

PAPER

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE HISTORY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ETHNIC PROCESSES IN THE KHOREZM OASIS SOCIETY

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Abstract

The article analyzes the historical development of socio-economic and ethno-cultural relations in the Southern Aral Sea region from the Stone Age to the Antiquity period.

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Introduction

The territory of Uzbekistan is geographically located in the center of Central Asia and consists of a vast plain. On the eastern side flows the Syr Darya River, while on the western side, the Amu Darya River moves toward the Aral Sea, forming a geographical belt that has historically been favorable for human settlement and agriculture. The geographical position of Uzbekistan is represented by natural-economic regions such as Tashkent, Fergana, Surkhandarya, Zarafshan, Ustyurt, and the Khorezm Oasis. The achievements of the population of Uzbekistan in all areas of the economy since ancient times have been reflected in the historical monuments they left behind. This article aims to shed light on the ethnic processes that took place from the final stage of the Stone Age (40,000–12,000 years ago) up to the Antique period in the region between the Kyzylkum and Karakum deserts.

The analysis of literature related to the topic includes the following

Some considerations on the history of economic and ethnic processes in the society of the Khorezm oasis. In the eastern region of the Sultan Uvays Mountains, the Jonbos-4 site reveals the history of hunter-gatherers. By the time of the Eneolithic period, at the Qamishli 1 and 2 sites, representatives of the Jonbos tribal

communities recorded their daily activities.

Research by M.A. Itina has revealed that the ancestors of Neolithic tribal communities in the northern and southern Uzboy regions continued their traditional economic practices. This conclusion is based on materials found in the cultural layers of the Bala-Isham 8 and 9, Togolok 110 and 114 sites. The Burli-3 site is also linked to tribal communities of that era.

During the Bronze Age (second half of the 3rd millennium to the 2nd millennium BCE), Ya.G. Ghulamov identified the settlement patterns of the population along the right and left banks of the Amu Darya River. These populations were located in areas connected to the edges of water basins, on both plains and elevated terrain. Semi-subterranean dwellings with wooden columns were found in these regions. Sites such as Jonbos 4a, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 14 show that the economic activities of the hunters of Jonbos-6 were dependent on the availability and supply of resources from the Amu Darya River.

This was taken into account. The views expressed by members of the Khorezm Expedition regarding agricultural activities carried out during the Bronze Age on "Qayr" lands (uncultivated or marginal lands) can be supported. M.A. Itina conducted archaeological research on Bronze Age settlements in the Southern Akchadarya basin—specifically in the areas of Jonbos-Kukcha, Angka-Bozorkala, Kavati, and Tuyamuyin. Sites such as Kukcha 15, 16, 21, Jonbos 33, 34, and the Kukcha-3 cemetery, as well as Kavati-3 and Sultan Sanjar, were studied archaeologically.

During periods of flooding of the Amu Darya River, the population relocated from their original settlements, particularly in the Shurakhan and Sultan Uvays Mountain areas. However, in the Tuyamuyin region, such displacement was not evident.

B.I. Vainberg studied the population of the Eneolithic period in the areas of Dovdon and Daryolik.

Taking into account that the tributary waters did not reach Lake Sarykamys, this situation continued until the 7th century BCE.

According to B.V. Andrianov, in the elevated areas around Yonboshkala, the population settled in the Jonbos-Kukcha massif near the edges of water basins had reserves of daily food supplies. The researcher noted that fields were irrigated using irrigation structures fed by the Akchadarya tributary. These structures measured approximately 16x10, 10x10, and 7x7 meters, with some reaching lengths of 150–200 meters. However, it is difficult to agree with the researcher's statement, as farming through irrigation would have been challenging under conditions where the Amu Darya's water levels were rising.

It is also important to recall Ya.G. Ghulamov's conclusions in his work regarding the "Suvorgan lakes" system. S.P. Tolstov and Ya.G. Ghulamov.

In their works, S.P. Tolstov and Ya.G. Ghulamov correctly noted that during the Bronze Age in the Lower Amu Darya region, the local population practiced "Qayr" agriculture (farming on marginal lands) as part of their daily agricultural activities. Ya.G. Ghulamov stated that due to the long absence of water in the wave-like spreading sands between the Kyzylkum and Karakum deserts, since the Akchadarya tributary was not a reliable source of water, agricultural activities were difficult. Under the influence of high temperatures, small patches of arable land known as "taqr" were formed, and the local people used them for farming.

This usage is reflected in a local folk expression: "Three months of melon, three months of soap, three months of pumpkin, three months of rags," which metaphorically refers to the "food of the poor." This highlights how difficult life was in these areas.

Thus, from the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE, the people of the Khorezm oasis practiced agriculture in moderately humid areas.

They sowed wheat, barley, and lentil seeds, and after preparing the fields and harvesting the crops, they used the produce to meet their daily needs by making porridge and dough-based food products.

The material and spiritual culture of the population living in the southern Akchadarya coastal region during the Late Bronze Age is described in M.A. Itina's monograph. In the researcher's publication, the settlements and structures (semi-underground dwellings), pottery artifacts (handmade), and domestic animal husbandry practices of the Tozabog'yab and Andronovo tribes are recorded.

Unfortunately, there is no observed evidence of the population or their economic activities in the regions of Yonboshkala Heights and Tuyamuyin. However, S.P. Tolstov's monograph provides information about the Suvorgan culture. The author did not pay attention to these details.

In the 10th–8th centuries BCE, as a result of the merging of the Tozabog'yab and Andronovo tribes in the Southern Aral Sea region, the Amirabad culture emerged, which is dated to the 11th–8th centuries BCE. The creators of this culture used bronze tools for labor.

The population engaged in the Amirabad culture's economy widely utilized bronze labor tools. However, there were no technological innovations reflected in the construction of dwellings. Geographically, the Amirabad settlements differed in scale from those of Southern Akchadarya (covering 2.5 hectares), but they were not surrounded by defensive walls. In terms of defense knowledge and spiritual culture, they resembled the population of Jarkutan.

By the end of the 9th century BCE – early 8th century BCE, significant changes took place in the southern border of the Khorezm oasis, specifically in the middle part of the left bank of the Amu Darya. According to the archaeological literature, the southern region of Khorezm (the northeastern part of the Sariqamishbay area connected to the middle Amu Darya left bank) demonstrated that ethnic processes in this area were influenced by the geographic environment. Sources suggest that this region became an object of ethnic processes.

According to V.N. Philip's conclusions, the excavation works carried out at the site revealed clay construction techniques, topographic location, and defensive walls, and the presence of semi-circular shaped towers. The pottery samples found were similar to the material culture of the northern Bactrian population.

Taking into account the findings, it has been noted that the monument dates back to the 9th–8th century BCE.

The historical data reflecting the content of the topic can be summarized as follows

Geographically, the lowlands of the Khorezm oasis were settled by humans later than other regions. In the 4th–3rd millennia BCE, the geographic location of the Kyzylkum allowed humans to settle and engage in daily activities, providing favorable conditions in terms of geography, climate, and ecology.

During the 4th–3rd millennia BCE, the Uzboy, Sariqamishbay, Tuyamuyin, and lower Syr Darya regions became ethnic territories.

In the early 2nd millennium BCE, nomads from neighboring regions (northwest and northeast) arrived and settled, coming into contact with the local population, thus establishing the basis for the Tazabog'yob culture. As a result, both the Suvyorgan and Tazabog'yob cultures existed.

From the 10th to 6th century BCE, settlements along the right and left banks of the Amu Darya were semi-subterranean dwellings.

By the late 6th century BCE to the 5th century BCE, settlements such as Dingilja and Bozorqala on the right bank and city-type settlements like Khazarsap and Khiva on the left bank were established, leading to the formation of the first agricultural micro-oases. Their governance system was structured around the "Kahin" (priest).

Based on theoretical and comparative analysis of historical data, the following conclusions can be made

Under the influence of geological processes, the Lower Amu Darya region became an ethnic settlement area at the end of the Stone Age. During the Neolithic period, the Uzboy, Sariqamishbay, Tuyamuyin, and Lower Syr Darya basins were settled by tribal communities, forming the geographic extent of ethnic processes.

During the Eneolithic and Bronze Age, the descendants of the Jonbos-4 settlement tribes continued the economic traditions of their ancestors, blending with nomadic herders who had migrated from neighboring regions, thus creating the Tazabog'yob culture. It has been noted that semi-subterranean dwellings continued to be used as settlements in the 9th to 8th centuries BCE.

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