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ETHNOCULTURAL PROCESSES IN SAMARKAND REGION (IX-X CENTURIES)

Abstract: This article examines the ethnic and cultural aspects of the development of the Samarkand region, including the city of Samarkand, as well as the ethnic processes of this region in the 9th-10th centuries.

Key words: Samarkand, city, Sogdiana, Maverannahr, Zeravshan valley, ethnic history, ethno-civilization processes, Uzbeks, Tajiks, nomadic and semi-nomadic population.

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Introduction

The city of Samarkand, known as the pearl on earth, is one of the oldest centers of world civilization, which made a significant contribution to the development of world culture. Not only Uzbeks, but all the peoples of Central Asia are rightfully proud of the city of Samarkand, which was the largest political, economic and cultural center of its time and which has an ancient history.

IX-X centuries constitute a significant period in the history of Maverannahr, including the Samarkand region and the city. During this period, Sogd (Sogdiana) was considered one of the most economically and culturally developed territories of Maverannahr. Sources say: "Sogd is a historical region located in the upper and middle reaches of the Zeravshan River (up to Bukhara). Its length from east to west, according to Arab geographers, was 36 farsahs (1 farsahs - 6-9 km). According to the famous traveler and geographer, Abu Is`hak Ibrahim Istahri (850-934), the center of Samarkand was Sogd, which could be bypassed in 8 days [14; 274].

METHODS

Before the Arab conquest, Sogd was a state that included the Zeravshan oasis (with the exception of

the Bukhara oasis) and the Kashkadarya oasis, and was ruled by Ikhshid (king) in the capital of Samarkand. At the time of the encyclopedic scientist Abu Raikhan Biruni (973-1048), only the Zeravshan Valley was called Sogd. According to the scientist, in the fifth climatic region of the Sugd region, the cities of Karmana (Karminiya), Dobusiya, Kushaniya, Isbanjan, Arbinjan, Nasaf (Nakhshab), Kash (Kesh), Samarkand are mentioned [1; 424].

Hamdulla Kazvini (1281-1350) also wrote: "Sogd is the most beautiful place in the world, an 8-day road from Bukhara to Samarkand and gardens along the river. People are very hospitable and kind, there are about 20 thousand villages and fortresses in the country" [11; 99].

The further flourishing of this country took place under the Samanids, who came to power in the first half of the 9th century. Because the leaders of this dynasty took an active part in the economic and cultural development of the country and the stability of Islam in the Zeravshan oasis. Naturally, the working people played a decisive role in the development of the region. The presence of the Zarafshan River in the oasis, as well as large and small canals and ditches that take water from it, is also an

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important factor in the overall development of Sogdiana. Thanks to this irrigation system, all crops and orchards in the oasis were irrigated. The Sogdian oasis was famous for its fertile lands and was densely populated. Sources describe Samarkand as “heaven on earth”. There were coal mines in all cities and villages of the Sogd region [5; 105].

In the foothills of the Zarafshan River (middle and upper reaches of the Zarafshan River), there were fertile arable lands on which the population grew wheat, barley and other cereals. Most of the products of these crops were sold in the markets. As in the provinces of Maverannahr and Khorasan, agriculture in the Zeravshan Valley was highly developed. Crops such as wheat, barley, rice, cotton, sesame, millet, flax, hemp, peas, and alfalfa were grown. The yield was so high that by sowing a handful of grain, hundreds of handfuls or more were harvested.

Success has been achieved in areas such as horticulture, especially viticulture and horticulture. Dozens of varieties of grapes, fruits, peaches, apricots, pears, figs, quince, cherries, plums, pomegranates, almonds, walnuts, melons, zucchini, watermelons, cucumbers, eggplants, carrots and onions were grown. Foreign tourist historians (for example, Istahri, Ibn Hawqal) were amazed by their industriousness in agriculture, fertility of the land, high productivity [2; 97].

Cattle, horses, mules, sheep and goats grazed in the green pastures in the foothills of the oasis. Nomadic and semi-sedentary pastoralists (Turkic peoples) lived in the desert areas, who also were engaged in sheep breeding, goat breeding, camel breeding, and horse breeding. The sedentary population of the oasis (the ancestors of the Uzbeks and Tajiks) lived in cooperation with the shepherds and sold or exchanged their goods in the market. This partnership has also greatly contributed to the economic and cultural growth of the oasis.

Its geographical position also played an important role in the development of Sogdiana. Due to the fact that the large cities and villages of the oasis are located at the crossroads of the main trade ring - the Great Silk Road, the inhabitants of the region have established extensive cooperation with a number of leading countries.

With the help of this important means of communication, many goods that are in demand in different countries were delivered to Maverannahr. The best agricultural, livestock and handicraft products were also sold abroad. The sedentary population of the oasis - a certain part of the Sogdians - was engaged in trade and traveled in caravans to Afghanistan, India, Iran and other countries of Central Asia, through East Turkestan to China.

Local merchants also sincerely served the development of the oasis and made a significant contribution to its all-round development. For this reason, Sogdiana became one of the most promising

countries of the Middle Ages, which played a significant role in the ethno cultural development of the peoples of Central Asia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Sources claim that Sogdiana was divided into two regions: the first is the middle and lower part of the Zeravshan Valley, called the Samarkand region. Samarkand Sogdian land from Yaylyak to Bukhara surrounded by gardens and fields. The part of Samarkand Sogd, located in Miyonkol, was called Nimsugd (half-sogd) or Sugdi Khurd (small Sogd); the second included the lower reaches of the Zarafshan (Karmana and its consequences) river, called the Bukhara region, and the Nurata region [14; 424].

Ethno-cultural processes that took place in the Samarkand region in the 9th-10th centuries, and the history of the city of Samarkand during this period are unique. It is known that the struggle against the invasion of the Arab Caliphate ended with the formation of the Samanid state, and the city of Samarkand has been the capital of the region since the 20s of the 9th century. In the second half of the ninth century, in 875, during the reign of Ismail ibn Ahmad Somoni (847-907), the capital was moved to Bukhara, but Samarkand remained the leading economic, trade and cultural center of Maverannahr. The famous historian Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Jafar Narshahi (899-959) named the city Samar in Arabic and Samarkand in Persian [6; 29], Abu Raikhan Beruni noted that in Turkish Samarkand was the city of the sun [1; 424].

Medieval authors Yakut Hamavi (born 1179), Hamdulla Kazvini (1281-1350), Rashiddin (XIII century) and others noted that such a beautiful and rich city as Samarkand, the administrative center of the Sughd region, did not exist in the world. There were many dwellings between the outer and inner walls of the city. The city had four gates through which water was supplied through a lead pipe. The city was surrounded by so many gardens that even the buildings on top of the cliff were hard to see. The sources mention the gates of Samarkand, such as Babdoston, Bobkohak, Bobtok, Namazgokh, as well as mahallas in Ushtabazi (Ushta-Babiyzak), Bamjakhin, Chokardiza, Zarimash, Sanjaduza, Gadavad, Farazmisan, Vagonvaravara, Fagonvara [5; 108].

In the second half of the 9th - the first half of the 10th century, the standard of living of the population of Samarkand, the center of Sogdiana, significantly improved, and the urban area in ruins also increased. The city developed handicrafts, trade and construction of irrigation facilities. In the city, a suspended pipe (nova) - the aqueduct was built of baked bricks, the bottom of which was covered with lead. This Zhuyi Arzis ("Lead Ditch") in the IX-XII centuries supplied the whole of Samarkand with water. The famous

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geographer Ibrahim Abulkasim ibn Hawqal (10th century), who was in Samarkand between 960-970, wrote about this in detail.

Crafts for cotton, silk, wool, various fabrics, ready-made clothes also met the needs of the oasis population. Samarkand city was the leader in paper production in the Middle and Middle East. As Istahri writes: "Nowhere in the world you will find such paper as Samarkand" [2; 98].

The city also developed dozens of crafts, such as glass making, ceramics, carpet weaving, hemp spinning, weapons making, blacksmithing, sesame and linseed oil production. From the second half of the VIII to the X century, the city of Samarkand provided the entire Arab Caliphate with paper. Samarkand paper was only equal in quality to Chinese paper. This quality paper even completely replaced papyrus and parchment from the Muslim world.

The merchants sought primarily to meet the needs of the local population. Many markets were built, gardens and shops specialized in a certain direction. Wholesale trade was encouraged in central markets. According to sources, "Samarkand is the Maverannahr market, from where the merchants come. The produced most of the products of Maverannahr are first delivered to Samarkand, and then from there to other regions". Deposits of gold, copper, lead, mercury and marble of that time were found in the Nurata Mountains.

The first silver coins of the Samanids were minted in Samarkand in 887, probably even earlier [12; 146]. Mostly gold Ismaili coins and Muhammadi dirhams were in circulation. In this regard, the information of Istakhri is noteworthy: «Gold (coins) and Ismaili dirhams are in circulation in Samarkand. There is another currency in circulation, which is called Muhammadi and is not used anywhere except Samarkand» [2; 99].

During the Karakhanid period (XI-XII centuries), the city of Samarkand expanded, the city center stretched to the south and southeast, it was almost inhabited by potters and artisans, the aristocracy settled in new place [12; 149-150]. In 1066, Karakhanid Ibrahim ibn Nasr presented (waqf) to the hospital in Samarkand two caravanserais with all the buildings and equipment. The proceeds from these two caravanserais were used to pay for food, medicine, and wages for all types of serving doctors. Ibrahim ibn Nasr also paid for the reconstruction of a madrasah complex with three hotels, a caravanserai, a men's bathhouse, a water separator, a vineyard and various arable lands, among others [2; 211].

The famous researcher of the history of the Great Silk Road, British scientist Susan Voightfield in the book "Life on the Great Silk Road" (2004), devoted to the study of political, economic and cultural monuments of the eastern part of the trade route from 750 to 1000 years, sets out the following: "The circumference of Samarkand is 500 miles. The capital

and completely surrounded, the territory consists of hills and ridges, and its population is countless. Valuable goods of many foreign countries are stored here. The land is rich and fertile, and a bountiful harvest is gathered during the harvest. The beauty of the trees in the forest is pleasing to the eye, there are many flowers and fruits. Breeding horses are bred here. The entrepreneurial spirit of the population is especially evident in the arts and trade with other countries. The climate is temperate, people are young and energetic" [9; 24]. It is also noted that the Chinese tourist Eluy Chu-Tsai, who visited Samarkand in 1218, wrote a poem in honor of the improvement of the city [5; 108].

The city of Samarkand, as mentioned above, consisted of several districts and mahallas (guzars). Considered one of the potential cities of its time, in the 10th century about 100-110 thousand people lived in this city [4; 266]. Around the city there were many irrigated lands, canals and ditches, villages and fortresses. Most of the villages were located on the edge of irrigation canals. According to Ibn Hauqal, it is difficult to find a plot in Sogd that is not located along the canal, cultivated, not engaged in agriculture, was not densely populated, did not have magnificent palaces and strong, prosperous buildings.

There are 12 rustaks (districts) in the Samarkand region, 6 of which are located in the western part of the Zeravshan River: Benjikent (Penjikent), Varogsor, Maimurg (Ravdor), Dargom, Obgar, Savdor. Also in the northern part of the river there were 6 rustoks: Yarket, Burnamad, Buzmajon, Kabudanjaket, Bedar and Marzbon [13; 196]. These rustoks are centers, each of which included dozens of villages. The densely populated villages around Samarkand have also attracted the attention of historians. The area around the city was extremely picturesque, with many villages and magnificent castles.

When Ibn Hawqal was in Samarkand, looking around at the city's arch, he was amazed to see so many trees, magnificent castles, flow channels, villages and rich culture in the area.

Samarkand occupies a special place among the largest trading cities of Maverannahr. Among the cities of the oasis, Dabusya, Arbinjon, Kushania are also large settlements that play a significant role in trade relations. In the Middle Ages, Samarkand was a large cultural center, where there were many large markets of international importance, craft quarters, and caravanserais. Trade relations of this city are mentioned separately in written sources.

As mentioned above, Ibn Hawqal gives interesting information about the city of Samarkand, noting that the city consisted of an arch, shahristan and rabat, canals flowed, trees added splendor to the city, and that he had never seen such a high culture anywhere else. It is also noteworthy that he noted Samarkand as a city with large markets, caravanserais, residential buildings and many craft districts.

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It is known that one of the features of medieval cities is that city gates are named after neighboring cities or countries. This feature also indicates the direction of the city's economic and cultural ties, the beginning of the trade route from the gate of a certain name to the city of the same name. During this period, there were four gates in Samarkand, located on the hills: The Western Gate - Navbahor, the Northern Gate - the Bukhara Gate, the South Gate - the Big Gate or the Kesh Gate.

On the southern outskirts of Samarkand there was a trade and handicraft center, and to the south of the Kesh gate on Registan Square there was a shopping center, consisting of several special markets. XI century documents mention the existence of money exchange kiosks, bakeries, dairy shops, jewelry and craft makhallas in these markets. Archaeological excavations have also revealed that there were several other trade and craft centers in the northern part of Afrosiab, not far from the mosque. The main occupation of the craftsmen of this center was metal processing. The historian Samani (1113-1167) mentions that weavers also had closed stalls on the southern outskirts of the city.

In Samarkand, these large trade markets and trade routes passing through the region have played an important role. The works of Arab authors contain a lot of important information about the roads connecting other cities of Maverannahr with Samarkand, their distances and stops between these cities [10; 82-83].

Ibn Battuta, an Arab traveler who later visited Samarkand after the Mongol invasion (late 1330s), described the city as large and beautiful with irrigation canals, buildings, and gardens [7; 24-27].

Of the large cities in the middle reaches of the Zeravshan River mentioned in sources, Ishtikhan, Kushania, Dabusiya, Arbinjon (Robinjon), although they were developed, could not rise to the level of large medieval cities such as Termez and Merv. The oasis specialized mainly in agricultural products.

The population of the villages and towns of the oasis during the study period is not clearly indicated in the sources. The data of different authors on this matter can also be called approximate. A.M. Belinitsky, I.B. Bentovich, as well as O.G. Bolshakov in his writings indicated assumptions about the population of the city on the basis of a map compiled by them as a result of archaeological research. Of course, it is difficult to determine the exact population of a city from the ruins map. Some cities were small in size but densely populated.

The information of Arab authors about the rustaks and cities of Samarkand clearly proves that the villages are densely populated. For example, Istahri (850-939), Ibn Hawqal (X century), Al-Mukaddasi (947-1000) visited many cities and villages of the Maverannahr region, including Samarkand, and recorded their data in their writings [3; 86-87]. The

information of these authors about the population density of the economic and cultural development of the city is extremely important.

The four largest cities in the middle reaches of the Zeravshan River - Ishtikhan, Kushan, Dabusiya and Robinjon - are medium-sized cities after Samarkand and Penjikent. Only in Penjikent there were 40 thousand people.

Analysis of the development of the period under study suggests that in the 10th century each of the four large cities mentioned above should have had an average population of 10,000. Of the 13 cities in the region, seven were small towns, each with a population of 5,000 to 6,000. It can be concluded that the total population of 7 cities has reached about 40 thousand people. This means that the total population of all cities in the middle reaches of the Zeravshan River was about 230 thousand people. This of course does not include the villagers [13; 200].

Academician V.V. Bartold (1869-1930) also mentioned the names of 223 villages in the Zeravshan Valley in the writings of the historians Samani (1113-1167) and Yakut Khamavi (early 11th century). 101 of them were in the Samarkand region [3; 173-187]. In most cases, Arab authors only mentioned villages with mosques and markets. In Central Asia, urban dwellers accounted for 20-25 percent of the total population [4; 26]. The rural population of Samarkand region is estimated at 850,000 people, and the total population of cities and villages in the region has reached 1,080,000 people [13; 200]. The main part of the sedentary population of the oasis was made up of Turks, Sogdians, that is, the ancestors of the Uzbeks and Tajiks. Arabs also lived in this area, but their number was small. In the foothills and deserts of the Samarkand region lived nomadic, semi-sedentary Turkic-speaking peoples - the Karluks, Chigils, Ouzes and others.

According to the latest data, Somonkhudot and his ancestors also belonged to the class of sedentary and urban Turks of Central Asia, who had their own ancient agricultural and urban culture [8; 16].

The Turkic-speaking pastoral tribes were not a minority. This is due to the fact that the territory of Maverannahr was mainly inhabited by nomadic tribes who converted to Islam after the Arab conquest and during the Samanids period. If their number is estimated at 200,000, then the total population of villages and cities in the region reached 1,280,000. [13; 201].

CONCLUSION

During this period, the ethnic composition and specific cultural life of the region's population was largely formed. Because the inhabitants of the oasis have long been sedentary, engaged in agriculture, crafts and trade. Most of them were Turkic-speaking peoples; Tajiks also lived together in an oasis. After the Arab conquest, their representatives also lived in

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the oasis and took an active part in social and political life. A certain part of the Turkic-speaking population led a nomadic and semi-sedentary lifestyle, was mainly engaged in animal husbandry and was always in close economic and cultural contact with the sedentary population.

Thus, during the Samanids (IX-X centuries), and then during the Karakhanids (XI-XII), most of the population of Maverannahr, including the Samarkand oasis, which had the potential for economic and cultural development, led a sedentary lifestyle and were considered the ancestors of Uzbeks and Tajiks. The ancestors of these two fraternal peoples for

centuries lived side by side and mixed, being in close economic and cultural contact with each other.

Nomadic and semi-sedentary Turkic-speaking ethnic groups in the foothills and deserts of the oasis also had close ethnocultural ties with the sedentary population. The nomadic population became more and more sedentary, which led to a further increase in the stable population and made a worthy contribution to the formation of the ancestors of the Uzbeks as a people. During the period under study, the Samarkand oasis, which received economic and cultural development, played an important role in ethno-cultural processes in Central Asia.

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