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## ETHNOGENESIS OF THE KARAKALPAKS: THE LEGACY OF SOVIET ETHNOGRAPHY

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the achievements of Soviet ethnography in the study of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak. It is noted that through the efforts of P.P. Ivanov, S.P. Tolstov, L.S. Tolstova, T.A. Zhdanko and others, the concept of ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak was first proposed. The most important materials were collected thanks to the activities of the Khorezm archaeological and Ethnographic expedition. The first ethnographers appeared among the Karakalpak.

**Keywords:** Ethnography, ethnology, ethnogenesis, Apasiaks, Augasias, Pechenegs, Kipchaks, Oguzes, Kerders, Nogai, Karakalpak.

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada qoraqalpoqlar etnogenezini o'rganishda sovet etnografiyasining yutuqlari tahlil qilingan. Qayd etilishicha, P.P. Ivanov, S.P. Tolstov, L.S. Tolstova, T.A. Jdanko va boshqalarning sa'y-harakatlari bilan qoraqalpoqlarning etnogenezi kontseptsiyasi birinchi marta taklif qilingan. Eng muhim materiallar Xorazm arxeologik-etnografik ekspeditsiyasi faoliyati tufayli to'plangan. Qoraqalpoqlar orasidan ilk etnograflar paydo bo'lgan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Etnografiya, etnologiya, etnogenez, apasiaklar, avgaziyalar, pecheneglar, qipchoqlar, o'g'uzlar, kerderlar, no'g'aylar, qoraqalpoqlar.

**Аннотация:** В статье анализируются достижения советской этнографии по изучению этногенеза каракалпаков. Отмечаются, что усилиями П.П.Иванова, С.П.Толстова, Л.С.Толстовой, Т.А.Жданко и других впервые была предложена концепция этногенеза каракалпаков. Были собраны важнейшие материалы, благодаря деятельности Хорезмской археолого-этнографической экспедиции. Появились первые ученые-этнографы среди каракалпаков.

**Ключевые слова:** Этнография, этнология, этногенез, апасиаки, аугасии, печенеги, кипчаки, огузы, кердеры, ногаи, каракалпаки.

### INTRODUCTION.

In the study of historical and ethnographic problems, including ethnogenesis, material and spiritual culture is of paramount importance. "To understand the origin of a people does not mean to establish the historical continuity of its name or to find the area where its ancestors used to live, or to trace the evolution of the remnants of ancient cultures on its present territory.

In 1933-1934, the historical and folklore expedition of the Karakalpak SRI (Scientific Research Institute) under the leadership of A.A. Sokolov worked. She collected historical legends, ethnographic materials characterizing family and



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household relations, ancient customs, beliefs and rituals of the Karakalpaks, which was of great scientific importance. In 1937, the Khorezm complex archaeological and ethnographic expedition under the leadership of S.P.Tolstov began its work.

Taking as a basis the false premise that the Karakalpaks and Kazakhs descended from a single mythical ancestor, M.Tynyshpaev concluded that the study of the history of the Karakalpak people is impractical. In 1926-1927, a discussion began on the pages of the newspaper "Еркин каракалпак". M.Tynyshpaev, A.Rysbayev, K.Sarsenbayev generally denied the Karakalpak language that "their native language is the Kazakh language, therefore, it is unnecessary to invent a new language, create a new writing system." [1].

The bibliographic index of A.S.Morozova contained a detailed list of books and articles on the history and ethnographies of the Karakalpaks [2].

## **METHODS.**

A significant contribution was made by the prominent orientalist P.P.Ivanov (1893-1942), who published «An essay on the history of the Karakalpaks». Of particular importance for historical science was the interpretation given by the researcher of the reports of primary sources about the Pechenegs. His observations confirmed scientific ideas that the Pechenegs were tribes related to the ancestors of the Karakalpak people.

P.P.Ivanov proved the scientific inconsistency of attempts by individual researchers to solve the question of the origin of the Karakalpak tribes only on the basis of formal similarity of ethnonyms. He emphasized that considering the Karakalpaks as direct descendants of the "black hoods" of the southern Russian steppes is tantamount to recognizing them as direct descendants of the eastern (Turkic) Pechenegs. The chain of various tribes preceding the modern Karakalpaks, which have replaced each other for many centuries, is too complex and poorly studied to consider them all direct ancestors of the Karakalpak people. No less carefully P.P.Ivanov studied the question of the attitude of the Karakalpaks to the Nogai during the XV-XVIII centuries, he proved that in the sources of this





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period it comes different peoples, which cannot be mixed, because the connection between them is not so much ethnic as territorial.

Based on a scrupulous study of given sources, P.P.Ivanov made a principal conclusion about the futility of disputes on the topic with whom exactly — the Pechenegs, Kipchaks or Nogai — the initial stage of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks was associated. The researcher considered such a statement of the question to be an oversimplification of a complex problem, paying attention to the mixed composition of the tribes of both the Kipchak Union and the Nogai Horde. "The Mongol conquest," - he wrote, "and later the gradual disintegration of the Golden Horde caused a number of complex migration movements of the Turkic-Mongolian tribes, which undoubtedly affected the composition of the population of the Trans-Volga and Trans-Ural steppes".

P.P.Ivanov noted that even the earliest information about the Karakalpaks shows the diversity of their composition, the inclusion of ethnic components of Kipchak, Nogai origin and many others in their environment. Thus, the researcher approached the problem of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks from a new position and showed that they represent a historically formed ethnic community, which over a long, centuries-old process of ethnic development included various groups - local origin and newcomers.

In 1937, P.P.Ivanov read a report on the topic «New data on the Karakalpaks». On the basis of the manuscript of Fazlul Ruzbehan's work "Mikhman-nama" discovered by him in Tashkent, P.P. Ivanov concluded that the appearance of Karakalpaks in the Syr-Darya should be attributed to the second half of the XVI century. The Karakalpaks came to Central Asia not from the South Russian steppes, as the proponents of the well-known theory about their Pecheneg origin approved, but from the Ural basin, where this people lived throughout the late Middle Ages [3].

A.Birze confirmed the conclusions of P.P.Ivanov about the time of the appearance of the Karakalpaks in Central Asia. "The Karakalpaks," A. Birze noted,



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"almost completely ruined and forced by force of circumstances to rush to the Yany-Darya in the areas southeast of the Aral Sea, to the border of Khiva, became completely dependent on Khiva, and subsequently the emirate of Bukhara" [4].

S.P.Tolstov made a conceptual conclusion of great scientific significance: "The history of the Sogdians, Bactrians, Khorezmians, Massagets, Saks, Usuns, Ephthalites, Turks of ancient Central Asia is the history of the direct ancestors of the peoples of the East, peoples who have shown in practice that in their person has worthy descendants the Central Asian antiquity".

T.N.Karyniyazov noted the insufficient study of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak people. "The main question in the study of the history of every nation, and consequently of the Karakalpak people," he said, "is the question of its origin. The primary sources, which are both directly and indirectly related to the issue under consideration, are still not fully studied, and without this, serious work on the study of the past of the Karakalpak people is unthinkable." Further, T.N.Karyniyazov pointed out: "Strictly scientific development of the issues of the past of the Karakalpak people can be carried out, first of all, only on the basis of a comprehensive and in-depth study of written and other historical sources".

The resolution adopted at the session provided for the further development and expansion of the study of the ethnography of the Karakalpaks in close connection with the study of the Uzbeks of the Amu Darya Delta and other peoples.

Separate groups of the indigenous population were surveyed, a general summary of materials on the sections "Clothing" and "Food" was compiled, the way of life of the Uzbeks of the city of Nukus and the Muiten tribes was described.

The study of the home life of the Karakalpaks, which preserved many peculiar features of the ancient culture, eloquently speaking about their origin, was of great importance for deepening scientific ideas about the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak people, whose historical path is illuminated by written historical sources only since the end of the XVI century.





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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.

The Khorezm archaeological and ethnographic expedition made a huge contribution to the study of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks.

The results of S.P.Tolstov's ethnographic research, his elaboration of the problems of the development of the ancient Khorezm civilization and the historical role of the steppe tribes inhabiting the periphery of ancient Khorezm are important.

Based on the archaeological discoveries made by the staff of the Khorezm expedition, the concept of the early stages of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks was formed. According to S.P.Tolstov, the Sako-Massaget tribes of the Apasiaks were the most ancient ethnic element involved in the formation of the Karakalpaks in the era of antiquity.

S.P.Tolstov considered the formation of the Pecheneg political association of the IX-XI centuries to be a key moment in the history of the formation of the Karakalpaks. He considered the eastern branch of the Pechenegs as the most important element of the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks and believed that after the "Turkic Pechenegs" underwent in the XI-XIV centuries, strongly influenced by neighboring tribes (Oguz, Kipchaks and Turkized Mongols), and also included in their composition some groups of western descendants who returned from the South Russian steppes to the Aral Sea region ("Khazar") the Pechenegs, they "became the ethnic basis of the eastern Nogai and then the historical Karakalpaks of the XVI and subsequent centuries" [5].

However, the mere coincidence of the data of archaeological and historical sciences was still not enough to solve such a complex issue as the origin of the people. Therefore, in order to conduct in-depth stationary ethnographic research, the Karakalpak ethnographic detachment (headed by T.A.Zhdanko) was organized as part of the Khorezm expedition of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1945.

The task of this detachment was a planned and systematical historical and ethnographic study of the multinational population of the lower reaches of the Amu Darya. The Karakalpak Ethnographic detachment also included in the



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program of its works and versatile historical and ethnographic research on ethnogenesis, on traditional forms of economy, social system, life and culture of the Karakalpaks.

In 1945-1955, the Karakalpak Ethnographic detachment carried out a historical and ethnographic survey of all areas of the former Karakalpak habitat on the lower Syr Darya, in the Zhanadarya and Kuvandarya basins.

Collaborators of the Karakalpak ethnographic detachment T.A.Zhdanko, B.V.Andrianov, M.V.Sazonova, K.L.Zadykhina, N.P.Lobacheva, S.K.Kamalov, R.K.Kosbergenov, U.X.Shalekenov recorded from the words of the older generation - connoisseurs of the historical traditions of the Karakalpak people - a lot of oral traditions about the origin and composition of the Karakalpak tribes, genus and generic units, about their movements before and after coming to the Amu Darya Delta [6].

The extensive ethnographic material collected by the detachment on traditional forms of economy, family customs, dwellings, clothing, applied arts of the Karakalpaks was a valuable source for the development of issues of ethnogenesis.

The study of ethnographic material showed that the Karakalpaks, as well as some tribes of Kazakhs and Turkmens, part of the Uzbeks (Aralians) were mainly formed on the territory of the Aral Sea region.

As a result of many years of archaeological and ethnographic research, the participation of many specific tribes and nationalities, such as the Sako-Massagets, Chionito-Pechenegs, Kipchaks and Nogai, in the formation of the Karakalpak people has been proved and scientifically substantiated.

It is very important that the ethnographic data not only do not differ from the data of history and archeology on the question of the ways of formation of the Karakalpak people, but on the contrary complement and confirm the latter.

The study of the complex history of the formation of the peoples of Central Asia, including the Karakalpaks, showed that the ethnic ties of its tribes and





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peoples dating back to the primeval era (Neolithic and Bronze Age) continued throughout their subsequent history. Thus, the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan are connected between themselves by ancient ties of ethnic kinship. The study of the material culture, applied art and ornament of the peoples of Central Asia in the historical and ethnographic aspect made it possible not only to restore the cultural heritage and the history of the formation of original, peculiar national cultures of individual peoples, but also to identify their common, similar features, indicating the prescription of mutual influences.

In the late 1940s, by scientists was created the first consolidated work on the history of the peoples of Uzbekistan. It also reflected the history of Karakalpakstan (the first volume of 1947, the second volume -1950). It was noteworthy that this work was the result of a fruitful collaboration of Uzbek scientists with historians of Moscow and Leningrad.

In the generalizing work on the history of the peoples of Uzbekistan, the past of the Karakalpak people was reflected quite widely and in detail. It included special sections "Karakalpaks in the XVI—XVII centuries." and "Karakalpaks in the XIII century.", as well as a separate chapter "Karakalpaks in the first half of the XIX century." All of them were written by A.A.Semenov using unpublished materials of P.P.Ivanov. The pages of the "History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan" were reflected many important problems of the history of Karakalpakstan, including the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpak people, its political history, the level of development of productive forces at different stages and the socio-political system.

A.A.Semenov managed to clearly trace the stages of the evolution of the Karakalpak economy and the dynamics of changes; in the ratio of various sectors of the economy, in particular, he characterized the process of development of the land-owning economy and the gradual increase in its share due to nomadic cattle breeding, which was the foundation of the semi-nomadic lifestyle of the Karakalpaks.



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## CONCLUSION.

The publication of the first edition of the two-volume "History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan" as a whole was an important event in the history of historical science of our republic.

During the same period, the ethnographic study of the Karakalpaks outside the Khorezm oasis began. L.S.Tolstova conducted a historical and ethnographic study of the Karakalpaks living in the Fergana, Samarkand and Bukhara regions and paid much attention to the history of their resettlement in these areas [7].

In the mid-1950s, a new generalized work on the history of Uzbekistan was published. The sections devoted to the history of the Karakalpak people were written by T.A.Zhdanko, who worked a lot and fruitfully on the problems of the history and ethnography of the Karakalpaks.

T.A.Zhdanko managed to give a clear description of the ethnographic processes that determined the formation of the Karakalpak people, and to show its place among other Turkic-speaking elements of the population of Central Asia. On this basis, the ethnogenesis of the Karakalpaks was convincingly presented as the result of strengthening the internal relationships of the tribes and peoples of the Aral Sea region.

The book "Ethnography of the Karakalpaks" became a generalizing monograph on ethnogenesis.

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