



中国传媒大学
COMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY OF CHINA



Institute for a Community
with Shared Future
人类命运共同体研究院



The significance of the period of the Sheibanid dynasty in the formation of regional identity in Central Asia

Jointly Written by:

Mr. Salikhbayev Anvar

Senior Expert

at the International Institute of Central Asia,
Former Ambassador of Uzbekistan in
Pakistan

Mr. Karimov Azizjon

Senior Expert

at the Institute for Institute for Strategic
and Regional Studies under the President
of the Republic of Uzbekistan



Published on 31st July 2023



In recent years, the historical science in Uzbekistan has undergone significant changes. There was a rejection of outdated methods, new methodological approaches appeared, modern programs, textbooks and methodological manuals were created, as well as previously undeveloped topics entered the problematic field of historical science.

However, until now the period of the coming to power of the Sheibanid dynasty in Transoxiana and its century-old rule remains an insufficiently studied topic and a thorough analysis is not presented. Most scientific publications do not provide detailed information about the contribution of the Uzbek dynasty to ensuring the independence of Transoxiana from Safavid Iran, about the development of science, culture, literature, education, architecture and handicrafts in the XVI century.

The studies note the increased attention of the board to the rivalry of the outstanding representative of the dynasty – Muhammad Sheibani Khan with the Timurids for the Samarkand throne and the negative influence of the Sheibanids on the processes of internecine wars of the Timurids. As a result, the reader has a biased idea of the role and significance of the Sheibanid dynasty period in Central Asia. Meanwhile, it should be noted that it was Muhammad Sheibani Khan who united numerous Turkic tribes, creating one of the most centralized states for that period. He managed not only to continue, but also to develop many traditions, elements of the foundation of state-building, which were laid by Amir Temur.

As a sovereign, Sheibani Khan was a skilful ruler and diplomat. He sought to create, as some researchers believe, a kind of multicultural state. During his reign, intensive resettlement of various tribes and ethnic groups from the Volga region, Southern Siberia, Dashti Kipchak and other regions of Central Asia began. At the same time, Sheibani Khan allowed a certain independence of the ethnic groups that were under his patronage, and pursued a fairly flexible



internal policy. This circumstance allowed him to more effectively resist external enemies and strengthen the international image of the state.

He was distinguished by an astute mind, deep knowledge of religious sciences, and was known as a patron of culture, art and science. The emergence of such qualities in Sheibani Khan was facilitated by his proximity to the settled culture of Transoxiana, since he studied with Islamic scholars in Bukhara and Khorezm, where he became close to Sufi tariqas.

The principles of Sheibani Khan's rule, as many scholars believe, were based not only on the nomadic traditions of the Turkic tribes, but also on the centuries-old experience of governing the state and the settled population of Transoxiana, which was based on Sharia. Appealing to the architectural tradition of the Timurid dynasty, Sheibani Khan was a tireless builder and initiator of the construction of monumental complexes that were not inferior to the Timurids in luxury.

The customers were Sheibani Khan himself, members of his family, representatives of the secular authorities and the clergy. The Sheibanids hosted receptions in the Bagh-i Nau palace complex, the former residence of the Temurids in Samarkand. In another garden of Temur's descendants, the suburban Kan-i Gil, Sheibani Khan built his residence. Sheibani Khan himself wrote poetry under the pseudonym "Shibani". The sofa of his poems, written in the Central Asian Turkic literary language, is currently stored in the Topkapi Manuscript Collection in Istanbul of 192 pages. In 1507, he wrote the essay "Risale-yi maarif-i Sheibani" in the Chagatai language. In 1507, it was dedicated to his son, Muhammad Timur. The essay talks about the need for knowledge of Sharia to the sovereign. It follows from the essay that Sheibani Khan was an adherent of the tariqa of Ahmad Yassavi. This manuscript is also kept in Istanbul.



It is necessary to emphasize the regional aspects of the rule of Sheibani Khan, the role and importance of Sheibanids in the development of integration processes in Central Asia between various Turkic tribes and clans, the influence of these processes on the formation of modern national states in the region and a unified cultural identity of Central Asia. Thus, the study of many historical sources indicates that the name of Sheibani Khan is associated with the formation of a new political unit - Central Asia, which outlined the borders of its state without expanding the territory outside the region.

In a very short time, Sheibani Khan established control over Transoxiana (1499-1505), Khorezm (1505) and Khorasan (1506-1508). It is obvious that separate political tribal unions of that time were again united around the ancient capital - Samarkand.

Another difference is that Sheibani Khan sought to create a national state, as well as to ensure the integration of settled and nomadic Turkic tribes. This once again emphasizes that the representative of the Sheibanid dynasty, first of all, sought to strengthen the political, cultural and ideological foundations of his own state. The borders of the Sheibanid state in the north reached the city of Turkestan and the Syrdarya cities, in the east stretched to the Tien Shan, in the south it included Khorasan, to the borders with Iran. Defending his northeastern borders of the state, Sheibani Khan repelled local attacks of the Khazars, who were supported by the Shah of Iran Ismail I (1487-1524). on the territory of Afghanistan. As a result, the troops of Kyzylbash Shah Ismail I, in the battle near the village of Mahmudabad at Merv in November 1510, managed to decide the fate of the battle in their favor, which led to the death of Sheibani Khan. The remains of his body are laid to rest in a dakhma in Samarkand.

After the death of Sheibani Khan, the real power in the state remained in the hands of Ubaidullah Khan, who ruled in Bukhara, the son of Sheibani Khan's younger brother Mahmud

Sultan. He received his name in honor of the leader of the Naqshbandi tariqa Ubaidullah Khoja Ahrar (1404-1489). In 1512, in the battle of Gijduvan, the Sheibanids of Transoxiana under the command of Ubaidullah Khan defeated the army of the Kyzylbash Safavid state, winning a decisive victory. The victory of the Sheibanids was of great historical significance for the peoples of Central Asia, who retained their independence from the Safavids. Ubaidullah Khan was one of the gifted rulers from the Sheibanid dynasty, who possessed a lively and quick mind. He thoroughly knew the Koran, provided it with comments in the Turkic language, was fond of music. Despite the difficult military-political situation in the state, he paid great attention to the development of science and culture.

He is considered to be the founder of the first real library in Bukhara, in the walls of which a style of miniature painting was created, subsequently improved under the heirs of Ubaydullah Khan and called the Bukhara School. Also, by order of the khan, as a gift to the outstanding Yemeni Sheikh Seyid Abdullah al-Yamaniy, who was his spiritual mentor, in 1530-1536, the Miri Arab madrasah was built in Bukhara.

Among its features is the presence of 114 rooms designed for listeners according to the number of surahs of the Holy Quran.

In 1993, "Miri Arab" was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Graduates of this madrasah in our time were: the late Chief Mufti of Uzbekistan and Chairman of the Board of Muslims of Uzbekistan Usmankhon Alimov; the late Chairman of the





Spiritual Board of Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Sheikh Muhammad Sadik Muhammad Yusuf; the late First President of the Chechen Republic as part of the Russian Federation, Ahmad Kadyrov; Ratbek Nysanbayev, Supreme Mufti of Kazakhstan (1990-2000); Haji Allahshukur Gummet oglu Pashazade Sheikh-ul-Islam of Muslims of the Caucasus; Ravil Gainutdin, Chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Council of Muftis Russia and many others. The name of Ubaidullah Khan is associated with the formation of a significant court literary circle in Transoxiana in the first half of the XVI century. Ubaidullah Khan himself wrote poems in Turkic, Persian and Arabic under the pseudonym Ubaidiy.

He was able to put an end to internal strife. It is noteworthy that in foreign policy, Ubaidullah Khan's priority was to get recognition by his neighbors of the Sheibanid state within its borders, which is similar to the aspirations of Sheibaniy Khan, while maintaining ties with the Ottoman Empire and China. Ubaidullah Khan was buried in one of the cells of the Mir Arab Madrasah in Bukhara, next to his mentor Abdullah al-Yamaniy.

The Sheibanid state achieved significant success under Abdullah Khan II (1534-1598), who managed to further strengthen the power and authority of the dynasty in this region. By the end of the reign of Abdullah Khan II, the borders of the state stretched from the Caspian Sea in the West to Issyk-Kul in the East, from the Aral Sea in the North and to Herat and Mashhad in the South.

In domestic and foreign policy, Abdullah Khan II largely adhered to the ideology and traditions of the founder of the dynasty, Muhammad Sheibani Khan.



Abdullah Khan II, like his other predecessors, paid attention to science, literature, urban planning, including military affairs. Under him, Uzbek troops massively mastered firearms, and the quality of the guns of Uzbek gunsmiths was known throughout the East.

In the economic field, Abdullah carried out an important reform - instead of silver coins, he introduced copper coins into circulation, establishing control over their circulation and solvency with their help. He died and was buried at the mausoleum of Bahauddin Naqshband near Bukhara.

Under the Sheibanids, historical science also develops, and many historical books appear. Kamaliddin Binoi, Mullah Shodi, Muhammad Salih, Fazlullah ibn Ruzbehan also wrote their works by order of Sheibani Khan.

Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Ali Nasrullah wrote the historical work "Zubdat ul-ozor", the poet Tanysh Bukhari "Abdullah-name" ("Sharafnomai shohiy"), Zainiddin Vosifi "Badoe ul-wakoe" (Amazing events) In the madrasas of Samarkand and Bukhara under the Sheibanid dynasty in Transoxiana, scientists who continued the traditions of the Mirzo Ulugbek Academy, such as mudarris Kamaliddin Ibrahim, Mavlono Abdullahan Khoja Muhammad, astronomer Kiyamuddin Shaido, created their works. Famous physicians Muhammad Mazid, Hakim Shahrizabzi, surgeons Bako, Rafe, Muhammad Hussein ibn Shirak Samarqandi, who wrote a book on medicine and pharmacology in 1541, oculists Shokhali ibn Suleiman, Khoja Hakim, Abdulhakim ibn Sultan Mahmud, who received the title of head of the tabibs. Khoja Hassan-Nisari in his book "Muzakkiri akhbob" (In Memory of friends) notes special merits in mathematics and astronomy of Kavkabi.

As a result, the term "Uzbek" is widely used in Central Asia. This period is of particular importance in the process of ethnogenesis of Uzbeks and other peoples of the region. In the



middle and at the end of the X century, the creation of the Kazakh Khanate was marked, formed during the collapse of the Golden Horde in 1465 and the Uzbek Khanate in 1468 and the completion of the formation of the Kazakh ethnic group.

Evidence of fraternal friendship and kinship ties of Uzbeks and Kazakhs is a monument to the founders of the Kazakh Khanate as well as the Sheibanids, direct descendants of Jochi Khan - Haji Gerei (1397-1466) and Zhanibek Khan (1428-1480), installed in the capital of Kazakhstan in Astana in 2010.

Such closeness in the line of rulers who played a key role in shaping the national borders of Central Asia once again confirms the centuries-old nature of friendship and cultural and ethnic similarity of the Uzbek and Kazakh peoples, who today adhere to a single system of values and continue to develop positive multilateral political and economic relations with the Kyrgyz, Tajik and Turkmen peoples of our region.

Thus, it should be noted that many system-forming events took place in Central Asia during the ruling Sheibanid dynasty. The main one was the formation of the current geographical contours of Central Asia.

In this regard, deepening the historiography of the Sheibanid period becomes an urgent task, in the context of a positive reset of relations between the Central Asian countries, on the general cultural, humanitarian, political and economic landscape of the region.