

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE POPULATION DURING THE QARAKHANI PERIOD

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Abstract: The article discusses the social life of the Karakhanid period, the lifestyle of the population, and their professions and positions. The number of sources providing information about the Karakhanid period is very small, which makes it difficult to obtain information about the social strata of the population of that period.

Keywords: Turkic tribes, "Turkic factor" and "Turkic element", "gatehouse", "Kutadgu bilig", black people, Alawites, scholars, dream interpreters, astronomers and astrologers, farmers, merchants, herders and the poor

Introduction. The Karakhanid state covered a vast territory from the Karakum Desert in the west to Lake Lobnor in the east, and from Lake Balkhash in the north to the Amu Darya in the south. The ethnic composition of the population was also complex, with some speaking Turkic, others Persian and Arabic. In addition, their social life was not uniform. The geographical conditions, economic foundations, and laws of the places where they lived were different.

During the reign of the Karakhanids, migration processes in Turkestan intensified significantly. Many Turkic tribes, previously engaged in cattle breeding and included in the tribal union called the Uyghurs, migrated from the pastures in and around the foothills of the Yettisuv, Tangritog and Altai mountains to the cities and agricultural regions of Turkestan. Therefore, a transition from cattle breeding to agriculture was observed among them. As a result, a new form of ownership entered the social life of these tribes.

This change was directly related not only to the availability of areas suitable for farming, but also to the improvement of their social standard of living. During their stay in the Seven Seas, the production relations and way of life based on farming in the south penetrated every sphere of the social life of these tribes. The Turkic tribes living in the west of the Pamirs were attracted, first of all, by the advantages inherent in farming. In particular, the immigrants were interested in important agricultural products, a sedentary and luxurious lifestyle, and a comfortable environment. These aspects influenced the thinking, mentality, and customs of the Turkic tribes [4:77-78].

Main part. The Karakhanids' nomadic Turkic origins, their occupation of many cities, and their important position in trade between China and the rest of the Islamic world led to the establishment of several cities in the region's mountain ranges. These high-altitude cities flourished above the lowland farming zones during the early decades of Karakhanid Islamization and geographic expansion. In 2011, the archaeological

remains of the city of Tashbulak in the Malguzar Mountains of eastern Uzbekistan were excavated. Founded in the late 19th century, it flourished under the Karakhanids in the early 11th century.

The presence of Muslim tombs suggests that the city was founded after the Karakhanids converted to Islam. The city's inhabitants were engaged in sheep and cattle breeding. The city is a previously unknown example of a highland urban center built by nomads. It served to integrate the nomad population into the political structures and economic life of the empire. Initial fieldwork in 2015 identified another large walled highland Karakhanid city at Turgunbulak, just 3 km from Tashbulak. Surface finds of pottery similar to those found at Tashbulak and the remains of large fortified towers were found here. The existence of cities such as Tashbulak suggests that the political and industrial foundations of the Karakhanids originated both in lowland urban administrative centers and in mountain pastoral communities. There was a significant expansion of urban development throughout the region. This situation coincided with the Islamization of these lands and the expansion of the territory under Karakhanid control in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. This process extended far beyond the major Samanid urban centers and was part of the semi-sedentary process of the region's numerous nomadic peoples [10:284].

Part of the population of the cities was engaged in animal husbandry. Another part was engaged in metallurgy, including the production of iron, steel, copper, bronze and silver products. From the end of the 10th century to the 11th century, merchants and artisans traded along the Silk Road, which covered the territory from Ustrushana (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) to the Aral Sea and Bukhara. Archaeological excavations in the cities ruled by the Karakhanids have yielded numismatic evidence, a wide range of exotic fruits and nuts. This, in turn, testifies to the mutual economic influence of the mountain and foothill cities on each other. Although high-mountain urbanism is not well known for the nomadic peoples of this period, the Karakhanids, after adopting Islam, established central cities in the mountainous regions. They used them to control trade, the production of iron and other metals. The integration of nomadic populations into a broader economic network and transcontinental trade network during the Karakhanid period undoubtedly contributed to the strengthening of their economic and cultural development throughout the region [9:303].

From a socio-cultural point of view, in the Middle Ages, the influence of crafts on society, social relations, social institutions, the cultural potential of the masses and public consciousness was extremely wide. During the Karakhanid period, settlements in Turkestan were almost always located in oases-cities surrounded by mountains, steppes and deserts. The place where urban craftsmen worked was the main trading center where

the products of both the settled population and nomads were sold. With the strengthening of the Karakhanid power, the unification of vast territories from East Turkestan to Khorezm ensured the security of internal and international trade routes and formed a common economic environment. With the mass settlement of Turkic peoples in cities, the integration of images of steppe culture into urban art and crafts was observed. Nomads remained faithful to the ancient "steppe" artistic traditions (patterns and techniques of "animal style", realistic animal images, pottery, totem elements in jewelry, etc.). Although ethnocultural characteristics left a certain mark on crafts, the previous artistic ideals, tastes, and standards in the work of urban craftsmen did not undergo such significant changes. Sedentary life and steppe craft culture continued in parallel.

The pottery of the Karakhanid period reflects the tolerance and openness of the Turkic peoples. They adopted the professional skills and religious motifs of the settled peoples of Turkestan. Although the ornaments and forms of bronze, copper, and ceramic objects were universal, some samples showed local, ethno-cultural features. Despite the adoption of Islam and settled culture, the nomadic peoples managed to preserve their Turkic-steppe traditions. They even brought the "Turkic factor" and "Turkic element" to the forefront in crafts and art. This is clearly seen in the widespread use of unglazed ceramic vessels, known as "gray pottery", similar to Bronze Age vessels in the cities of Turkestan. Vessels decorated with zoomorphic images and handles are associated with ancient Turkic traditions. Thus, nomadic "steppe" patterns entered the artisan style. Although ethno-cultural characteristics left their mark on artisanal works, urban masters continued to use the previous artistic ideals, tastes, and standards without significant changes [11:88].

During archaeological excavations at the Afrosiab settlement, dwellings dating back to the 11th-12th centuries were discovered. This allows us to determine the characteristics of the houses of different social strata of society, namely artisans, small merchants, urban Sogdians, and lower-class officials. When describing the settlements according to ethnographic characteristics, it can be assumed that the "gatehouse" served as an entrance gate or a structure at the gate. According to researchers, "in order to respect the traditions of the population and not disturb the family, until recently, the tradition of building a separate room at the entrance to the house for receiving strangers, especially male strangers, continued. From this room, one could enter the courtyard where the summer kitchen of the house was located. In the northeastern side of the courtyard, instead of a sofa, there was a "peshavon" - a closed porch. This type of house allows us to determine some features of the relief and social structure of Afrosiab in the 11th-12th centuries. The northeastern part of these settlements, after being abandoned for a long time after the 8th century, was repopulated in the second half of the 12th century. The

small area of the houses indicates that land for building houses was at a high price during this period. Since there are no traces of any production activity, it can be noted that this type of house belonged to an ordinary city dweller, a small merchant or a low-ranking official [4:75].

Discussion and conclusions. The number of sources providing information about the social life of the Karakhanid period is very small, which makes it difficult to obtain complete information about the social strata of the population of that period. Therefore, Yusuf Khos Hajib's work "Kutadgu Bilig" is among the few sources that we can rely on. In this work, the author cites the social strata that existed in his time as follows:

1. **The common people.** The common people are far from morals, simple and straightforward. Despite their lack of discipline and decency in dealing with other categories of people, they still have their place in society and are a necessary stratum. Yusuf Khos Hajib emphasizes that since this stratum is economically helpless, it spends most of its life worrying about feeding its stomach [5:647].

2. **Descendants of the Prophet (Alawites).** It is clear that by the time of the Karakhanids, this class had gained special respect among the rulers. Yusuf Khos Hajib teaches that rulers should treat this class with kindness and courtesy, and that they should be shown special respect and honor because they were descendants of the Prophet.

3. **Scholars. Scholars** are those who distinguish between right and wrong and guide people to the right path. This group is a beacon of knowledge for the common people. Therefore, they are required to be respected and honored, just like the descendants of the Prophet [6:356-357].

During the Karakhanid period, we can see a mass movement of scholars living and working in the eastern regions to the west. The relocation of his capital to Samarkand by Ibrahim Tamgach Khan in 1040 was an important event. From this time on, the main aspects of the Karakhanid policy towards local scholars are manifested. One of its features was the attraction of theologians from the eastern regions, far from Turkestan, to official positions within the Karakhanid state. These scholars acted in agreement with the Karakhanids. For example, when Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abul Qasim al-Lamishiy (d. 1128, Samarkand; originally from the village of Lamish in Fergana) who arrived as part of the embassy in Baghdad in 1122, was invited to perform the hajj, he refused to fulfill it, citing the khan's instructions. The army was kept away from the local population. Separate military judges - qazi askars - were appointed for the military. A qazi askar named Abu Hafs Umar ibn Shuayb ibn Abul Qasim as-Sarram ad-Dizaki (d. 1131) worked in Samarkand [3:490].

The activities of this group of scholars show a cautious attitude towards local Samarkand scholars. For example, after the death of Qazi Ahmad ibn Mansur Isfijobi (d. 1088), a whole chest was found containing fatwas in which the Samarkand muftis pointed out their mistakes and offered them the right solutions. However, the deceased did not dare to make them public during his lifetime [2:201].

Discussion of an issue often lasted several days and sometimes even caused a wide public resonance. In Samarkand, during the reign of Abul Yusr Pazdavi, the discussion of the issue of alcohol took on a political character due to influential figures interested in its solution. The jurist was forced to leave the city, despite the personal support of the ruler [1:119a, 151a].

He was executed in Samarkand in 1161 for demanding greater rights for Muslims and scholars under the Kara-Khitans [2:203].

4. **Doctors.** The inevitability of any living person suffering from some disease in their life makes doctors a particularly important stratum in society. Considering that ensuring the stability of society is achieved through the treatment of various ailments and mental illnesses, and in addition, the fact that the doctor was the highest paid person in the hospital built in Samarkand by the Karakhanid ruler Ibrahim Tamgach Khan, it becomes clear why doctors were considered a special class worthy of respect during the Karakhanid era.

5. **Sorcerers.** Occultists formed a separate class during the Karakhanid period. One of them was the sorcerers, who, according to Yusuf Khos Hajib, were engaged in the treatment of human diseases. However, since sorcery was not a divine science, doctors did not believe in their various prayers. Similarly, sorcerers did not recognize doctors [7:375].

6. **Dream Interpreters.** Another occult scholar who formed a separate social stratum were dream interpreters, whose reputation and importance were linked to the fact that every person has dreams while sleeping and that these dreams, if interpreted correctly, can come true.

7. **Astrologers (astronomers and astrologers).** The importance of calculating the year, month, and day in society ensured that astronomers were also distinguished as a separate class. It is noteworthy that Yusuf Khos Hajib included astrologers in this class under the general name of "astrologers". Since it was believed that the movement of the stars was not limited to calendar calculations, but also had a positive or negative impact on human life, astrologers were also recognized as a class with a high status.

8. **Poets.** Poets enjoyed great prestige and influence among the people during the Karakhanid period. The praise of those they praised spread among the people, and

the reputation of those they disparaged was damaged. Having such great influence among the people made them a separate social stratum.

9. **Peasants. In the Middle Ages, the material well-being** and prosperity of any state were undoubtedly primarily associated with the activities of peasants. As in all eras and in all states, peasants were considered a separate social stratum during the Karakhanid period [8:330-331].

10. **Merchants.** Merchants were not only people who conducted trade relations with different countries, but also a category that disseminated various news about what was happening in the world.

11. **Cattlemen.** The Karakhanids originated from the nomadic Karluk tribe, which was mainly engaged in cattle breeding. Cattle breeding continued to play an important role in the life of nomadic tribes in later periods. Therefore, cattle breeders were also considered a separate social stratum [5:663-666].

12. **Artisans.** The activities of all 11 strata listed above are undoubtedly related to artisans. It was artisans who were considered the category that produced the tools of labor of representatives of these strata.

13. **The poor.** The difference between the poor and the black common people is most likely that they are a relatively civilized class, unlike the black people, and do not live only on the basis of their own needs [6:367].

From the above considerations, it is clear that the minister has a structural-functional view of society, in modern terms, of the Radcliffe-Brown type. According to him, the social structure of society is composed of various groups or classes, whose place in this society is determined mainly by specific professional roles. The function of each class or structural component is its contribution to the harmony and preservation of the overall social system. All strata, even the common people, are necessary elements of the social system. Social integration is based on the specific, but complementary characteristics and functions of each. During this period, the ruler's palace was considered the most superior institution of the social system. While the various social strata provided food, clothing, intellectual enlightenment, spiritual comfort, etc., the ruler's palace ensured internal and external security by controlling and coordinating the functions of the entire society and protecting it from external aggression [12:232-238].

Conclusion. Each stratum, along with performing certain functions for the well-being of society, enjoys a certain set of rights and requirements that the ruling institution must recognize. One of the main tasks of the ruling palace is to protect rights and implement these requirements. Among them are the right to fair and honest treatment, the right to receive good and prompt payment for work performed, the right to be treated humanely, the right to be treated in a manner appropriate to one's stratum, and most

importantly, the right not to be in a materially helpless situation and to enjoy all the basic necessities of life. It is this last right that serves as the basis for peace and security within the state.

The ruler gains the respect of the people by recognizing and enforcing these rights. Successful governance requires the establishment and maintenance of a complex set of social relationships. This requires a good understanding of the nature of the people with whom one deals. Such understanding can only be achieved through knowledge.

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