



# THE HISTORY OF EMERGENCE OF URBANISATION CULTURE IN THE TERRITORY OF ANCIENT KHOREZM

**Matyaqubov Xamdam<sup>1</sup>, Babayazov Umidbek<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, PhD Department of History. Urgench State University

<sup>2</sup>Teacher at the Department of History, Urgench State University  
Urgench, Uzbekistan

## ABSTRACT

*In this article, it is opened the history of development socio-economical life of the ancient people of Khorezm and the history of urbanisation traditions.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Tozabogyob, Amirabad, Southern Aralbuyi, Central Asia, reservoir Okchadarya, M.A. Itina, S.P. Tolstov.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Southern Aral Sea Oasis is one of the oldest centers of civilization in Central Asia. The study of the archaeological memorials of the oasis began in the 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and researches are still going on. Expansion of scientific data on the history of this region, revealing the essence and meaning of the results of many years of research, use of archaeological information on topical issues as a historical source and their historical analysis are of particular importance.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This monograph, chronologically speaking, is dedicated to the history of the Southern Aral Sea regions during the Bronze Age when the term “Khorezm” was not known and the Early Iron Age, when Khorezm was first mentioned in written sources. In the Bronze Age, production economy in the Lower Amu-Darya regions – farming and cattle breeding were developed, the final stage of the history of primitive society began. In the early Iron Age, complex ethnic processes took place in the South Aral Sea oasis, where defensive buildings and individual houses were built and a peculiar city-centered culture and ancient statehood were developed.

Analysis of scientific literatures shows that the history of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age of the Southern Aral Sea oasis were chronologically interconnected and not studied separately as a generalized subject. It is important to study the peculiarities and development of the historical processes of these ancient stages.

Most articles and monographs of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, devoted to the Bronze and early Iron Ages of the Southern Aral Sea regions, had archeological directions and they widely illustrate important information about the memorials of the area, defense constructions, house-strongholds, construction materials and methods and material culture. Also, there were studied ecological basics of development of farming, livestock breeding, farming and artificial irrigation – irrigation system, the early written sources on ancient Khorezm history, economic-social and political relations, some aspects of cultural relations. However, scientific problems covering important subjects as the preservation of the importance of mastering economy (fishing and hunting farms) in the southern Aral Sea regions for many centuries, from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age, and the reasons for the use of lattice-walled, hovel-shaped houses, semi-cellars and handmade earthenware crockery by the local people until the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, appearance of production economy (livestock breeding and husbandry) far later in the Southern Aral Sea regions in comparison with the Southern regions of Central Asia and construction of wattle and daub and raw brick walls, the emergence of cities and statehood, the local ethno-cultural traditions and their influence on the ethnic history of migrations, the origin of the nation “Khoresmians” - Khorezmians.



In this respect, it is important to study and comparatively analyze the features of the relationships of various ancient communities and changes of historical processes, the factors of cultural development.

According to the ideas of V.M. Masson narrated in the late 1950s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the relatively simple crop-livestock culture was developed in 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC exactly in the territory of Khorezm oasis and ruins of big cities were not investigated. In the Khorezm soil there were not identified houses, fortresses or defensive walls built of raw bricks and wattle and daub walls peculiar to that period. On the basis of such conclusions, V.M. Masson denied early appearance of statehood in Khorezm [1]. The researcher also concluded: “Undoubtedly, at that time, there occurred the destruction of primitive communal relations in Khorezm even if not so intensively compared to the southern provinces, the union of the Saks in the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC transmitted its political influence to some southern provinces”. But the issue of the territory where the Saks’ united politically remained open. V.M. Masson connected the Akhes River, belonging to the historic geography of the Khoresmians in the written sources, with Tajan. The views on the political union of Greater Khorezm, whose center was located in Herat and Marv, were reflected in the publications [2] of various scholars and even calling it as Herat-Marv union was suggested [3].

Some researchers say that during the reign of Kiaksar – the King of Mussel (625-585 BC), the southern provinces of Central Asia and Khorezm were in the composition of Mussel state. I.M. Dyakonov wrote that Girkania, Parphia, Areia and Khorezm were separate administrative regions of Mussel. According to the ideas of B.A. Litvinsky, a part of Sogdiana was also included into the territory of Mussel along these regions. i.e. it was supposed that the Greater Khorezm union - Parphia, Khorezm, Areia and Sogdiana were formed in the composition of Mussel.

M.G. Vorobyova analyzed the existing conclusions about the Greater Khorezm kingdom and she offered her ideas that it hadn’t been confirmed historically and on the basis of archeological data that this state united the territories of Kopetdagh Mountain foothills, Kuchan-Mashhad oasis, Nishapur surroundings, Tajan-Herat oasis, Khoresmians were not moved from the south to the Lower Amu Darya regions during the period Ahamanides, Khorezmian people originally formed as a nation in Khorezm oasis, the southern borders of the ancient Khorezm state stretched to the regions of the Middle Amu Darya.

Similarly, I.P. Khlopin wrote that the state, founded by the Khoresmians in southern Central Asia until the time of Ahamanides, was not developed.

E.V. Rtveladze analyzed the data collected in the field of historiography until the recent years and concluded that the state-association Greater Khorezm was a legend created by scientists. To clarify his point of view, the scientist offers the following arguments:

- The story of Herodotus about the use of the Akhes River’s water does not contain any information about the Khorezm kingdom or Herat (Areia) and Marv (Marghiana);
- Herodotus’ reports don’t contain information about certain features of the state either: borders, capital, administrative apparatus and political institutions;
- The Greek historian did not write about the political leadership of Khorezm and the military alliance of different nations under Khorezm.

It’s possible to agree with the conclusions made by the researcher as Herodotus and his earlier Greek historiographer Hekatey did not mention the state of Khoresmians and the kingdom of Khorezm, the Greek historians only mentioned about Khoresmians.

In particular, it is important to identify the period of formation of the first statehood and town-planning culture in Khorezm territory. Various dates were included in the relevant scientific literatures, besides, beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC (M.A. Itina) [4], the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC (M.G. Vorobyova), the border of 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (O.A. Vishnevskaya, Yu.A. Rapoport) [5], by the middle of 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (M.M. Mambetullaev), 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (Q. Sobirov, R. Abdirimov), 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (G. Khodjaniyazov).

In our opinion, according to archaeological data, it’s expedient to mark the beginning of that process by the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Compared to this period, connecting the formation of statehood and town-planning culture in Khorezm with the last quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century was the result of the traditional view of the relocation of the “Khoresmians” from the south during the period of Darius the 1<sup>st</sup> – the king of Persia.



Before the emergence of the Kuzalikir culture, the early Saks settled in the Sarikamish regions and livestock tribes, which were conditionally as “kuyisay people”, were representatives of the indigenous people. They were the heirs of the tribes that created the culture of Amirabad. The memorials of the first discovered Saks found in the steppes and foothills of Central Asia are characterized with the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. It is well-known that cattle-breeding was important in the economy of immigrants. They propagated lots of cattle, small cattle and horses. Livestock became the main property of immigrants. The book “Yasht” in “Avesto” contains information that leaders of the tribes and leaders of the countries sacrificed “one hundred horses, one thousand cows and a great deal of sheep”.

Starting from 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, livestock breeding farmers in the Aral Sea region achieved great success in the military field and equipment production. Horsing equipments, bronze and iron weapons were found at grave-strongholds Tagizken, Uygarak and Sakarchaga. The horsing equipments, daggers and arrows of the Saks resemble those of the nomadic tribes of Eastern Europe steppes (Savromats, Skifs).

In Avesto, there were mentioned about two-sided sharp arrows, stone mallets, military pole-axe, bayonets, daggers, shields, helmets, military carts with horses and “warriors with horses”. That time is described in connection with constant attacks and wars, tragic events, robbery, demolition of homes and evil deeds.

Military attacks and robberies took place in the era of the collapse of the primitive society and the process of appearance of the first statehood. Robberies were the result of intense violence by means of material wealth and the desire to obtain additional goods. The variability of social and economic factors led to the struggle between settled farmers and nomadic tribes and livestock breeders and those struggles competitions led to the struggles for virgin lands and grassy pastures. “Military robberies”, “confrontation of armed forces”, “bloodthirsty enemy armies” and others were described in “Avesto” and this situation informs about worried events and advantages of political interests.

By the time of the first Iron Age, a new social system was created in the nomadic society. Tribal began to dominate kin and community as a social organization. Even though “people’s assembly”, the body of elders and the tribal chiefs, peculiar to the history of the primitive society, kept their significance, military leaders and tribal associations played a major role in the system of external relations [6].

In the Aral Sea areas, it is possible to assume that such military unions, tribal alliances emerged. Y.A. Rapoport wrote that the Saks of the Lower Amudarya attacked to southern civilization centers as the European Scythians and the southern provinces of Central Asia were “invading territories” of the Saks. According to V.N. Yagodin, historical and ethnographic data were evidence of the fact that military raids were important in the social life of nomadic cattle-breeding societies and they emerged at the stage of “military democracy” in the history of nomadic people.

According to the writings of A.S. Sagdullayev, in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and especially in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, nomadic lifestyle was widespread in the steppes of Central Asia and Kazakhstan and nomadic tribes gained great success in the field of weapons development and became a large military force. Their raid was a threat to the inhabitants of southern provinces. The need for protection from outside influences required a comprehensive and reliable defense system. Therefore, defense structures and military fortifications surrounded by strongly fortified defense walls were constructed in areas of strategic importance (along the coastline and mountain pass, the Amu Darya transitions and ravine paths). Creation of such defense structures of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC was confirmed in the examples of Oltindiyor, Talashkan, Bandikhan 2 and Kiziltepa in Bactria, Odoytepa on the banks of the Middle Amu Darya and Uzunkyr, Yerkughon and Kuktepe in Sogdiana.

In the early Iron Age, the nomadic tribes in the steppes became a very dangerous military force for the peasants. Therefore, in the southern provinces of Central Asia, the defense system became complicated. There were special corridors inside the defence walls built in order to shoot, trenches, defense and attacking weapons – arrows, daggers, lances, stone mallets, military axes and “nucleus” made of stone and ceramic used as an arrow.

The main part of the Aral Sea Saks consisted of rifle-battalion. According to the writings of Herodotus, the Saks were armed with arrows, daggers and military axes – Sagaris. According to archaeological data, horse equipments and weaponry of the Saks were similar to the weapons of the first Scythian migrants in Southern Ural, Kazakhstan, Siberia and Altai [7].



Herodotus also considered Massaget tribes as “numerous” and “brave” tribes. Massagets are described as fighting warriors able for military affairs. It is possible to assume that women were also involved in battles from the fact that in women’s graves in the Saks’, there were found horse equipments. In the stories of Greek historians Herodotus and Ktesy about queen Tumaris and Zarina there was described the fact that they participated in wars and led tribal associations. In 530 BC, Tumaris’ tribal associations met the armies of the ancient Persian King Cyrus the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Massagets defeated the Persian Forces completely and killed Cyrus the 2<sup>nd</sup> in this war.

At the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Kuzalikir culture developed at the result of the southern population groups of Central Asia came and settled in the southernmost parts of Khorezm and in the surroundings of the Sarikamish Dowdon river basins. The Saks, who had located on the steppes of Dowdon before the inhabitants of southern population, did not oppose the newcomers. Ceramics workshops of Humbuztepe, Khazorasp and Kuzalikir fortifications were built in peaceful condition.

The structure of Kuzalikir, which was built by South builders, reflect architectural monument in itself, which had a character of military administrative and worship center. The king of Saks was sitting on the throne set in the courtyard of the inner castle palace and aristocrats of tribes were sat on the two sides of the courtyard. In front of the throne, in the center of the courtyard, there was built worshipping otashkade on a high foundation.

The formation of the first statehood in Khorezm is associated with the culture of Kuzalikir. The large centralized state uniting Khorezm oasis did not develop until the time of Ahamanides. It is likely that the first statehood had been established on the basis of a livestock breeding farm in separate districts (Kuzalikir, Khazorasp)(Annex 4).

In Marghiana and Bactria, the first states peculiar to the Bronze Age was formed on the basis of regional cultivation of separate crop cultures. There was found an inside fortress, a palace and a temple in Jarkutan, in southern Uzbekistan. Such architectural constructions were discovered in Northern Afghanistan and the Lower Murghab oasis. The studied archaeological sources are evidence of the complexity of socio-economic relationships in agrarian communities. Leaders, who were linked to management functions, such as the organization of production, the custom in the community, the regulation and control of relationships, were separated in society.

It is possible to see the repetition of state archaeological signs (a separate district, oasis, fortress, palace, temple) learned in Bactria and Marghiana in the examples of Kuzalikir. In our opinion, the formation and development of the first statehood in different regions of Central Asia was based on close historical factors.

## CONCLUSIONS

Some scientific views and approaches belonging to the ancient Khorezm history, adopted in the Central Asian historiography for many years, became antiquated and they need to be observed again. In the 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, the idea of constructing a large irrigation system in the Khorezm oasis, the use of “thousands of slaves” in the production of long and wide canals and the linkage of these processes with the centralized state policy have lost their significance. (In Khorezm, a centralized state was developed in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC and there appeared a large irrigation system at the same time). The population peculiar to the period of Kuyisoy and the early Kuzalikir and the culture of the Saks in Khorezm was settled and half-settled livestock breeders. Cultivation during this period (until the last quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC) developed as an auxiliary branch of economy.

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