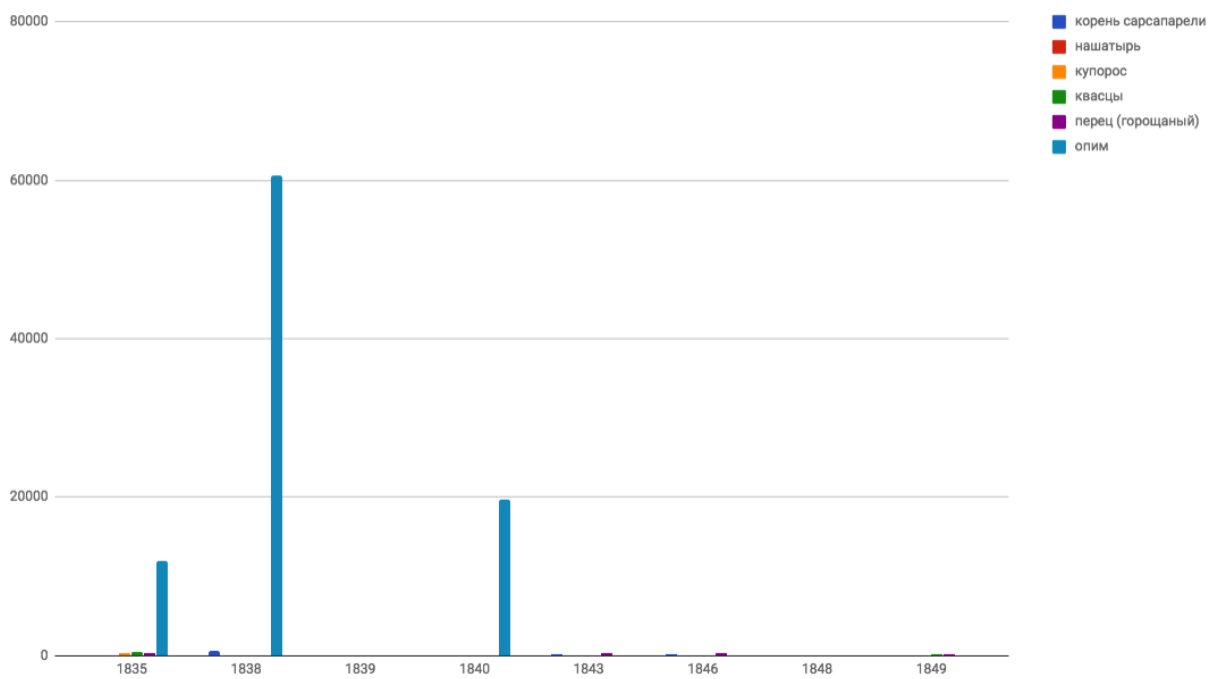
7.1.2

Quantity of drugs (by pood)



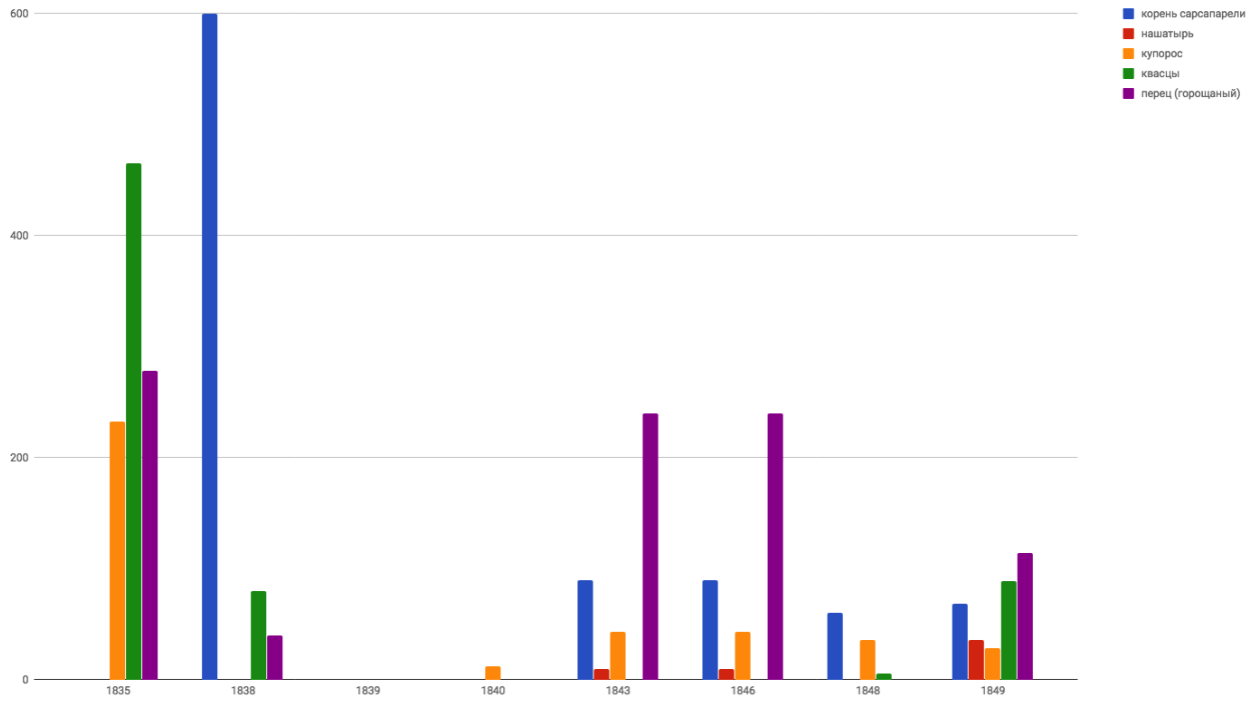
7.2.1a

Total value of drugs (ruble)



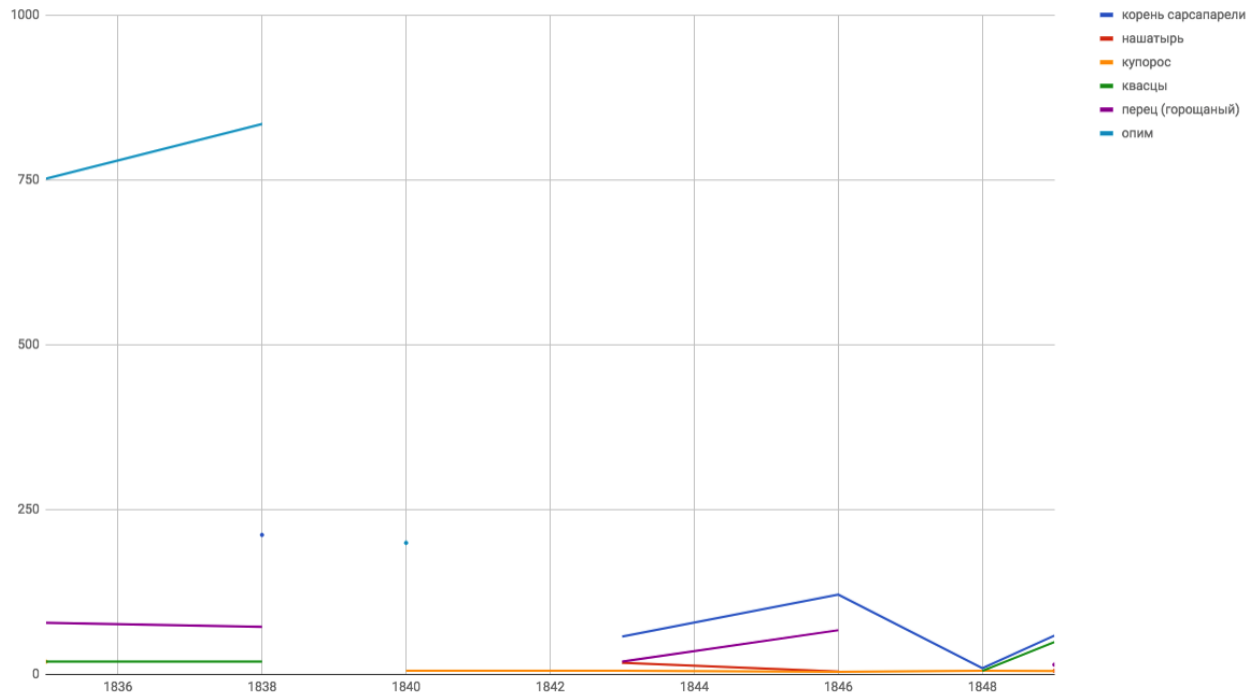
7.2.1b

Total value of drugs (excluding opium) (ruble)



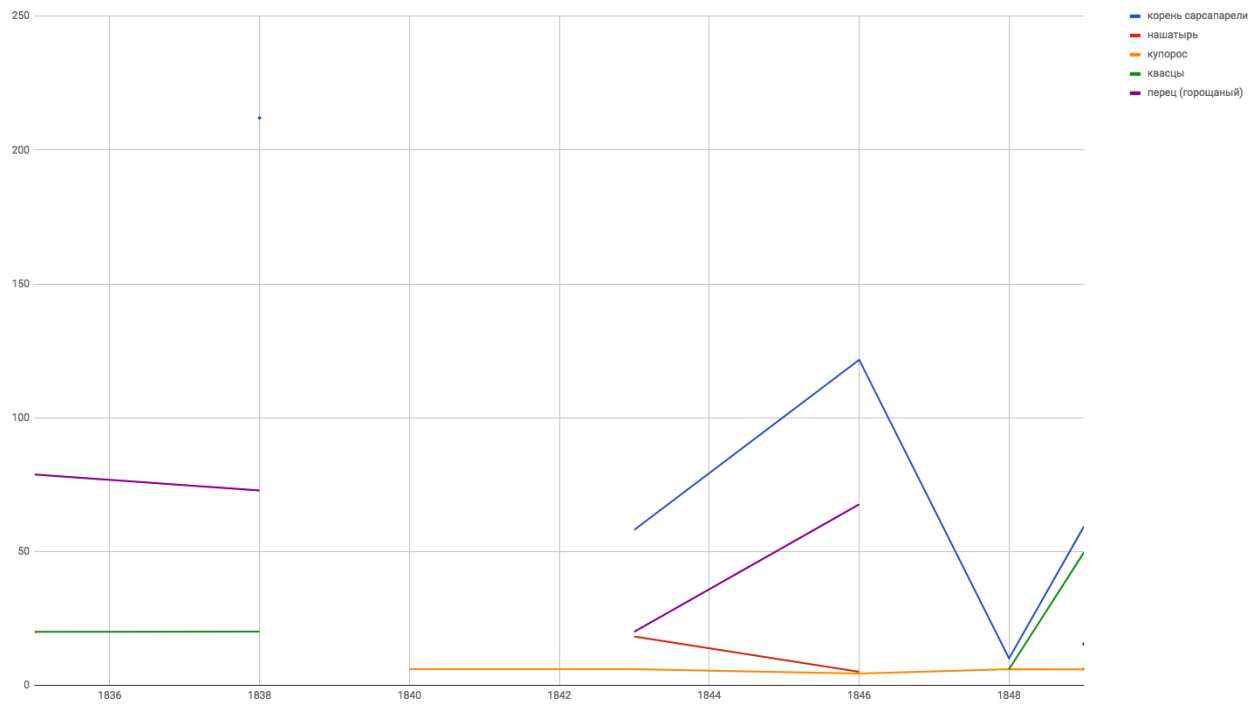
7.2.2a

Price of drugs (ruble)



7.2.2b

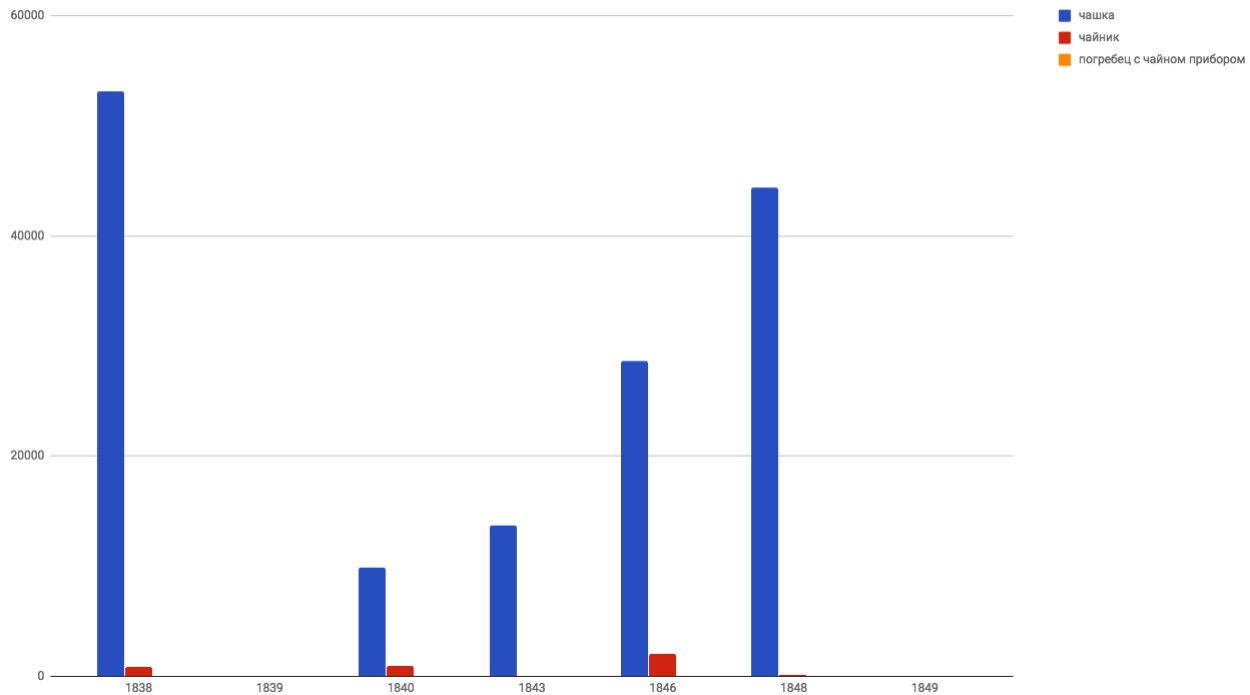
Price of drugs (excluding opium) (ruble)



8. Teaware

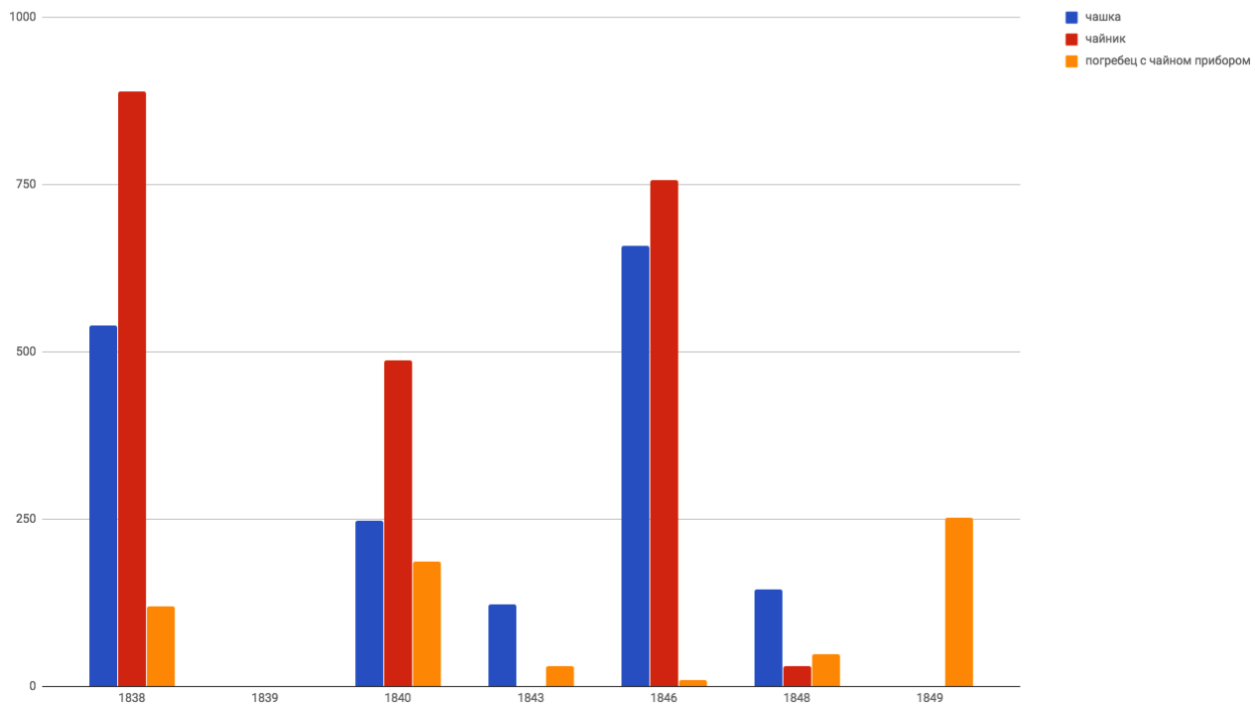
8.1

Quantity of teaware



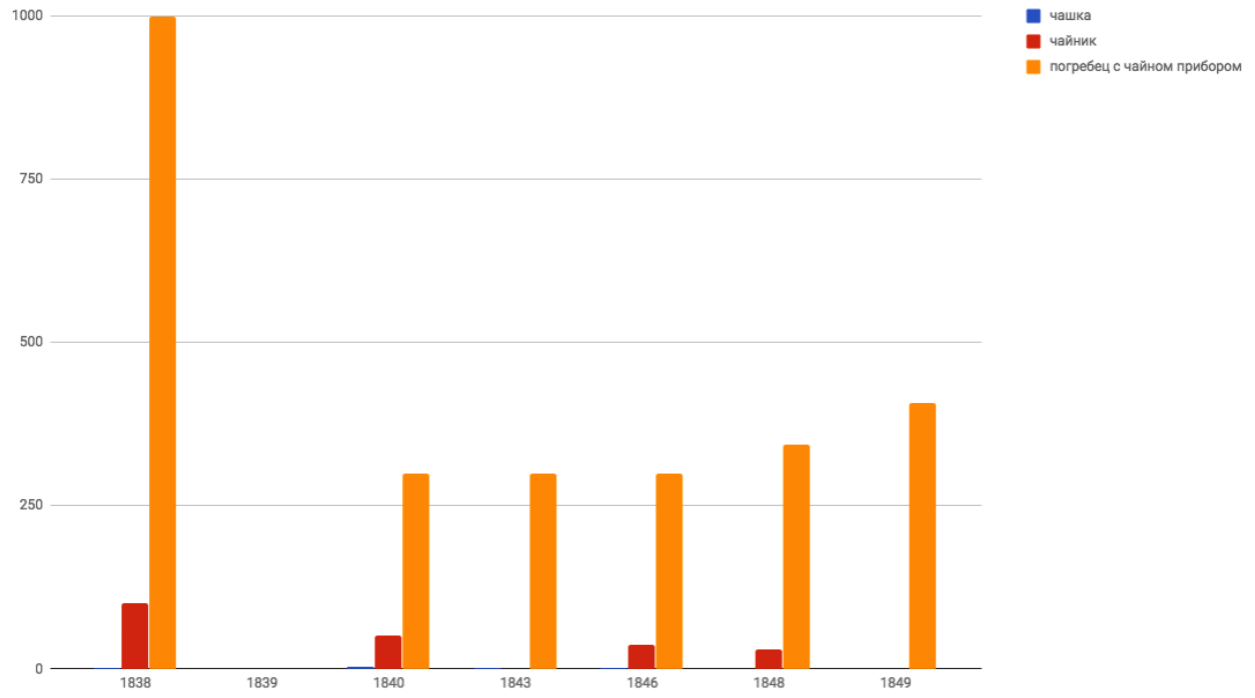
8.2.1

Total value of teaware (ruble)



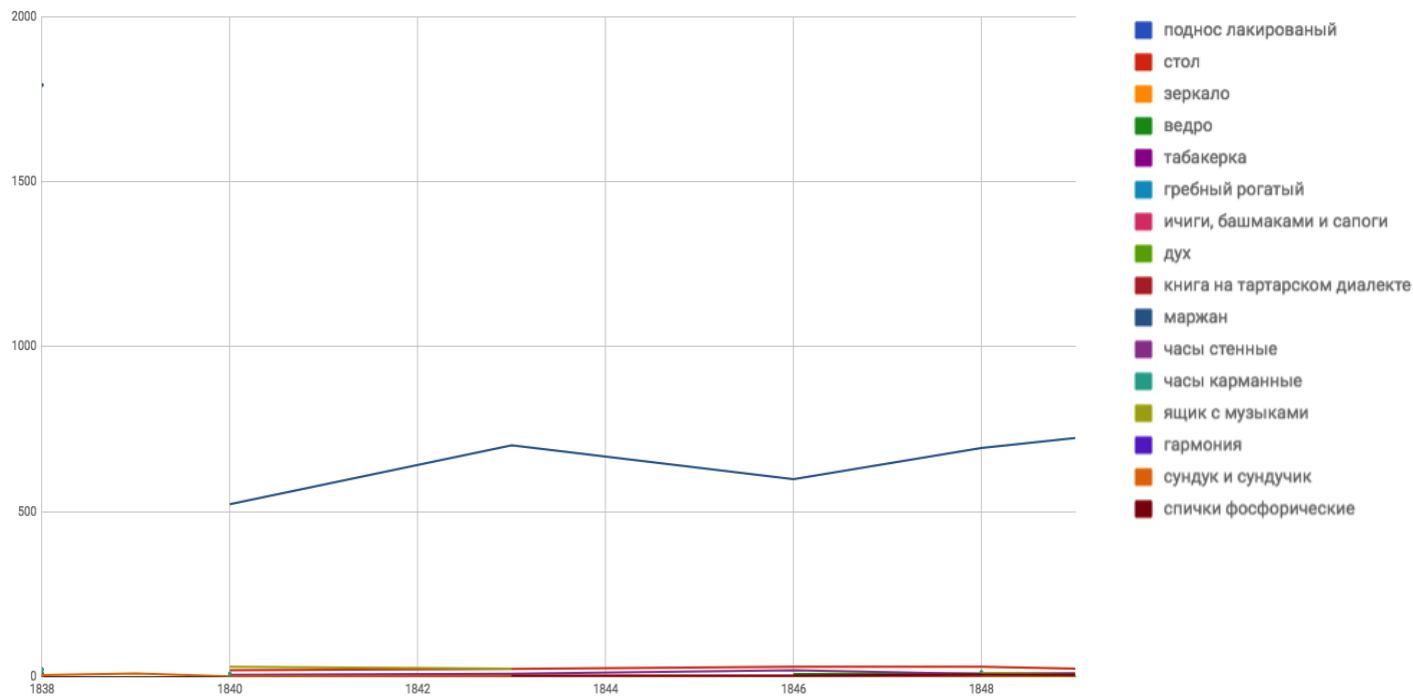
8.2.2

Price of teaware (kopek)



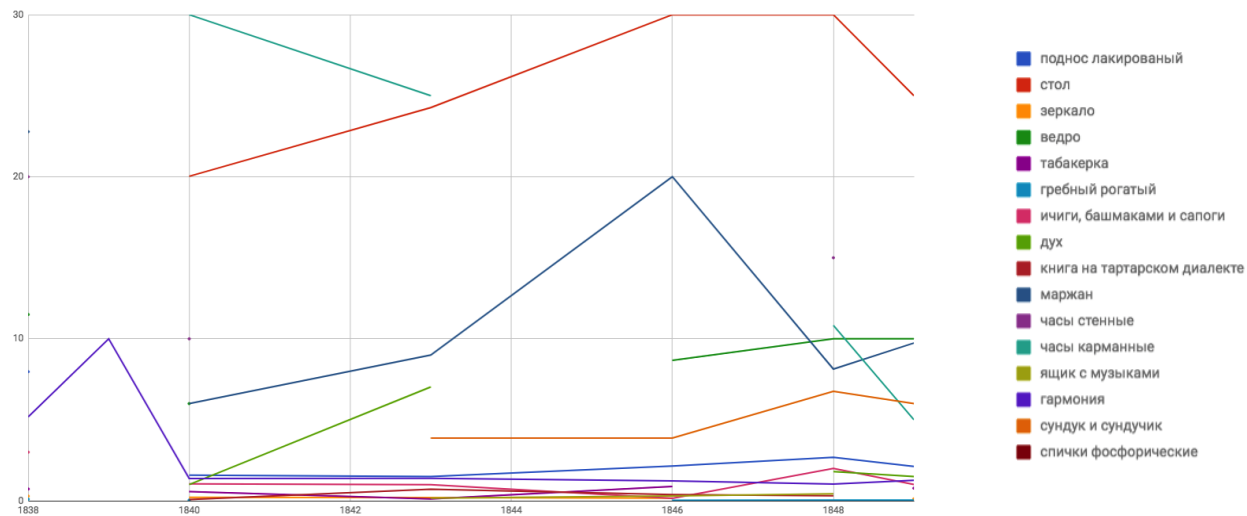
9.2.2a

Price of miscellaneous goods (ruble)



9.2.2b

Price of miscellaneous goods (excluding coral) (ruble)

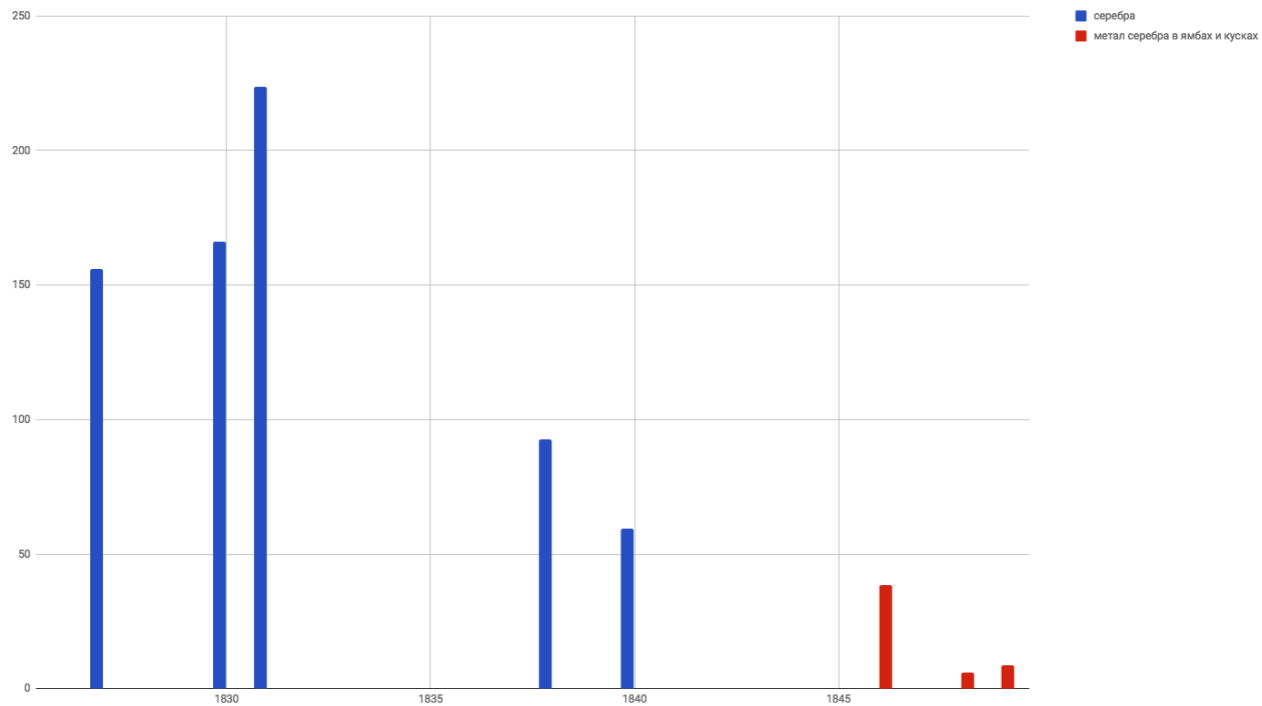


Imports from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk:

1. Silver

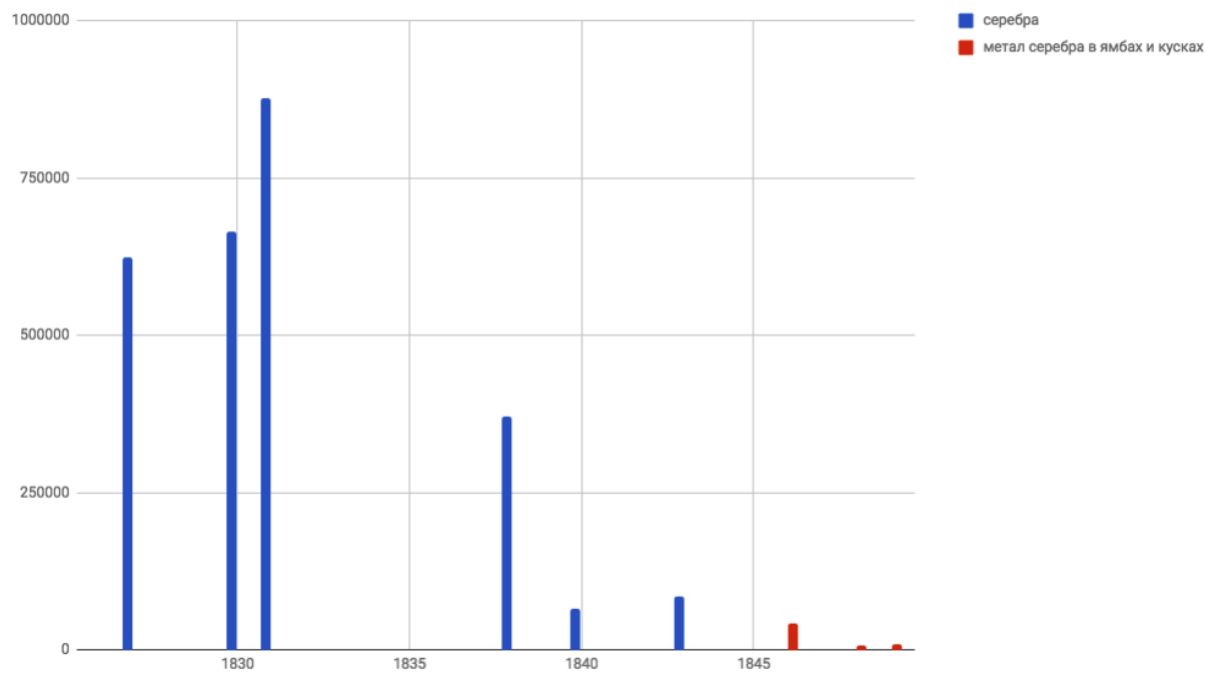
1.1

Quantity of silver (by pood)



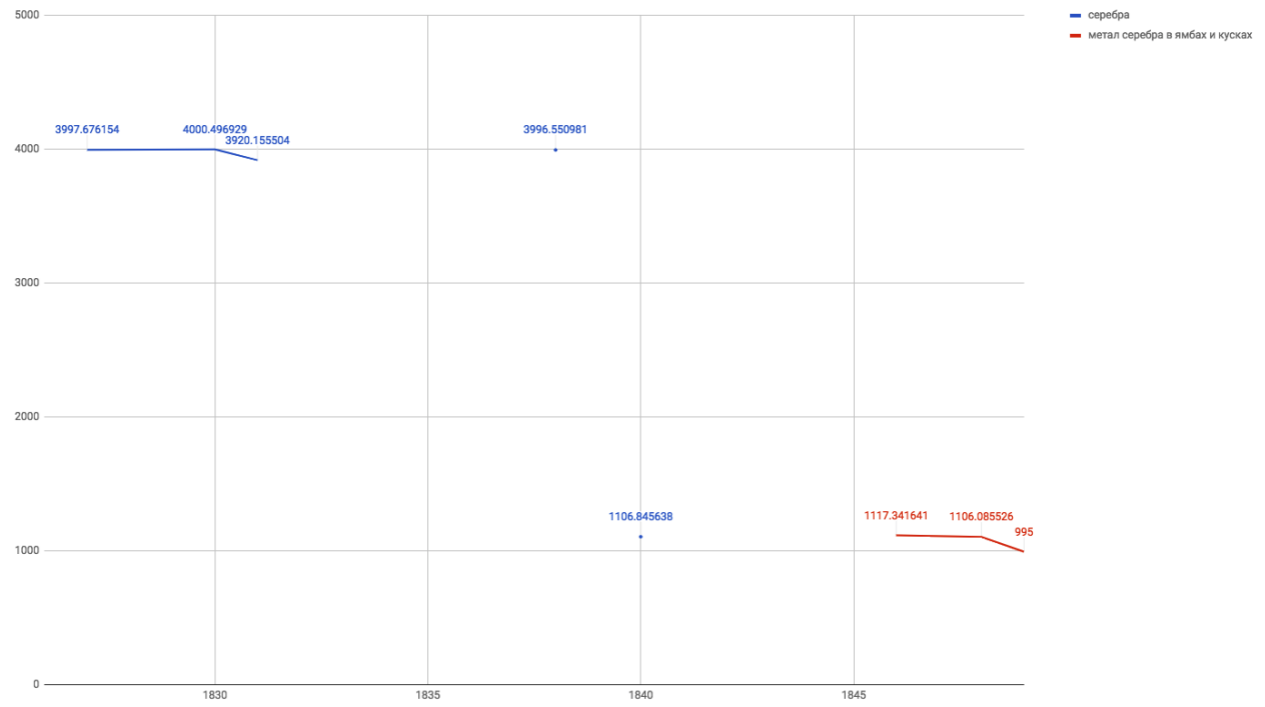
1.2.1

Total value of silver (ruble)



1.2.2

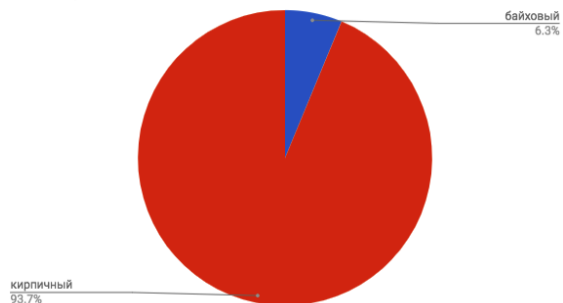
Price of silver (ruble)



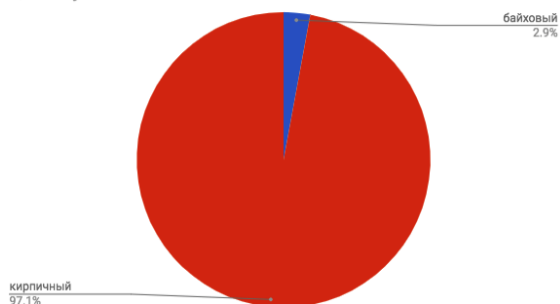
2. Tea

2.1.1

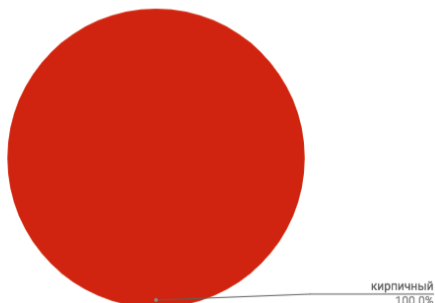
Quantity of tea 1826



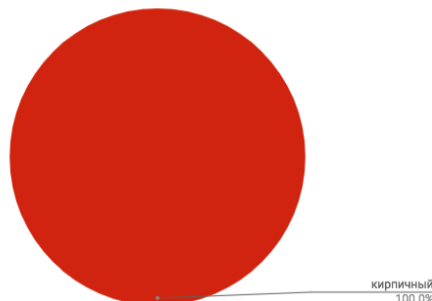
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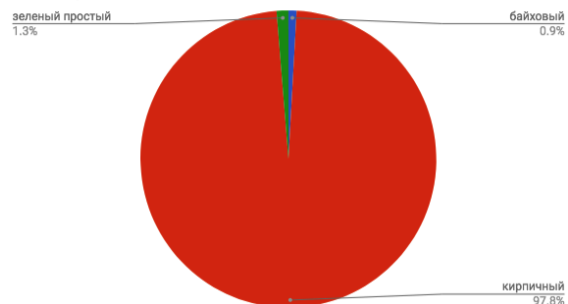
Quantity of tea 1830



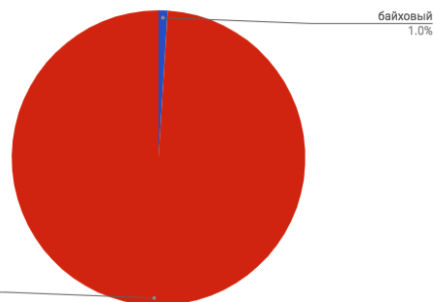
Quantity of tea 1831



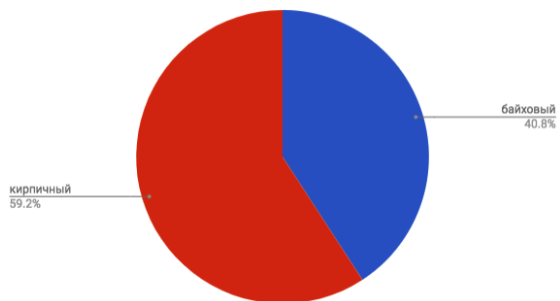
Quantity of tea 1835



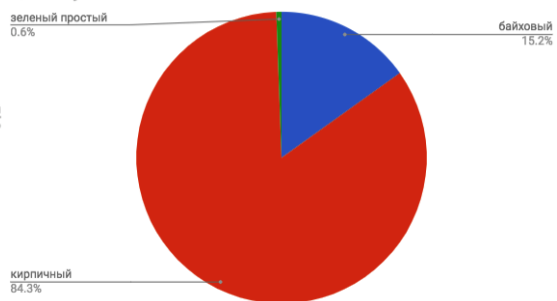
Quantity of tea 1838



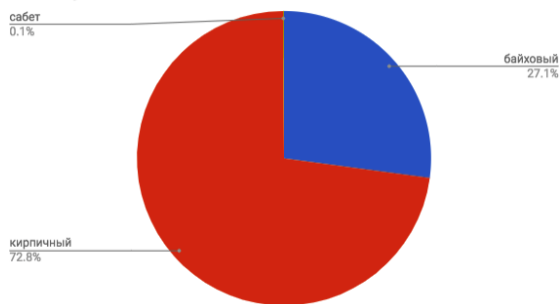
Quantity of tea 1840



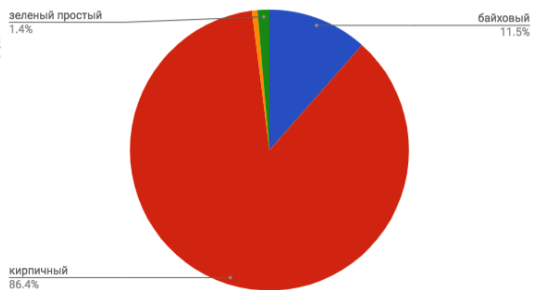
Quantity of tea 1843



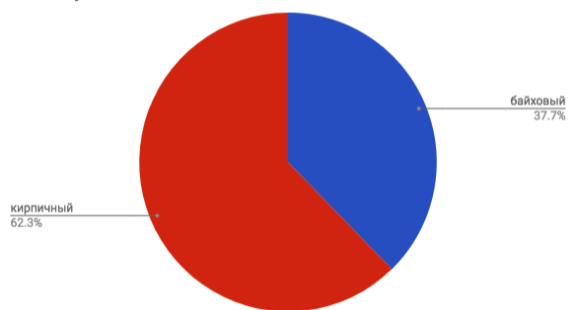
Quantity of tea 1846



Quantity of tea 1848

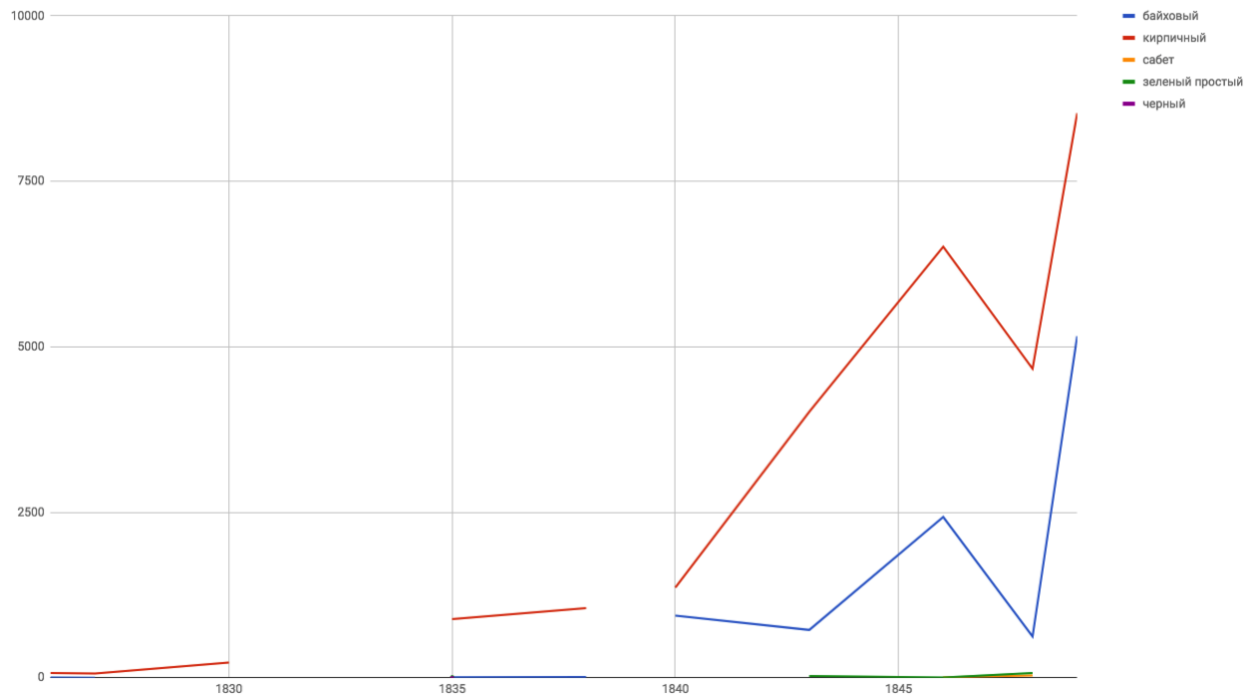


Quantity of tea 1849



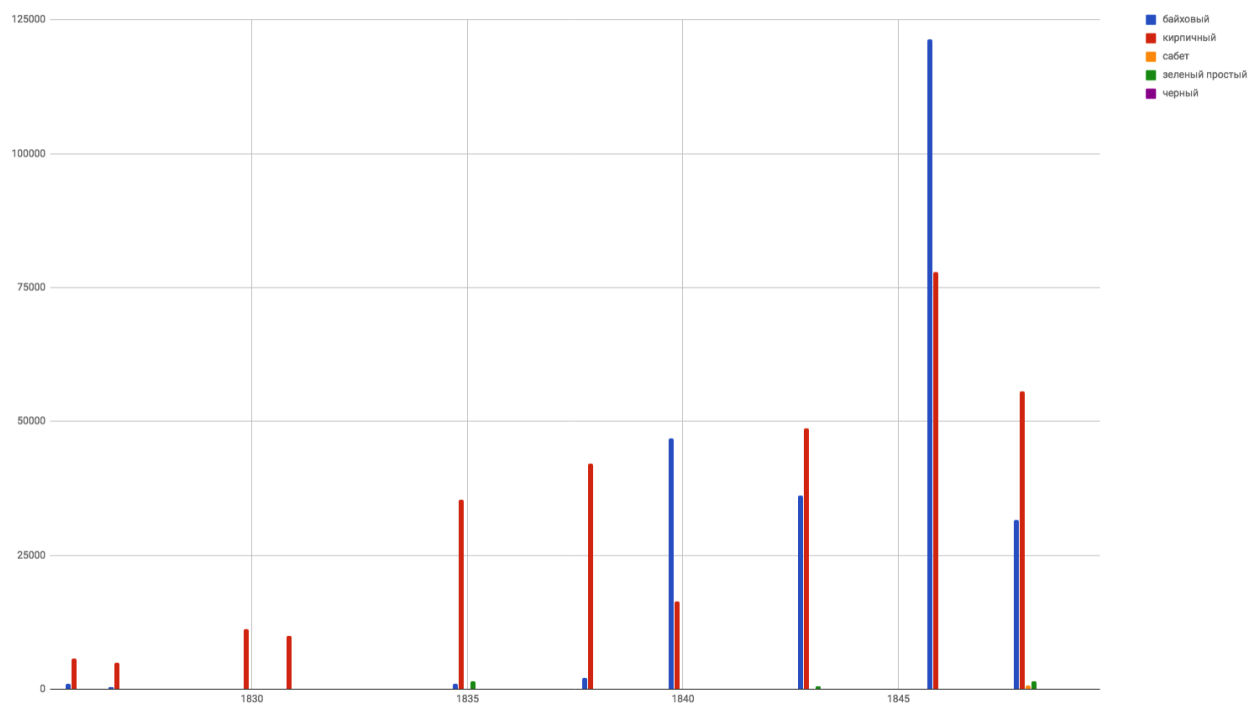
2.1.2

Quantity of tea (by pood)



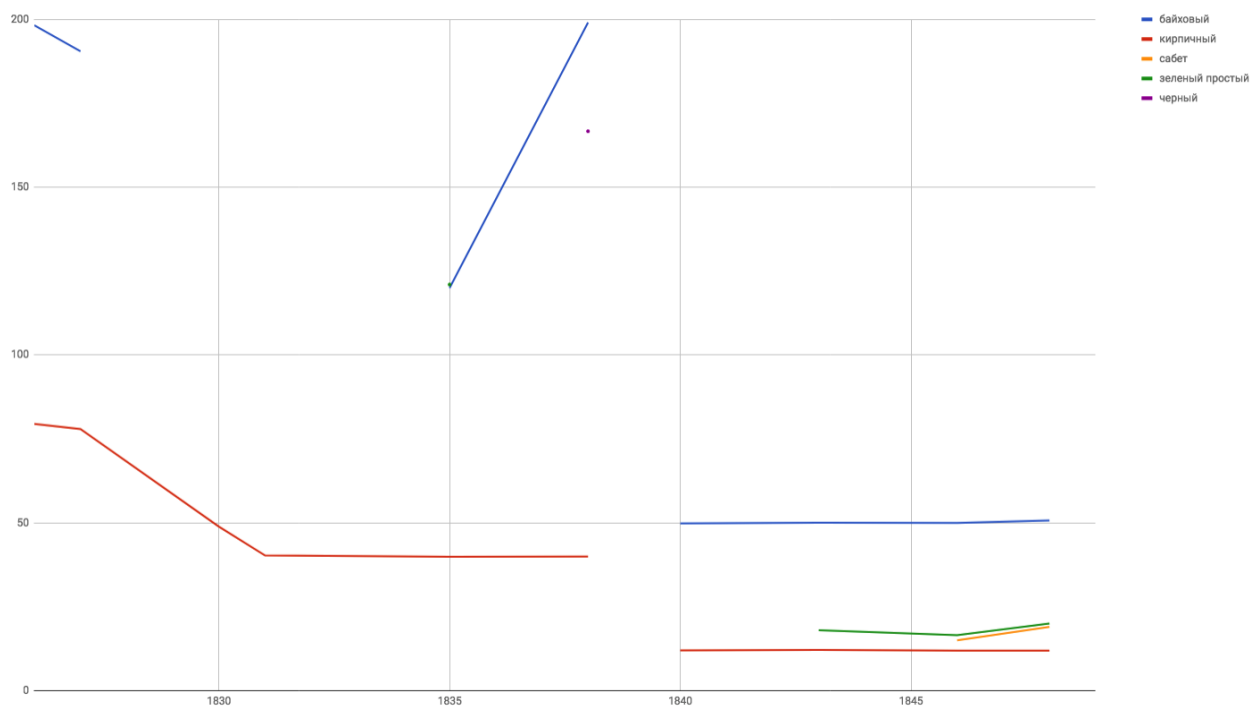
2.2.1

Total value of tea (ruble)



2.2.2

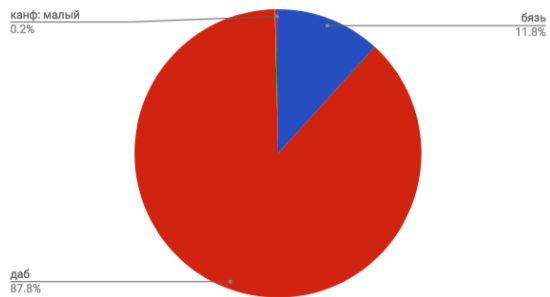
Price of tea (ruble)



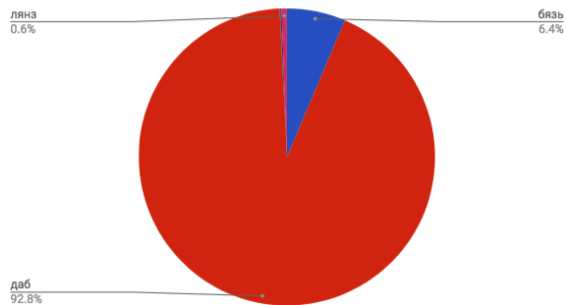
3. Cotton and silk products

3.1.1

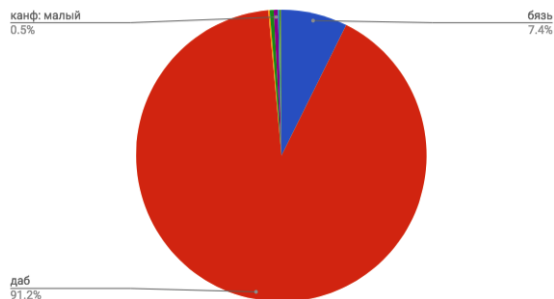
Quantity of cotton and silk 1826



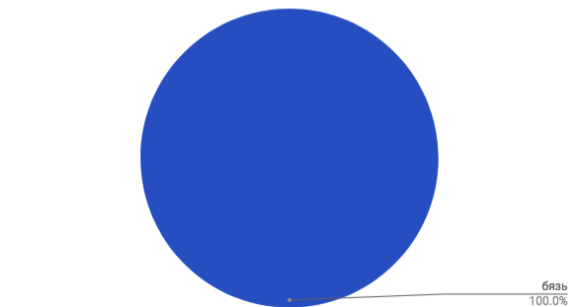
Quantity of cotton and silk 1827



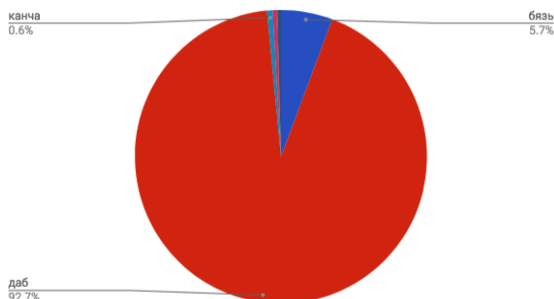
Quantity of cotton and silk 1830



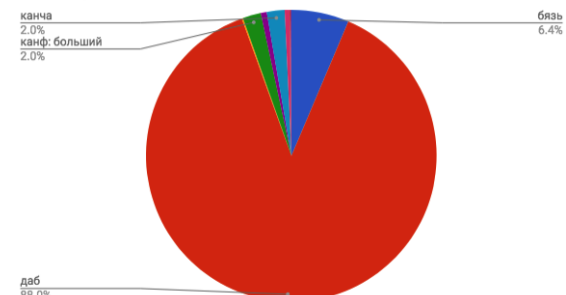
Quantity of cotton and silk 1831



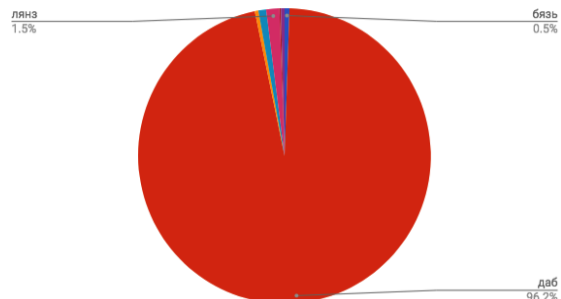
Quantity of cotton and silk 1835



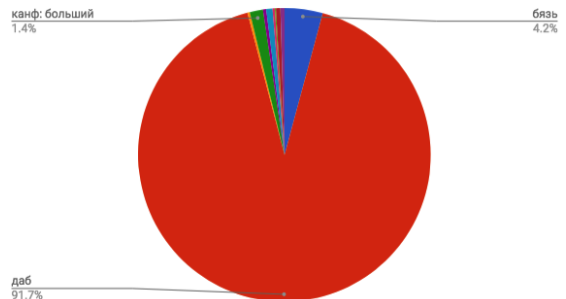
Quantity of cotton and silk 1838



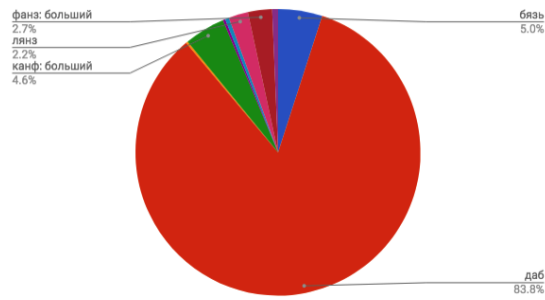
Quantity of cotton and silk 1839



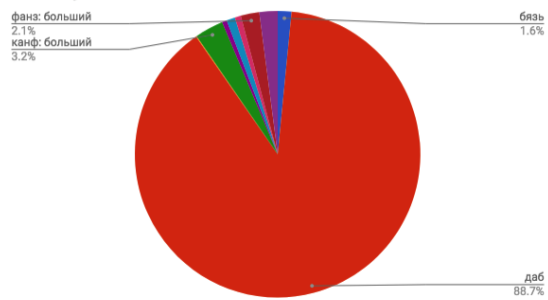
Quantity of cotton and silk 1840



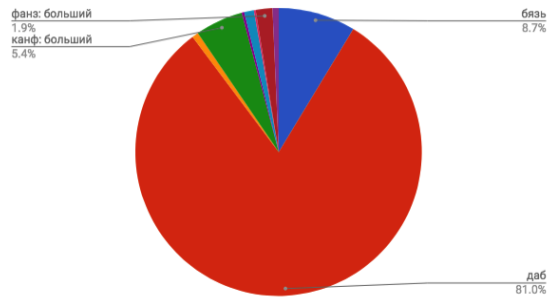
Quantity of cotton and silk 1843



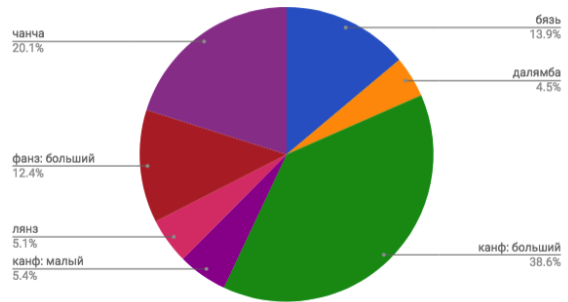
Quantity of cotton and silk 1846



Quantity of cotton and silk 1848

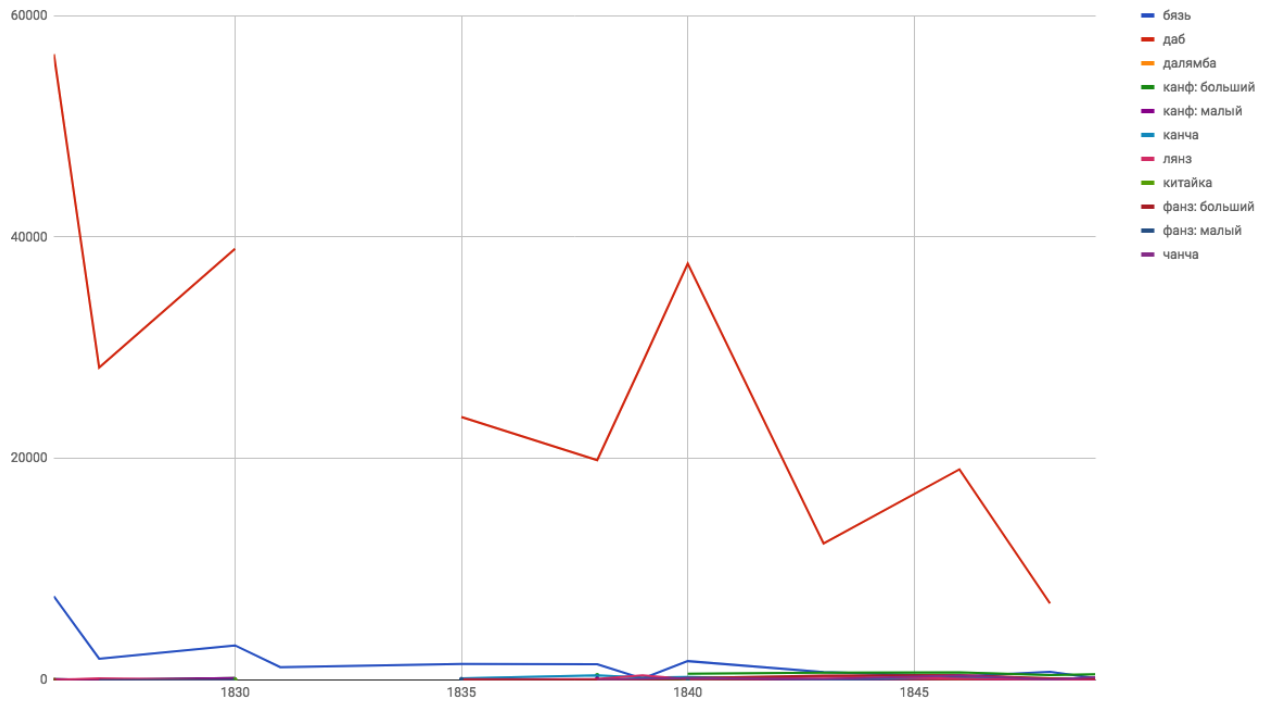


Quantity of cotton and silk 1849



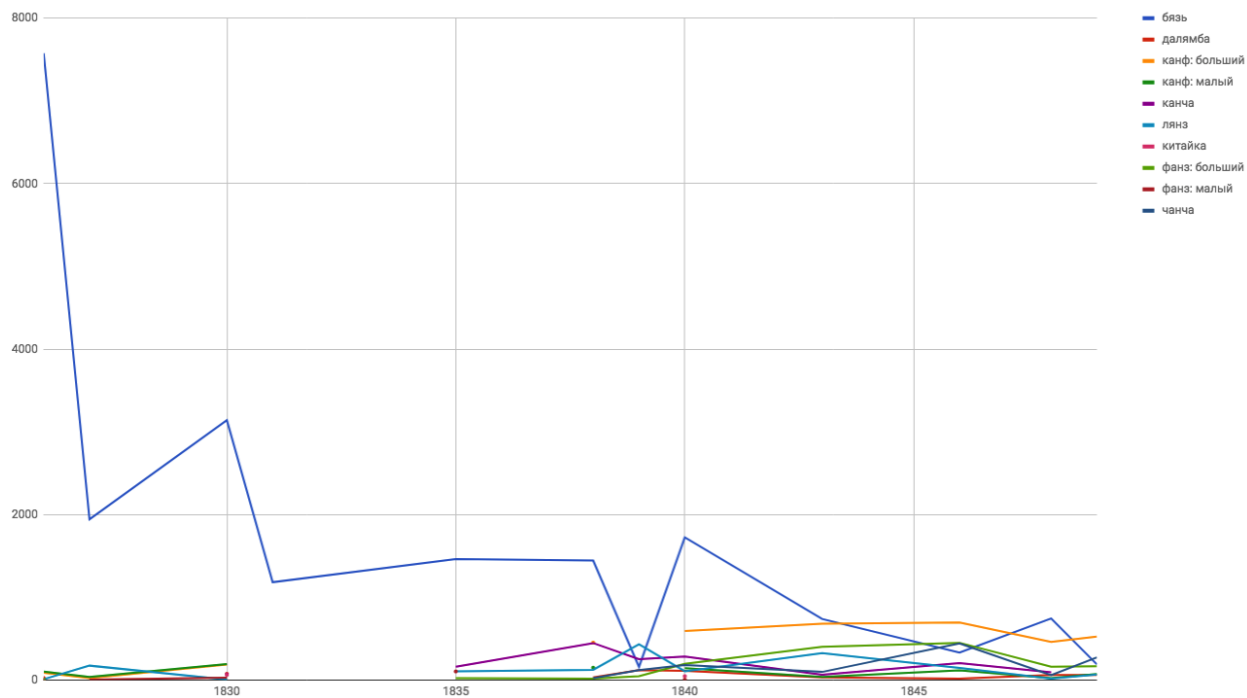
3.1.2a

Quantity trend of cotton and silk



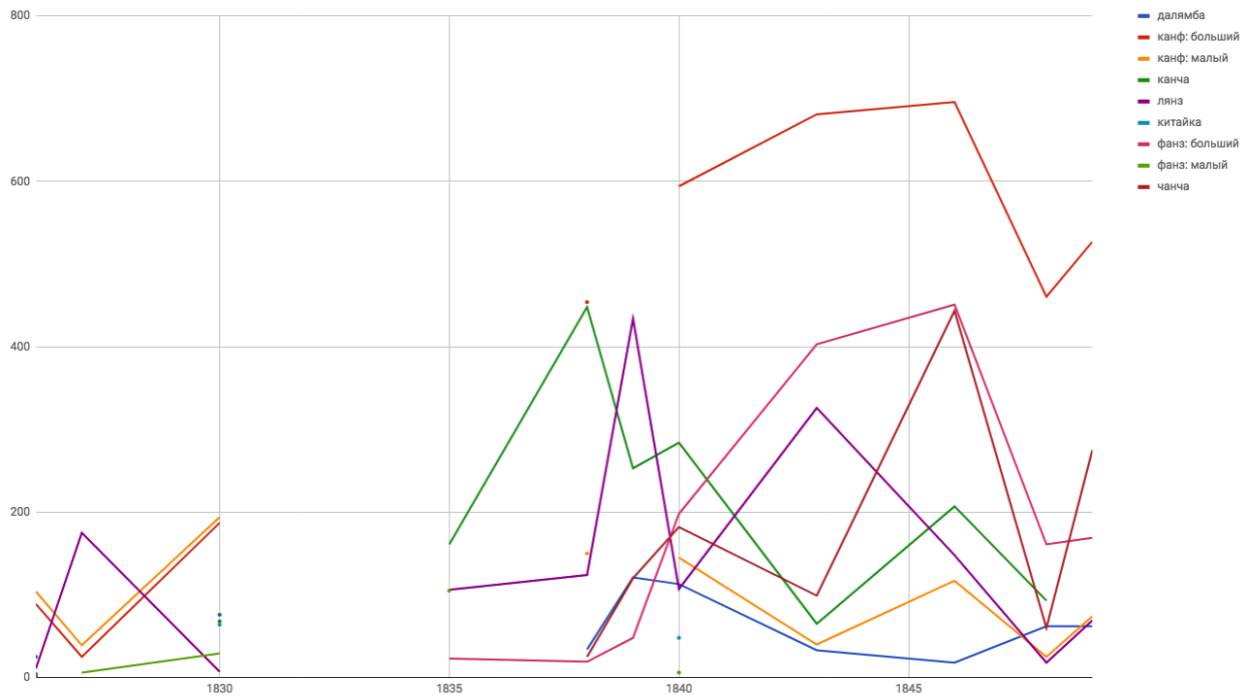
3.1.2b

Quantity trend of cotton and silk (excluding dab')



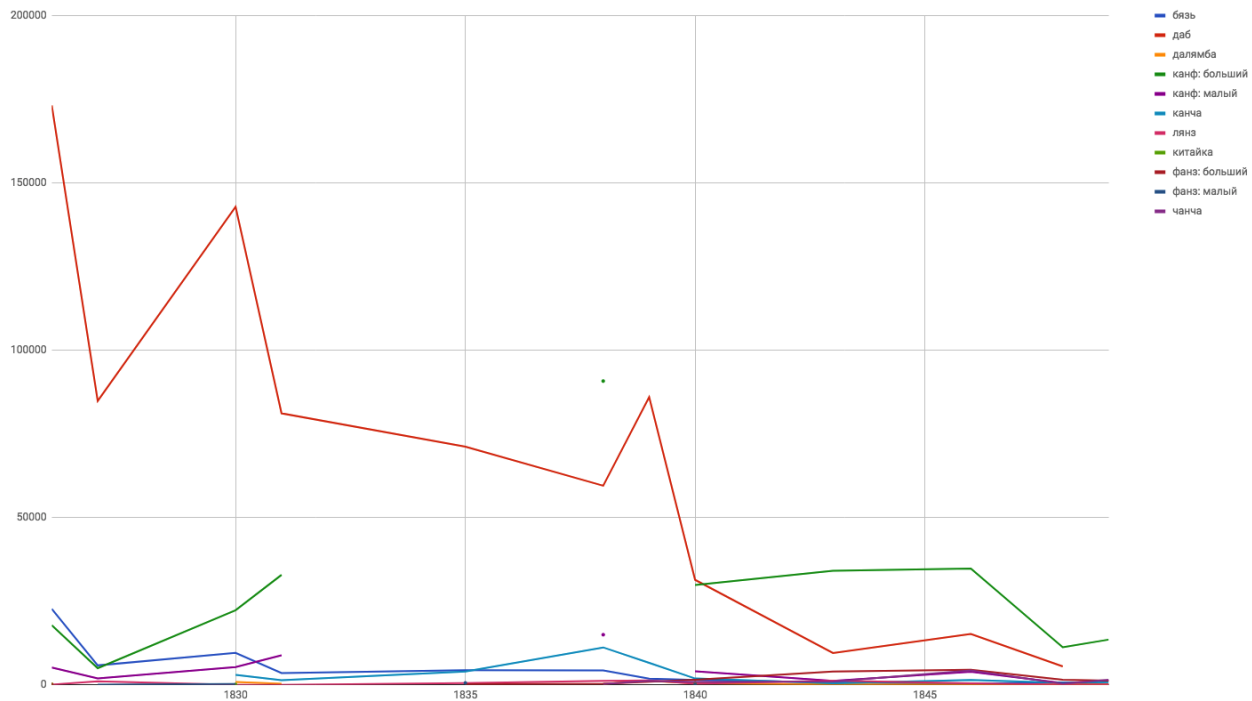
3.1.2c

Quantity trend of cotton and silk (excluding dab' and byaz')



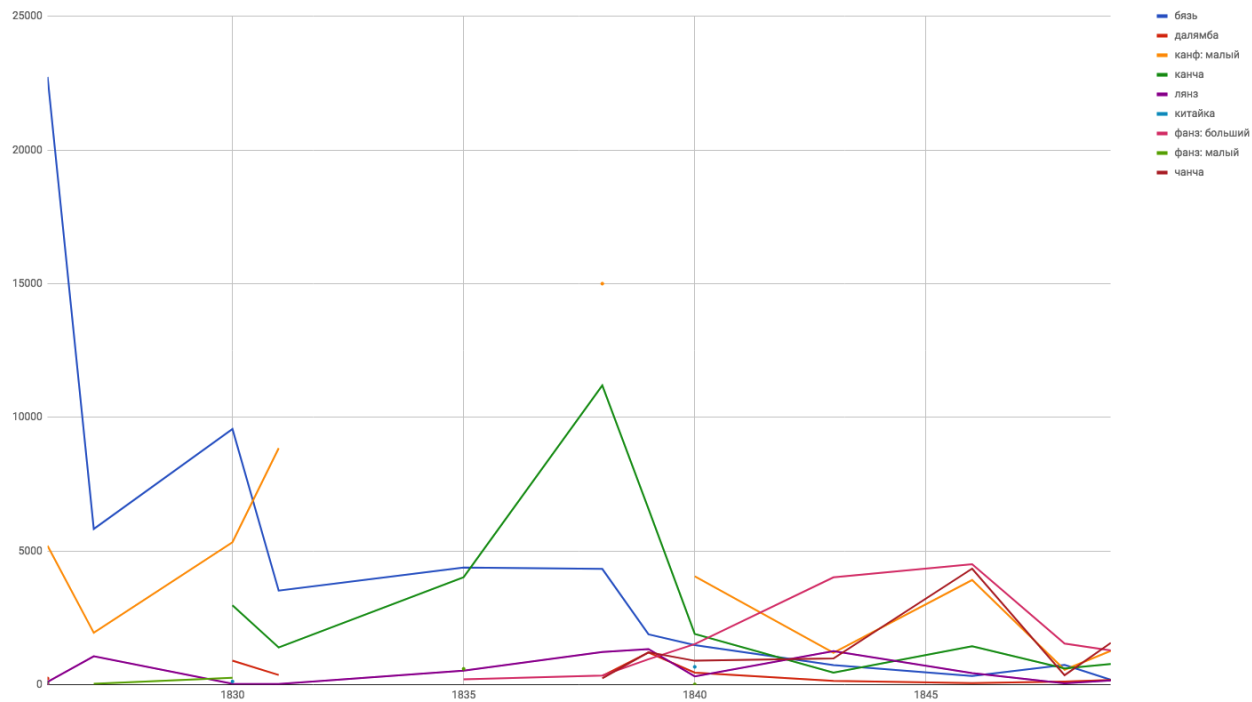
3.2.1a

Total value of cotton and silk (ruble)



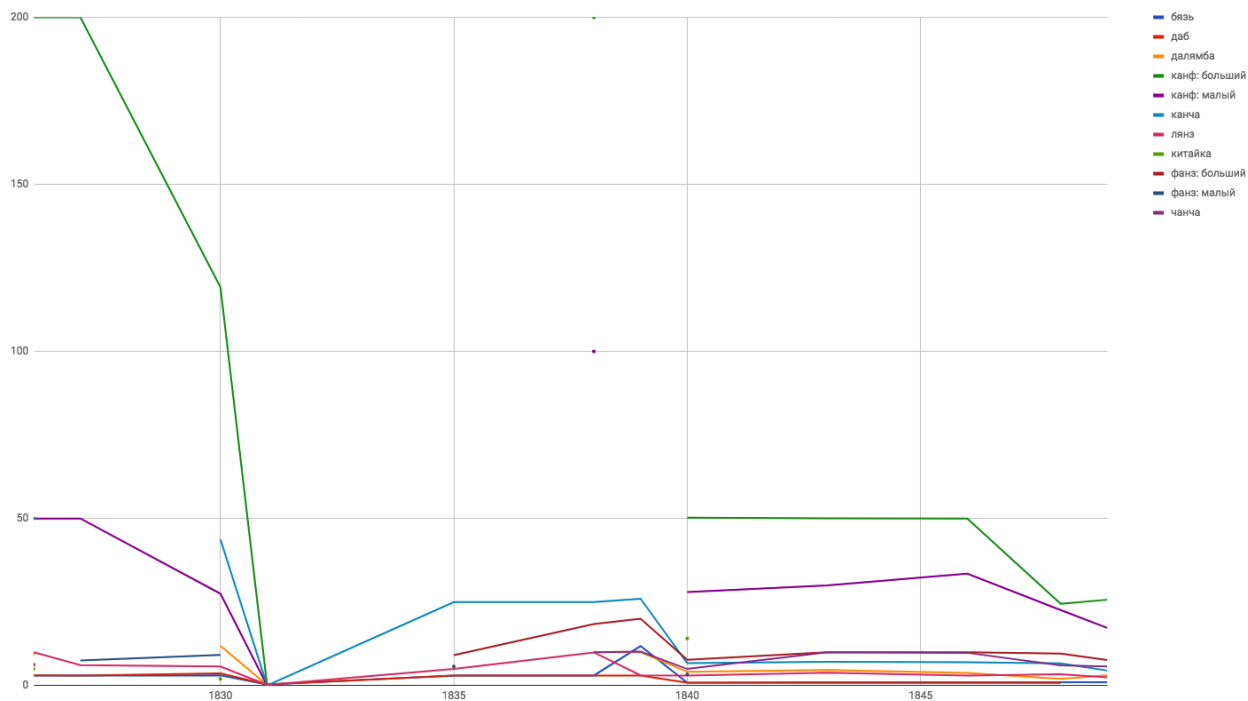
3.2.1b

Total value of cotton and silk (excluding dab' and big kanf) (ruble)



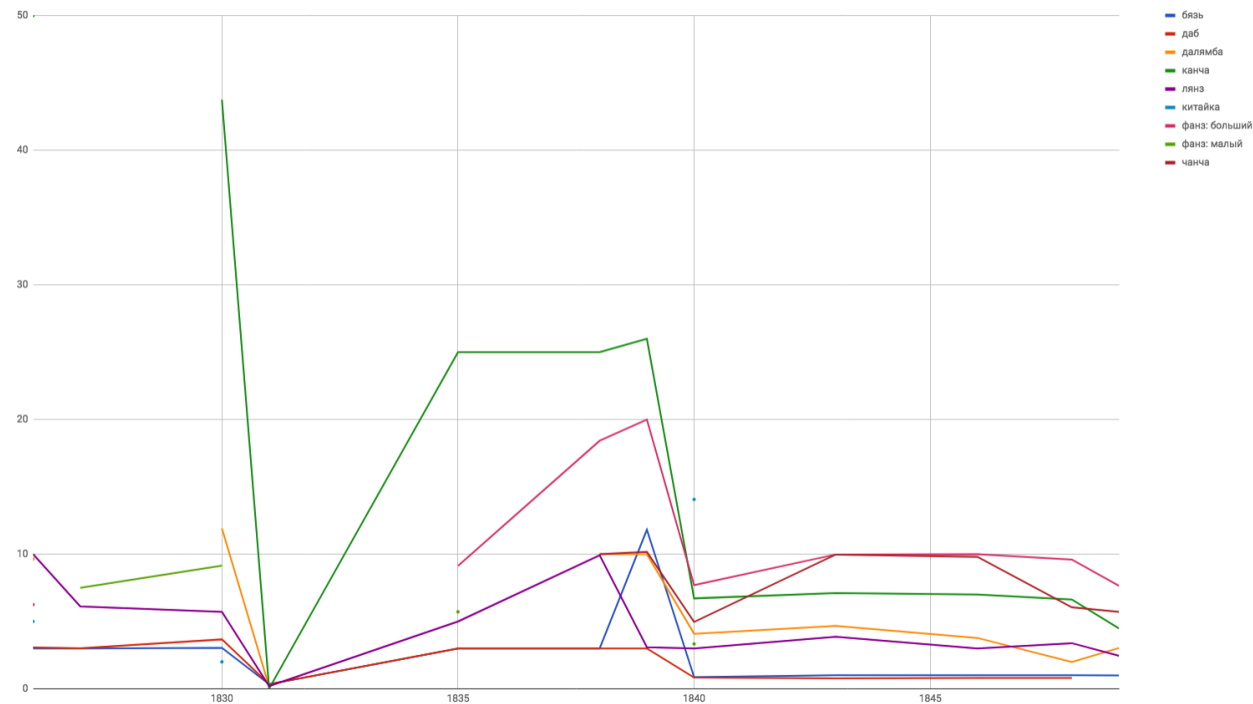
3.2.2a

Price of cotton and silk (ruble)



3.2.2b

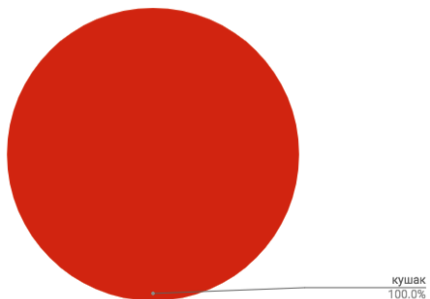
Price of cotton and silk (excluding big kanf and small kanf) (ruble)



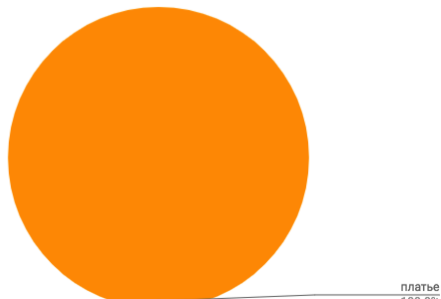
4. Textile products

4.1.1

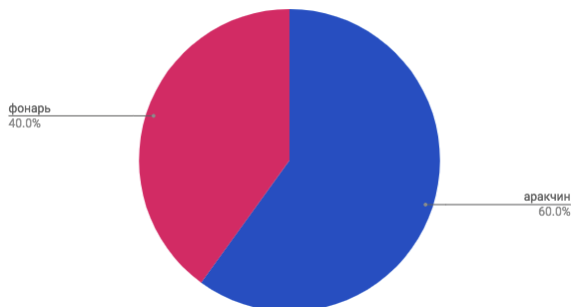
Quantity of textile products 1826



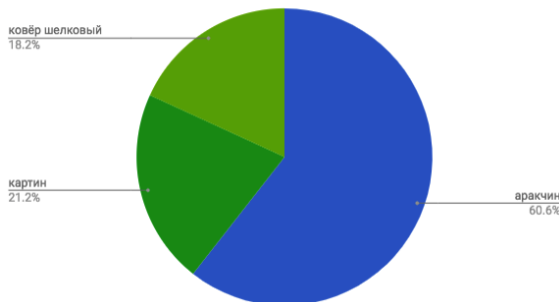
Quantity of textile products 1830



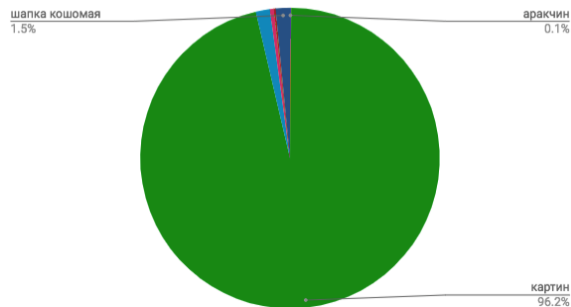
Quantity of textile products 1835



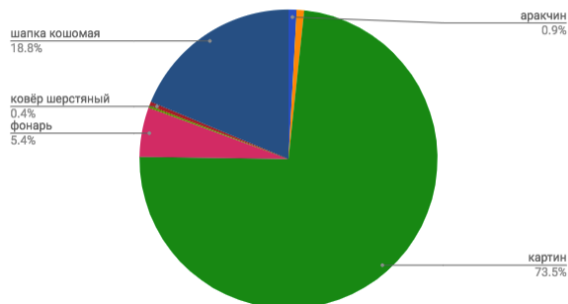
Quantity of textile products 1839



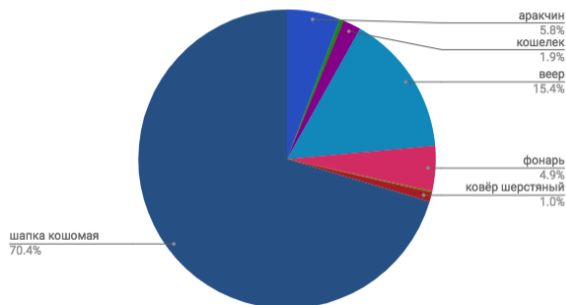
Quantity of textile products 1840



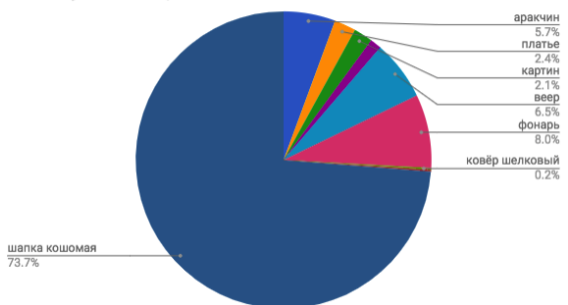
Quantity of textile products 1843



Quantity of textile products 1846

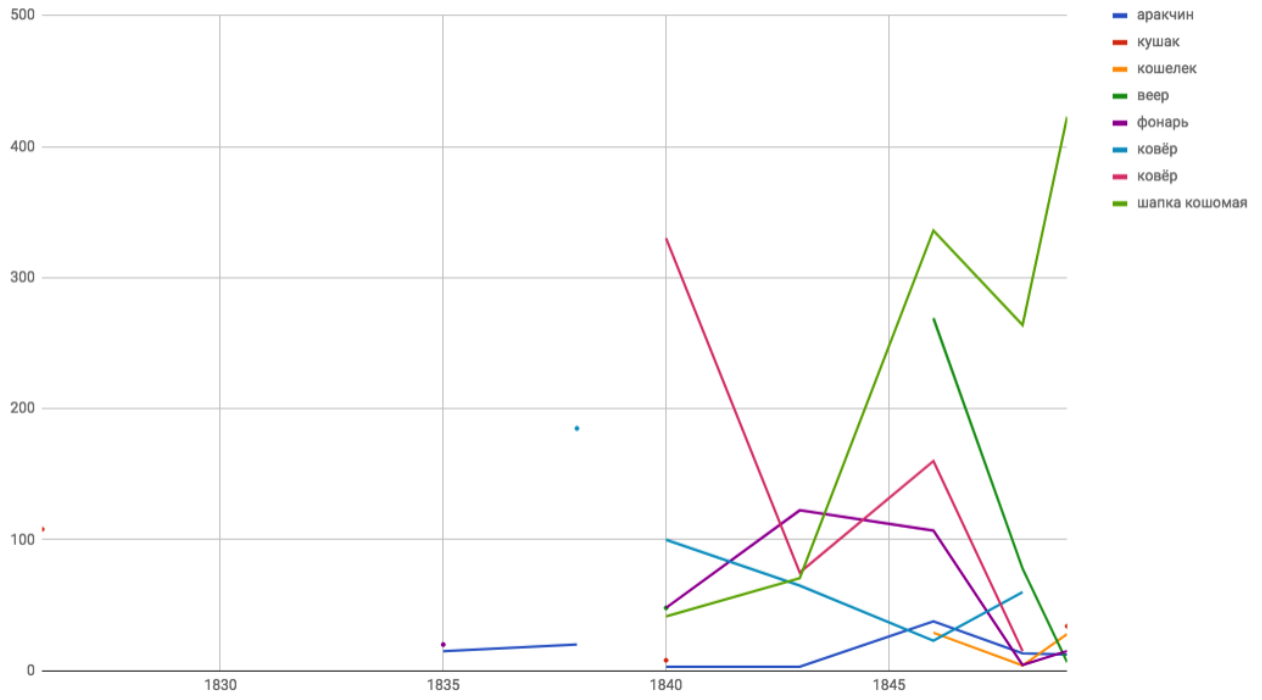


Quantity of textile products 1848



4.2.1b

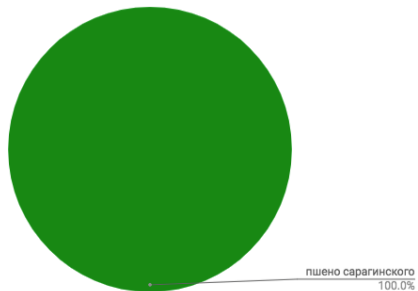
Total value of textile products (excluding pictures and dresses) (ruble)



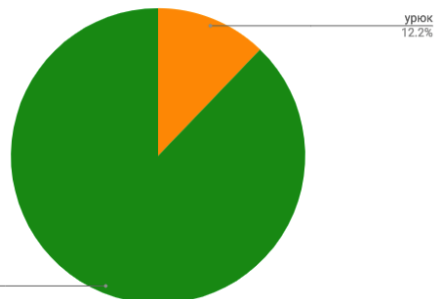
5. Food

5.1.1

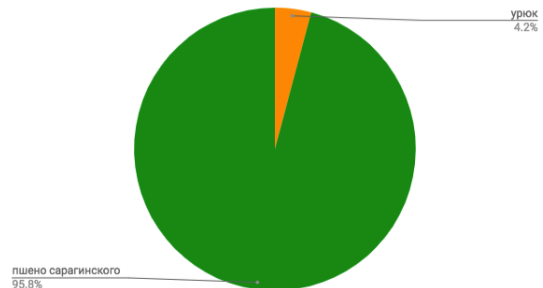
Quantity of food products 1826



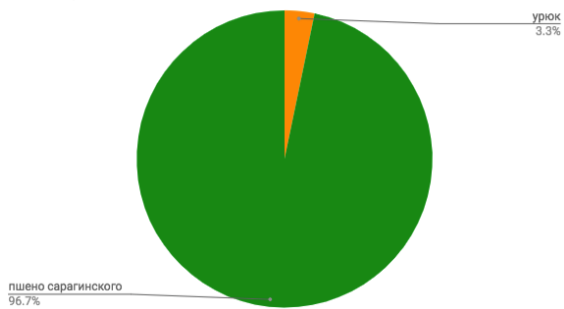
Quantity of food products 1827



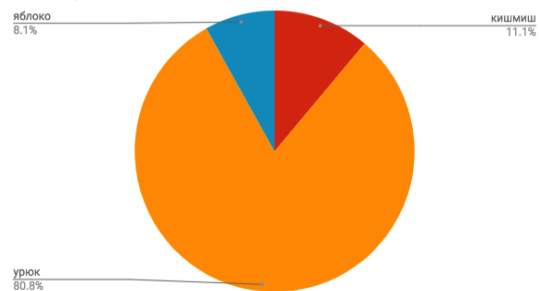
Quantity of food products 1830



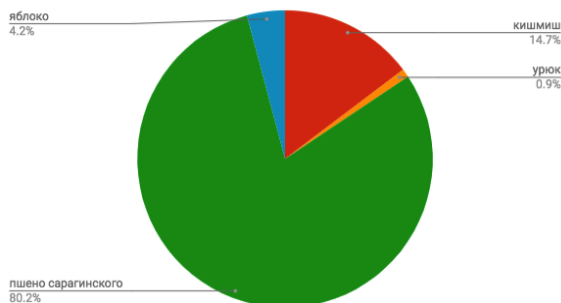
Quantity of food products 1831



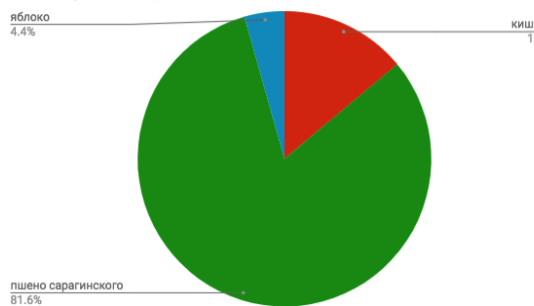
Quantity of food products 1835



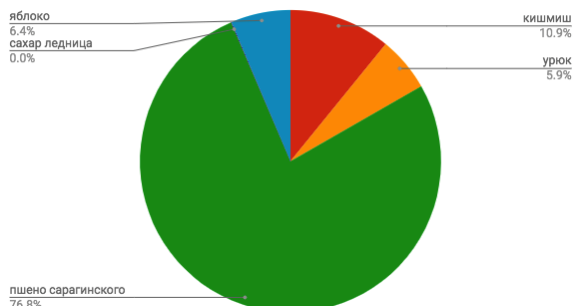
Quantity of food products 1838



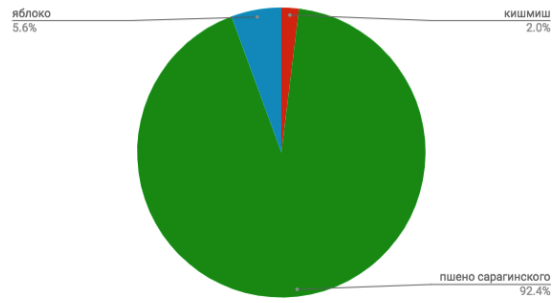
Quantity of food products 1839



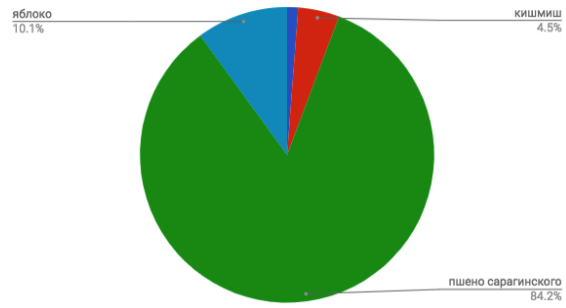
Quantity of food products 1840



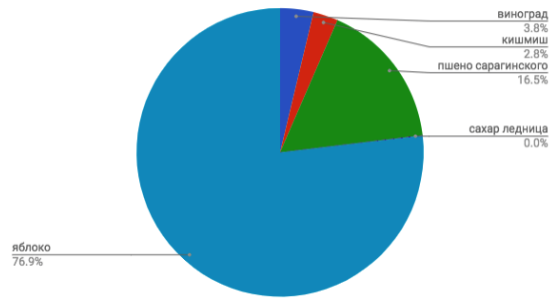
Quantity of food products 1843



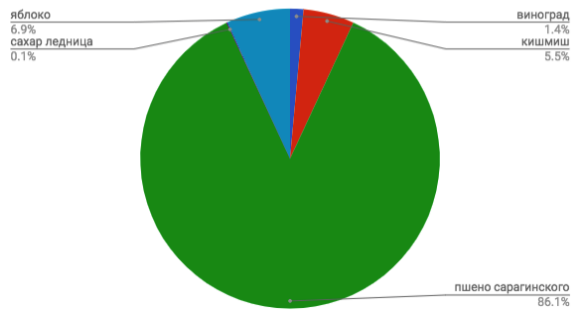
Quantity of food products 1846



Quantity of food products 1848

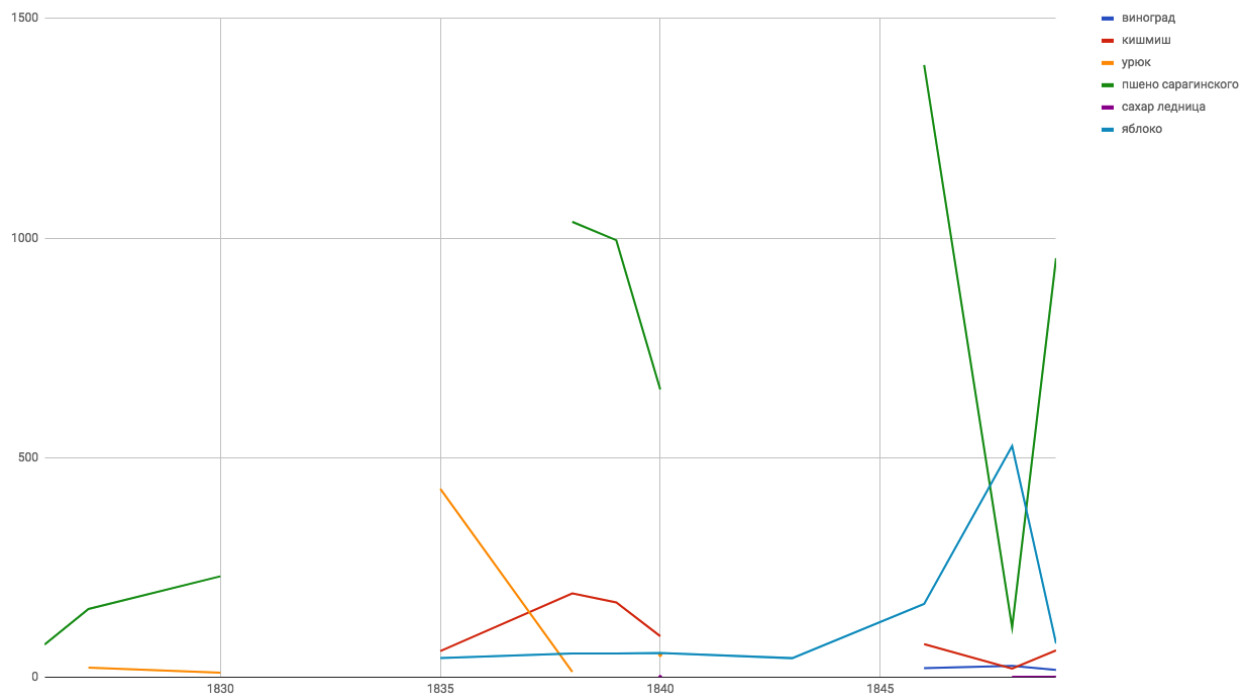


Quantity of food products 1849



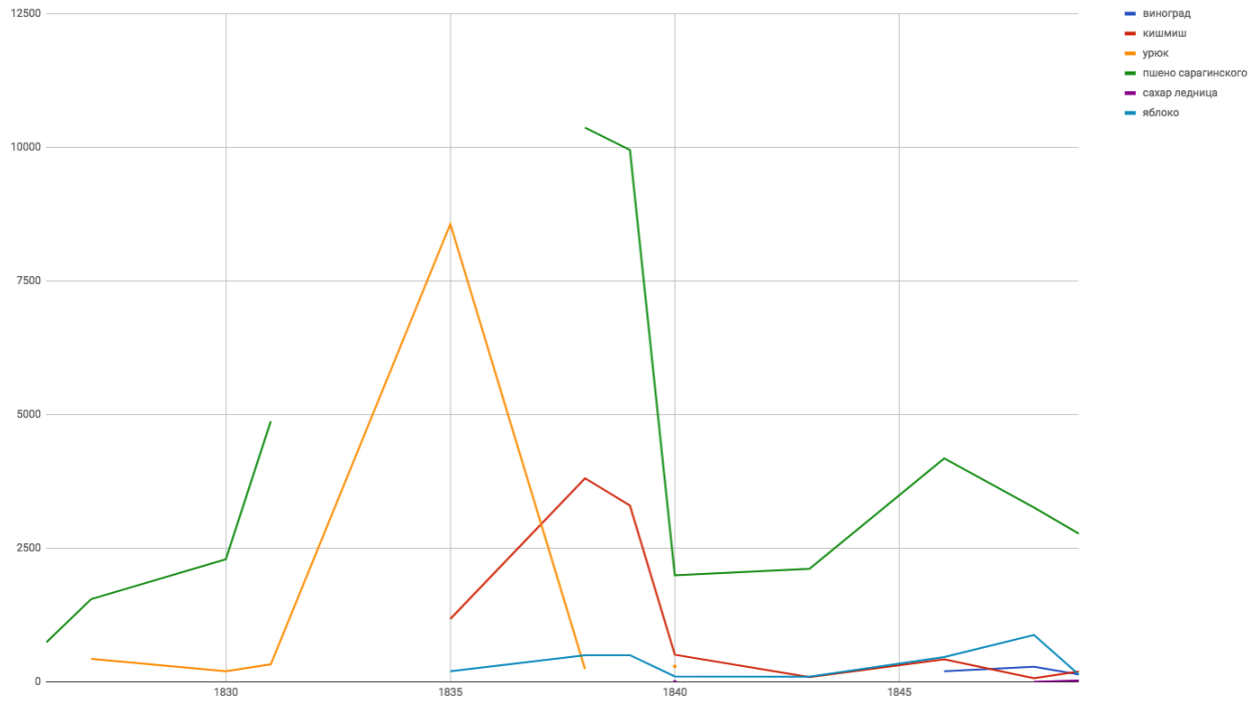
5.1.2

Quantity trend of food products (by pood)



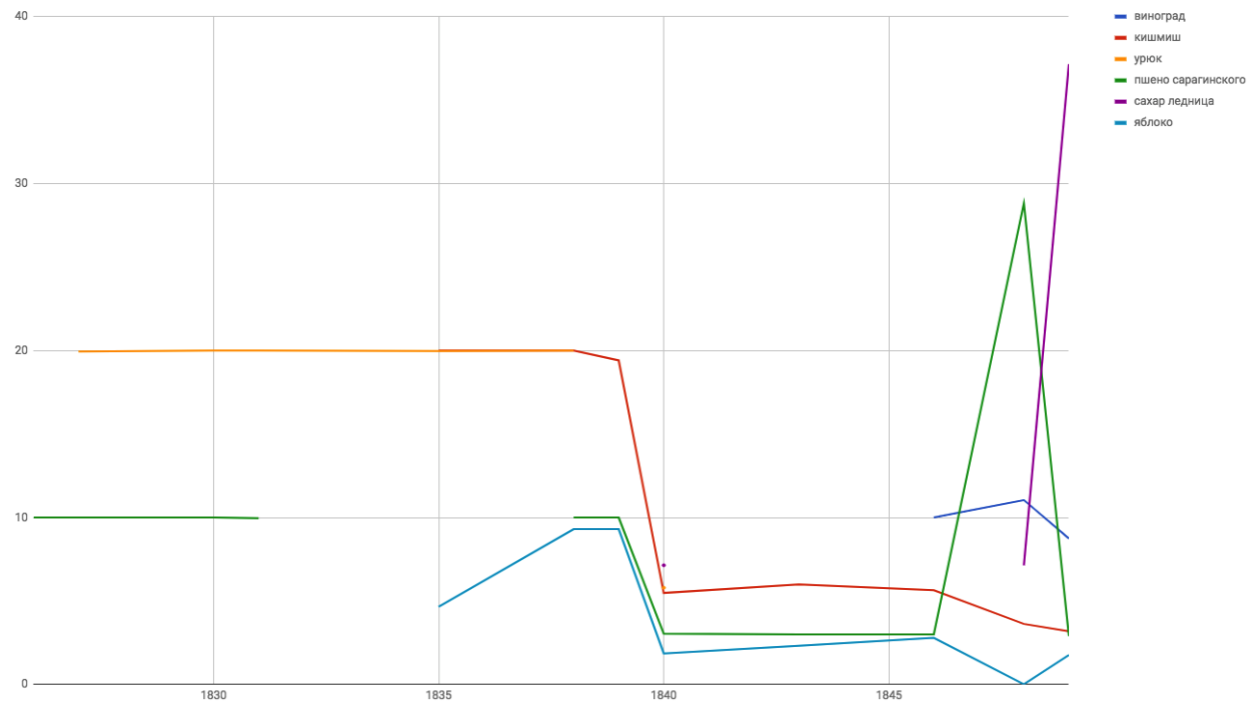
5.2.1

Total value of food products (ruble)



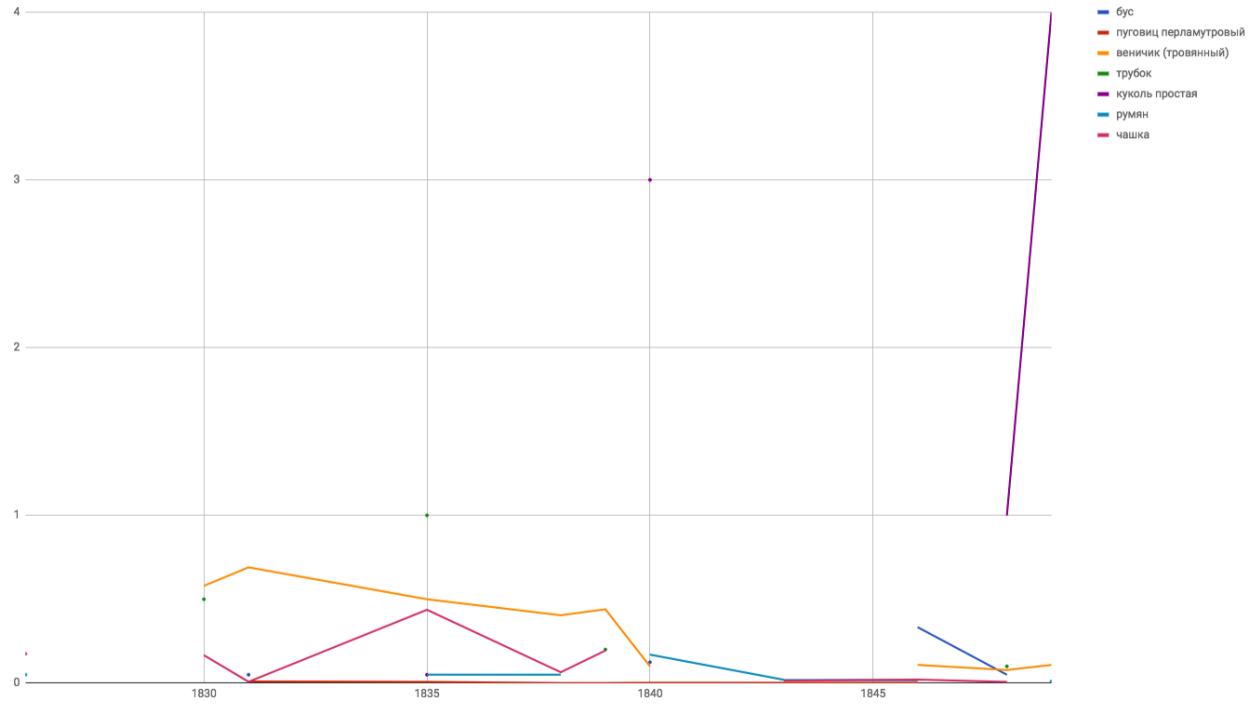
5.2.2

Price of food products (ruble)



6.2.2c

Price of miscellaneous goods (excluding ink, green paint and alum) (ruble)



Woolen products

The woolen products did not follow the pattern of substantial decrease of price in 1840 like most of the other types of commodities in this trade.

Among all the Russian textile exports, linens and woolens played a much bigger role than cottons.¹⁰⁶ According to Gatrell, the most organized branch of textile industry in Russia was woolen industry before 1800. This was due to the high demand for producing uniforms for the army.¹⁰⁷

Bukharan merchants participated in the woolen products trade by purchasing European woolen products made in Poland, England and Russia in either Moscow or Siberia from Muscovite travellers. These woolen materials “ranged from canvas and coarse, undyed cloth, to English cloth and *stamed*, a cross-stitch variety.”¹⁰⁸ Compared with the European counterpart, Russian woolens were often “coarse, heavy fabrics” and lower in price.¹⁰⁹

Among the woolen textiles, the one with the highest quantity was woolen cloth of mediocre quality, followed by *drap de dames*. The quantity of cloth of mediocre quality imported by Tarbagatai and Ili kept declining slightly until 1848 when a sudden rise in quantity took place and remained stable in 1849. (Appendix export 3.1) The price of woolen cloth of mediocre quality and *drap de dames* remained relatively stable throughout the 1840s, and the price of the two types of fabrics started converging in 1846. (Appendix export 3.2.2)

Leather products

Leather products, like most other commodities in this trade, do follow the pattern of a sharp decrease in price in 1840.

Although procuring fur was one of the most important motivations for Russian expansion to the east, by the mid-17th century, the role of fur was gradually becoming smaller due to the depletion of animal populations, and also because *iuft'* started becoming a more popular commodity.¹¹⁰ *Iufts'* are semi-finished leather products. The whole production process usually took 5-6 months.¹¹¹ The hides were usually dyed in black or red, and were produced in almost all Russian towns,¹¹² although Kazan was seen as the center of the production of *iuft'*. *Iufts'* for trade

¹⁰⁶ Foust. 352.

¹⁰⁷ Gatrell. 146.

¹⁰⁸ Burton. 373.

¹⁰⁹ Foust. 352.

¹¹⁰ Erika Monahan. 2016. *The Merchants of Siberia: Trade in Early Modern Eurasia*. Cornell University Press. 88. Cited from Kotilaine, Russia's Foreign Trade, 250

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Foust, 351.

with China were usually produced in Tobol'sk, Tiumen', Tomsk and Irkutsk.¹¹³ Burton further conjectured that the price of *iuft'* was probably higher in Siberia than in Muscovy as the production of *iuft'* only started in Siberia after 1650.¹¹⁴

In the mid-18th century, there were various decrees by the Russian government to control the export of hides and fur. The measure was used to protect the struggling tanning and processing industry of hides and fur. However, these restrictions were only applied to the European market and did not apply to the eastern market.¹¹⁵ This probably reflected the low level of competition that Russian fur and hides experienced in the eastern market. It may also reflect that the need for exchanging eastern goods with fur and hides was strong in Siberia.

According to the data on exports of the Semipalatinsk custom post between 1835 to 1849, leather products were the most important commodity exported by Russia in the Semipalatinsk - Tarbagatai and Ili trade in terms of value. *Iuft'* was virtually the only product traded in the category of leather products after 1835. (Appendix export 2.1) The quantity of *iuft'* exported by Semipalatinsk into China was not stable through the years, but shifted constantly. The price of *iuft'* had been much higher compared with other types of leather products before 1840. (Appendix export 2.2.2) After 1840, the price of *iuft'* dropped to almost the same as other types of leather products, and this new price remained stable. (Appendix export 2.2.2)

Food

The price of food traded from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk also saw a major decrease in the year 1840.

Tarbagatai and Ili were major suppliers of saraginskii millet for Semipalatinsk. Saraginskii millet took up more than 75 percent of all the food exported by Tarbagatai and Ili throughout the period except the year 1848. (Appendix import 5.1.1) Other food products were mostly fruits or fruit products: apples, pears, grapes, and raisins. Rock candy was also exported. Again, the price of all these products dropped in 1840, like the price pattern for many other commodities. However, there was a significant rise of the price of saraginskii millet in 1848 and then a quick decrease of the price to the level in 1846. The price of rock candy also rose considerably in 1849.

Metal

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Burton, 375.

¹¹⁵ Foust, 199-200.

The price of metal traded from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili did decrease, but the change was small compared with that of other types of commodities.

From 1839 to 1849, the one good traded in the highest quantity was wrought iron, followed by cast iron. Iron took up more than 50 percent of all the yearly metal exports in Semipalatinsk from 1839 to 1849. (Appendix export 4.1.1) Besides wrought iron and cast iron, this category also includes copper and tin. The quantity of iron reached its peak in 1840 and then gradually declined until 1848. (Appendix export 4.1.2) The quantity of all the different types of metal started rising since 1848. The total values traded did not follow a certain pattern, (Appendix export 4.2.1) but the price was steady especially since 1840 after a sharp decline in the previous years. (Appendix export 4.2.2)

Drugs (excluding opium here)

Of all the drugs exported via Semipalatinsk, alum was the highest in quantity but was only exported in three years with a sharp decrease of quantity between 1846 and 1849. (Appendix export 7.1.2) Following alum were copperas and pepper. Throughout the period, the quantity traded among all the types grew and became more and more diverse. The total values traded, however, decreased substantially since 1840. (Appendix export 7.2.1b) Sarsaparilla root and pepper were the most expensive products among all of the goods in this category, though the price of both of the products shifted substantially throughout the period. (Appendix export 7.2.2b)

Teaware

Tea cups made up the bulk of all the tableware exported from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili. The quantity reached its peak in 1838, then dropped but gradually rose again. (Appendix export 8.1). The items with the highest total value were kettles, (Appendix export 8.2.1) but the good in this category with the highest price was teaware set. (Appendix export 8.2.2). The values of the three types of dishware follow the same pattern.

Products made of textiles

_____The products made of textiles imported from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk include belts, dresses, *taqiyah*,¹¹⁶lanterns, pictures, carpets, fur hats and fans. None of the above commodities dominate the category throughout the period. *Taqiyah* dominated in 1835 and 1839, followed by pictures in 1839, 1840 and 1843, and then fur hats in 1843, 1846, 1848 and 1849.

¹¹⁶ skullcaps

However, there was a trend that the types of commodities were becoming more and more diverse during the period from the 1820s to the 1840s. (Appendix import 4.1.1)

Miscellaneous (from Semipalatinsk to Tarbagatai and Ili)

Most of the commodities in this category seem to follow two patterns regarding the change of quantity. There are two critical points when most of the commodities shifted from increasing to decreasing: the years 1843 and 1846. Lacquer trays made up the highest total values among all the goods in this category, (Appendix export 9.2.1a) but the good with the highest price was coral. (Appendix export 9.2.2a) After coral, the goods with the highest price were music boxes, tables and wall clocks. Most of the goods in this category followed a steady change of price except books in Tatar language and music boxes.

Miscellaneous (from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk)

Unlike the miscellaneous goods exported by Semipalatinsk into Tarbagatai and Ili which consist of many manufactured goods, the exports of miscellaneous goods from Tarbagatai and Ili to Semipalatinsk included beads, pearl buttons, whisks, tubes, cockles, rouge, alum, ink, green paint, matches, vases and tea cups. (Appendix import 6)
