The Role of Islam and Muslim Clergy in Economical Life of Central Asian Khanates

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Abstract: The author of the article joins the discussion on the assessment of the development of social-economical life of the Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand khanates at that era. Based on the analysis of the changes in internal life and international trade of the khanates. The article contains an analysis of the main changes made the development of social-economical life of Central Asian khanates and in its ruling according to Islam’s laws. Attention is drawn to the trends of weakening the repressiveness of clergymen’s participation in trade activity, as well as other representatives of clergy.

Keywords: khanates, Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand, shayh ul-islom, muftiy, qozi, rais, yarlik (decree), economics, social-economical life, administrative-governmental system, muslim clergy and agency.

Introduction

In the 16th-the first half of the 19th centuries there were 3 state establishments on the territory of Central Asia – the khanates of Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand. Muslim clergy played an important role in difficult and contradictory processes, which took place in these khanates. The representatives of Muslim clergy thanks to their knowledge and experience occupied different administrative positions. In Central Asian khanates state and social government was based on Islam and Shariat rules. And such kind of state government was possible because of prominent religious figures, who occupied significant positions like shayh ul-islom, muftiy, qozi, rais and others. Author of the 18th century Mirza Badi Devoni in his work devoted to studying official office-work in Bukhara noted that governmental position in the khanate were divided into 4 categories. According to him such positions as qozi, mufti, muhtasib, mudarris were included in first group [1].

Main body

Many sources of the 16-19th centuries prove that representatives of Muslim clergy, being owners of large land properties, played significant role in social-economical life of the khanate. We can see this on the example of Juybari shayhs, who had high status in political and social-economical life of the khanate of Bukhara in this period. In particular, one of them Khodja Islam (1493-1563) had many horses, different hunting birds – falcons, golden eagles, and a number of people to serve them [2]. Medieval author wrote about another Juybari shayhs the following: «everywhere in Balkh, Badakhshan, Chardjuy, Marv, Miyonkala there is property of his Majesty – trade stalls …mills, caravan-sarays» [3]. Juybari shayhs bought different kinds of property like lands, houses, caravan-sarays, markets, trade stalls, shops, mills and others, and Bukharian documents of the 16-18th centuries help us to trap this process. So, for example, in 154-1563 Khodja Islam bought about 104 stalls and handicraftsmen’ workshops from ruined owners. This process was continued under his followers Khodja Saad. By the same time Juybari shayhs were engaged in building of new trade constructions. They built a number of shops, trade stalls, markets, caravan-sarays, public baths [4].
The author of «Matlab al-tolibin» work Abulabbos Mukhammad Tolib Siddikiy (17th century) noted that Khodja Saad had property in Bukhara, Mienkala, Samarkand, Savron, Turkestan, Ahsikent, Nasaf, Hisar, Termaz, Kubadiyan, Balkh, Badakhshan, Great, Marv, Murgab, Mashkhad, Chardjuy and Andkhud. This property included 2000 of land plots, 2500 rams, 1500 horses, 12 public baths, 10 sardoba, hundreds of trade stalls and handicraft workshops, there were several barns for grain storage in every city. For example in one Bukhara were 4 barns, there 100000 manns [5] of grain were kept. Annual income of this Juybari shayh, being 60000 tanga, was equal to the whole annual income of Samarkand region [6]. The source of the 16th century informs that in 1579 Juybarids Khodja Mukhammad Islom and Khodja Saad built a number of madrassa and mosques in Bukhara, in 1578 Jome mosque in Zandana village, 11 public baths in Tatkend, Gijduvan, Chardjuy, Korakul, Sumitan, Bukhara, and 2 caravan-sarays and 10 sardoba in Bukhara [6].

Besides Juybari shamys there were other clergy representatives, who owned some property. An interesting document of the 16th century, in which is mentioned one of the stalls (dukans) of Bukhara, informs that it is «dukan of the best muftiy Maylono Mukhammad Amin» [7]. Another documents also prove that clergy representatives owned real estate. So, in 60es of the 19th century one of Tashkent caravans was a property of Shirin Khodja Rais [7].

In the result of development of trade some of the cities of Central Asian khanates became large centers of East’s commercial world, and in studied period their economical potential increased much. Development of trade, especially transit and external trade favorably reflected on the development of some kinds of handicraft. As the result, increased the process of some cities’ specialization on separate types of production.

In Central Asia in late medieval period as the result of handicraft’s development, trade’s activity, strengthening cities’ relations with neighboring states and nomadic steppe the representatives of separate population estates, in particular clergy representatives began to play an important role in the life of cities.

Describing trade activity of Bukhara the author of the 19th century A.D. Grebenkin noted «!!!!!!» [8]. Actually, very often there were representatives of clergy among the people, who were engaged in trade and had different trade buildings.

The sources of the 16th - first half of the 19th centuries inform that representatives of clergy, who had markets, dukans, handicraft workshops, caravan-sarays actively participated not only in internal life, but also in international trade. They sent big caravans with their accredited representatives in remote countries. So, for example, trade caravans of Khodja Saad reached even Moscow. Ivan Khohlov, visited the khanate of Bukhara in 1620-1621 informed that person named Abiz (Hafiz), who was ambassador of Juybarid Khodja Saad accompanied him during his way back to Russia [9]. Here we should mention that in studied period these ambassadors had to deal with business, and usually they also became the leaders of big caravans.

The representatives of clergy, participating in international trade also headed caravans to other countries. So, in yearlik (decree), given by the ruler of Bukhara Imamkuli-khan to his envoy to Moscow Kamolliddin Khodji Ota-qui there is the following: «….khodja of two sacred cities Kamol-ad-din Khodji-Ota-qui … could find expensive goods and materials in India and Iraq, Tara and Kazan, and in Moscow» [10]. English officer A. Borns, visited Central Asia in 30es of the 19th century also gives information about the participation of clergy representatives in trade affairs. He could establish goods relations with one seller of tea in caravan. And A. Borns wrote the following about this man: «He was khodja ... by the same time he was cleric and tradesman» [11].

Clergymen contributed much in providing safe way for trade caravans. Representative of «Moscow trade company» Englishman Antoni Jenkinson, visited the khanates of Bukhara and Khiva in 1558 – 1560 described one event. According to him when robbers wanted to plunder their caravan priest «Tatar Azi», who was in caravan began talks and provided safe way until
A. Vamberi, participated in the 60es of the 19th century in caravan road also told about one clergyman [13].

Clergymen’ participation in trade activity provided cultural exchange of different peoples.

In Central Asian states not only state government, but also social-economical relations were regulated by shariat’s laws. We can see that on the example of trade and its organization. So, on Central Asian markets the trade was possible only on daytime. To trade at night was against the laws of shariat. It was explained by many reasons, first, in order not to make competition among tradesmen, who are able to trade at night with those, who are not; second, the goods people need to see and weigh the goods without any difficulties [14]. But, in some cases, the trade was possible even at night. Such cases took place under special decree of the ruler because of some holiday or event. Here we should stop on interesting information of the author of the 18th century Mir Muhammad Amin Bukhori about the following decree of Bukhara ruler Ubaydulla-khan: «in high decree is written the following: all tradesmen, handicraftsmen and workers without fail should decorate their stalls (dukons), to make equal days and nights and to trade [without breaks] » [15].

Night trade was carried out on the days of hayit (religious holidays) and in Ramadan month too. The author of the 19th century «Tarih-i jadidy-i Toshkent» Muhammad Solikh gave the following information about Tashkent: «trade stalls of the market reached confectioner’s (dukon) on Chorsu. In Ramadan the trade takes place at night too. People do trade and amuse» [16].

We can trap the importance of clergymen in social-economical life of the khanates on the example of their situation in big centers. Usually madrasa of qazi’s house were situated in the center of large cities near the palace (we can see that for example in Khiva city) [17]. In some cases the makhalla were named on behalf of clergymen, who lived in it, according to their activity or status in the society. For example, Qozi street, Khodja street, Rais street, makhala of Khodja in Tashkent [18].

The representatives of clergy played significant role in the development of social-economical life of Central Asian khanates and in its ruling according to Islam’s laws. It is very difficult to imagine this process without some ranks in administrative-governmental system of the khanates. Rais is one of such ranks. His duties were like the duties of muhtasib – administrative rank in classic Muslim states; they «called people to do good actions and controlled their refusal from those, which contradict to shariat» [19].

So, rais had many duties. Controlling different aspects of everyday life, moral-ethical behavior of population they paid a special attention to the following questions. Rais watched if population kept to the religious rules, in particular to reading five times namaz, to education Muslims on the basis of shariat. E.K. Meyendorf’s information of the 20es of the 19th century proves this. According to it, in Bukhara rais asked from imams of mosques “those people who do not read namaz regularly and compulsory turned them out their houses. Every evening at 4 o’clock during namaz reading on Registan … turned tradesmen and buyers out and sent them to mosque” [20].

Rais also controlled not drinking of alcohol, not smoking of tobacco and others. Here we should stop on the information of the author of the 16th century A.Jenkinson “… it was forbidden to drink everything except water ant milk of mare; those who broke this rule were beaten on the market. Besides that there are officials, who have right to call at every house and look for alcohol drinks (aroq, sharob)” [21]. Rais’s duties were not changed during centuries, and we can see that on the example of the sources of the 19th century. So, the author of the 30es of the 19th century P.I. Demezon wrote the following about Bukhara: “it is forbidden to amuse, to play games, which are contradict to shariat, to laugh, to smoke tobacco” [22]. One of the witnesses described the event in Bukhara, when Jew, who sold vodka to Cossack according to the order of rais was imprisoned, “his family had to pay 150 tilla” and he was punished with “60 sticks” [23].
In the khanates of Khiva and Kokand raises were responsible for moral-ethnic side of life of population and controlled their “not smoking of tobacco, and not sleeping during namaz” [24]. Rais had secular duties too. They were responsible for solving some problematic situations, preventing population to live on the basis of shariat, to do economic activity. So, in the khanate of Kokand one of rais’s duties was “controlling cleaning on the streets and squares” and look after the people in order their building “not to cover up the streets” [25]. In Bukhara rais’s duties was control repairs the houses in order to prevent some “unpleasant occasions for people on the streets” [26]. In the khanate of Khiva rais provided “good condition of roads and bridges” [27]. According to the author of the 19th century in Bukhara “he (rais) can check muddarises not to include to educational programs ideas, which are against to real study of Muhammad” [28].

Another kind of rais’s duties is to control conformity of process of buying-selling on the markets to certain rules. In particular, they checked if the sellers do not deceive the population, especially during weigh and measure. If raises found such persons, they were severely punished.

In the beginning of the 19th century F. Nazarov wrote about the following event in Kokand: “one naked man was took over me, and he was beaten”, and this man had to cry loudly about he had done [29]. Activity of raises on controlling the process of buying-selling was like the activity of mukhtasib in other Muslim states in late medieval period. By the same time, according to the information of the 18th-19th centuries activity of mukhtasibs included only controlling the process of buying-selling on the markets and checking the quality of production of handicraftsmen [30].

Usually raises were appointed from the representatives of Sayids and descendants of Muhammad [31]. Often they taught in madrassa as mudarrises. In some cases raises were appointed from qozi, and carried out the duties of qozi themselves.

**Conclusion**

So, in conclusion, we can say, that the representatives of clergy, being one of the estates of Central Asian society, played significant role in social-economical life of the khanates. Through their means, property, personal participation and activity they, basing on Islam and shariat rules contributed much to the development of handicraft and trade in Central Asian khanates.

**References**

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