

DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES IN THE BUKHARA EMIRATE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY AND THEIR SOCIO-POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract. This article analyzes the demographic processes that occurred in the Bukhara Emirate at the beginning of the 20th century and examines their socio-political characteristics. During this period, the emirate remained a traditional political entity, but its internal development was strongly influenced by the Russian Empire, social stratification, economic inequality, taxation, land relations, and reformist movements. The population structure of the emirate was shaped by settled, semi-settled and nomadic communities, as well as by the interaction of different ethnic, religious and social groups. The article also highlights the role of cities, trade routes, rural life, administrative control and the Jadid movement in demographic change.

Keywords: Bukhara Emirate, demographic processes, population movement, social structure, political situation, Jadid movement, Russian protectorate, migration, urbanization, early 20th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Bukhara Emirate occupied an important place in the historical development of Central Asia. It was one of the most significant political, religious and cultural centers of the region. Although the emirate preserved its traditional form of governance, its internal political life was increasingly influenced by external forces. After 1868, Bukhara became a protectorate of the Russian Empire, and this status gradually limited the political independence of the emirate. The emir formally retained internal authority, but the influence of Russian political and economic interests became stronger over time. This situation affected not only state administration, but also the demographic and social life of the population. Demographic processes in the Bukhara Emirate were closely connected with the social and political conditions of the period. Population growth, internal migration, urban concentration, rural settlement, ethnic composition and social mobility were all influenced by the structure of power, taxation, land ownership and economic relations. Historical sources give different estimates of the population of the emirate. Some researchers indicate that the population of Bukhara in the 19th and early 20th centuries was approximately between two and three million people. These differences show that the demographic situation of the emirate was complex and that exact statistical information was difficult to collect under traditional administrative conditions.

One of the main features of the demographic structure of the Bukhara Emirate was the coexistence of settled, semi-settled and nomadic populations. The settled population mainly lived in cities, villages and agricultural oases. They were engaged in farming, handicrafts, trade and religious education. Semi-settled and nomadic groups were more connected with livestock breeding, seasonal movement and tribal relations. This diversity created a specific demographic landscape in which people's way of life depended on natural conditions, occupation, social status and political control. The rural population formed the demographic foundation of the emirate. Most people lived in villages and were engaged in agriculture. However, agricultural life was strongly dependent on land and water resources. Since land and irrigation systems were controlled by influential groups, ordinary peasants often faced economic pressure. Heavy taxation, dependence on local officials and unequal access to land created difficult living conditions. As a result, some families moved from one place to another in search of more favorable economic and social opportunities. Thus, rural demographic movement was closely related to the social structure of the emirate. Cities also played an important role in demographic processes. Bukhara, Karshi, Shahrisabz, G'ijduvon and other urban centers were places where trade, craft production, education and religious life were concentrated. Bukhara city, in particular, was not only the political capital of the emirate, but also a major cultural and religious center. Madrasas, mosques, bazaars and craft workshops attracted students, merchants, artisans and scholars from different regions. Therefore, cities became important centers of population concentration and social interaction.

Trade relations also influenced demographic changes. The Bukhara Emirate was located on important trade routes connecting Central Asia with neighboring regions. Bazaars served not only as places of economic exchange, but also as centers of communication, cultural contact and social movement. Merchants and craftsmen often moved between different towns and regions, which contributed to the mobility of the population. Studies on the economic life of the emirate emphasize the role of Bukhara as a significant trade and transit center in Central Asia. The socio-political characteristics of demographic processes were especially visible in the tax system. Various taxes and obligations had a direct impact on the daily life of the population. In many cases, economic pressure forced people to change their place of residence. Some peasants moved to other villages, while others tried to settle near cities where work, trade or craft opportunities were available. Therefore, migration in the emirate was not only a geographical process, but also a social response to inequality and administrative pressure.

The Russian protectorate also affected the demographic life of the Bukhara Emirate. Russian political and economic influence led to the appearance of new social groups, especially in trade and administrative centers. Russian-speaking settlers, merchants and officials had a different legal and social position in comparison with the local population. Some studies note that the Russian-speaking population living in the cities of the Bukhara Emirate did not always obey the same laws and tax obligations as the local population. This created social differences and influenced relations between local communities and newcomers. Ethnic and cultural diversity was another important feature of demographic processes in the emirate. The population consisted of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens, Arabs, Jews, Persians and other groups. These communities had their own traditions, languages, religious practices and forms of social organization. In urban centers, different ethnic groups interacted through trade, education and craft activities. This diversity enriched the cultural life of the emirate, but it also reflected the complexity of its social structure.

At the beginning of the 20th century, political instability began to influence population movement more strongly. The traditional system of government faced growing criticism from progressive intellectuals. The Jadid movement emerged as an important reformist force that aimed to modernize education, society and public life. In Bukhara, Jadidism developed under difficult conditions because conservative religious and political forces resisted reforms. Jadid intellectuals paid special attention to new-method schools, literacy, social renewal and the development of modern knowledge. The Jadid movement indirectly affected demographic and social mobility. Young people who wanted to receive modern education began to move toward cities and educational centers. Some students and intellectuals established contacts with Tashkent, Samarkand, Kazan, Istanbul and other centers of reformist thought. This process created a new type of mobility — intellectual and cultural mobility. It was not based only on economic necessity, but also on the desire for knowledge, reform and social change.

The political events of 1917 also had a serious impact on the social and demographic situation of the Bukhara Emirate. After the February Revolution in Russia, reformist groups in Bukhara became more active. The Young Bukharans demanded political and social reforms from the emir. However, the emir's administration and conservative groups opposed these demands. The conflict between reformist and conservative forces increased political tension and affected the movement of people, especially intellectuals and supporters of reform. Social stratification was one of the main reasons for demographic instability. The society of the emirate was divided into different groups: the ruling elite, religious scholars, merchants, artisans, peasants, nomadic

communities and poor urban residents. Each group had different opportunities for movement and social development. Wealthy merchants could travel for trade, religious scholars could move between educational centers, and poor peasants often migrated because of economic hardship. Thus, demographic processes reflected the unequal structure of society.

Another important aspect was the connection between demographic processes and political control. The administration of the emirate attempted to preserve the traditional order, while social and economic changes gradually weakened this system. Population movement, urban growth, trade expansion and educational reform all showed that society was changing. These processes created new social relations and prepared the ground for political transformation. By 1920, the political crisis of the emirate reached its final stage. The overthrow of the emir and the establishment of a new political order marked the end of the traditional Bukhara Emirate. However, the demographic and social changes that had developed before this period were already signs of deep transformation. The movement of peasants, merchants, artisans, students and intellectuals showed that Bukharan society was no longer static. It was entering a new historical stage.

Conclusion. In conclusion, demographic processes in the Bukhara Emirate at the beginning of the 20th century were closely connected with socio-political conditions. Population movement, urban concentration, rural migration, ethnic diversity and social mobility were influenced by taxation, land relations, trade, political dependence and reformist ideas. These processes were not simply natural demographic changes; they reflected the internal contradictions of Bukharan society.

The socio-political characteristics of demographic processes show that the Bukhara Emirate was experiencing a period of transition. Traditional forms of governance, social inequality and economic pressure existed together with new reformist ideas and external political influence. Therefore, the study of demographic processes in the Bukhara Emirate helps to understand the deeper social and political transformation of Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century.

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