

Social and economical development in Sammanid

Ezzat Khodadadi

Department of History, Shoushtar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shoushtar, Iran
E.Khodadadi@yahoo.com

Abstract

In Sammanid ages, cities and villages developed very much, and Islam was presented to all people. Cultural and economical relations were improved in an optimum behavior. Big cities included tower, town and rabaz. The cities had police stations and prisons. Most of economical relations were done in market. Agriculture was developed very much then, and so farmers formed the main social level of society; They were respectful too: there was a fastened wall around each city to set security and social welfare. The Sammanid empire had independence and was a powerful government too. Khorasan was Sammanid territory including many cities such as Samargand, Marve, Khojand and Chauch. In this paper as a result of one research about the subject, situations of the society in Sammanid ages will be analyzed.

Keywords:

Sammanid, Situation, Social, Cultural.

Introduction

The history of Central Asia has been determined primarily by the area's climate and geography. Aridity of the region makes agriculture difficult, and its distance from the sea cut it off from much Trade. Thus, few major cities developed in the region. Nomadic horse peoples of the steppe dominated the area for millennia. Relations between the steppe nomads and the settled people in and around Central Asia were marked by conflict. The nomadic lifestyle was well suited to warfare, and the steppe horse riders became some of the most militarily potent people in the world, due to the devastating techniques and ability of their horse archers.

Domination

The Samanids, a dynasty of Persian dehqan origin, reigned for 180 years, encompassing a territory which included Greater Khorasan (including Kabul), Ray, Transoxiana, Tabaristan, Kerman, Gorgan, and west of these provinces up to Isfahan. At the peak of their power, the Samanids controlled territory extending as far south as the Sulaiman Mountains in Quetta, Ghazni and Kandahar, and as far as Qazvin in the west. The Samanids were descendants of Bahram Chobin, and thus descended from the House of Mihrān, one of the Seven Great Houses of Iran. In governing their territory, the Samanids modeled their state organization after the Abbasids, mirroring the caliph's court and organization. They were rewarded for supporting the Abbasids in Transoxania and Khorasan, and with their

established capitals located in Bukhara, Balkh, Samarkand, and Herat, they carved their kingdom after defeating the Saffarids.

With their roots stemming from the city of Balkh (then, part of Greater Khorasan) the Samanids promoted the arts, giving rise to the advancement of science and literature, and thus attracted scholars such as Rudaki, Ferdowsi, and Avicenna. While under Samanid control, Bukhara was a rival to Baghdad in its glory. Scholars note that the Samanids revived Persian more than the Buyids and the Saffarids, while continuing to patronize Arabic to a significant degree. Nevertheless, in a famous edict, Samanid authorities declared that "here, in this region, the language is Persian, and the kings of this realm are Persian kings.

The Samanid Empire was the first native Persian dynasty to arise after the Muslim Arab conquest. The four grandsons of the dynasty's founder, Saman Khuda, had been rewarded with provinces for their faithful service to the Abbasid caliph al-Mamun: Nuh obtained Samarkand; Ahmad, Fergana; Yahya, Shash; and Elyas, Herat. Ahmad's son Nasr became governor of Transoxania in 875, but it was his brother and successor, Ismail Samani who overthrew the Saffarids and the Zaydites of Tabaristan, thus establishing a semiautonomous rule over Transoxania and Khorasan, with Bukhara as his capital. In 893, Ismail invaded and defeated the Karluk Turks, taking Talas and converting the Nestorian church there into a mosque.

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The Samanids defeat the Saffarids and Zaydids

Samanid rule in Bukhara was not formally recognized by the caliph until the early 900s when the Saffarid ruler 'Amr-iLaith had asked the caliph for the investiture of Transoxiana. The caliph, Al-Mu'tadid however sent the Samanid Amir, Ismail Samani, a letter urging him to fight Amr-iLaith and the Saffarids whom the caliph considered usurpers. According to the letter, the caliph stated that he prayed for Ismail who the caliph considered as the rightful ruler of Khorasan. The letter had a profound effect on Ismail, as he was determined to oppose the Saffarids.

The two sides fought in Balkh, (now modern-day Afghanistan), during the spring of 900. During the battle, Ismail was significantly outnumbered as he came out with 20,000 horsemen against Amr's 70,000 strong cavalry. Ismail's horsemen were ill-equipped with most having wooden stirrups while some had no shields or lances. Amr-iLaith's cavalry on the other hand, were fully equipped with weapons and armor. Despite fierce fighting, Amr was captured as some of his troops switched sides and joined Ismail. D. G. Tor suggests that the defections to the Samanid side were because of Ismail's raids into Central Asia had given him the reputation of being a successful holy warrior.

Isma'il thereafter sent an army to Tabaristan in accordance with the caliph's directive. The area at that time was then controlled by the Zaydids. The Samanid army defeated the Zaydid ruler Muhammad ibn Zayd and the Samanids gained control of the region.

The Samanid Empire was the first native dynasty to arise in Iran after the Muslim Arab conquest. It was renowned for the impulse that it gave to Iranian national sentiment and learning.

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Ismail

Ismail I conquered many places, and a territory of his kingdom was wide spread all over today's Central Asia, Afghanistan, and eastern Iran, however in the time of his successors we can observe the autonomy of the regions. The image of Ismail came in the history of Central Asia not only as a strong and capable politician, but also as an equitable ruler, who changed the heavy tax weights, and confiscated the possessions of some landowners. Due to the strong political regime of Ismail, Transoxiana, and his capital Bukhara was so safe, from the nomadic Turks that the walls around of some cities were neglected, although later on

these walls were necessary. The successors of Ismail could not continue his policy, and they left under the influence of their Turkish guard, who became dominant in the court (Alp-Tegin and later established by him Ghaznavid dynasty), and alongside with the Qarakhanids ended the rule of the Samanids in 999. However, in some aspects the time of Ismail's successors was more important than his own. For instance the time of Nasr b. Ahmad (914 - 943) is described by many authors as the golden age of the Samanid rule, because of flowering of literature and culture. The main role in this process was played by the Samanid viziers, the prime ministers, who themselves were the danishmands (scholars) of their time. Here we should mention the names of two important prime ministers Abu Abd Allah al-Djayhani, and Abul Fadhl Muhammad al-Bal'ami. They gathered many intelligent people in their court and made Bukhara the cultural centre of Iranian civilisation. According to R. Frye the well-known process of Iranian renaissance began in Central Asia rather than in Iran, and he sees the reason for that in the difference of the social groups in these two parts of Muslim world. The mercantile, trade society of Central Asia was much more suitable for the development of an egalitarian Islamic society than a hierarchical caste society of Iran. Therefore the Samanids, who were the real rulers of Transoxiana could be seen as a pioneers of Iranian renaissance. Indeed the changes, which took place under that process, occupied every sphere of life: cultural, linguistic, social, art, economy, politics, and scientific.

The changes, which came with the emergence of the Samanids in the agriculture, commerce, architecture, city building, coinage, textiles, and metalwork, were due in many respects to the stability and safety political situation of the country. The merchants had good opportunities to enter into commercial relations not only with their nearest neighbours, but also with the far countries as well, like the Khazars of Volga, through whom an active traffic developed, with the Vikings of Scandinavia. Due to them the textiles and metalwork of Samanids were exchanged for the furs and amber of the Baltic lands.

The Samanid amirs had control over the most important silver producing veins of Central Asia in Badakhshan and Farghana, which made possible the development of the coinage system. The Samanid coinage, due to its vast quantity, was popular not only in the Islamic world, but also outside it in Russia, Scandinavia, the Baltic lands, and even in British Isles.

The Samanids contribution to Islamic architecture indeed is very significant. Examples of this could be observed in the growth of the cities in ninth and tenth centuries. Here we can code the to capital of the Samanids, Bukhara, which became the cultural, political, and economic centre of Central Asia for the centuries, until the Bolshevik revolution in 1920 (when the Soviets ended the rule of the Bukhara Emirate). The Registan of Bukhara - a large square, where the ten divans (ministries) were located, is still the most beautiful part of the city, and a tourist attraction. There are also some other historico-architectural memorials remaining from that time, like the mausoleum of the Samanids in Bukhara, the mausoleum of Arabato in Tim, the mosque Nuh Gunbad in Balkh, and so on. Along with Bukhara many other cities in the Samanid empire began to develop such as Samarqand, Balkh, Usturusha, Panjacent, Shash, Marv, Nishapur, Herat. The cities in many respects were the signs of new Persian civilisation represented by the name of Islam, because mostly the development of literature, language, art, architecture, trade, took place in the cities.

Perhaps the most important sphere of activity that benefited from the Samanid patronage was development of new Persian literature. The poets, who lived in that time, were indeed the most respectable people in the society as long as they supported political and religious

interests of the Samanids. The best example of can observe in the poetry of one of famous poets of that time Abu Abdullahi Rudaki, who describes the amirs as the moon, and their capital Bukhara as the sky: .

Mir mah astu Bukhara asuman, Mah sui asuman ayad hame. Mir (amir) is the moon and Bukhara the Sky, The moon is appearing up on the Sky.

However, the Samanids as the partisans of the Sunni branch of Islam could not forgive Rudaki for his support of Qaramati movement in the court during the rule of well-known amir Nasr b. Ahmad, who himself was involved in that movement. In the anti-Qarmati repression, which was organised by the Sunni ulama and the Turkish guard, and led by Nasr's son Nuh II (943 - 954) many intellectuals like amir Nasr himself, vazir Bahlami, poet Rudaki and others were taken out of the court.

Rudaki was not the only representative of the new Persian literature under the Samanids, and alongside with him there were other poets like Shahidi Balkhi, Abushukuri Balkhi, Pbiai Balkhi, and Ahmadi Daqiqi..

Cultural and religious efforts

The Samanids revived Persian culture by patronizing Rudaki, Bal'ami and Daqiqi. They also determinedly propagated Sunni Islam. However, the Samanids repressed IsmailiShiism[29] but were more tolerant of TwelverShiism. Islamic architecture and Islamo-Persian culture was spread deep into the heart of Central Asia by the Samanids. Following the first complete translation of the Qur'an into Persian, during the 9th century, populations under the Samanid empire began accepting Islam in significant numbers.

Through zealous missionary work as many as 30,000 tents of Turks came to profess Islam and later under the Ghaznavids more than 55,000 under the Hanafi school of thought. The mass conversion of the Turks to Islam eventually led to a growing influence of the Ghaznavids, who would later rule the region.

Agriculture and trading were the economic basis of Samanid State. The Samanids were heavily involved in trading - even with Europe, as thousands of Samanid coins that have been found in the Baltic and Scandinavian countries testify.

Another lasting contribution of the Samanids to the history of Islamic art is the pottery known as Samanid Epigraphic Ware: plates, bowls, and pitchers fired in a white slip and decorated only with calligraphy, often elegantly and rhythmically written. The Arabic phrases used in this calligraphy are generally more or less generic well wishes, or Islamic admonitions to good table manners.

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