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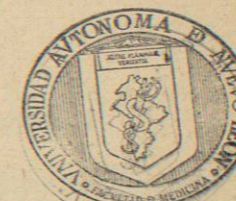
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# ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA.

## BOKHARA

**BOKHARA**, **BUKHARA**, or **BUKHARIA**, a country and khanate of Central Asia, in Turkistan or Independent Tartary, lying between lat. 37° and 41° N., and long. 62° and 69° E. Its extent has been greatly diminished during recent years both on the N. and S.,—in the former direction by the conquests of Russia, and in the latter by the encroachments of Afghanistan. A considerable stretch of country, including the important towns of Balkh, Andkhoy, and Meimene, was at various times regarded as an integral part of the khanate; but at present the River Oxus forms for the most part its southern boundary. To the W. it is conterminous with the khanate of Khiva and the desert of Kharezmi, which now form part of the Russian empire; and on the E. it stretches to the khanates of Kunduz and Khokand. Its area is estimated at 100,000 square miles. A large part of the western half of the land consists of a desolate steppe of argillaceous clay, broken by hills of slate and bare granite rocks; the eastern parts are occupied by offshoots of the Hindu-Koh and Tien-shan ranges, and the Pamir steppe. The cultivated land is confined almost entirely to the immediate neighbourhood of the rivers, of which the most important are the Amu or Oxus, the Zer-Affshan, and the Karshee. The Amu (Jihon or Kohik), which only belongs to the khanate in the middle part of its course, flows from S.E. to N.W., and varies in width from 300 to upwards of 800 yards. The Zer-Affshan, inferior to the Amu in the volume of its waters, and superior to it in the populousness and cultivation of its banks, rises in the high lands east of Samarkand, and, passing north of that city and of Bokhara, forms a lake in the province of Karakul about 25 miles in length. Its whole course is about 340 miles. The Karshee rises in the mountains to the S.E. of Samarkand, and passes through Shehr-Sebz and Karshee, below which it is lost in the desert.

There are no gold mines in Bokhara, but that metal is found among the sands of the Oxus in greater abundance, perhaps, than in any of the other rivers which flow from the Hindu-Koh. The climate of Bokhara is exposed to great variations. In summer the heat is often very great, and in winter the cold is proportionally severe. The frosts commence about the end of November, and continue till towards the end of April. The Amu is generally frozen over for some weeks in winter so as to be passable for

caravans. In the desert the heat in summer exceeds 100° Fahr. Thunder-storms and earthquakes are not unfrequent, especially in the spring; and there are sometimes violent tornadoes, generally blowing from the N.W.

The population of Bokhara, composed of Tadjiks, Inhab. Arabs, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Persians, Mervi, and Jews, may be estimated at between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000. Me-yendorff estimates it at 2,478,000, Khanikoff at from 2,000,000 to 2,500,000, Burnes at less than 1,000,000, and Wolff at 1,200,000. The Tadjiks are the aborigines of the country, and are said to have come from the west, and settled on the banks of the Zer-Affshan at a time when the country was uninhabited, and a jungle of reeds covered the place where the town of Bokhara now stands. Except in the town of Bokhara, where they constitute the majority of the population, there are few Tadjiks now in the khanate. They are mostly engaged in commerce, are peaceful or even cowardly in their disposition, and are characterized by avarice, faithlessness, and deceit. They are usually tall, with handsome and regular features, fair complexion, and black eyes and hair. The number of Arabs, though not considerable, exceeds that of the Tadjiks. They are the descendants of the followers of Kutribe, who conquered the country about the beginning of the 8th century, and compelled the inhabitants to adopt the Mahometan faith. Their numbers are stated at 60,000, and they inhabit the northern part of the khanate, especially the neighbourhood of Vardanzi and Vafkend. Like their ancestors they still continue to lead a wandering life, their chief occupation being the tending of their flocks. Their moral qualities seem to be of a higher character than those of the Tadjiks. The Uzbeks, the last people that conquered this country, are the most numerous, and are at present the dominant race. They are divided into a number of tribes, of which the principal is that of Manghit. To it the reigning dynasty belongs. Some of the Uzbeks are nomadic in their habits, others are engaged in agriculture or live in towns. They are more bold and straightforward in their manners than the Tadjiks, but have unfortunately degenerated from contact with that race. There are a considerable number of Persians in Bokhara, most of whom have been brought as slaves from their native country. They are readily distinguished by the regularity of their features, and their bushy black

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