



MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC  
SOLUTIONS  
SOCIAL SYSTEM, STATEHOOD AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
SYSTEM IN THE KHOREZM OASIS (VII-VI CENTURIES BC).

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**Abstract.** *In the socio-economic relations of pastoral communities, such important tasks as the principles of organizing livestock farming, the distribution of pastures by season and the definition of pasture boundaries were established. In studying the processes of implementing these tasks in ancient times and reconstructing the history of livestock farming, researchers turn to archaeological and ethnographic data.*

*In this article examines the social system in the Khorezm oasis in the VII-VI centuries BC.*

**Keywords:** *livestock farming, social system, statehood and administrative system, socio-economic relations, ancient times.*

**Introduction.** At the beginning of the Early Iron Age, the Aral Sea territories were occupied by the Saka tribes. The Saka living in the Lower Syr Darya basin (Eastern Aral Sea lands) were nomads, on the contrary, the Saka living in the Sarykamysh basin, formed by the Davdon and Daryolyk beds of the Amu Darya in the western part of the Khorezm oasis, were semi-sedentary (semi-nomadic) and sedentary pastoralists, with agriculture as an auxiliary branch of livestock breeding. Their culture was studied based on data identified in the Sakarchaga burial mounds, Kuyisay 2, Yassiqyr and Kangha settlements.

**Analysis.** In the Akchadarya delta in the eastern part of the Khorezm oasis, which was widely developed in the Bronze Age, no settlements dating back to the 7th-6th centuries BC were found. It is known that during the Bronze Age, canals were dug from the tributaries of the Akchadarya River, relatively small fields were located around semi-subterranean settlements, agricultural work was carried out by tribal communities, and irrigated agriculture developed to a limited extent.

In the Early Iron Age, the economic and cultural landscape changed significantly. In the Sarikamishboyi Dovdon oasis, settlements and burial mounds were located on high hills, and around them, traces of ancient irrigation structures - canals and ditches - were not detected. The population raised cows, sheep and goats, and horse breeding also played a significant role in the livestock farming<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Вайнберг Б. И. Скотоводческие племена в древнем Хорезме // Культура и искусство древнего Хорезма. – М.: “Наука”, 1981. – С. 121-123.





## MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

In addition, the pastures on the banks of the middle part of the ancient Uzboy basin of the Amu Darya, which flows from Lake Sarikamysh, began to be seasonally exploited by nomadic herders in the 7th century BC. Their burial mounds have been discovered in hills such as Khanali and Yalkim<sup>11</sup>.

The life of the Saks of the Sarikamysh region has developed a socio-economic system with its own characteristics. The lands used for the development of livestock farming formed ethnic territories where the tribes settled or moved seasonally. In this regard, the pastures around the Daryolyk, Dovdon, and Uzboy rivers were a source of livestock grazing<sup>12</sup>.

In the socio-economic relations of pastoral communities, the principles of organizing livestock farming, the seasonal distribution of pastures, and the definition of pasture boundaries were of great importance. In studying the processes of implementing these tasks in ancient times and reconstructing the history of livestock farming, researchers turn to archaeological and ethnographic data, as well as paleogeographic conditions. According to historical and ethnographic data, livestock farming, suitable for the conditions of the steppes, developed mainly in a nomadic and semi-nomadic (semi-sedentary) form, since such farming did not require much labor, and pasture grass was more nutritious for livestock. On this basis, camels and bighorn sheep were raised, which were adapted to moving from place to place in the desert dunes, while horses, on the other hand, were raised in groves or pastures along the rivers, and were supplemented with grain and alfalfa<sup>13</sup>.

In the steppes of the Sarikamish basin, according to the topography of the monuments of the Early Iron Age, on an area of approximately 180x120 kilometers, along the cattle-breeding coast (excluding the inner Kyzylkum desert), these indicators were 250x150 km. It can be assumed that these territories were used by nomadic and semi-nomadic Sakan communities in different seasons for the purpose of cattle-breeding and migration.

It is known that since the Bronze Age in the steppes of Eurasia, including in the pastoral communities of the Aral Sea, large patriarchal families have emerged. This was facilitated by the development of productive forces, the acquisition of additional products, the development of productive livestock breeding, the expansion of exchange opportunities, and socio-economic reasons<sup>14</sup>.

Archaeological materials and early written sources testify that by the 7th century BC, the economic position of large patriarchal (father-son) families in the social system of pastoralists had increased. The structure of society during this period is described in the

<sup>11</sup> Юсупов Х. Ю. Памятники древних кочевников Заузбойского плато // Культура и искусство древнего Хорезма. – М.: “Наука”, 1981. – С. 142-143.

<sup>12</sup> Вайнберг Б. И., Юсупов Х. Кочевники северо-западной Туркмении // Степная полоса азиатской части СССР в скифо-сарматское время. – М.: “Наука”, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> Сазонова М. В. Традиционное хозяйство узбеков Южного Хорезма. – Л., 1978. – С. 54-56.

<sup>14</sup> Ўзбекистон тарихи (Хоразм тарихи). XI жилд. – Тошкент: “Ozbekiston”, 2023. – Б. 38-40.







## MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

Avesta. The Avesta's Yasna mentions the family, clan, and tribe, and distinguishes the priest, warrior, herdsman, and artisan in the social structure of communities<sup>15</sup>.

According to the source, the family-"nmana" constituted the production (low) part of the social structure, and several related large families united in clan-"vis" communities. The clan included at least 15 large families, and the clan community was the basis of society. Clan communities formed the "zantu" tribe. The territory where the tribe lived was called "shoytra"<sup>16</sup>. This social system developed significantly with the emergence of a nomadic form of pastoralism in communities of shepherds living in the steppes<sup>17</sup>.

In the works of ancient Greek historians, the concept of "ethnos" - people was not applied to the steppe pastoral tribes - Sauromats, Daxes, Sakas and Massagets, the territories where they were located were not associated with a specific name, only the ethnonym of the tribes was mentioned. For example, this situation is vividly expressed in the statement of Herodotus: "these Massagets are a brave and innumerable tribe"<sup>18</sup> and in the work of Strabo: "each of the Massagets and Sakas tribes has its own name"<sup>19</sup>.

The tribe was first understood as a social association and the territory of the clan communities that were part of it, as their homeland by the herders. Pastures belonged to the clan-tribal communities and were divided between them. The attitude to private property and the social ties based on it, corresponding to kinship ties within the family and clan communities, strengthened the relations of members of the social association in the production process.

In the life and economy of the Khorezm oasis and the Aral Sea herders in general, the manufacture of tools and other items from bronze and later from iron was of great importance. It should be noted that, as in other regions of Central Asia, in the craft industry of the Aral Sea communities, starting from the stage of iron processing, iron was considered a precious metal, and it was initially used as jewelry. A bracelet made of iron was found in the Uygarak burial mound along with bronze and silver bracelets<sup>20</sup>. Two iron bracelets were found in the burial mound of Sakarchaga<sup>21</sup>. These findings also prove the above-mentioned ideas.

The spread of iron weapons increased labor productivity. In the Bronze Age, in the Khorezm oasis, tools and household items were made by artisans who were cattle breeders in their homes. In the 7th-6th centuries BC, specialized craftsmen who worked with iron emerged.

<sup>15</sup> Ясна. Глава XIX // Перевод Виноградовой С. П. Хрестоматия по истории Древнего Востока. – М.: "Высшая школа", 1980. – С.64.

<sup>16</sup> Лившиц В. А. Общество Авесты // История Таджикского народа. – М. 1963.Т. I. – С. 139-144.

<sup>17</sup> Кузьмина Е. Е. Экология степей Евразии и проблема происхождения номадизма. II. Возникновение кочевого скотоводства // ВДИ. – М., 1997. № 2. – С. 81-94.

<sup>18</sup> Геродот. I. 201.

<sup>19</sup> Страбон. Кн. XI, VIII, 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> Вишневецкая О. А. Культура сакских племён низовой Сырдарьи...С. 81.

<sup>21</sup> Яблонский Л. Т. Саки Южного Приаралья...С. 31.





## MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

Not only tools, but also weapons were made from iron. Iron tools made it easier to work with stone, bone, leather and wood. For this reason, blacksmithing became a specialized profession.

The burial goods found in the Sakas' burial mounds included weapons, horse equipment, bronze water jugs, buckles and domes. There are similarities in the images of birds of prey and animals on the bronze buckles and domes. Among the burial goods, bronze domes adorning the saddles of horseshoes feature images of birds of prey, leopards, and boars, painted in the style of animal paintings typical of the art of steppe nomads<sup>22</sup>.

According to L.T. Yablonsky, the social system of the Sakas - Khorezmians of the 7th-6th centuries BC consisted of warriors, horsemen, priests and priestesses, and ordinary and impoverished representatives of clan communities<sup>23</sup>.

In the graves of priestesses in the burial mounds studied on the Eastern Aral Sea, objects dedicated to faith and sacrifice were found, and in the graves of female horsemen, horse equipment was found. These finds testify to the high social position and status of women in the society of the Saka-Massages and the preservation of traces of matriarchy.

The female leaders of the Saka-Massages - the "queens-rulers" Tomaris and Zarina, known from the works of Herodotus and Ctesias, were described by Greek historians primarily as military leaders. Accordingly, they studied the art of military work and heroism on a par with men and knew the methods of battle.

Also, based on the information that in Babylon and Assyria, priestesses were more likely to have the name "Tamaris", the question was put forward that Princess Tomaris was not only the military leader of the Massagets, but also the chief priestess.

Of course, it is possible that in the Khorezm oasis of the 7th century BC, the tribal leader also performed the duties of the chief priest, since the members of the clans and tribes valued their leader as a person who brought peace, prosperity, military success and abundance to the communities, and was generally beneficial. At the same time, it is possible to assume the emergence of a separate class of priests - ministers of their religious beliefs. By the Early Iron Age, veneration of the spirits of ancestors, worship of the forces of nature, the sun and fire began to be significant among the Sakas-Khorezmians<sup>24</sup>. In the conditions of military democracy, the tribal goddess combined the qualities of war, the sun, the sky and the spirits of the founders of the clan - ancestors, forefathers. Along with beliefs, special rituals associated with the "Avesta" were performed. In addition, the priests knew the traditions and customs of the clan, and served to spread positive knowledge among the clan members<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Яблонский Л. Т. Формирование культуры саков Южного Приаралья // СА. – М., 1991. № 1. – С. 72-89.

<sup>23</sup> Яблонский Л. Т. Саки Южного Приаралья... С. 66.

<sup>24</sup> Матякубов Х. Хоразм воҳаси бронза асри ва илк темир даври тарихи. – Тошкент, 2017. – Б. 151.

<sup>25</sup> Першиц А. И., Монгайт А. Л., Алексеев В. П. История первобытного общества. – М.: "Высшая школа" 1968. – С. 194-195.







MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC  
SOLUTIONS

**Conclusion.** The Avesta praises the work of herders, provides information about the heroism of warriors-horsemen, their weapons. The production of weapons played a significant role in the society of the Saks. Weapons, armor, and horse equipment were produced in special craft workshops. Written sources mention the battle ranks of the Saks and Massagets, cavalry and infantry warriors, and their military unit was based on cavalry-archers, who used spears, battle axes, and daggers in battle. New research has examined the field of ancient military work in the Aral Sea region as a special topic. The management of the Saks was based on the system of a large family and clan head, and a tribal leader. Vital issues were resolved at the council of elders and tribal gatherings. All armed warriors attended the tribal meeting, and issues of war or truce were also discussed<sup>26</sup>. In the 7th-6th centuries BC, this system largely did not reach the level of political governance, but reflected clan-tribal social customs and traditions of governance. Tribal leaders and military leaders of tribal associations were elected by the council of elders and community gatherings, and the governance system was based on the principles of "military democracy"<sup>27</sup>.

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MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC  
SOLUTIONS

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