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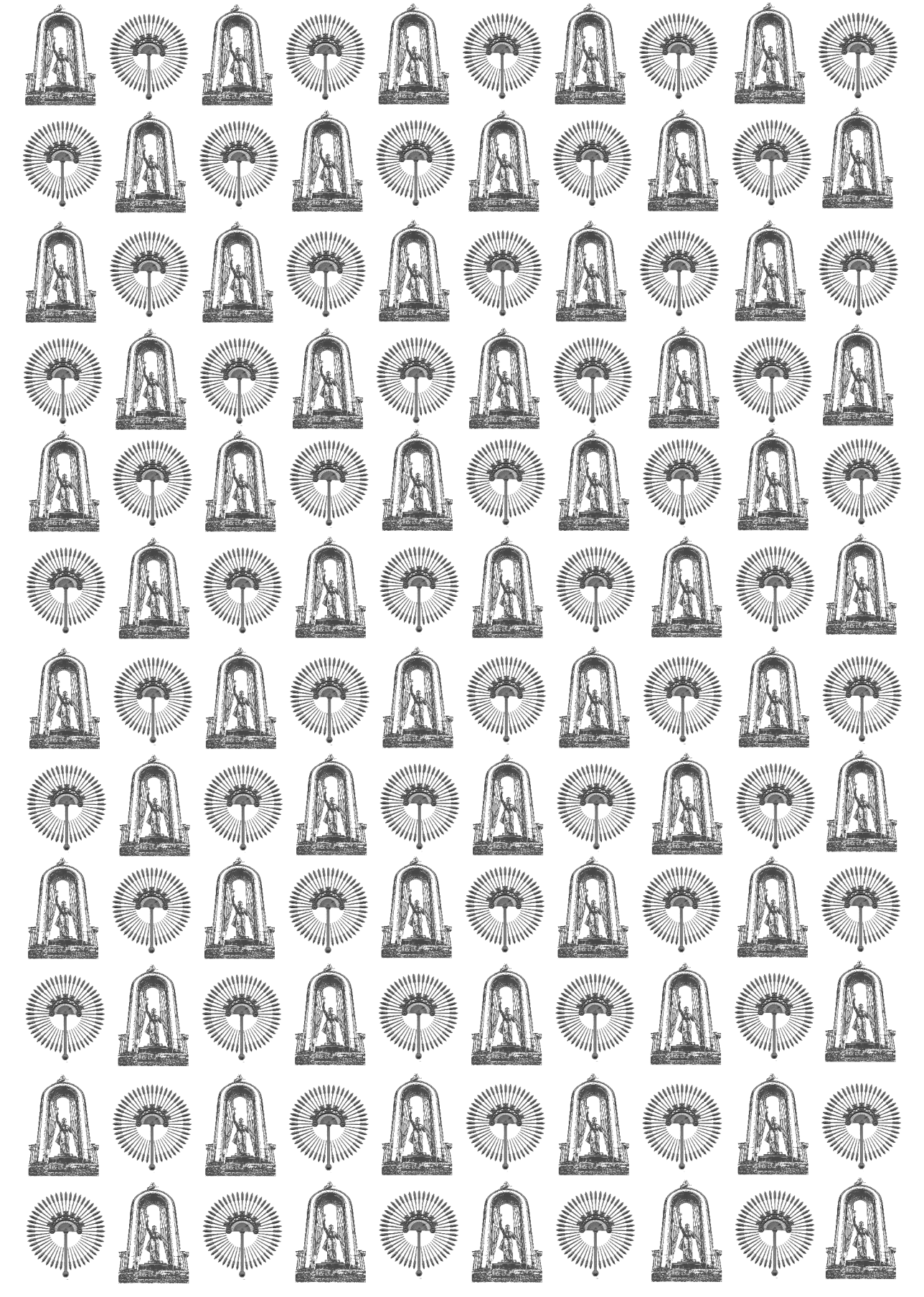

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HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SAMANID EMPIRE

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The era of the Samanid reign is regarded as the "golden age" of Eastern history by historians. Various issues related to this period have been thoroughly analyzed by scholars, and valuable works have been published on the subject. However, the historical geography of the Samanid Empire has not yet been studied in depth. Given the existing information from historical sources and recent successful research, it is essential to conduct a more detailed analysis of the historical geography of the Samanid Empire and clarify its internal and external borders during different periods of its existence.

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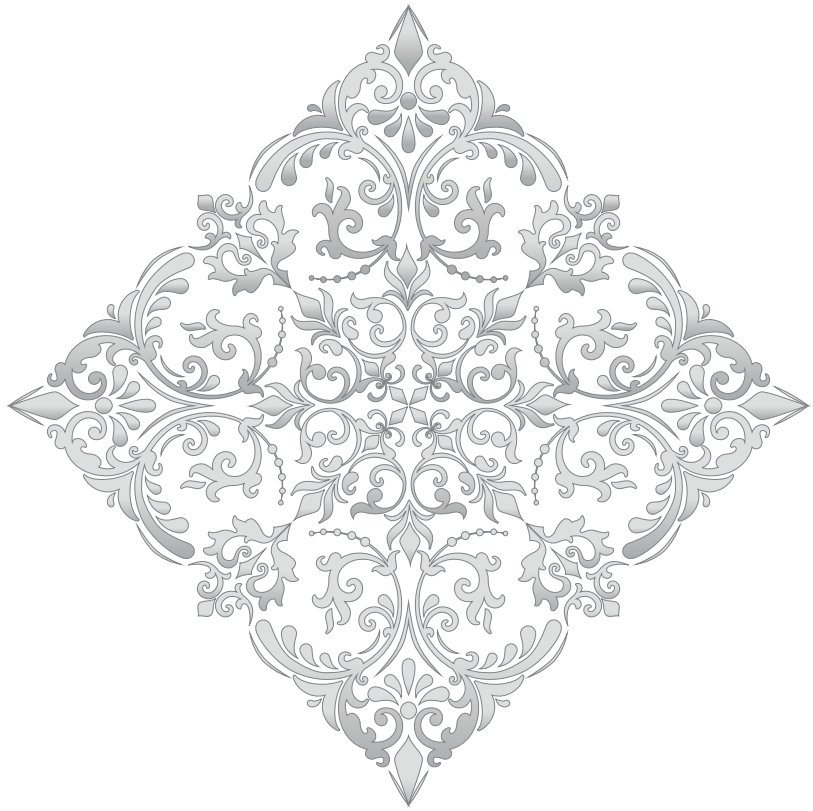



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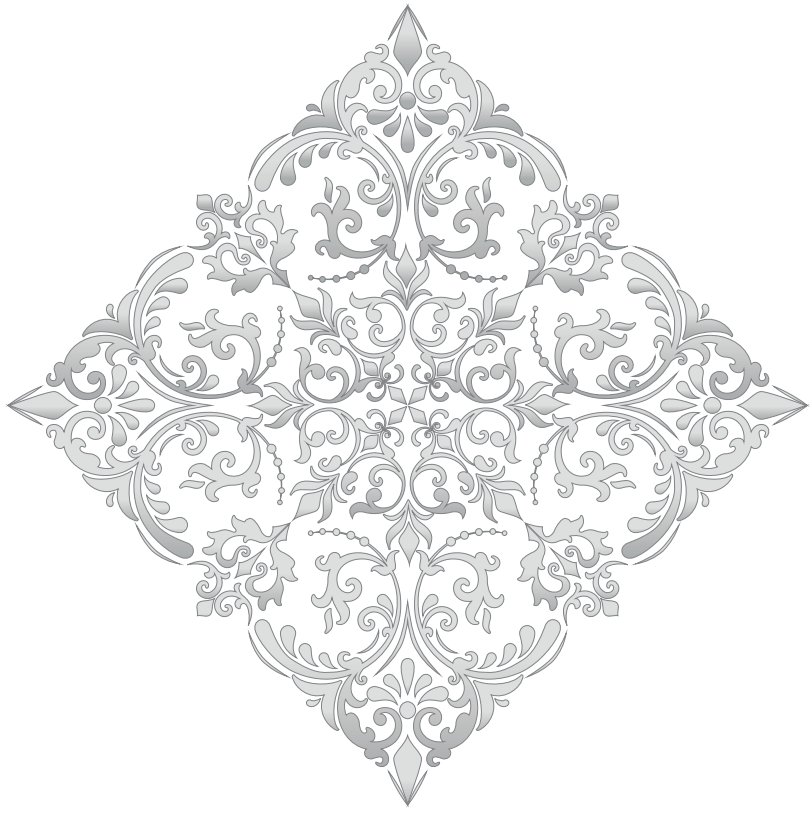

A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IN NATIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

In contemporary Tajik historiography, it can be said that no research has been conducted on the issues of historical geography of medieval local Tajik (national) states. Territorial issues of most of them remained unclear and undefined for scientific and educated circles of the country. In some cases, their territories have even been misinterpreted. This includes the historical geography of the most famous Tajik state—the Samanids. Despite numerous scientific studies conducted by foreign Tajik historians, the true boundaries of the Samanid state had not yet been deeply examined or accurately defined. In this case, the publication of the monograph by Nekruz Safarzoda - "The Historical Geography of the Samanid Empire" is a promising and welcome development for Tajik scientific society, one that can be confidently celebrated.

For the first time in Tajik and also foreign historiography, this subject is being fully studied and discussed. The author's approach to writing and compiling this book has been highly successful. Initially, he investigates the early period of Samanid rule, while also accurately defining the geographical scope of the influence of each local ruler from this dynasty based on available sources. Then, drawing from reliable historical sources, the author studies

the territorial expansion of the Samanid state, and, in chronological order, specifies the state's expanding boundaries. He thoroughly examines the political, social, and economic events that contributed to this territorial expansion and deeply analyzes their consequences. As a result of the author's research and conclusion, the exact boundaries of the Samanid state have been determined, and a complete map of the state has been illustrated, which constitutes a significant scientific achievement.

The second section of the book contains information about the main regions (provinces) and cities of the Samanid Empire. The author compares historical sources with archaeological findings to determine the locations of the Samanid state's cities. Additionally, relying on historical sources and other medieval geographical works, the author determined the internal borders, i.e. the territory of the regions within the Samanid Empire, and depicts them on maps. Overall, in this section, a detailed description of the regions and territories within the vast Samanid state is presented, and valuable historical information has been thoroughly examined and analyzed. The book not only traces the rise of the Samanid state but also discusses the gradual decline in its territorial extent. The author insightfully analyzes the factors that led to the territorial reduction of the Samanid state.

In the conclusion, the author expresses his opinion on the issues considered, clarifying some important aspects of the topic which were relatively unclear until now. The appendix section of the book contains maps

that clearly depict the author's work. There are more than 20 maps; each prepared using reliable historical sources and a comparison of scholarly findings, providing clear scientific and logical credibility to the book.

In summary, this monograph by Nekruz Safarzoda can be considered a major and significant achievement for the academic community of Tajikistan, as it offers a solution to the geographical and territorial issues of the largest medieval Tajik state–the Samanid state–and provides a comprehensive and accurate understanding of a glorious period in the history of the proud Tajik nation.

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ABOUT HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY…

The term "historical geography" is a not widely familiar to everyone, and most scholars and educators in our contemporary society. It is even possible that not all scholars in historical and fields truly understand the essence of historical geography or recognize its significance in their research. This may have various reasons. One of the main reasons is that historical geography is a specialized subject. That is, only those who engage in scientific research or teaching might have comprehensive knowledge about historical geography. Scholars in the field have had long discussions about the subject of study, position, and importance of historical geography, expressing their views in different ways. Some have considered it a branch of geography, while others have regarded it as a branch of history, with the latter being closer to the truth, and this perspective will be confirmed below by describing the history of the formation of historical geography as a discipline.

Although many works and writings in the field of historical geography link the emergence of geographical-historical knowledge to the Renaissance and the Great Geographical Discoveries of Europeans, the reality is quite different. Since the birthplace and development of the first civilizations was the Ancient East (Egypt, Mesopotamia, Iran, China, India), it is quite likely that the earliest geographical-historical knowledge also emerged there, and works on this subject were written, although due to historical events, they have not survived in written form to our time.

However, there is also very strong evidence in this regard that is highly valuable for supporting the aforementioned statement. The depiction of various peoples with their distinctive clothing and equipment in the "Takhte Jamshid" (Persepolis) and the Avesta, which is a historical legacy of all Aryan-descended peoples, including us Tajiks, encompasses geographical and historical information. Several studies have been conducted based on this information. Thus, even though the earliest geographical-historical knowledge was in a primitive form, attributing it to ancient Eastern peoples, including the Iranians, will not be incorrect. The area of residence of peoples of Iranian origin had a special place in this regard, due to the fact that it was the "heart of the East". Here the first empire of the ancient world was formed - the Achaemenid Empire; at the royal court of which many scientists-geographers from all over the world of that time lived and worked. Among them were also Greek scientists, whose works have survived to this day.

Moreover, the development of geographical writing in the medieval Islamic countries of the East reached such a high level that almost 500 years later it laid the foundation for the geographical discoveries and achievements of Europeans in this area. Valuable works have written, including those by our ancestors - Ibn Khordadbeh, Istakhri, Abu Zeyd Balkhi, Khwarizmi, Ibn Faqih Hamadani, Jayhani, Biruni, Zakariya, Qazwini and others, – on topics of geography, including mapmaking, defining travel routes, the location of cities, descriptions of regions and lands, the ethnic, religious, and linguistic affiliations of the inhabitants of various cities and regions of the world at that time, still remain some

of the most important sources for studying issues of historical geography.

Based on the writings and discoveries of medieval Muslim geographers, Europeans also achieved unprecedented breakthroughs in the 15th–16th centuries. All of this accumulated geographical knowledge throughout human history eventually provided the groundwork for the formation of a new discipline – historical geography. That is, through scholars' observations and research, it was proven that natural-geographical factors have played a role in certain historical events, which should be studied within the framework of a separate discipline.

Thus, historical geography emerged as a separate and new scientific discipline in European scientific circles (in France and Germany) in the late 19th – early 20th centuries. Throughout the 20th century, many valuable works related to this subject were published, further developing the various branches of this discipline. Scholars in the field, each with their own scientific approach and perspective, have articulated the position and subject of study of historical geography.

The current common definition of historical geography is as follows: Historical geography is a complex discipline that studies the natural, socio-economic, cultural and political geography of the past in the context of historical development. In other words, from a general historical science perspective, historical geography is an auxiliary branch of history that studies the territorial (spatial) aspect of the historical process, or specifically the geography of the past of a particular country or region. From this viewpoint, the task of historical geography is

considered to clarify the location of historical events and geographical objects in the past.

However, if we pay more attention to the subject of studying historical geography, we will notice that important issues such as the expansion or contraction of the internal or external borders of states and their administrative units, identifying the exact location of cities, settlements, road, travels and expeditions routes, military campaigns, battles sites, and other significant historical events are specifically researched and analyzed through historical geography.

Depending on the subject being studied, historical geography is divided into the following branches: historical natural (physical) geography, political geography, population geography, social geography, economic geography, regional geography, and others, each of which should be studied in conjunction with one another.

THE SIMILARITIES OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY WITH OTHER SCIENCES

Historical geography has many connections and commonalities with various branches of social sciences (humanities). However, its connection with two modern disciplines - political geography and geopolitics is particularly strong, to that point where even similarities between them are observed. All three of these disciplines belong to different sciences: historical geography is part of history, political geography is a branch of geography, and geopolitics is a subdivision of political science. Despite this, their shared focus on certain topics and tasks often becomes so similar that it becomes impossible to

limit the subject to just one of these disciplines. For instance, when examining historical geopolitical issues (defining the borders of states and their expansion or contraction over different periods, the geographical scope of the formation and settlement of nations), historical geography and political geography nearly merge into one discipline. To study such topics, the scholars have defined a special branch within historical geography called historical political geography.

This thematic combination of historical geography, political science and geopolitics has its objective and proven reason. The main reason is that these sciences share a common theoretical (conceptual) foundation. All three disciplines were formed on the basis of the theory of geographical determinism. According to this theory, the course of historical events and the development of different societies are heavily influenced by nature and environmental conditions. The earliest thoughts on this subject were expressed in their primitive forms by ancient scholars like Guan Zhong (720–645 BCE), Hippocrates (406–377 BCE), and others. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) delved into this topic in greater detail and expressed scientifically grounded ideas more comprehensively. Ibn Khaldun's views were later supported and promoted by Montesquieu (1689-1755), influencing other scholars.

In the late 19th – early 20th centuries, the scientific theory of geographical determinism was mixed with the racial and nationalistic ideas by scientific circles (including the founders of geopolitics F. Ratzel, H. Mackininder, K. Haushofer, etc.) and political leaders of some Western countries and it was used as an ideological basis for the conquest and colonization of other territories by European nations.

For this reason, the theory of geographical determinism lost its scientific status as the "ideological foundation" for colonial states, which in turn cast doubt on the role and significance of the disciplines developed based on it—historical geography (particularly its political branch), political geography, and geopolitics. For a while, researchers in historical geography focused only on social and economic aspects of discipline. Detailed information on these foundational topics can be found in the introductory sections of books on geopolitics, so there is no need for further elaboration here.

However, subsequent historical events in the world, including natural disasters caused by human activity that have had negative consequences for the entire planet, once again demonstrated the strong interconnection between natural and social factors. This reaffirmed the idea that when analyzing the causes and factors of major historical (political, social, economic) events, it is crucial to consider the natural environment and geographical characteristics of each region.

ADVANTAGES OF RESEARCH WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

In order for research on specific scientific issues in the relevant branches of social sciences to be more comprehensive and the conclusions drawn from it to be more stable and reliable, the study must necessarily include a historical analysis. Specifically, any event or process (such as the formation of states and changes in their boundaries, the formation or

migration of nations, or other events influenced by natural-geographical conditions of any land) has a historical beginning and end, which must be covered comprehensively in the research. The historical approach in this case is of great importance, as it examines phenomena (processes) from their inception and prerequisites through to their conclusion and completion, resulting in very thorough and comprehensive findings. The combination of methods used in historical-geographical research allows for a complete and multi-dimensional examination of the subject matter. Although it is unnecessary to describe each of these methods in detail here, it is important to note that one of them–cartography–enables the visualization and direct observation of the dynamics of territorial changes, the expansion of political events, transformations in geopolitical realities, and the mutual influence of societal events and processes with natural-geographical conditions. This method is extensively utilized in this book.

If we focus specifically on the topic of this monograph, in our view, historical political geography can serve as a strong foundation for a more complete examination of modern geopolitical and political-geographical issues. In this regard, referencing the opinion of Russian scholars V.G. Shvedov and A.N. Makhinov is quite appropriate, as they state: "Most contemporary geopolitical studies are weakly connected with retrospective territorial (spatial) analysis. This situation arises because addressing these issues requires complete and profound knowledge of the past natural environment and society, the characteristics of the dynamics of their interrelation, and simultaneously the ability to use them together–something that requires highly

skilled specialists with broad and comprehensive knowledge, who are currently quite rare."[1]

In the academic circles of Western countries (including the United States, Britain, and Germany), historical geography today is primarily focused on its ecological aspect. That is, only the natural (physical) component of historical geography is studied and researched within this discipline. Furthermore, in Britain, geopolitics is considered a subfield of political geography. However, in other countries, such as Russia, China, the Central Asian nations, and others, historical geography is studied as an auxiliary discipline to history in specialized academic and educational institutions. In Russia, attention to the study of historical-geographical issues has significantly increased since 2010, with a special center established within the Russian Academy of Sciences to address pressing topics in this field. In the Republic of Tajikistan, the establishment of such a center and the broad teaching of historical geography across all relevant humanities fields is highly necessary.

Certain pressing issues of regional studies (such as the definitions of the terms "region," "border," and "territory," taking into account national, cultural, identity factors, and others) are also modern subjects of study within historical geography, laying a strong foundation for the emergence of historical political geography as an independent discipline.

At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, numerous publications emerged that further solidified the thematic links between

[1] V. G. Shvedov, A. N. Makhinov. Rossiyskoye zemleprokhodcheskoye dvizheniye v Priamur'ye (XVII vek). Istoriko-geograficheskaya retrospektiva (Monogr.) n(Russian exploration movement in the Amur region (17th century. Historical and geographical retrospective). P. 7–8. M., «Akademiya yestestvoznaniya», 2011.– 214 pp.

historical geography and political, economic, social, cultural geography, as well as geopolitics. It is quite possible that in the near future, historical geography will evolve into a completely independent discipline that will comprehensively research and analyze all related subjects within these fields as a unified whole.

In this monograph, relying on reliable historical sources and using scientific methods established in historical and geographical research, the boundary and territorial issues of the Samanid Empire are considered. The topic of the monograph is thus closely related to historical political geography due to its interdisciplinary nature.



PREFACE

Scholars have rightfully deemed the era of the Samanid dynasty as the golden age in the history of the Tajik people. During this period, politics, economics, society, culture, science, art, and literature flourished immensely. This is why the study and research of this historical period have attracted the attention of many scholars. They have explored topics such as politics, economics, science, culture, literature, philosophy, music, architecture, military affairs, and other areas, shedding light on many aspects of this history. However, amidst these studies, the historical geography of the Samanid state has been briefly touched upon, often in limited thematic scopes or on the periphery of other research, and has not been seriously investigated on its own. It can be said that to this day, the historical boundaries of specific periods within this era have not been definitively identified. Even the timeframe when the modern territories of Tajikistan were incorporated into the Samanid state remains unclear in these studies. Maps currently used in scientific and educational materials in schools and universities of Tajikistan still depict the borders of the Samanid state incompletely. For example, the historical Tajik-populated region of Ghor is shown outside the borders of this state, while some western and central regions of Iran, which were part of the Samanid state for nearly half a century, are not included in these maps.

In the book that is now being presented to the esteemed reader, the internal and external boundaries of the Samanid state will be clarified to some extent

based on scholarly research, by comparing information from sources and contemporary archaeological findings. In this way, the historical geography of the formation of the Tajik people and the geographical expansion of the Dari Persian language in Greater Khorasan and beyond will become clearer.

The study of the historical geography of individual regions of the Samanid state and its semi-independent territories will allow researchers of this period to more accurately determine the socio-economic conditions of the vast Samanid realm.

A scientific examination of this issue, based on written sources and contemporary scholarly materials, provides more opportunities to precisely define the geographical and historical characteristics of the region during this period. It is evident from the research conducted that the historical geography of the Samanid state has always attracted the attention of historians and researchers. The study of sources, along with archaeological excavations—which have achieved remarkable success since the 20th century—has contributed to the creation of important works related to this issue. Particularly, as a result of archaeological excavations, the most significant material artifacts from the Samanid era, including the ruins of major cities from that time—such as Afrasiab, Bunjikat, Hulbuk, Termez, Merv, Nisa, Munk, Vakhsh, Shuman, and Akharun–have been discovered.

In general, the historical issues of the Samanid period have been examined by scholars and researchers from various periods. From the second half of the 19th century onwards, scholars began studying the history of Samanid statehood, examining nearly all scientific aspects. As a result, scholars such

as V.A. Zhukovsky, V.V. Bartold, A.Yu. Yakubovsky, A.A. Semyonov, E.A. Davidovich, I. Petrushevsky, Said Nafisi, B.G. Gafurov, M.E. Masson, Guy Le Strange, Yu.F. Buryakov, A.M. Belenitsky, I.B. Bentovich, O.G. Bolshakov, A.M. Mandelstam, N.N. Nematov, A. Mukhtorov, S. Abdulloyev, G. Ghaibov, N. Amirshohi, M. Noji, A. Ranjbar, Hamza Kamol, M. Isomatov, S. Mullojonov, A. Zarrinkub, J. Hiravi, and others have conducted valuable research on topics such as the history, culture, literature, and historical geography of the Samanid state, determining the historical significance of this dynasty.

Despite the extensive scientific research already conducted, some issues remain unresolved. Among them is the historical geography of the Samanid state, which, despite the significant scientific work done on the subject, still has some ambiguities regarding the boundaries of the provinces and, in general, the overall territory of this great state. Therefore, the author has made an effort in this direction to research and analyze this issue comprehensively.

CHAPTER I

THE SAMANIDS: THE BEGINNING OF RULE AND GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION OF THE STATE

§ 1.1. Ascension of the Samanid dynasty to the throne in Transoxiana and Khorasan

The progenitor of the Samanid dynasty, Saman-khudat, originated from the regions of Balkh, Termez, or around Samarkand.[1] He was called Saman-khudat because he established a village and named it "Saman." Historians associate the name of Saman-khudat with the genealogy of the famous Sassanid commander - Bahram Chobin.[2] When Saman-khudat traveled from Balkh to Merv, the governor of Khorasan, Asad ibn Abdallah al-Qasri, honored him and sent him back to Balkh. Saman-khudat embraced Islam and, out of respect for Asad ibn Abdallah, named his son "Asad". Asad ibn Saman-khudat had four sons: Nuh, Ahmad, Yahya, and Ilyas, who were involved in supporting the Abbasid government against the rebellion of Rafi ibn al-Layth (806–810). By the orders of Caliph al-Ma'mun (813–833), the sons were appointed to various administrative roles in 819–820. Thus, in the years 819–820, Nuh was appointed to rule in Samarkand, Ahmad in Ferghana, Yahya in Chach and Ustrushan and Ilyas in Herat. Although it seemed that each of the four brothers govern separate regions, which directly

[1] Gafurov B. Tojikon. Tarikhi qadimtarin, qadim va asrhoi miyona (Tajiks. Prehistory, ancient and medieval history) (in Tajik). Dushanbe, 1998. P. 450. (hereinafter: Gafurov B. Tajiks).

[2] Narshakhi, Abubakr Muhammad ibn Jafar. Tarikhi Bukhoro (History of Bukhara) (in Tajik). Prep., ed. G. Goibov and N. Amirshahi. Dushanbe: "Payvand", 2012. P. 114 (hereinafter: Narshakhi).

subjects Khorasan ruler, in fact it differed.[1] Nuh ibn Asad held a special position among the brothers and was recognized as the head of the family in foreign relations. The coinage study prove that, despite the fact that the other brothers of Nuh were considered as rulers of certain territories (provinces), they minted coins in the name of their older brother Nuh.[2] This process demonstrates that from the very beginning of the reign, the Somon dynasty maintained the family unity, laying a favorable foundation for the independence of their state.

According to historian Narshakhi, when the caliphate passed to al-Ma'mun, he appointed Ghassan ibn Abbad the emir of Khorasan and instructed him to appoint the sons of Asad ibn Saman-khudat to govern the cities of Khorasan. In 202 A.H. (817–818), Ghassan appointed Nuh ibn Asad to govern Samarkand and Ahmad ibn Asad as the ruler of Merv.[3] By 204 A.H. (819–820) Ahmad ibn Asad was appointed the ruler of Ferghana.[4] Gardezi also claimed that Ahmad ibn Asad was appointed by Ghassan ibn Abbad as the ruler of Ferghana.[5]

The analysis of the above written claims that the information of Ibn Asir and Gardezi is more reliable, since, in the scientific literature, which based on the written sources, is mentioned that Ahmad ibn Asad 204 A.H. (819/20 C.) was appointed as the ruler of Ferghana[6].

1 Ibid.

2 Davidovich I.A., 1954, p. 3

3 Narshakhi. Pp. 141–142.

4 Ibn al-Athir. "Al-kamil fi t-tarikh" (in Persian). In 13 volumes. Translated by Hamid Riza Azhir. Tehran: "Asatir", 1382 agricultural, T. 8. –P. 279. (hereinafter: Ibn al-Athir).

5 Gardizi, Abu Sa'id Abd al-Hayy ibn Zahhak. Zayn al-akhbar (in Persian). Prepared for publication by Rahim Rizazadeh Malik. – Tehran: Cultural Heritage Society, 1384 H. P. 146. (hereinafter: Gardizi).

6 Nematov N. Davlati Somoniyon (The Samanid State. in Tajik). Dushanbe: Irfon, 1989. pp. 24-25.

In 821, Ghassan ibn Abbad was replaced by Tahir ibn al-Husayn as the governor of Khorasan, which set the stage for local rulers to gain independence. Tahir ibn al-Husayn was the first local Tajik noble to rule Khorasan after the Arab conquest, and he declared the independence of his state by removing the caliph's name from the Friday sermon (khutbah) and replacing it with his own. His action was a clear declaration of independence.[1] During the Tahirids the key regions of Transoxiana were in the hands of the Samanid dynasty. The significant change that occurred during the Tahirids era political geography was the transfer of the capital of Khorasan from Merv to Nishapur.[2]

The Samanids, during this period, ruled as vassals of the Tahirids, holding administrative power in local areas and launching military campaigns into neighboring regions. For example, in the years 839–840, Nuh ibn Asad launched a campaign against Isfijab, which was under the control of the Turks and a group of their allies from the people of Chach, and he conquered it. To protect the city from the plundering raids of nomads, he surrounded the city with high, strong walls.[3] According to the research of V. V. Bartold, Nuh ibn Asad was appointed governor of a part of Sogd, including the city of Samarkand, Fergana, and some "lands of the Turks".[4] The governor of Isfijab gained many privileges from the Samanids

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1 Amirshohi Nurmuhammad. Davlatdorii tojikon dar asrhoi IX–XIV (The statehood of the Tajiks in the IX-XIV centuries) (in Tajik). Dushanbe, 1999. P. 130. (hereinafter: Amirshohi N.).

2 Noji Muhammadrizo. Farhang va tamadduni islomi dar qalamravi Somoniyon ("History and culture of Islam in the territory of the Samanids" (in Tajik). Dushanbe, 2011. P. 178. (hereinafter: Noji M.)

3 Negmatov N. N. Gosudarstvo Samanidov. (The Samanid State. In Russian) Dushanbe: Donish. 1977. P. 25. (hereinafter: Negmatov N. The Samanid State).

4 Bartol'd V.V. Soch. T. 1. P. 268.

and, instead of taxes, would send annual gifts to the Samanid court.[1] According to al-Baladhuri, Nuh ibn Asad, during the reign of the caliph al-Muntasir, brought the rebellious regions of Fergana—Kasan and Awrasht—back under his control.[2] In this case, the author of "Futuh al-Buldan" made an error, as caliph al-Muntasir ruled only for six months in the years 861–862. Al-Baladhuri might have meant Nuh's campaign to Isfijab, which took place in 839–840 during the reign of caliph al-Mu'tasim (833–842).

During this time, the pressure from Turkic tribes seeking access to the lands of Transoxiana increased once again. Therefore, the governor of Khorasan, Abdullah ibn Tahir, regularly launched campaigns against the Oghuz Turks.[3] For this reason, defensive walls and fortifications were being built in the border regions of Khorasan and Transoxiana to protect against the Turkic tribes. Nuh ibn Asad also helped Abdullah ibn Tahir capture Husayn ibn Afshin, a prince of Usrushana. Despite Nuh ibn Asad's successful rule and his ability to elevate the prestige of the Samanid family, it was his brother, Ahmad ibn Asad, who laid the foundations for the centralized Samanid state.

After Nuh's death in 842, his brother Ahmad ibn Asad (842–864), who was the governor of Fergana, was appointed by the Tahirids as governor of Samarkand and was recognized as the head of the Samanid family. Another brother of Ahmad, Yahya ibn Asad,

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1 Ibid. P. 270.

2 Belazuri, Ahmad ibni Yahya ibni Jabir. Futuh al-buldan. Translation from Arabic into Russian, prim. i oglovleniya., Goibova G. – Dushanbe: "Donish", 1987. P. 28. (hereinafter: Belazuri, Futuh al-buldan. Dushanbe).

3 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. V. II. Epokha formirovaniya tadzhikskogo naroda. (The era of the formation of the Tajik people. in Russian). Edited by academician N. Negmatov. Dushanbe, 1999., p. 333. (hereinafter: Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda).

was governor of Chach and Usrushana. According to Ibn al-Athir, Ahmad had seven sons: Nasr, Yaqub, Yahya, Asad, Ismail, Ishaq, and Hamid.[1] Narshakhi writes that Ahmad was a learned and pious man, and before his death, he appointed his eldest son, Nasr, as his successor.[2] Ibn al-Athir mentions that Ahmad, before his death, entrusted his province – Samarkand and its surroundings – to his son Nasr.[3]

After the death of Yahya ibn Asad (856), the governance of Chach and Usrushana passed to Ahmad's son, Yaqub.[4] Thus, the territories of Transoxiana came under the control of the family of Ahmad ibn Asad, creating unity between the main regions of this land—Sogd, Fergana, Chach, and Usrushana.[5]

The governance of Herat, which had been given by Ghassan ibn Abbad to Ilyas ibn Asad in 819, passed to his son, Muhammad ibn Ilyas, after Ilyas's death (856). Due to the services Ilyas had rendered to the Tahirids from 822 to 828, Sistan also came under his control before his death. With the rise of Ya'qub ibn Layth, the vassal rulers of the Tahirids were removed from governing Herat. Another son of Ilyas ibn Asad, Ibrahim ibn Ilyas, after being defeated by Ya'qub ibn Layth at Nishapur (862), joined him and went to Sistan.[6]

From the 870s of the IX century, political fragmentation spread across Transoxiana. When Nasr ibn Ahmad (875–892) came to power, not all of his brothers accepted him as the leader of the

1 Ibn al-Athir. T. 7. P. 279.
2 Narshakhi. P. 142.
3 Ibn al-Athir. T. 7. pp. 279-280.
4 Negmatov N. Gosudarstvo Samanidov.
5 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 333.
6 Noji M. P.85.

dynasty. From the study of numismatic materials, it appears that in Chach and Fergana, Nasr's brothers, Yaqub and Nuh, minted coins in their own names without including Nasr's name on them.[1] Despite this situation, relative unity and the stability of the Samanid government remained intact. From this period, Samarkand became the main base of the Samanid family and the first capital of this dynasty. The administrative, commercial, cultural, and strategic importance of Samarkand turned it into one of the key centers of Great Khorasan, further strengthening the rule of the Samanids in this region.

After the Tahirid state was overthrown by Ya'qub ibn Layth, the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tamid, for the first time, issued a decree appointing Amir Nasr ibn Ahmad as governor of Khorasan, a task that had previously been handled by the Tahirids. Since this period, the Samanids gained independence from the governors of Khorasan, indicating that the Baghdad caliphs wanted to use the Samanids' stable position and power against the Saffarids.[2]

When the Saffarids seized control of Khorasan and the Tahirid state collapsed, the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tamid issued an emirate charter for Transoxiana in the name of Nasr ibn Ahmad. Following this, Nasr ibn Ahmad led his army to the banks of the Jayhun River to prevent Ya'qub ibn Layth from crossing it. His forces killed the commander of Ya'qub's army and returned to Bukhara. "The governor of Bukhara feared for his life and abandoned the city. The people of Bukhara appointed one person after another as their leader, only to dismiss them, until Nasr ibn Ahmad sent his brother Ismail ibn Ahmad to the

[1] Gafurov B. Tajiki. P. 451.

[2] Noji M. P. 86.

banks of the Jayhun. Ismail held his brother Nasr in high regard and served him faithfully."[1]

According to Narshakhi, in 874, Husayn ibn Tahir al-Tayi came from Khwarazm to Bukhara and fought with the people of the city. As a result, many were killed or wounded, and the people's wealth was looted by Tahir's army. The inhabitants of Bukhara wanted to request help from the governor of Khorasan. However, due to the ongoing wars of Ya'qub ibn Layth with other contenders and the caliph's appointees, the situation in Khorasan was in chaos. Therefore, the people of Bukhara, led by one of the city's famous jurists, Abu Abdullah al-Faqih, wrote a letter to Nasr ibn Ahmad of the Samanid dynasty, asking him to appoint a ruler over Bukhara[2]. Amir Nasr sent his brother, Ismail ibn Ahmad, with an army to Bukhara. Upon reaching Bukhara, Ismail defeated Husayn al-Tayi, liberating the city from the looters. From that year, Bukhara officially became part of the Samanid state, and the Friday sermon (khutbah) was delivered in the name of Amir Nasr, while Ya'qub ibn Layth's name was omitted.[3]

Ismail ibn Ahmad was appointed governor of Bukhara by his brother Nasr in 874. According to Narshakhi, with the arrival of Ismail ibn Ahmad in Bukhara, the rule of the Bukharkhudats came to an end.[4]

When Ismail became governor of Bukhara, a group of four thousand bandits planned to attack the city and loot it. Ismail sent his army commander,

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1 Ibn Hal'dun, Abu Zajd Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammad. Al'-Ibar. History of Ibn Khaldun (in Persian). Volume 3. Translated by Muhammad Ayati. Tehran, 1383 p. 551. (hereafter: Ibn Khaldun. Al-Ibar).

2 Narshakhi. P.145.

3 Narshakhi. P. 145.

4 Narshakhi. P.149.

Ismail ibn Alar, to fight against this group of bandits. The people of Bukhara joined them, and together they defeated the bandits. At the same time, news arrived that Husayn ibn Tahir, with two thousand Khwarazmians, was intending to attack Bukhara. Ismail, with his army, confronted them and emerged victorious, marking his first battle against the enemy. After this defeat, Husayn ibn Tahir retreated to Merv.[1]

As previously mentioned, the political situation in Khorasan was in turmoil, and the Tahirid state was on the verge of collapse. The Samanid rulers, taking advantage of the situation, sought to establish an independent state in Transoxiana. The existing conditions were reinforced by the support of the working-class people, as a unified and centralized state protected the people from the devastating raids of nomadic tribes by using a permanent army, defensive walls, and fortifications. Additionally, for farmers, artisans, and workers, paying regular taxes to the state, which were used to maintain the army and fortifications, was easier. This way, the people's property and crops were safe from looting, peace was ensured, and the conditions for stable work were provided.[2]

Considering thi situation, the Samanid emir Nasr ibn Ahmad and his brother Ismail ibn Ahmad were constantly engaged in conflicts with the nomadic Turkic tribes, who regularly attacked the borders of the Samanid territories from the north.

Later, a conflict arose between the brothers Nasr and Ismail. According to the reports of Ibn Khaldun, the reason for the conflict between the brothers was that Rafi' ibn Harthama, who had gained control

[1] Narshakhi. P.149-150.

[2] Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 334.

over Khurasan from the Tahirids and driven out the Saffarids, "corresponded with Ismail, and Ismail asked him to give him the administration of Khwarazm. Rafi' carried out this request, and this act became the cause of the conflict between the brothers."[1]

According to Narshakhi, the cause of the conflict between the brothers was that Nasr had assigned Ismail the duty of sending five hundred thousand dirhams from Bukhara's revenue to the treasury of Samarkand every year. Due to wars and other expenses, Ismail was unable to fulfill this obligation. Therefore, Nasr sought help from his other brothers to march against Ismail.

Ismail, in turn, sought help from the governor of Khurasan, Rafi' ibn Harthama. Rafi' crossed the Jayhun River with his army and rushed to assist Ismail. As is well known, on the 15th of Jumada al-Akhira, in the year 275 AH / October 25, 888 CE, a battle took place in the village of Vozbadin (in Soghd, near Samarkand) between the armies of Ismail and Nasr, and Ismail's army emerged victorious.[2]

After defeating Nasr, Ismail demonstrated extraordinary magnanimity by reinstating Nasr on the Samanid throne, while he himself remained content with Bukhar.[3] Although Nasr ibn Ahmad was officially considered the head of the Samanid dynasty, real power belonged to Ismail.

B. Gafurov has written that the conflict between the brothers, Ismail and Nasr, was not about power at all, but was entirely economic in nature. Ismail simply wanted to control Bukhara, both politically

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1 Ibn Khaldun. Al-Ibar. P. 551.

2 Narshakhi. P 153-154.

3 Ibid. P. 156.

and economically.[1] B. Gafurov considers Ismail's victory and his reinstatement of Nasr to the throne as proof of this assertion.

One year before his death, Nasr appointed his brother Ismail as his heir. After the death of Nasr ibn Ahmad in 892, all the territories of the Samanids came under the rule of Ismail ibn Ahmad (892–907). "When Amir Nasr passed away, Amir Ismail went from Bukhara to Samarkand, organized the realm, and appointed Nasr's son, Ahmad ibn Nasr, as his caliph."[2]

All recognized historians regard Ismail ibn Ahmad as the founder of the Samanid state. Upon ascending the throne of the emirate, Ismail moved the capital of his state from Samarkand to Bukhara, making it the seat of power—something no previous Khurasan rulers had done.[3]

Thus, by appointing representatives of the Samanid dynasty to govern the cities and provinces of Mawarannahr and Khurasan, they laid the groundwork for the establishment of an independent state for the Tajiks across a vast geographic area. However, the Abbasid caliphs sought to create discord between the Samanids and the Saffarids, in order to maintain their own authority over Mawarannahr and Khurasan.

1 Gafurov B. Tadzhiki. P. 451

2 Narshakhi. P. 156.

3 Ibid. P. 166.

§ 1.2. The Geographic Expansion of the Samanid State

In the month of Muharram 280 AH (March-April 893 AD), a decree from the Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tadid (893–902) issued, appointing Ismail ibn Ahmad Samanid as the ruler of Transoxiana. That same year, to neutralize the threat of Turkic invasions, Ismail launched a military campaign against the city of Tiraz (modern-day Taraz in Kazakhstan), a prominent city in Turkestan. In the ensuing battle, Ismail defeated the Turkish khan and captured him along with 10,000 of his soldiers and retainers. This victory curtailed Turkic incursions into Transoxiana for a long period.[1] Following this, Ismail ordered the construction of a large congregational mosque in Taraz, actively working to spread Islam among the Turkic tribes.

After this victory, Ismail expanded his territory to the Talas Valley, a region rich in valuable mineral resources. Exploiting these minerals significantly increased the region's importance and contributed to the overall economic development of Transoxiana.

In 893, Ismail also re-annexed Ushrusana, which marked the permanent removal of the region from the rule of the Afshins of the Kavusian dynasty.

The growing power of the Samanids in Transoxiana and the Saffarids in Khorasan began to cause anxiety in the Abbasid caliphate's center in Baghdad. In an attempt to weaken both of these Persian dynasties, the Abbasid caliphs sought to instigate a conflict between Amr ibn al-Layth, the Saffarid ruler, and Ismail ibn Ahmad Samanid. In 892, Caliph al-Mu'tadid issued a decree granting Amr ibn al-Layth

[1] Narshakhi. P. 157; Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 334.

governance over Khorasan. The caliph's aim was to remove Rafi ibn Harthama, the existing governor of Khorasan, by using Amr ibn al-Layth. In 896, Amr ibn al-Layth defeated Rafi ibn Harthama, consolidating control over Khorasan, and by the following year, he had also taken control of Rayy, extending his state's borders up to the Jayhun River in the north.

The opportunity that the caliph was waiting for—to pit Amr ibn al-Layth against Ismail ibn Ahmad—came in 898. Al-Mu'tadid sent Amr ibn al-Layth a decree, along with costly gifts, ordering him to take control of Transoxiana from Ismail. At the same time, the caliph secretly sent another decree to Ismail, appointing him as the ruler of both Transoxiana and Khorasan and instructing him to arrest Amr.[1] This led to a conflict between Ismail and Amr. Amr had hoped for military support from the caliph, but this support did not materialize.

Sensing Amr ibn al-Layth's intentions for war, Ismail moved his forces against him. [2] In their first encounter near Nisa and Abivard in 899, Amr's forces were defeated, and several of his commanders were captured by Ismail. Ismail treated these prisoners with respect and sent them back to Amr, a gesture that earned him the admiration of some of Amr's soldiers.

In 900, Amr gathered an army in Nishapur for a second battle against Ismail and moved towards the Jayhun River. In a second decisive battle near Balkh, Ismail again defeated Amr, capturing him and sending him to Baghdad. After this victory, the

[1] Noji M. P. 94.

[2] Gafurov B. Tadzhiki. P. 452.

entire Saffarid state came under the control of the Samanids.[1]

Narshakhi writes that when Amir Ismail sent Amr ibn al-Layth to the caliph, the caliph granted Ismail the governance of Khorasan, including the regions from the Hulwan Pass, Khorasan, Transoxiana, Turkestan, Sind, Hind, and Gorgan.[2]

In late 900, Ismail led a military campaign to Tabaristan, where he defeated the local ruler Muhammad ibn Zayd, who had come with 20,000 troops to fight against Ismail's army. Muhammad ibn Zayd was killed in the battle. In Tabaristan, separatist movements had been active since the time of the Tahirids (864), leading to the formation of an independent state. The rulers of this state, known as the Alavids, were Shia and political opponents of both the Abbasid caliphate and the Samanid state. By dismantling the Alavid state, Ismail eliminated a significant political and religious threat to both himself and the Abbasids, further expanding his dominion to the west.[3]

Ismail's commander in Tabaristan, Muhammad ibn Harun, who had played a key role in suppressing the Alavids rebellion, later established contact with Nasir Kabir, the leader of the Alavids, and planned to secede from the Samanids. Muhammad ibn Harun attacked Gorgan and Rayy, defeating the Samanid forces. In 902, Ismail launched another campaign into Tabaristan, defeating Muhammad ibn Harun near Rayy and taking him prisoner. Nasir Kabir fled to Daylaman. Ismail appointed his cousin, Abdullah ibn Nuh, as the governor of Tabaristan and took control

1 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 336-337.

2 Narshakhi. P. 165.

3 Noji M. P.97.

of Rayy.[1] Abdullah strengthened Samanid authority in the region by gaining the support of local elites. In 904–905, Nasir Kabir led another unsuccessful uprising in Daylam, and the region remained under Samanid control.

In 901, Caliph al-Mu'tadid sent Ismail a decree formally granting him control over Khorasan, Gorgan, and Tabaristan, accompanied by numerous gifts. From this point onward, Khorasan officially became part of the Samanid state.[2] Following the death of al-Mu'tadid in 902, his son al-Muktafi (902–908) reaffirmed Ismail's governance, also granting him authority over Rayy, Qazvin, and Zanjan.

Under Ismail ibn Ahmad's rule, the Samanid state expanded to cover vast territories: from the Talas River Valley in the north to Sistan in the south, from the eastern borders of Turkestan and Sind in the east to central Iran in the west. In modern terms, this territory covered approximately 3 million square kilometers. Through his leadership and wisdom, Ismail was able to create a powerful and centralized state in this vast region (see Map 1 in the appendices). His efforts to ensure internal and external security paid off, allowing him to establish a well-organized administrative apparatus and a strong military.

By uniting all Tajik inhabited lands (Iranian descent), Ismail established a large, independent state. The end of internal conflicts and the elimination of Turkic raids created favorable economic conditions, laying the foundation for the development of science and culture. Ismail created a standing, well-organized army and banned the construction and maintenance of expensive defensive walls, which burdened the

1 Ibid.

2 Ibn al-Athir. T. 7. P. 502.

population with heavy taxes. Recent archaeological studies have shown that the famous defensive walls of Varakhsha were no longer maintained or rebuilt during the Samanid era, even though the city itself was thriving. In the presence of a strong army and other state institutions, there was no need for costly defensive structures.[1]

Bukhara, the capital of the Samanid state, was one of the most prosperous cities and one of the largest cultural centers in the world at the time. Its political and economic independence with its military strength allowed Ismail to declare Persian as the official state language.

To govern the state effectively, ten divans (ministries) were established: the Divan of the Vizier, Mustawfi (finance), Amidu'l-Mulk (public affairs), Sahib al-Shurat (police), Sahib al-Barid (postal services), Muhtasib (market inspector), Mushrif (accounting), Qadi (judiciary), Divan al-Mamlaka (state affairs), and Awqaf (religious endowments). Each of these departments had specific responsibilities. It should be noted that in most historical sources, the number of Samanid divans is mentioned as ten.[2] However, the Iranian scholar M. Noji lists twelve: the divan of the vizier, kharaj (taxation), ishraf (supervision), rasail (correspondence), shurta (police), barid (postal services), qada (judiciary), hisba (market regulation), awqaf (bequests for pious purposes), sipah (military), mamlakai khos va ob (state special and water affairs).[3]

The activities of these divans were closely linked with local governments in the provinces. The heads of local divans reported to the provincial governor

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1 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. V. 2. P. 336.

2 Ne'matov N. Dawlati Somoniyon. Dushanbe, 1989. P. 29-35.

3 Noji M. Farhang and tamadduni Islom dar qalamrawi Somoniyon. P. 293-475.

and the central head of the corresponding divan. In individual regions and districts, governors were directly appointed and dismissed by the emir, in consultation with the Hajib al-Kabir (chief minister). The Samanids often appointed members of local ruling families, who had governed the region for generations, as governors. Among the provincial governors, the governor of Khorasan held a special position, as in addition to ruling over a large portion of the state, he also served as the commander-in-chief of the Samanid army. All provinces of Khorasan were subordinate to the governor, whose residence was in Nishapur. The Samanid emir often consulted with the sipahsalar (commander-in-chief) when appointing governors to strategically important provinces, which demonstrated the commander's significant influence in the state.

The established system of governance was not uniformly applied across all the territories under the Samanid state. Some provinces enjoyed a degree of autonomy, paying annual tribute to the Samanid emirs and they were obliged to provide a certain number of soldiers to serve the Samanid emirs in emergency situations.[1]

Siiston, Gharjiston, Guzgan, Ghazna, Khuttal, Chaghaniyan, Isfijob, and Khwarazm were among such provinces. The internal policy of these provinces was managed at the discretion of the local ruler. According to Muqaddasi, in times of necessity, the province of Chaghaniyan could provide 10,000 soldiers along with their horses for the service of the Samanid Amir.[2] The rebellion of the rulers of some

[1] Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 340.

[2] Muqaddasi, Muhammad ibn Ahmad. Ahsan at-takasim fi marifat al-akalim ("The best division for the knowledge of climates") (in Persian). Translated by Ali-Naki Munzawi. Tehran, 1385 H. P. 347. (hereinafter: Muqaddasi).

of these mentioned provinces by refusing to pay taxes to Bukhara often led to internal conflicts. For instance, in 907, the governor of Herat, Muhammad ibn Harithma, wrote a letter to Amir Ismail, informing him that a rebellious group of 10,000 men, under the leadership of Bubilal, had gathered in the mountains of Ghur and Gharjiston, calling on the surrounding people to join their cause. Ismail dispatched 500 experienced soldiers under the command of Beghash in that direction and wrote to Buali Marwazi to join them in helping Muhammad ibn Harithma in Herat. Beghash and Buali Marwazi united their forces in Merv Rud and proceeded towards Herat. In Herat, their combined forces joined those of Muhammad ibn Harthama, and they engaged in battle with Bubayl's followers in the mountains of Ghur and Gharjiston. As a result, Bubilal's rebellion was suppressed, and he, along with ten of the rebellion's leaders, was captured and later executed.[1]

Scholarly research into the territorial scope of the Samanid state has included the province of Ghur as a dependency alongside Herat and Gharjiston.[2] However, in all modern maps of the Samanid state, the province of Ghur is shown outside its borders. Although the inhabitants of Ghur had not yet converted to Islam, administratively, they were under the governance of the governor of Herat. The incident involving Bubilal's rebellion in these regions and its suppression by Amir Ismail's army is solid evidence of Ghur's subjugation to the Samanid state.

It was at the peak of the Samanid state's prosperity that emir Ismail passed away on November 25, 907, and his son, Ahmad ibn Ismail (907–914), became the

[1] Amirshohi N. P. 310.

[2] Ne'matov N. N. Dawlati Somoniyon. S. 47; Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 341, 354.

emir of the Samanid state. Emir Ismail left behind a centralized state with a powerful army and an economy and culture that had developed significantly.

After Ahmad ibn Ismail ascended the throne, rebellions broke out in several cities and regions, while border incursions by neighbors also became a problem. Ahmad intended to march his army to Ray to defeat its rebellious rulers and reassert his control over Tabaristan and Ray. First, he went to Samarkand, where he arrested his uncle, Ishaq ibn Ahmad, who harbored thoughts of independence.[1] Once Ahmad dealt with the family's internal issues, he set his sights on reconquering the rebellious provinces. Consequently, he marched to Nishapur and from there went to Ray, sending an army to conquer Gurgan and Tabaristan. The governor of Ray and Tabaristan, Boris Kabir, who had been appointed by Ismail, fled from Ray, and these provinces fell back under Ahmad's control. Ahmad appointed Abdullah ibn Nuh as the governor of these provinces. In the years 910–911, the Russians repeatedly attacked the southern coastal provinces of the Caspian Sea (mainly targeting the port of Abiskun), plundering the local population's wealth. In 911, Abdullah ibn Nuh gathered his forces, ambushed the Russians, and destroyed many of them. However, after Abdullah ibn Nuh's death (911), the attacks by the Russians intensified against the local population.[2]

[1] Gardizi. P.148.

[2] Dorn B. A. Kaspij. O pohodah drevnih russkih v Tabaristan s dopolnitel′nymi izvestiâmi o drugih nabegah na pribrež′â Kaspijskogo morâ. (About the campaigns of the ancient Russians in Tabaristan with additional information about other raids on the shores of the Caspian Sea. in Russian). – In the book: Appendix No 1 to the XXVI t. Proceedings of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. St. Petersburg, 1875; A. P. Kovalevskij. Kniga Ahmeda ibni Fadlana ob ego putešestvii na Volgu v 921–922 gg. (The book of Ahmed ibn Fadlan about his journey to the Volga in 921-922). − Kharkov, 1956. P. 16–17; S. Šamsi. Putešestviâ Ibn Fadlana na reku Itili. (Travels of Ibn Fadlan on the Itili River). M., 1992. P. 65.

In that same year, 911, news of a rebellion in Sistan led by the nephew of Ya'qub Layth, Mu'addal ibn Ali, reached Amir Ahmad. He traveled from Nishapur to Herat and assembled his army, led by Husayn Marvrudi, Ahmad ibn Sahl, Muhammad ibn Muzaffar, and Simjur Davoti, to suppress the rebellion in Sistan. Ahmad's army defeated Mu'addal ibn Ali's forces, capturing the city of Bust and appointing Mansur ibn Ishaq as the governor of Sistan. From this time, Sistan was no longer under the control of the Saffarids and came under the authority of the Samanids.[1]

After these victories in Tabaristan and Sistan, Ahmad ibn Ismail wrote a letter to the Caliph in Baghdad requesting the governance of Kirman and Fars, and only Kirman was granted to him.[2]

In the final years of Ahmad's reign, the political situation in the provinces of Tabaristan and Sistan became unstable again. In the years 913–914, the new Samanid governor in Tabaristan, Muhammad Sa'luk, lacked the ability to stop the regular plundering by the Russian and failed to gain the support of the local population. This poor state of affairs created the conditions for another uprising. Shiite propagandists, led by Hasan ibn Ali al-Utrush (Nasir Kabir), who had lost control of Tabaristan during Amir Ismail's reign, seized the opportunity to restore their rule. The army that Ahmad Samanid sent to fight Nasir Kabir was defeated. Ahmad gathered an army of 40,000 soldiers and intended to personally lead it to Tabaristan. At that time, Ahmad's cousin, Mansur ibn Ishaq, who had been appointed governor of Sistan, caused a new rebellion in 913 due to his misconduct. Ahmad

1 Jawad Hiravi. P. 139.

2 Narshakhi. P. 169.

Samanid sent Husayn Marvrudi and Simjur Davoti again to Sistan, where they suppressed the rebellion. Mansur ibn Ishaq was removed from his position in Sistan and appointed governor of Nishapur, with Simjur Davoti taking over as governor of Sistan. This caused discontent in Husayn Marvrudi. It was during this time that Ahmad was assassinated by several of his own slaves. [1]

Ahmad ibn Ismail spent his seven years in power striving to maintain the integrity and stability of the centralized state he had inherited from his father. One of his achievements was the incorporation of Kirman into the Samanid state. The annexation of Kirman extended the southern borders of the state to the Persian Gulf, opening the way for maritime trade. However, the significance of trade routes via the Persian Gulf was not as great as today, as Mediterranean ports played a key role at that time, and for the Samanid state, the Great Silk Road was more important than the southern sea routes.

Rebellions in Tabaristan and Sistan during Amir Ahmad's death raised concerns about the possible loss of these provinces. However, Ahmad's son and successor, Nasr ibn Ahmad (914–943), succeeded in preserving the stability of the state. When Nasr (Nasr II) became the Amir of the Samanid state, he was only eight years old. The administration of the state was taken over by the wise vizier Abdullah ibn Ahmad Jayhani, with Hamuyah ibn Ali appointed as commander-in-chief. Jayhani, a renowned scholar in geography, philosophy, and astronomy of the 10th-century Tajik world, used his knowledge and skill to end the internal struggles of the Samanid family, suppressing uprisings led by local landowners and

[1] Narshakhi. P. 169.

officials, and reviving the boundaries of the state that existed during Ismail's reign. Both Jayhani and Hamuyah ibn Ali, through their great services, managed to preserve the Samanid state with its extensive borders.

Among the uprisings in Sistan and Tabaristan, in 914, Nasr's uncle, Ishaq ibn Ahmad, raised a rebellion in Samarkand and set out with his army to overthrow Nasr's rule in Bukhara. Commander Hamuyah ibn Ali confronted him, defeating Ishaq in two battles and capturing him, bringing him to Bukhara.[1]

In 915, one of the Samanid commanders, Husayn ibn Ali Marvrudi, rebelled in Herat and Nishapur. This rebellion was also defeated by Hamuyah ibn Ali. In 919, Husayn Marvrudi rebelled again in Nishapur, supported by the Ismailis of Khurasan. This uprising was also quelled by Ahmad ibn Sahl, a peasant from Khurasan and a noble from the Balkh family, who captured Husayn Marvrudi and sent him to Bukhara.

However, in 920, Ahmad ibn Sahl himself rebelled against Amir Nasr, seizing Herat, Nishapur, Merv, and Gurgan. Hamuyah ibn Ali marched from Bukhara against Ahmad ibn Sahl, captured him, and sent him to Bukhara.[2]

During the first six years of Nasr II's rule (914–920), attempts by some local rulers to gain independence from the Samanid Amir, particularly in Samarkand, Fergana, Herat, and Nishapur, were defeated. However, after 915, the Samanid state's active governance in Sistan is not evident.[3]

Between 914 and 928, Ray, Tabaristan, and Gurgan experienced significant turmoil. The invasion of Yusuf

1 Narshakhi. P. 169.
2 Gardizi. P. 151–152.
3 Amirshahi N. P. 326.

ibn Abisaj, the governor of Azerbaijan and Armenia, on one side, and the power struggles of the Alavids on the other, turned this region into a battleground for conflicting interests, effectively removing it from Samanid control. (See Map 2.) For this reason, Amir Nasr stayed in Nishapur for some time to stabilize the situation in the western regions of his state, sending a well-equipped army under the command of Hamuyah ibn Ali to subjugate Ray, Gurgan, and Tabaristan. Additionally, Amir Nasr took advantage of the internal conflicts among the local leaders of these regions to consolidate the authority of the Samanids. When Asfar ibn Shiruya (with the support of Amir Nasr) emerged victorious in the internal wars between the leaders of Tabaristan and Gorgan, the khutbah (Friday sermon) was delivered in Amir Nasr's name in Ray, Tabaristan, Qazvin, Qom, and Kashan.[1]

In 930, while Nasr was in Nishapur, a rebellion broke out in Bukhara, in which the Ismailis and some supporters of the Hurufiya sect were involved. Nasr's brothers, who had been imprisoned by him in the city's citadel out of fear of rebellion, also joined this affair. Nasr's brothers – Yahya, Mansur, and Ishaq – along with the prisoners, including Daylamids and Alavids, looted Nasr's treasures and palaces and sent a group of soldiers to the banks of the Jayhun (Amu Darya) to prevent Amir Nasr from returning to Bukhara.[2] With the prudent intervention of the wise vizier, Abu'l-Fadl Bal'ami, the conflict was resolved, and Amir returned to Bukhara, where his brothers Mansur and Ibrahim reached an agreement with him. However, Yahya fled, first to Balkh and then to Merv and Nishapur, where he, along with Muhammad ibn Ilyas, initiated a rebellion.

1 Ibid. P. 328.

2 Noji M. P. 105.

Nonetheless, Amir Nasr defeated this alliance, and its leaders—Muhammad ibn Ilyas fled to Kerman, while Yahya escaped to Sistan. Yahya was later pardoned by Amir Nasr, and Nasr's ally, Qarotakin, was appointed as the governor of Balkh.

However, the aftermath of this uprising in Nishapur manifested as an anti-Abbasid rebellion with Shiite tendencies. Nasr did not display much determination in suppressing this unrest. His approach towards the rebels did not align with the preferences of the Sunni scholars of Bukhara, which caused significant dissatisfaction among them. Factions emerged within the court of Bukhara, and the scholars of Bukhara aligned with Nasr's opponents.

With the death of Asfar ibn Shiruya in 932, one of his commanders, Mardavij ibn Ziyar (founder of the Ziyarid dynasty), took control of Ray, Gorgan, and Tabaristan, attempting to separate his territories from the Samanid state. Abu Bakr ibn Muhtaj Chaghani, the Samanid commander of Khorasan and a renowned commander, defeated the forces of Mardavij's successor, Vushmgir ibn Ziyar (934–940), near Ray. It was agreed that the Ziyarids would retain rule over Gorgan while paying annual tribute to the Samanid Amir. [1]

Gardizi wrote that during the reign of Amir Nasr ibn Ahmad, numerous events occurred, and "mentioning each of them would result in a lengthy book."[2]

The struggles for control over Gorgan, Tabaristan, and Ray—fought between Baghdad-appointed governors, Samanid generals, and local commanders—ultimately favored the Samanids. However, Gorgan was not governed by Samanid-appointed governors but was instead ruled by local leaders. A new local

[1] Ibn al-Athir. V. 8. P. 304.

[2] Gardizi. P. 154.

dynasty, the Ziyarids, who claimed descent from the Sassanids, emerged in Gorgan. They were autonomous in internal affairs but paid annual tribute to the Samanid state.

In 939, due to illness, Abu Bakr Chaghani stepped down as the commander of Khorasan, and his son, Abu Ali Chaghani, was appointed in his place by Amir Nasr. Abu Ali managed to restore order in the western provinces of the Samanid state and maintained Samanid influence in these regions.[1] In the final years of Nasr II's rule, Abu Ali Chaghani even conquered Jibal (Western Iran) and incorporated it into the Samanid realm, but upon hearing news of Amir Nasr's death, he returned to Khorasan.[2]

The continuous military campaigns to suppress rebellions and uprisings required significant expenditure. As a result, in the later years of Nasr ibn Ahmad's reign, the state faced financial difficulties. At the same time, the leaders of the Qarmatian movement, who had gained access to Nasr's court, embezzled 40,000 dirhams from the treasury that was intended as compensation for the murder of Husayn Marwazi, which was supposed to be sent to the Fatimid caliph.[3] To compensate for the losses, taxes were collected twice in 942, which caused widespread dissatisfaction among the population. Additionally, the state's soldiers had not been paid for an extended period, and their discontent posed a threat to national security. In the wake of these events, a group of military commanders, in alliance with the clergy, organized a plot to assassinate Amir Nasr, but the attempt failed. Nevertheless, under their pressure, Nasr was forced

1 Noji M. P. 182.

2 Ibn al-Athir. V. 8. P. 359, 369–70, 388–89.

3 Gafurov B. Tadjiki. P. 459.

to abdicate, and his son, Nuh ibn Nasr (943–954), succeeded him as the ruler of the Samanid dynasty.

After Ismail Samani, the most illustrious period of the Samanid dynasty was during the reign of Nasr II, who ruled Transoxiana and Khorasan for thirty years. Although his father had been assassinated, the support of the court and the efforts of viziers such as Abu Abdullah Jayhani and Abu'l-Fadl Bal'ami ensured that his reign began without instability or disorder. Nasr II, with the help of these viziers, took great steps in supporting scholars and reviving Persian-Tajik culture.

In conclusion, compared to the reigns of Amir Ismail Samani and Ahmad ibn Ismail, the territorial boundaries of the Samanid state did not change significantly during Nasr II's reign. Only Sistan broke away from Samanid control in 917, and in 928, Gorgan gained internal autonomy, whereas under Ismail and Ahmad, both of these regions were directly governed from Bukhara. During this period, the commanders of Khorasan gained greater privileges, and at times, their defiance led to conflicts among themselves for control.

CHAPTER II

THE TERRITORY OF THE SAMANID EMPIRE: MAJOR PROVINCES AND CITIES, AND FACTORS OF POLITICAL TERRITORIAL DECLINE

§ 2.1. Location of the provinces and main cities of the Samanid Empire

This section primarily describes the provinces and cities that were part of the Samanid Empire from the time of Ismail Samani's rule to the era of Nasr ibn Ahmad. During this period, the Samanid Empire encompassed vast territories, stretching from the north of the Oxus River and the Talas River valley in the north, the eastern borders of Eastern Turkestan, to Khorasan in the south, the Sindh region, and westward to central Iran. (See: Map 3).

The biggest cities and provinces included Bukhara, Samarkand, Usrushana, Ferghana, Chach, Elok, Isfijab, Khwarazm, Gurganj, Chaghaniyan, Kesh, Nakhshab, Khuttal, Badakhshan, Balkh, Juzjan, Gharjistan, Ghur, Sistan, Bamiyan, Marv, Nishapur, Sarakhs, Herat, Ghazni, Gorgan, Ray, Tabaristan, and others. Each of these had many smaller towns and villages. Due to the extensive size of the Samanid Empire, it is not possible to describe each city and region in detail. Therefore, this section provides a general geographical overview of the provinces and focuses on administrative centers and cities that were economically, strategically, and politically important during the Samanid era, with information specific to the Samanid period and its territories. This will

help achieve the goal of defining the borders of the Samanid Empire and its administrative divisions (See: Map 4).

Bukhara. The Samanids gained control of Bukhara in 874, after it had been under the governance of the Tahirids and Saffarids. In 892, under Ismail Samani's reign, Bukhara was declared the capital of the Samanid Empire. Bukhara, compared to other cities in Transoxiana, was located in a dry region with a variable climate due to its proximity to the mountains, experiencing long, cold winters, rainy springs, and hot, dry summers.

In terms of architecture, Bukhara resembled the city of Damascus, with densely packed houses, diverse ethnic groups, vast markets, and a wide variety of foods and clothing. The majority of Bukhara's population followed the Hanafi school of Islamic thought, and the city had a grand congregational mosque, where only jurists and scholars were allowed to engage in discussions.[1] The city's prison was also located within the fortress.

During the Samanid era, like other medieval cities, Bukhara consisted of three parts: the ark or citadel, where the ruler's palace, treasury, prison, congregational mosque, and other important buildings were located;[2] the shahristan, a walled city with seven gates; and the rabat, which was the outer area beyond the city. In the 9th–10th centuries, the size of the rabat expanded, and a wall was built around it with eleven gates. Ibn Khordadbeh mentioned that "Bukhara had an ancient citadel and the cities of

[1] Muqaddasi. P. 281.

[2] Ne'matov N. Dawlati Somoniyon. Dushanbe 1989. Pp. 37.

Karmana, Tavavis, Bumjikath, Vardana, Baikand and Barfar were the city of merchants".[1]

According to Jayhani, the shahristan of Bukhara had seven gates: the Gate of the Shahristan, the New Gate, the Hurfa Gate, the Iron Gate, the Kuhandiz Gate, the Bani Asad Gate, and the Bani Sa'ad Gate.[2] Istakhri counted seven gates of sharistan of Bukhara (there were seven), and said that they were made of iron and with slight differences in the names: the City Gate, the Nur Gate, the Hurfa Gate, the Kuhandiz Gate, the Bani Asad Gate, the Mehr Gate and the Bani Sa'd Gate.[3] Narshakhi, in his "History of Bukhara" listed the gates as: the Bazaar Gate, the Shahristan Gate, the Bani Sa'ad Gate, the Bani Asad Gate, the Ark Gate, the Hurfa Gate, and the New Gate.[4]

Despite some discrepancies in the names, all sources agree that Bukhara's shahristan had seven gates during the Samanid era.

In the 10th century Bukhara was surrounded by a wall, "the length of each link of which was one farsah (an ancient Persian unit of distance, i.e. 6 km.), and was located in a valley near the Sogd River".[5] Regarding the wall around Bukhara, Ibn Hawqal writes: "Bukhara is in the valley, and its buildings are lattice made of wood. the surrounding area of Bukhara was

[1] Ibn Khordadbeh Ubaidullah ibn Abdullah. Masalik and mamalik (in Tajik). Translated from Arabic to Farsi by Said Khakrand. Translation from Persian into Cyrillic - Nekruz Safarzoda. Chief Scientific Editorial Board of the Tajik National Encyclopedia, Dushanbe, 2022. Pp. 44–45. (hereinafter: Ibn Khordadbeh).

[2] Jayhani, Abulqasim ibn Ahmad. Ashkal al-alam (in Persian). Translated by Ali ibn Abdus-salam al-Katib. Ed. Firuz Mansoori. Tehran, 1368 h. S. 184. (hereinafter: Jayhani).

[3] Istahri, Abu Ishaq Ibrahim. Masalik and mamalik (in Persian). Translated by Muhammad ibn Asad ibn Abdullah Tustari. Podg. to ed. Eraj Afshar. Tehran, 1373 h. P. 328. (hereinafter: Istakhri).

[4] Narshakhi, P. 73-80.

[5] Le Strange Guy. Juhgorofiyai ta'rihii sarzaminhoi Khilofati Sharqi. (Historical geography of the eastern regions of the Abbasid Caliphate) (in Persian) Translated by M. Irfon. Tehran, 1390 p.m. P. 490. (hereinafter: Le Strange).

filled with palaces, gardens, and connected villages, which stretched for twelve by twelve farsakhs. All these palaces, buildings, villages, and settlements are surrounded by a wall, and within them, there is no barren or ruined land to be seen. Moreover, the wall, along with the palaces, houses, and neighborhoods considered part of the settlement, are connected to it. The inhabitants of the settlement are people who live there both in winter and summer."[1]

According to written sources, in addition to this great wall, there was another wall in Bukhara during this period. According to Istakhri, the wall was one farsakh to one farsakh in length, where local residents lived in.[2] Jayhani also provides similar information.[3]

Istakhri reported that the citadel or ark of Bukhara had two gates: the Registan Gate in the west and the Gate of Ghur or the Gate of the Congregational Mosque (Friday or Jumu'ah Masjid)[4] Yaqut al-Hamawi wrote that the citadel was located outside shahristan and was as large as a small city.[5] Jayhani writes that there were two gates in the Bukhara fortress: one was called the Registan gate, and the other the gate of a Friday Mosque.[6] Muqaddasi names the gates of Registan – "Bab-as-Sahl" and the gates of the Friday mosque – "Bab-al-Jame'".[7] From the mosque gate, people would go to the central mosque (Masjid-i Jami), which was located in Registan near the gate of the Kuhandiz (citadel). The central mosque was

1 Somoniyon dar oinai ta'rikh ("The Samanids in the Mirror of History" (in Tajik). V. 2., Huqand, 1999. P. 144-145.

2 Istakhri. P. 326.

3 Jayhani. P. 183.

4 Istakhri. P. 395.

5 Yaqut al Hamawi al Baghdadi. Translation of Mujam al-buldan (in Persian). Persian Online Library Tarikheslam.com@gmail.com. P. 353. (hereinafter: Yaqut).

6 Jayhani. P.183.

7 Muqaddasi. C. 280.

close to the ark (fortress), and within the city itself, there were also many smaller mosques, markets, bathhouses, and public squares.[1]

Analysis of this material indicates that the Kuhandiz (citadel) of Bukhara had two gates and was located outside the main city.

Another part of the city, known as the rabaz, was situated between the shahristan (inner city) and the old city wall, and it had many gates. The number of gates in the rabaz (suburbs) of Bukhara is mentioned with some variation in written sources. According to Istakhri, the rabaz of Bukhara had eleven gates, named as follows: the Gate of the Square (Darvaza-i Maydan), which was on the road to Khurasan; the Gate of Ibrahim, the Gate of Rev, the Gate of Mardqusha, the Gate of Kalaboz, the Gate of Navbahar, the Gate of Samarkand, the Gate of Faghasukun, the Gate of Romisaniya, the Gate of Hadshurun, and the Gate of Ghushj.[2]

Jayhani reports that the rabaz of Bukhara had thirteen gates: the Gate of the Square, the Gate of Ibrahim, the Gate of Rabud, the Gate of Marv-i Qamisha, the Gate of Kalobod, the Gate of Samarkand, the Gate of Navbahar, the Gate of Lafoskun, the Gate of Romina, the Gate of the Market Bridge (Pul-i Bazarche), the Gate of Farjik, the Gate of Darvazha, and the Gate of the Mugh Quarter (Ku-i Mugh).[3]

The rabaz also had markets, some of which had their own gates. For example, there were the Iron Gate (Darvaza-i Ahan), the Gate of the Hassan Bridge (Pul-i Hassan), the Gate near the Moj Mosque, the Gate of Rakhna, the Gate near the palace of Abihisham al-

1 Le Strange. C. 490-491.

2 Istakhri. P. 328.

3 Jayhani. P. 184.

Kannani, the Gate near the Suwaika Bridge, the Gate of Farijak, the Small Gate (Darvazacha), the Gate of the Mugh Road, and the Samarkand Gate (Darvaza-i Samarkand).[1] (See: map 5).

Bukhara had many surrounding villages. Sources provide differing information on the number of these villages. Istakhri states that there were 22 villages, of which 15 were within the city walls and the rest outside.[2]

Bukhara had many villages, with Tavavis, Karmina, Zandana, Afshana, Iskijkat, Romitan, Varakhsha, and Paikand among the largest. (See: Map 6).

Paikand, or Baykand, was distinct from other villages under Bukhara. In the "Ashkalu-l-alam," it is mentioned that Paikand had no villages but was full of rabats (fortified inns or caravanserais). The author states: "I have heard that it had a thousand rabats, and this Paikand has a solid wall; its Friday mosque is exceptionally elaborate, with a beautifully adorned mihrab, unrivaled in all of Transoxiana."[3]

The author of Masalik wa Mamalik writes that every city in Bukhara's regions had a district, "except for Baykand, which had no villages but around a thousand rabats." Baykand was surrounded by walls, and its Friday mosque's mihrab was said to be the most ceremoniousness in the whole of Transoxiana.[4]

According to Maqdisi, Baykand "was located near the registan and Jeyhun (Amu Darya) River. It had a wall with a single gate. The market there was bustling, and the mihrab of the main mosque was adorned with jewels. Below it was the rabaz (suburban area) with

1 Said Nafisi. P. 45-46.C. 45-46.
2 Istakhri. P. 244.
3 Jayhani. P. 160.
4 Istakhri. P. 245.

its own market. Baykand had around a thousand rabats, both functional and in ruins." [1]

The author of Hudud al-Alam emphasizes that Baykand was a small town with approximately a thousand rabats. Its land was well cultivated, and it housed mausoleums where bodies were brought from Bukhara for burial.[2]

Narshakhi described Baykand as one of the cities: "The people of Baykand did not agree to let anyone call it a village. If someone from Baykand went to Baghdad and was asked, 'Where are you from?' they would say 'Baykand,' not 'Bukhara.' It had a grand Friday mosque and impressive buildings. As of the year 240/855, there were many rabats around it. Baykand had more than a thousand rabats, equal to the number of villages in Bukhara. The reason for this was that Baykand was a highly revered place, and every village built a rabat there, settling a congregation, with their expenses sent from the village. During the winter, when the infidels posed a threat, people from every village would gather there and engage in battles. Each group would settle in its own rabat. The people of Baykand were merchants, trading with China and beyond, and were extremely wealthy. Qutayba ibn Muslim faced great difficulty in conquering it because it was so well-fortified. Baykand was called the "Shahritani ruin" ("Strong City" and was older than Bukhara. Every ruler in the region had once resided there."[3]

In the 10th century, Baykand had a fortress with a single gate, a mosque with a marble-adorned

[1] Muqaddasi. P. 281.

[2] Hudud al-alam mina-l-Mashriq ila-l-Maghrib (in Tajik). Dushanbe, 2015. P. 68-69. (hereinafter: Hudud al-alam).

[3] Narshakhi. P. 46-48.

and gold-plated mihrab, and many caravanserais, reportedly numbering up to a thousand.[1]

According to the research of V.V. Bartold, Baykand was located 5 farsakhs from Bukhara and was a significant trading center. There were two markets: one in the ark (fortress) and another near the city. The grand mosque of Baykand was famous for its decorated mihrab and precious stones. The Haromkom canal flowed near Baykand.[2]

The ruins of Baykand are located about 40 kilometers west of Bukhara. During the Samanid period, Baykand was one of the largest trade centers in Transoxiana, alongside Samarkand, and was referred to as "Madinat al-Tujjar" (City of Merchants). Due to its strong fortifications, it was also known as the "Copper City." Archaeological excavations have revealed remnants of an 11-meter-high minaret near the city's grand mosque, which was built during the Samanid era, standing one meter taller than Bukhara's famous Kalyan Minaret.[3] The oldest known pharmacy in Central Asia has also been discovered in the ruins of Baykand.

From the analysis of written sources and scholarly research, it can be concluded that Baykand played a significant role in the economic and social life of the Samanid Empire, serving as a prosperous and important trade place.

Samarkand, according to some historians, was the birthplace of the Samanids dynasty and their first

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1 Le Strange. P. 492.

2 Bartol'd V.V. Geograficheskiy ocherk Maverannakhra (Geographical essay on Maverannahr. In Russian) // Sochineniya. V. 1. Moskva 1963. S. 169-170.

3 A. R. Mukhamedzhanov, SH. T. Adylov, D. K. Mirzaakhmedov, G. L. Semenov, «Gorodishche Paykend. K probleme izucheniya srednevekovogo goroda Sredney Azii» (The Settlement of Paykend. On the Problem of Studying the Medieval City of Central Asia), Publisher "Fan", Tashkent 1988.

capital state. V.V. Bartold stated that Samarkand was one of the most populous cities in Transoxiana. Although Bukhara was the Samanid capital, Samarkand had a larger population.[1] Geographer Yaqut al-Hamawi writes that Samarkand was located in the fourth climate zone, with coordinates of 89.5 degrees longitude and 36.5 degrees latitude.[2] According to Ibn Faqih, Samarkand and its surroundings were enclosed by a wall, stretching 12 farsakhs, with 12 gates. These gates were made of wood, two-tiered, and behind them were additional double-layered gates. Between these gates were the houses of gatekeepers. The city, along with its surrounding areas, covered 6,000 jaribs[3] (a Persian unit of land measurement), while the city itself spanned 5,000 jaribs. in total (unit of area), and the city itself was 5,000 jaribs. The Shahristan (inner city) covered 1,500 jaribs, and within it were the main Friday mosque and the citadel (Ark), where the ruler's palace was located. The Ark had two iron gates. Unlike in other cities such as Bukhara, the Ark in Samarkand was part of the Shahristan.[4]

Within Samarkand itself, there were four gates, a grand mosque, and a kuhandiz (citadel). The city had a large market, canals, and streams, with an iron gate atop the kuhandiz, and another iron gate within it. (See: Map 7).[5]

Al-Muqaddasi wrote that Samarkand's Shahristan was located in the middle of the city and had four gates: the "Gate of China," the "Gate of Navbahor,"

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1 Bartol'd V.V. Geograficheskiy ocherk Maverannakhra P. 134.

2 Yakut al-Hamawi. Vol. 3, p. 248.

3 At the beginning of the Middle Ages, 1 jarib was equal to 1592 m2; after the 15th century, one jarib was considered equal to 958 m2.

4 Bartol'd V. V. Geograficheskiy ocherk Maverannakhra. P. 135.

5 Said Nafisi. P. 82.

the "Gate of Bukhara," and the "Gate of Kesh."[1] Istakhri also confirms Muqaddasi's point.[2]

According to Istakhri, the Shahristan was located near the Sughd River, with a moat-like river encircling the rabaz. The wall surrounding the rabaz spanned two farsakhs. The city had markets, springs, and many palaces and gardens, with several gates like the Gates of Shadovad, Ashbask, Sawakhshin, Afshina, Kuhak, Varsanin, Revdad, and Farakhshid.[3] (See: map 8).

Al-Jayhani described Samarkand as "the capital of the Sughd region, located on the southern side of the Sughd River on an elevated area. It has a Shahristan, a kuhandiz, and a rabaz. The kuhandiz contains palaces, the Shahristan is fortified, and it has four gates. The eastern gate is called the "Gate of China", the western gate "Navbahor Gate", the northern gate "Gate of Bukhara", and the southern gate "Gate of Kesh"".[4]

The author of Hudud al-Alam also describes Samarkand as a large and prosperous city, "full of riches and a hub for merchants from around the world. It has a Shahristan, a kuhandiz, a rabaz, and a canal running through its market".[5]

Samarkand was surrounded by many small towns and villages, including Bunjikas (modern Panjakent), Maimurgh, Kushaniya, Dargam, Vazir, Ishtikhan, and Kesh. Kesh, despite being under the jurisdiction of Samarkand, was geographically distinct due to its fertile land and irrigation systems.

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1 Muqaddasi. P. 278.
2 Istakhri. Pp. 246-247.
3 Istakhri. Pp. 247-248.
4 Jayhani. Pp. 186.
5 Hudud al-alam.P. 69.

Kesh. According to Istakhri, Kesh was a city in the Samanid era with a kuhandiz, a rabaz, and two Shahristans. The inner Shahristan, kuhandiz, and the Friday mosque were in ruins, while the market was in the rabaz. The city had a warm climate, and buildings were made of clay and wood. The fruits of Kesh ripened earlier than in other cities of Transoxiana. The inner Shahristan had four gates: the "Iron Gate," "Gate of Ubaydullah," "Butchers' Gate," and "Shahristan Gate." The outer Shahristan had two gates: "the inner Shahristan gate" and the other the "Tarkanon gate".[1] Jayhani's accounts of Kesh align with those of Istakhri[2]. Jayhani, in continuing his report, writes that Kesh has two streams: one is the Kozaron stream, which flows from the Buttam Mountain towards the south of the city, and the other is the Asrud stream, which originates from the village of Kuhakrud and flows towards the north of the city. Both streams reach the city gates.[3] The author of Hudud al-Alam confirms the information provided by Istakhri and Jayhani, adding that "the mountains of Kesh contain medicinal minerals. Excellent horses and red salt, which is traded with the entire world, come from there".[4]

According to V. V. Barthold's research, the city of Kesh was a dependency of Bukhara and was located on the trade route between Bukhara and Samarkand.[5]

Thus, summarizing the above information, it can be concluded that in the 10th century, Samarkand had many cities and towns that played an important

1 Istakhri. P. 254.

2 Jeyhani. Ashkolu-l-olam. P. 174

3 Jeyhani. C. 174.

4 Hudud al-alam. P. 69.

5 Bartol'd V.V. Kesh // Soch. V. III. Moskva: Nauka, 1965. P. 460.

role in the political and social life of Transoxiana at that time.

The province of Ustrushan or Surushan was located in the north of Sughd. Its main cities were Bunjikat, Zomin and Dizak. (See: map 9). Jayhani describes Usrushana during the Samanid period as follows: "Usrushana is the name of a province, most of which consists of mountains, and its surroundings to the east include parts of Fergana. To the west are the borders of Samarkand, to the north are Shash and parts of Fergana, and to the south are the borders of Kesh, Chaghaniyan, and Shuman. Its largest city is called Lutikhkat in the Usrushanian language. It also has other cities such as Arasmonkat, Kurkat, Arfat, Faakat, Sabot, Zamin, Durkat, Luhkat, and Khirkona. The seat of the ruler is in Luhkat."[1]

Istakhri provides the following information about Usrushana during this period: "Surushana is a name like Sughd, which refers to a region. There is no city or village with this name. It is located in the mountains. To the east, Surushana borders Fomir (Pamir) and Fergana, to the west it borders Samarkand, to the north, it borders Chach and parts of Fergana, and to the south, it borders Kesh, Chaghaniyan, Shuman, Washgird, and Rosht. Its capital is called Bunjikas in their language. The names of its districts are: Arsionkas, Karkas, Ghazak, Vaghkas, Sobot, Zamin, Dizak, Navijkas, and Harqona.[2] Jayhani also confirms this."[3]The author of Hudud al-Alam repeats this information, adding that "a lot of wine is produced there, and iron is extracted from its mountains".[4]

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1 Jayhani. Pp. 189-190.

2 Jayhani. P. 256.

3 Jayhani. P. 175.

4 Hudud al-alam. P. 70-71.

Bunjikas. Istakhri writes that the seat of the rulers of Surushana is Bunjikas (modern-day Istaravshan). "About ten thousand men live in this city. Its buildings are made of wood and clay. The inner Shahristan is surrounded by a wall. The Rabaz also has a wall. The inner Shahristan has two gates: one is called "Boloyin Gate", and the other is "Shahristan Gate". The Friday mosque and Kuhandiz are in the inner Shahristan. A large river flows through this city, and a mill is built on this water. The market is located in Shahristan, and Rabaz also has a market. The size of the city is one farsakh. The Rabaz has four gates: one is "Zamin Gate", the second is "Marsmanda Gate", the third is "Nujikas Gate", and the fourth is "Kahbod Gate".[1]

The statements of Jayhani about Bunjikas and the description of its kuhandiz and rabaz agree with the accounts of Istakhri. He also adds that the area of the rabaz was half a farsakh and it was surrounded by a moat. The rabaz had four gates: the "Gate of Amir," the "Gate of Marsamanda," the "Gate of Navhakat," and the "Gate of Gulhor".[2]

According to Istakhri, the lands of Bunjikas were irrigated by six streams that flowed through the city: Sorin, which passed through the Shahristan, Burjan, Yamojin, Sakanjin, Ruyjin, and Sitingjin. All these six streams were fed from one source. Around these streams, ten mills were operating. The distance from the city to the source was less than half a farsakh.[3] In Jayhani's work, Ashkalu-l-Alam, the names of these rivers differ from Istakhri's description.[4]

The author of Hudud al-Alam refers to this city as Numijkat and describes it as follows: "Numijkat is

[1] Istakhri. P. 257.

[2] Jayhani. Pp. 175-176.

[3] Istakhri. P. 257.

[4] Jayhani. P. 176.

the center of Surushan and the residence of the ruler of this region, a prosperous and populous place."[1] The title of the ruler of this region was "Afshin."

The ruins of Bunjikat are now located in the Shahriston district of the Sughd region.

Fargona (Ferghana). Fergana was a province in the Syr Darya basin, and during the Samanid era, it had many cities, the largest of which were Akhsikat, Koson, Kubo, Nasoiya, Osh, and Uzgend. (See: map 10). According to Istakhri, ""Fergana is a vast and prosperous region with many villages. Its capital is called Akhsikat. It has a Kuhandiz, a Shahristan, and a Rabaz. The ruler's palace and prison are in Kuhandiz. The Friday mosque is located in Shahristan. The size of the city is about three farsakhs. The Rabaz has a wall around it. The inner Shahristan had five gates. Shahristan and Rabaz had flowing streams and ponds. All the gates were surrounded by gardens and orchards".[2]

Akhsikat is considered one of the oldest cities in Central Asia. According to scholars, Akhsikat consists of two Sogdian words: "akhshiz" (meaning ruler) and "kat" (meaning city or village), which together mean "city of the king." Ibn Hawqal confirms Istakhri's statements about Akhsikat, writing that the size of the inner city was one square mile, and both the inner city and its surroundings had markets, with a wall surrounding the city.[3]

Jayhani, describing Fergana, writes: "Its capital is Akhsikat, a city located by the Shash river on flat, level land. Between it and the mountains is about one farsakh on the right side of the river. Its markets are in

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1 Hudud al-alam. Pp. 110-111.

2 Istakhri. P. 265.

3 Ибн Хаукаль. P. 237.

the city and Rabaz. Its size is ten dongs of a farsakh (a measure of distance). Its buildings are made of clay."[1]

In "Hudud al-Alam", it is noted that Akhsikat is the capital of Fergana and the residence of the ruler. It is a large city located by the Hashrat River at the foot of the mountains. The mountains are rich in silver and gold mines, and the people of Akhsikat are known for their wine consumption.[2]

Fergana reached its peak of development during the Samanid rule and was considered one of the major cultural and commercial centers. V.V. Barthold, relying on al-Muqaddasi's reports, writes that in the 10th century, Fergana had 40 cities and villages, all of which had Friday mosques.[3] The Samanids brought a large number of Turkish slaves to Fergana after capturing them in border wars.

The ruins of the medieval city of Akhsikat are now located in the Toshkurgon district of Namangan region in Uzbekistan. Archaeological excavations have revealed that the city covered an area of 30 hectares and had a sophisticated irrigation and service system for its time. In the Samanid era, Akhsikat had a mint where coins were struck in the name of the Samanid rulers of Fergana and the emir of the Samanids. Akhsikat had a large metalworking and smelting workshop, which, according to archaeological findings, covered 70 hectares. During the most recent excavations, small tunnels were found in the city of Akhsikat, inside of which water pipes were discovered. Scholars consider these findings

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1 Jayhani. P. 194

2 Hudud al-alam. P. 71.

3 Bartold V.V. Obyori dar Turkiston. (Irrigation in Turkitan. In Tajik) Tarjumai Karimi Kishovarz. Tehron, 1350 h.sh. P 187.

evidence of the city's highly developed irrigation system.[1]

Chach and Elak are two historically and geographically connected regions. Chach consisted of flatlands, while Elak was mostly mountainous. Istakhri mentions 27 cities in Chach,[2] Muqaddasi 34[3] and Jayhani 22.[4] The center of Chach was the city of Banokat, which was surrounded by two defensive walls and had numerous gardens and fields. The ark, which had two gates and was surrounded by a wall, housed the governor's palace and the prison. The shahristan was also walled and had three gates and marketplaces. The rabaz was divided into inner and outer sections, with the first having 10 gates and the second having 7 gates. Copper and occasionally silver coins were minted in Banokat.[5]

Jayhani writes about Chach, saying: "It is located on soft land. Among its buildings, which are connected, there are no mountains or elevated lands. The largest wall is toward the Turks. Their buildings and palaces are made of clay, spacious and wide. In all their palaces, there are flowing waters and greenery. Chash is one of the most pleasant lands of Transaxonia. Its capital is called Sakas."[6]

According to the information from "Hudud al-'Alam", Chach was a large and prosperous region, with a population of skilled warriors and wealthy

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1 I. Akhrarov. Novyye arkheologicheskiye materialy s gorodishcha Akhsiket XIV–XVI vekov: Obshchestvennyye nauki v Uzbekistane, vyp. № 8-9. Tashkent, 1969. (New archaeological materials from the Akhsiket settlement of the 14th-16th centuries. In Russian)

2 Istakhri. P. 266.

3 Muqaddassi. P. 264.

4 Jayhani. P. 177.

5 Istoriya tadjikskogo naroda. P. 347.

6 Jayhani. P. 177.

people. Its capital was Baykas, a large and flourishing city, where the sultan's residence was located.[1]

Istakhri writes that Chach had many spacious buildings, all made of clay.[2]

The main city of Elak, Tunkat (or Tuvankat), was half the size of Banokat and had walls and several gates. According to Muqaddasi, Tunkat was the governor's residence in Elak and housed one of the major mints of the Samanid period. [3] The ruins of Tunkat are located on the left bank of the Ohangaron River. Recent excavations have shown that metalworking was highly developed there during the Samanid period.[4]

The total number of cities of Elok according to Istakhri was 14, and according to Muqaddasi 17.These included Navkat, Shavkat, Zaronkat, Tuskat, and others..

Thus, the above materials indicate that Chach and Elak, during the Samanid period, were extensive border regions, prosperous and well-populated, with numerous cities, and played a significant role in the political life of Transaxonia (See: map 11).

The province of Isfijab was located to the north of Fergana and Chach, between the valley of the Arys River and its tributaries. Its territory extended eastward to Talas, northwest to Sabron and south to Chach (See: map 12). Scholars have proposed two theories regarding the origin of the name Isfijab: one suggests that the word consists of two parts: "ispig" (spig – bright) and "ob," with the letter "g" later transforming into "j"; others link "ispiġ" to the Persian word "white," interpreting it as "white city."

1 Hudud al-alam. P. 73.

2 Istakhri. P. 260.

3 Muqaddasi. P. 265.

4 Masson M. E. Ahangaran. – Pp. 70–93.

The center of this province was the city of Isfijab, and it had other cities (according to Muqaddasi, more than 40), of which the most prominent were Kanjida, Farab, Shavrogh, Savron, Tiroz, Jamukat, and Sonikat. Muslims first conquered Isfijab in 678, but it was soon lost. In 839–40, Nuh ibn Asad Samani fully conquered the city and made it subordinate to himself. However, complete Samanid control over this territory began during the reign of Ismail Samani (892–907). Under the Samanids, Isfijab flourished greatly, with a kuhandiz (citadel), shahristan (city center), rabaz (outer town), and four gates: "Nujkas", "Farkhoz" (Farkhon), "Sari Karona" and the "Bukhoro Gate". All three parts of the city were surrounded by separate walls, each fortified. In the shahristan were the governor's palace, prison, congregational mosque (masjid al-jami), markets, and covered caravanserais, while in the rabaz there were many buildings and gardens. The congregational mosque of Isfijab had four gates, each near a rabat with its name: "the rabat of the Nakhshabiyans","the rabat of the Bukharans "," and the rabat of the Samarqandians and "the rabat of Qarotakin" (the commander of the Samanids, Mansur Qarotakin, who was buried in his rabat after his death).

According to Muqaddasi, Isfijab had 1,700 rabats.[1] According to Yaqut al-Hamawi, Isfijab was the only province in all of Khorasan and Transoxiana whose people were exempt from paying taxes, because Isfijab was on the frontier between the Muslims and the Turks, and its people had to use the money they would otherwise pay in taxes to buy weapons and provisions for themselves. The rulers of Isfijab would

[1] Mukaddasi. P. 394.

send gifts as a sign of their allegiance to the Samanid amirs.[1]

The author of "Hudud al-'Alam" relates that Isfijab was "a center of merchants from all over the world" and that "felt cloth and sheep" came from there. Muqaddasi also mentions that "Turkish slaves, white clothes, and weapons were brought from there to other cities." In 993, the Qarakhanid ruler Bugra Khan conquered Isfijab, and from that time the city gradually lost its popularity.[2]

Today, the medieval city of Isfijab is located in the place of the modern city of Sayram in Kazakhstan, with its ruins covering 28 hectares.

Farab or Barob was located on the eastern coast of the Sayhun at the confluence of the Chimkent River and later became known as Utrar. According to Muqaddasi, more than 70,000 men lived in Farab. This city was one of the key commercial hubs of Transaxonia, situated along the main trade route between Europe and China. Jayhani mentions this city as Porab, writing: "Porab is the name of a region, and its length and width are the same. It is a day's journey and a stronghold with brave people. It is located on salty land, with no forests, many buildings, and agriculture. It lies on the western side of the Chach River."[3]

Istakhri writes that Farab "covered nearly a day's journey, with all the places being fortified and located in a valley irrigated by the Chach River."[4] In "Hudud al-'Alam," it is said that "Porab is a prosperous region,

1 Yaquti Hamavi. P. **250.**

2 Hudud al-Alam. P 73; Mukaddasi. P. 394.

3 Jeykhani. P. 195.

4 Istakhri. P. 363.

and its capital is called Qadir. Its people are warlike and brave, and it is a place for merchants.[1]

In the 10th century, Farab's outer city was also known by the name "Kadar".[2] According to V. V. Barthold's research, Farab was a large city, with its congregational mosque in the city center and its main markets located in the rabaz.[3] The great Persian-Tajik philosopher Abu Nasr Farabi was born in Wasij, a district of Farab.

The ruins of medieval Farab are now located in southern Kazakhstan, near the confluence of the Arys River and the Syr Darya, known as the Utrar town. The total area of the settlement is 200 hectares, and ongoing excavations have uncovered valuable archaeological findings. In conclusion, the information from the sources about Farab fully aligns with the results of archaeological excavations.

Khwarazm, Khorezm, Khorazm. During the time of the Samanids, Khwarazm was governed by their appointed rulers, the Afrighids. This region was geographically and administratively divided into two parts: the left bank of the Amu Darya and the right bank. (See: Map 13). The administrative center of the right bank of the Amu was the city of Kat. Jayhani called this city the "village of Khwarazm,"[4] and the author of "Hudud al-Alam" referred to it as the "gateway to the Oghuz Turks."[5] According to Istakhri, Kat had an ancient citadel, which was originally a city but was destroyed by a river. The palace of the Khwarazmshah was located near the main mosque, and the prison was close to the citadel.

1 Hudud al-alam.P. 74.

2 Le Strange. P. 516.

3 Bartol'd V. V. Geograficheskiy ocherk Maverannakhra. P. 233.

4 Ibid. P. 183

5 Ibid. P. 183

At that time, some of the city's gates were in ruins, while others had been rebuilt.[1]

The city remained the center of Khwarazm until 995 (the fall of the Afrighid dynasty),[2] after which it was replaced by Gurganj. The ruins of Kat, now known as "Sheikh Abbas Ali"[3] cover an area of 44 hectares, from which many archaeological materials have been found.

Gurganj, Gorganj (Gurgenge). The second city of Khwarazm and the center of the left bank of the Amu was Gurganj. The city had strong walls and four gates, and geographers mention the palaces of its ruler Mamun and his son Ali. This city had strong walls and four gates, and geographers mentioned the palaces of its rulers, Ma'mun and his son Ali. The site of medieval Gurganj is now the city of Köneürgench (Old Gurganj) in Turkmenistan. In addition to these two cities, Khwarazm had other major towns, the largest of which were: Tahiriyah, Dargan, Hazorasp, and Mizdahkan.[4]

Chaghaniyan during the Samanid era was considered a very prosperous region, with its main cities being Chaghaniyan (the capital), Darzangi, Hamavaran, Nawandak, Regdasht, Shuman, and Akharun (Aharun). The ruins of the town of Budrach, located 6 kilometers southeast of modern Dehnav, are believed to be the location of the medieval capital of Chaghaniyan.[5] During the Samanid period, the city

1 Istakhri. Pp. 322–323.

2 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 348.

3 Bartold. V. 1 P. 200.

4 Istakhri. Ibid.

5 Pugachenkova G. A. K istoricheskoy topografii Chaganiana. Universiteta (On the his-torical topography of Chaganian (in Russian). Scientific works of Tashkent state university, issue 200. P. 59.)

of Chaghaniyan expanded further, covering more than 6 km².[1]

The palace of the city's ruler during the Samanid era was located on the site of the Kushan-period citadel.[2] The city's main mosque and markets were situated in shahristan, among the residences of artisans.[3]

According to Muqaddasi, the province of Chaghaniyan was a very vast and prosperous land, but the author of "Hudud al-Alam" described it as a region with a small population and noted that its people were poor.[4] V.V. Bartold believes that the decline of this land coincided with the rebellion of its ruler, Abu Ali Chaghani, against the Samanid emir Nuh ibn Nasr (943–954) in the years 946–948.[5] Thus, the author of "Hudud al-Alam" found this region sparsely populated and its people impoverished.

Almost all the cities and regions of Chaghaniyan were located along the caravan route, which mainly followed the bank of the Surkhandarya. The distance from the center of Chaghaniyan to the city of Termez along this road was four stops[6] or 24 farsakhs.

The main caravan route during the Samanid period ran from the center of Chaghaniyan to the northeast, along the Hissar mountain range to Rosht, and then crossed the Pamir Mountains via

[1] Rtveladze E. V. Novyye arkheologicheskiye dannyye k istorii gorodishcha Budrach. (New archaeological data on the history of the Budrach settlement). History of material culture of Uzbekistan, issue 18. P. 173.

[2] Rtveladze E. V. Issledovaniya na gorodishche Budrach i v yego okrestnostyakh. Arkheologicheskiye otkrytiya 1981. (Research at the Budrach settlement and its environs (in Russian). P. 464.

[3] Rtveladze E. V., Sagdullayev A. S. Pamyatniki minuvshikh vekov. (Monuments of past centuries. in Russian) P. 107.

[4] Khudud al-alam. P. 114.

[5] Bartol'd V. V. Soch. V. 8. Pp. 152–154.

[6] Ahmad ibn Abi Yaqub ibn Wazih al-Yakubi. Al-Buldan. Translation by Dr. Muhammad Ibrohim Ayati. Translation from Persian to Cyrillic by Nekruz Safarzod. Main scientific edition of the Tajik National Encyclopedia, Dushanbe, 2022. P. 292. (hereinafter: Yaqubi).

the Surkhob River to reach China. The first town on this route from Chaghaniyan, according to sources, was called Nawand or Nawandak. It was located 3 farsakhs from the center of Chaghaniyan, according to Qudama ibn Ja'far, and 6 farsakhs according to Ibn Khordadbeh.[1]

Shuman and Akharun. These two areas are located east of Chaghaniyan and south of the Hissar mountain range. Currently, Tursunzoda, Hissar and Shakhrinav districts in the Republic of Tajikistan ocupy this area.

During the Samanid period, Shuman was under the jurisdiction of Chaghaniyan, forming a single administrative unit with it. According to the author of "Hudud al-Alam," the city was located on a mountain slope and was surrounded by a strong wall. The citadel of Shuman was located on a mountain and was quite spacious.[2] Istakhri described Shuman as smaller in size than Termez and Washgird,[3] but Muqaddasi described it as a beautiful and populous city.[4] Ibn Hawqal mentioned the rabats of Shuman, noting that they brought significant revenue to the city.[5]

G. Ghoibov believes that the pre-Islamic fortress of Shuman was located in the territory of Hissar, but after the arrival of the Arabs, this city ceased to exist. The Shuman of the Samanid period was likely located on the site of the town of Shishakhona, on the left bank of the Varzob River, in the area of modern Dushanbe.[6]

1 Ibn Khordadbeh. P. 34.

2 Hudud al-alam. P. 115.

3 Istakhri. P. 228.

4 Muqaddasi. P. 284.

5 Ибн Хаукаль. С. 455.

6 Goibov G. Ranue pokhodu arabov v Srednuyu Azii (644–704 гг.). (Early campaign of

During the Samanid era, Shuman and Akharun were integrated into Chaghaniyan, forming a single administrative unit. The exact location of Akharun is unknown. V.V. Bartold wrote that it was located east of Shuman.[1] Diakonov identified Akharun's location in the Karatag River valley and noted that the city of Akharun itself was located on the site of the modern town of Shahrinav.[2] V.A. Zeimal identified the city of Akharun with the ancient town of Uzbekonteppa, located on the right bank of the Shirkent River.[3]

The name Akharun is not used at all in the X-th century, and instead of it, the sources mention Hamovaron as a city. By the 10th century, the name Akharun was no longer used, and instead, Hamavaran was mentioned in sources. In some sources, both names appear together, with Akharun referred to as a region and Hamavaran as a city.[4] In the works of Tabari, Baladhuri, and Ibn al-Faqih, either the region of Akharun or the city of Hamavaran is mentioned. A city named Akharun appears only in the writings of Ya'qubi.[5] In 10th-century sources, Hamavaran is no longer mentioned, suggesting that in the early Middle Ages, this region in the Karatag River valley was known as Akharun, with its center being the city of Hamavaran. M.M. Diakonov believes that the reason for the absence of the name Akharun in some medieval works is that it was not located on the main caravan routes.[6]

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the Arabs in Central Asia (644-704). - Dushanbe: Donish, 1989. P. 32.

1 Bartold V V. Soch. V.3. P. 320.

2 Dyakonov. M. M. P. 285.

3 Zeimal V.A. P. 135.

4 Ibn Khordadbeh. P. 37; Kodama ibn Djafar. Accedunt excerptae Kitab al-Kharadj. Ed. M. J. de Goeje. Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum. Pars 6. – Lugduni-Batavorum, 1967. P. 243.

5 Yaqubi. P. 289.

6 Dyakonov. M. M. Rabotu Kafirniganskogo otryada. Trudu Sogdiyskogo-Tadjikskogo

From the information above, it can be concluded that during the Samanid era, the province of Chaghaniyan was a wealthy and expansive region, encompassing many cities and districts. Due to conflicts between local rulers, it experienced a period of decline, as documented in written sources.

Washgird and Rosht. The historical region of Washgird was located in the Faizabad district, and Rosht in the Rasht district of the Republic of Tajikistan. The history and geography of this land were first studied by V.V. Bartold.[1]

The Vakhsh River passed through the border between Washgird and Khuttal (Vakhsh), and in the Middle Ages, the connection between these two regions was made via a narrow pass known as the Pul-i Sangin (located in the area of modern Norak). According to Istakhri, it was a two-day journey from the stone bridge to Washgird.[2]

Ya'qubi wrote that in the 10th century, the city of Washgird was larger than Shuman and roughly equal to Termez in size.[3] The city was located in the mountains and plains, with constant winds blowing through it.[4] In this area, there were several mines of chomospa (blue rubi, amethyst) in the valley of the Romrud River.[5]

V.V. Bartold identified the location of Washgird in the area of Faizabad,[6] and A.M. Belenitsky associated it with the town of Qal'ai Sangin, located on the

AE (Works of the Kafirnigan detachment). V. 1. p. 185.

1 Bartold V.V. Soch. V. 3, pp. 445–447.

2 Istakhri. pp. 339,341.

3 Yaqubi. P. 298.

4 Hudud al-alam. P. 115.

5 Ibid. P. 181.

6 Bartold V. V. V. 1. P.. 121.

banks of the Elok River.[1] This town covered an area of 80 hectares and had lower layers dating back to antiquity.[2] The citadel and the city were surrounded by strong defensive walls and ditches. Several mounds were located to the east of the town, likely the remnants of the ribats mentioned by Sam'ani and the "700 fortifications" mentioned by Ya'qubi.

In the east of Washgird and in the middle course of the Vakhsh River lay the region of Rosht, with its capital city of the same name. V.V. Bartold wrote that the central city of the region of Rosht was located at the site of the current town of Gharm (modern-day Rasht),[3] and the fortress of Rosht was a one-day journey to the east, on the border with the nomadic Turks.

The famous fortress known as Hisorak stands near the confluence of the Yasmon and Obi Kabud rivers into the Surkhob River, 1.5 km from the village of Hisorak of the Rasht district. This fortress served as a border post in the Middle Ages, defending against enemy attacks from the Alay Valley and the upper reaches of the Surkhob River toward the Rosht Valley. N.A. Kislyakov believed that this fortress was the one mentioned in medieval sources as the "fortress of Rosht" located five days' journey from Washgird. [4]

As noted, Ibn Khordadbeh described the distance between Washgird and the center of Rosht as a four-day journey, while Ibn Hawqal and Istakhri

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[1] Belenitsky A. M. Otchet o rabote Vakhshskogo otryada v 1946 g. (Report on the work of the Vakhsh detachment in 194. In Russian6). Trudu Sogdiysko-Tadjikskoi arkheologich-eskoy ekpspedicii. V. 1. M. - L., 1950. Pp. 128-139.

[2] Belenitsky A. M., Bentovich I. B., Bolshakov O. G. Srednevekovoue gorod Sredney Azii. (Medieval city of Central Asia). – L.: Nauka LO 1973. -352. p.

[3] Bartold V. V. Soch. V. 1. P. 120–121.

[4] Kislyakov N. A. Ocherki po istorii Karategina. K istorii Tadzhikistana (Essays on the history of Karategin. On the history of Tajikistan). Stalinabad, 1954. P. 42.

mentioned three stops along this route, named Elak, Darband, and Javakan or Hawakan.[1]

In the 10th century, a mint operated in Roshta, where silver dirhams of the Samanids were minted.[2] This is evidence of the existence of silver mine in the area. Additionally, a salt mine existed in the Langarshah Mountains of this region.[3]

Qubadiyan (Kubadiyan) was a land situated between Khuttal (Vakhsh) and Chaghaniyan, most of which consisted of flatlands and semi-desert terrain. The administrative center of Qubadiyan, also named Qubadiyan, was located two stops from the city of Termez.[4] According to sources, in the 9th century, the center of Qubadiyan was similar in size to Termez,[5] but by the Samanid period, Termez had grown larger. [6] This suggests that during the Samanid era, the center of Qubadiyan was one of the significant and developed cities in the Amu Darya basin.

According to M. M. Dyakonov, the ruins located 10 km north of Shahritus and 1.5 km west of the Kofarnikhon River were the center of medieval Kubadiyan.[7] To the south of these ruins, 9 kilometers from Shahrtuz, lies the town of Qizilteppa. This town, quadrangular in shape, was believed to have existed from the time of the Kushans until the 13th century.

1 Istakhri. Page 340; Ibn Hawqal. Page 519.

2 Kochnev B. D. Zametki po srednevekovoy numizmatike Sredney Azii (Notes on medieval numismatics of Central Asia). Part 5. Tashkent. 1983. P. 211.

3 Svedeniya o stranakh po verkhov'yam Amu-Dar'i. (Information on the countries along the upper reaches of the Amu Darya). Compiled by I. Minaev. St. Petersburg, 1879. P. 53.

4 Yaqubi. P.291.

5 Istakhri. Pp. 298, 341.

6 Istakhri. Pp. 298, 341.

7 Dyakonov M. M. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v nizhnem techenii reki Kafirnigana (Kobadian). Archaeological work in the lower reaches of the Kafirnigan (Kobadian) River. Trudy Tadzhikskoy arkheologicheskoy ekspeditsii.V. 2. Pp. 267–268.

According to A.M. Mandelstam, this very town was the center of Qubadiyan during the Samanid era.[1]

When mentioning Qubadiyan, Istakhri only referred to one city named Navdiz or Yuzar.[2] Ibn Hawqal referred to the same city as Kuz, noting that it was located lower than Qubadiyan.[3]

According to G. Ghoibov, these names (Biz, Kuz, Yuz) refer to the same city, implying the city of Tuz, located in the area of present-day Shahrtus. According to the same researcher, the term "Tus" or the city of Tuz derives from the name of the city of Tus in Iran and is related to the campaigns of Sasanian kings in the lands beyond the Varorud.[4] At 7.7 kilometers north of Shahrtuz lies a medieval town that G. Ghoibov identifies as the medieval Navdiz, which may have been the Tuz of the Samanid era, as 9th-10th-century no layers have been found in Shahrtuz itself. To the south of Shahrtuz, a caravan road passed in the medieval period, which led from Qubadiyan through a pass in the Babotag mountains to the Surkhandarya valley. The distance from the center of Qubadiyan to Termez via this road was two stops, and to the center of Chaghaniyan, three stops.[5]

Vakhsh. In the Samanid period, Vakhsh was part of the land of Khuttalan. The main and central city of Vakhsh during this time was Halavard, located two stops from the Orhan pass.[6] In terms of size, Halavard

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1 Mandel'shtam A. M. Predvaritel'nyy otchet o rabotakh Kafirniganskogo otryada v 1958 godu (Preliminary report on the work of the Kafirnigan detachment in 1958). Doklady AN TadzhSSR, № 11. p. 68.

2 Istakhri. P. 298.

3 Ibn Hawqal. P. 476.

4 Goibov G. Ranniye pokhody arabov v Srednyuyu Aziyu (644–704 gg.). P. 30.

5 Istakhri. P. 341; D'yakonov M. M. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v nizhnem techenii reki Kafirnigana (Kobadian). Trudy Tadzhikskoy arkheologicheskoy ekspeditsii. V. 2. P 270.

6 Istakhri. P. 359.

was larger than Hulbuk and also had a fortress.[1] The city was surrounded by many gardens and fields.[2] It had abundant farmland and numerous villages, and its inhabitants were skilled archers.[3]

V.V. Barthold believed that the medieval Halavard was located at the site of present-day Bokhtar (formerly Qurgonteppa).[4] However, according to V.S. Solovyov, pre-Islamic Halavard was located in the Kofirqala settlement, situated in the western part of the town of Jaloliddin Balkhi, which covered an area of 12 hectares.[5] The city consisted of an ark (citadel), shahristan (city proper), and a rabat (suburban area). From the western gate to the eastern gate of the city ran the main street, which divided the city into two equal parts. In the center of the city was a large square,[6] and along the main street, artisans resided. The shahristan, like the ark, was surrounded by double layers of defensive walls made of mud brick.[7] Near the western gate of the shahristan, inside the city, there was a warehouse where products collected as taxes from landlords and merchants coming to the city were stored.[8]

1 Yaqubi. P. 291.

2 Mukaddasi. P. 291.

3 Hudud al'-alam. P. 120.

4 Bartol'd. V. V. Soch. V.1. P. 119.

5 Solov'yev V, S. Raboty na Kafyrkale v Vakhshskoy doline. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane (Works on Kafirkale in the Vakhsh Valley. Archaeological works in Tajikistan). Issue 18. Dushanbe, 1984. Pp. 167-177. P. 167.

6 Solov'yev V. S. Izucheniye rannesrednevekovogo Khelaverda (Study of early medieval Khelaverd). Arkheologicheskiye otkrytiya 1986. M., 1988. PS. 519; P. 212.

7 Solov'yev V. S. Raskopki na gorodishche Kafyrkala v 1974 godu. (Excavations of Kafyrkala in Kolkhozabad) Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue. 14. Dushanbe. 1979. Pp. 145-155; P. 149–152.

8 Solov'yev V. S. Raskopki na gorodishche Kafyrkala v 1974 godu. (Excavations of Kafyrkala in Kolkhozabad) Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue. 14. Dushanbe. 1979. P

Archaeological data suggest that the city at the site of Kofirqala was founded during the Kushan period [1] and was destroyed during the Arab invasions.[2] After the Arab conquest, the center of Vakhsh moved 12 km northwest of Kafirkala, to the banks of Vakhsh River. This city retained the old name of the Vakhsh center, Halavard, and was located on the left bank of the Vakhsh River. Today, the town of Zoli Zar is situated in this location, 23 kilometers from the city of Bokhtar.[3] The total area of the town, along with its surrounding areas, covers 100 hectares.[4]

The city was surrounded by defensive walls (in some places double-layered), with four gates and watchtowers.[5] It is believed that the town of Zoli Zar was founded in the 3rd–4th centuries and grew into a large city after the spread of Islam.[6]

The city's peak period of prosperity was during the Samanid era, lasting until the early 13th century.[7] Almost all the buildings in the city were made of fired bricks, and its streets and squares were covered with

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1 Drevnosti Tadzhikistana. Katalog vystavki. Dushanbe (Exhibition catalogue. Dushanbe): Donish, 1985.. 156.

2 Solov'yev V, S. Raboty na Kafyrkale v Vakhshskoy doline. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane (Works on Kafirkale in the Vakhsh Valley. Archaeological works in Tajikistan). Issue 18. Dushanbe, 1984. P. 178.

3 Belenitsky A. M. Otchet o rabote Vakhshskogo otryada v 1946 g. (Report on the work of the Vakhsh detachment in 194. In Russian). Trudu Sogdiysko-Tadjikskoi arkheologicheskoy ekpspedicii. V. 1. P. 144; Litvinskiy V. A. Arkheologicheskoye izucheniye Tadzhikistana sovetskoy naukoy (Archaeological study of Tajikistan by Soviet science.). Stalinabad: Izd-vo AN TadzhSSR, 1954. P. 38.

4 Litvinskiy B. A., Solov'yev V. Srednevekovaya kul'tura Tokharistana (v svete raskopok v Vakhshskoy doline). (Medieval culture of Tokharistan (in light of excavations in the Vakhsh Valley) M.; Nauka, 1985. P. 158.

5 Belenitsky A. M. Otchet o rabote Vakhshskogo otryada v 1946 g. V. 1. P. 144.

6 Drevnosti Tadzhikistana. Katalog vystavki. P. 284.

7 Solov'yev V. S. Raboty Kolkhozabadskogo otryada. Arkheologicheskiye otkrytiya 1981 goda. M., 1983. P. 491.

gravel.[1] During the Samanid period, Vakhsh had a mint where silver coins were struck.[2]

Levakand (Lovakand). One stop from Halavard and two stops from Pul-i Sangin was the second-largest city in the Vakhsh region – Lovakand or Levakand.[3] The author of the "Hudud al-Alam" wrote that local sheep known as "Vakhshis" were bred here.[4] V.V. Barthold identified the location of Levakand as the village of Sangtuda, while A.M. Belintsky identified it as the settlement of Kounteppa, located 10 kilometers west of Bokhtar.[5] T.I. Zeimal believed that medieval Levakand was located on the site of present-day Bokhtar, being the largest medieval city in the Vakhsh valley to the north. The city was situated near the Juybor Canal and retained its strategic importance as a stronghold until the early 20th century[6].

A.M. Belintsky suggested that the medieval city of Vakhsh mentioned in historical sources was the same as Levakand.[7] E. Chavannes also confirms this point of view.[8] A. Mukhtorov believed that medieval Vakhsh was located at the site of the Laghmon settlement on the road between Bokhtar and Panji Poyon (Lower Panj).[9] V.N. Logofet believed that the

1 Litvinskiy B. A., Solov'yev V. s. Srednevekovaya kul'tura Tokharistana (v svete raskopok v Vakhshskoy doline). — M.; Nauka. P. 148–151.

2 Davidovich Ye. A. Monetnyye nakhodki na territorii Tadzhikistana, zaregistrirovannyye v 1970 g. (Coin finds on the territory of Tajikistan registered in 1970.) Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue 10. – M., 1973. P. 262.

3 Mukaddasi. P. 49, 490; Istakhri. P. 339.

4 Hudud al'-alam. P. 120.

5 Bartol'd V. V. Soch. V. 1. P. 119.

6 Zeymal' T. I, Drevniye i srednevekovyye kanaly Vakhshskoy doliny. (Ancient and medieval canals of the Vakhsh valley) Strany i narody Vostoka, issue 10. Srednyaya i Tsentral'naya Aziya. –M.,1971. P. 50.

7 Belenitskiy A. M. Otchet o rabote Vakhshskogo otryada v 1947 g. V. 1. P. 140.

8 Chavannes E. Documents sur les Tou-Kiue (Turks) occidentaux. Sbornik trudov Orkhonskoy ekspeditsii, issue. 6. P. 277.

9 Mukhtarov A. Po sledam proshlogo (In the footsteps of the past). Dushanbe: Irfon, 1982.

location of medieval Vakhsh was near the confluence of the Vakhsh River and the Amu Darya. According to him, the Vakhsh fortress, located on a high bank of the river, served as a lookout for entry into the valley from the south and also as a base and refuge for those involved in gold mining and other activities in the area.[1]

Khatlon (Khuttalan) during the Samanid period was a prosperous land with major cities like Hulbuk, Munk, Tamliyat, Porghar, and Andijorogh. The cities of Khuttalon were located along the banks of rivers and had fertile lands with many orchards.[2] The capital of Khuttalon during the Samanid period, Hulbuk, was a populous city with many villages.[3] Hulbuk was smaller than Munk.[4] The buildings in this city were made of clay, and the Friday mosque was located in the city center.[5] A river called Barson [6] or Barbon,[7] or the Hulbuk Canal[8], flowed near the Hulbuk, providing the city's drinking water.[9]

Today, the medieval site of Hulbuk is located in the Vose district of Khatlon province, covering an area of 70 hectares. It consisted of an ark, shahristan, and rabat. The ark was divided into inner and outer sections.[10]

P. 9.

1 Logofet D. N. Na granitsakh Sredney Azii. Putevyye ocherki, v trekh knigakh. (On the borders of Central Asia. Travel essays, in three books) SPb., 1909. P. 57.

2 Istakhri. P. 279.

3 Hudud al-alam. P. 119.

4 Istakhri. P. 297.

5 Muqaddasi. P. 291.

6 Istakhri. P. 339.

7 Ibn Hawqal. P. 518.

8 Ibn Khordadbeh. P. 296.

9 Muqaddasi. P. 291.

10 Gulyamova E. Raskopki v Khul'buke v 1961 g. (Excavations in Hulbuk in 1961.) Arkh.-ye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue. 9. Dushanbe. 1964. P. 103-113.

During the Samanid period, a mint operated in Khuttalon where silver dirhams were minted.[1] According to E.A. Davidovich, this mint was located in Hulbuk.[2] Archaeological excavations in the lower part of the ark have uncovered numerous coins dating from the 10th–11th centuries, which were struck at this mint.[3]

Archaeological finds in Hulbuk have shown that, in addition to canals, almost every house had its own water pipes.[4] In the medieval city, metalworking, pottery, glassmaking, and brick-making were well-developed.[5] According to Istakhri, Hulbuk's buildings were made of clay,[6] but excavations revealed that all the buildings in Hulbuk were constructed from fired bricks, and their floors were covered with glazed tiles.[7] The cultural layer at the Khishtteppa settlement dates from the 10th–12th centuries, suggesting that early medieval Hulbuk was located in a different place.

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1 Ubaydulloh Uk¸aylī. Doru-l-zarbḥoi Eron dar davrai islomī. (Dor-ul-zarbs of Iran in the Islamic period). P. 167; Walker J. A Catalogue of the Arab-Sasanian coins. London: The British Museum, 1941– 244 p.

2 Davidovich Ye. A. Monetnyye nakhodki na territorii Tadzhikistana v 1953 godu (Coin finds on the territory of Tajikistan in 1953). Doklady AN TadzhSSR. № 11. Stalinabad, 1954. P. 69—79.

3 Gulyamova E. O rabotakh Khul'bukskogo i Moskovskogo otryadov v 1979 g. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, (On the work of the Hulbuk and Moscow detachments in 1979). Issue. 19. Dushanbe, 1986. S. 264—277; S. 264–272.

4 Gulyamova E. Khul'buk - stolitsa Khuttalya (Khulbuk - the capital of Khuttal). Dushanbe: Irfon, 1969. P. 52.

5 Davidovich Ye. A. Monetnyye nakhodki na territorii Tadzhikistana, zaregistrirovannyye v 1970 g. (Coin finds on the territory of Tajikistan, registered in 1970). Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane. Issue 10. M., 1973.Pp. 249-281. − P. 59.

6 Istakhri. P. 279.

7 Litvinskiy B. A., Davidovich Ye. A. Predvaritel'nyy otchet o rabote Khuttal'skogo otryada na territorii Kulyabskoy oblasti v 1953 godu. (A preliminary report on the work of the Khuttal otryada in the territory of the Kulyab region in 1953). Doklady Akademii nauk TadzhSSR, № 11. Stalinabad, 1954. - P. 40.

Munk was the largest city in Khuttalan during the Samanids.[1] This city was located two days' journey from Hulbuk, on the border with Karun, serving as the easternmost Muslim border post.[2] According to Ibn Hawqal, Munk was not a large city but had a vast rural area.[3] It was a very beautiful and green city, and its residents were brave and experienced in warfare.[4] V.V. Barthold identified the location of the medieval Munk as present-day Baljuvon.[5] However A.M. Belenitsky, based on later archaeological findings, identified the location of the medieval city of Munk as being one kilometer from Khovaling, in the vicinity of the villages of Shahr-i Mung and Gulzor (formerly Khonaqoh).[6] B.A. Litvinsky believes that life in this city began during the Kushan period and continued until the Mongol invasion.[7] The valley stretched 10–12 kilometers in length and 6–7 kilometers in width, with fertile land suitable for the growth and prosperity of the city.[8] In the valley of the Obi Mazor River, there are two mounds that, according to M. Mullokandov, were the southern gates of the city of Munk.[9] On the banks of the Obi Mazor River, near the village of Gulzor, lies the medieval cemetery of Munk, where the bodies are buried facing north. On

1 Mukaddasi. P. 291.

2 Yaqubi. P. 290.

3 Ibn Haukal. P. 476.

4 Hudud al-alam. P. 120.

5 Bartold V.V. Soch. V. 1. V. 119.

6 Belenitskiy A. M. Otchet o rabote Vakhshskogo otryada v 1946 godu. Trudy Sogdiansko-Tadzhikskoy arkheologicheskoy ekspeditsii, t. 1. - M. - L., 1950. P. 128–129.

7 Litvinskiy V. A. Arkheologicheskiye raboty Instituta istorii AN Tadzhikskoy SSR. Arkheologicheskiye otkrytiya 1966 goda. - M., 1967. P. 39.

8 Gulyamova E. Raskopki u kishlaka Sayat (Parkharskiy rayon). Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, vyp. 10 - M. 1973. P. 217.

9 Mullokandov M. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v doline reki Obimazar v 1980 godu (Archaeological works in the Obimazar River valley in 1980). Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue 20. Dushanbe, 1987. P. 219–226. P. 221–222.

the left bank of the Obi Mazor River, in the area of Sumbulxor, traces of pottery and signs of craftsmen's dwellings from the 10th to 12th centuries have been found. [1]

The Tajik researcher Gh. Ghoibov has precisely identified the locations of other cities in Khatlon, such as Tamliyat, Porgar, Andijorog, and other cities of this region,[2] so we will refrain from discussing this further and suffice with the depiction of the region's map (see: map 14).

From the analysis of written sources and scientific studies, it can be concluded that during the Samanid era, the cities and districts of Transoxiana were generally in a state of growth, with almost all of them having sharistan, kuhandiz and rabats which were key features of urbanization. The political situation in the cities of Transoxiana was relatively stable compared to earlier periods, facilitating the development of agriculture, craftsmanship, trade, science, and culture. During this time, many renowned scholars and literary figures from Transoxiana produced timeless works and became famous around the world.

Khorasan (Khuroson) in the time of the Samanids was divided into four parts: Nishapur, Merv, Herat, and Balkh (see: map 15). Nishapur was the capital of all Khorasan, the residence of the commander-in-chief, and at the same time the second seat of the Samanid emirs. During the Samanid period, Nishapur was a large and prosperous city, covering an area of one farsakh by one farsakh. It had a kuhandiz, rabat, and a grand mosque. The city's administrative complex

[1] Mullokandov M. Arkheologicheskiye raboty v doline reki Obimazar v 1981 godu. (Archaeological works in the valley Obimazar River in 1981. Archaeological Works in Tajikistan) Arkheologicheskiye raboty v Tadzhikistane, issue 21. Dushanbe, 1988. P. 404-413. Pp. 406–413.

[2] Goibov G. Tarikhi Khatlon (History of Khatlon). Pp. 170–200.

was located near the mosque, and the prison was situated about 0.25 farsakh away.

The kuhandiz (citadel) had two gates, and the city had four gates with the following names: "the Gate of Pul", "the Maqil Street Gate", "the Kuhandiz Gate", and "the Tagin Bridge Gate."

Outside the city and the citadel, there was the rabad, where the city markets were located. The rabad also had several gates, including the Qubab (Gunbadon) Gate in the west, the Jang Gate in the east, and the Ahvasabad Gate in the south, among others. The city's famous markets included the large Marba'a Bazaar and the smaller Marba'a Bazaar. The large Marba'a Bazaar was located around the city's Friday mosque, and the smaller Marba'a Bazaar was near the administrative complex. Within these bazaars, there were caravanserais where merchants lived, depending on their trade. The waters of Nishapur flowed underground, and the city had underground canals. The city and its villages were irrigated by a large river. Nishapur produced silk and fine cotton cloth, which were exported to other places.[1] Le Strange writes: "Cobblers, cloth sellers, hat makers, and other craftsmen each had their own caravanserai, and every house in the city accessed water through qanats. These underground canals flowed from the village of Bastankan, located near Nishapur, towards the city. People were assigned to maintain and regulate the water supply."[2]

Nishapur was located on a caravan route connecting Fars and Kerman with Ray, Gorgan, and Khwarazm, which greatly contributed to the city's

[1] Istakhri. P. 204-205.

[2] Le Strange. P. 410.

economic development.[1] Other smaller cities than Nishapur also existed in this part of Khorasan, the most important of which were Tus, Baihak, Sarahs, Niso and Abevard.

Smaller cities near Nishapur included Tus, Bayhaq, Sarakhs, Nisa, and Abivard. The provinces of Qumis and Quhistan were mentioned as separate geographical entities in the sources, but we believe they were under the control of Nishapur during the Samanid period, as there is no mention of titles like "Emir of Qumis" or "Governor of Kuhistan" in any sources. In contrast, the sources frequently mention governors of Gorgan and Tabaristan attacking the cities of Qumis (Domghan and Semnan), and the governors of Kerman and Sistan attacking the cities of Quhistan. Therefore, in our view, Qumis and Quhistan were border districts of Nishapur in northern and southern Khorasan.

Today, Nishapur is the center of one of the provinces in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Determining the exact location of Nishapur from the Samanid era requires archaeological research.

Other cities in this region, such as the Samanid-era cities of Nisa, Abivard, and Sarakhs, have been located near the modern city of Ashgabat in Turkmenistan.

Merv (Marv). In 885, the Samanids took control of the government of Merv and remained their rule until the fall of their state. Today, the territory of the Samanid-era Merv is part of the Republic of Turkmenistan. The sources confirm that the geographical names of Merv were all in Tajik until the Türkic-speaking settled after the Samanids; some of them have survived to this day.

[1] Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 355.

In the second half of the 10th century, when Muqaddasi visited Merv, two-thirds of the surrounding settlements were in ruins, and its citadel was also deserted. According to the "Hudud al-Alam," Merv is an ancient city: "In ancient times, the ruler of Khorasan resided there, but now he resides in Bukhara. It is a prosperous and flourishing place. There is a citadel there, built by Tahmuras. It contains many palaces and was once the residence of kings. There is no market in all of Khorasan as good as its bazaar. Its revenue comes from the water, and from it come excellent cotton, camel fodder, steel, vinegar, pickles, and fine woolen garments."[1]

Istakhri writes: "Merv is called 'Shahjahan' and is an ancient city. It has a citadel and a town. Its land is somewhat salty. It has three Friday mosques. One was built in the town at the beginning of Islam. As Islam gained strength, they built another one at the city gate, which is now called the "Old Friday Mosque". Hadith readers prayed there, and it is called the 'Bani Mahan Mosque.' Later, the Friday Mosque of Mochan was built. It is said that the mosque, the governor's palace, and the Mochan Bazaar were all built by Abumuslim. The citadel is as large as several towns but is in ruins. The citadel has underground water."[2]

According to Yaqut, Merv in his time had two large Friday mosques located within the walls, one belonging to the Hanafis and the other to the Shafi'is. Yaqut lived in Merv for three years, where he worked on his book "Mu'jam al-Buldan," as Merv had many libraries before the Mongol invasion.[3] Yaqut noted that if it weren't for the Mongol invasion, he would

1 Hudud al-alam. P. 62.
2 Istakhri. pp. 205-206.
3 Le Strange. P. 427.

have lived in Merv for the rest of his life. Yaqut mentions two libraries in Merv, the "Aziziya" library with 12,000 volumes and the "Kamaliya" library. One of the largest and oldest libraries in Merv was established by the Samanids.[1]

The ruins of the city of Merv are located 30 kilometers east of the city of Mary in Turkmenistan. The city covered an area of 4 km², and together with the surrounding villages, it occupied 40 km². Topographically, the city was divided into several parts. The ancient citadel of the city (Erk-Qal'a) had already been destroyed during the Samanid period, and the inner city (Gabr-Qal'a) was considered the city's core, with four gates.[2] In the 8th–9th centuries, the western part of the city developed significantly, turning into a rabad with defensive walls. During the Samanid era, the city expanded further to the west and was surrounded by a special wall (see: map 16).

Other cities subordinate to Merv included Qushmaydan, Hurmuzfarrah, Borikdiz (Karunayn), Farhodgird, Savangird, Najor, Omul, Zamm, and others (see: map 17).

Herat. Herat included the districts of Isfizor, Badghis, Bamiyan, Ganjrustaq, and Ghor. The rule of the Samanids in this province began as early as the 920s. According to the writings of Ibn Hawqal and Muqaddasi, Herat in the 10th century was a large city with a fortress and four gates: the "Saroy Gate" to the north, on the road to Balkh, the "Ziyad Gate" to the west, facing Nishapur, the "Firuzabad Gate" to the south, on the road to Sistan, and the "Khushk Gate" to the east, facing the mountains of Ghor.[3]

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1 Le Strange. P. 429.

2 Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 353.

3 Ibni Hauqal. P. 318; Mukaddasi. pp. 329, 330.

Ibn Hawqal notes that the "Saroy Gate" was made of iron, while the other three gates were wooden.[1] The fortress of Herat also had four gates, each named after the corresponding city gates. The city's area was half a farsakh by half a farsakh. The administrative center, Darulamara, was located in a place called Khorasanabad, a mile outside the city, on the road to Pushanj. Near each city gate was a market and the Jame' mosques were in the middle of these markets, known throughout Khorasan and Sistan for their beauty and the number of worshipers. Behind the western city wall was the prison.

Istakhri writes that Herat had a large wall. The citadel (Kuhandiz) and the Friday Mosque were inside the city. Shahristan had four gates: "The Balkh Gate," "The Ziyad Gate," "The Firuzabad Gate," and "The Khushk Gate." All these gates were wooden, except the "Balkh Gate," which was iron. Between the city and its suburb (rabaz), there were running waters. The fortress had four doors. Around the fortress, the wall was three steps thick. The Friday Mosque was in the middle of the city. Nowhere in Khorasan and Transoxiana was there a more well-kept and populous mosque than the one in Herat. Herat was the trading post for Pars and Khorasan. At a distance of two farsakhs from the city, on the road to Balkh, was a mountain that had nothing but grass and firewood. At the top of the mountain was a Christian chapel. Between the city and this mountain, there was no water, gardens, or orchards except for the city's river, which had no bridge. The most prosperous gate was the "Firuzabad Gate," and the city's water came from near the Karvan fort. When

[1] Ibn Hauqal. C. 318.

it emerged from Ghor and approached Herat, other rivers branched off from it.[1]

The prosperity and development of Herat continued until the Mongols captured it. Yaqut, who visited Herat four years before the Mongol invasion, writes: "In Khorasan, I have not seen a larger, more important, more prosperous, and more populated city than Herat. It has many gardens and abundant water".[2] Qazvini also confirms Yaqut's words and mentions that he saw windmills in Herat that he had never seen anywhere else before.[3] Hamdallah Mustawfi describes the prosperity of Herat, saying: "The circumference of its walls is nine thousand steps, and it has excellent and healthy weather. In summer, a constant breeze blows. Eighteen villages are connected to the city, and its water comes from the Harirud canal. Among its fruits, the 'Fakhri' grape and melons are notable. The people are skilled warriors and fighters and are Sunni. There is a strong castle there, called Shamiran. Two farsakhs from Herat, on a mountain, there was once a fire temple called Arshak. During the rule of the Ghurids, the city had twelve thousand shops, six thousand bathhouses, caravanserais, and mills, three hundred fifty-nine schools, and religious houses, and four hundred forty-four thousand inhabited houses."[4]

The Isfizor region lay south of Herat, on the road to Zarang. In the 10th century, besides its center – the city of Isfizor – this region had four other cities: Adrasqar, Kavron, Kushak, and Kavoshon. Isfizor was also known as Sabzwar and was called Sabzwar of Herat to distinguish it from Nishapur's Sabzwar.

1 Istakhri. P. 209-210.

2 Yaqut, V. 4. P. 958

3 Qazvini, V. 2. P. 322.

4 Mustaufi. P. 187.

The length of this region from north to south was a three-day journey, and its width was a one-day journey. Istakhri mentions a famous valley called Koshon, noting that it had inhabited villages. The source of the river of this region was near Isfizor, flowing westward to the lake of Zara in Juvayn. All the cities of the Isfizor region had numerous gardens and farmlands.[1]

In medieval geographical works, Isfizor is mentioned under the names of Khoston and Joshton, and it is likely that Kavoshon is another form of the same name and that it is one and the same as Isfizor. The city of Adrasqar or Ardaskar still exists today to the east of Isfizor and is known as Adraskan. Yaqut considered Isfizor part of Sistan, and Hamdallah Mustawfi describes it as a central city where the population was Sunni Shafi'i and religiously fanatic. Unfortunately, the exact locations of the other cities in this region and their products are not mentioned in medieval geographical works.[2] Due to its abundant water and difficult mountainous terrain, Isfizor became a refuge for the Kharijites from the late 8th century to the mid-9th century, and several Kharijite rebellions in the region were suppressed by the Tahirid and Saffarid rulers. Scholars believe that the medieval city of Isfizor is located at the ruins of the Qal'a-i Dokhtar and the Qal'a of Rustam-i Zol in the district of Shindand.

Thus, the province of Isfizor and also Sistan, which lay to its south, were administratively subordinate to the governor of Herat during the Samanid era.

In the 10th century, Gharjistan was a prosperous province, with ten congregational mosques in various

[1] Le Strenge. P. 438.

[2] Ibid. P. 439.

cities. Istakhri writes that Gharjistan had two cities: one called Nishin and the other Surmin. In Nishin, there was plenty of rice, and in Surmin, an abundance of raisins.[1] According to Le Strange's research, the major cities of Gharjistan were Obshin and Shuzmin, although their exact locations are unknown. The cities of Gharjistan, which Istakhri mentions and Le Strange records with slight variations, are the same, differing only in the transcription of their names.

Ghur (Ghor). A large mountainous region in the southwest of Gharjistan was known as Ghor or Ghuristan. According to Istakhri, Ghor was a mountainous area surrounded by Muslim regions, but not all of its inhabitants had embraced Islam, though there were some Muslims among them. Ghor had strong and resource-rich mountains. The language of Ghor was similar to the language of Khorasan. The border of Ghor extended to Khorasan on one side and to the provinces of Sistan on the other. Silver mines were abundant in the mountains of Ghor from beginning to end.[2] In "Hudud al-Alam" it is wtitten that "Ghor is a region of mountains and ravines. In ancient times, this region was entirely inhabited by infidels, but now most of them are Muslim. They have numerous towns and villages. From this region come slaves, gold, armor, and fine weapons."[3]

This region encompassed the southern bank of the Herat River, beginning at the Kirwan fort in the north, extending to Bamiyan and Ghazna in the east, to Zamindawar and Farah in the south, and to Garjistan and Herat in the west. The main cities of Ghor were Firuzkuh, Bamiyan, Shahrak, Tulak, Ahangaran,

1 Istakhri. P. 209.

2 Ibid. P. 220.

3 Hudud al-Alam. P. 66.

Karabagh, Kirman, Shahr-i Zahhak, Shahr-i Shahi Qadim, and Ghulgula. Medieval geographers note that large rivers like the Harirud, Helmand, Khash, and Farah originate in the mountains of this land, while the Murghab River originates in Garjistan. Ghor had numerous fortified castles, such as Firuzkuh, Mandesh, Barkushk, Tulak, Khaysar, Tamron, Saifrud, and Walishan.[1] Most of these castles were located in the upper reaches of the Harirud River, and researchers have identified the castles of Ahangaran, Mandesh, and Firuzkuh, whose ruins still exist today, as important administrative centers of Ghor during the Samanid period.[2]

Bamiyan (Bamian). According to the "Hudud al-Alam," Bamiyan was a city between Gozganan and the borders of Khorasan. "Its ruler is called 'Sher'. A large river runs along its side. There are two stone statues there: one is called 'Sorkhbut' (Red Idol), and the other 'Khengbut'"[3] Yaqut mentions the great statues of Buddha, writing: "There is a large temple there, supported by massive pillars. It contains sculptures of all the birds God created. And on the surface of the mountain, two large statues, from the base to the top of the mountain, have been carved. And on the surface of the mountain, two large statues have been carved, from the bottom to the fortress of the mountain, one of which is called 'Sorkhbud' (Red Buddha) and the other 'Khonukbud' (Cold Buddha), and there is nothing like them in the entire world."[4]

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[1] Amirshoev N. K. Inikosi tarihi Gur va Guriyon dar sarchashmahoi hattii forsi (Reflection of the history of Ghur and the Ghurians in written Persian sources) // Akhboroti Academyi fangoi RSS Tojikiston. No. 3 (11), 1988. pp. 3–9.

[2] Aziz Ahmadi Panjsheri Jughrofiyoi tarikhii Ghur (Historical geography of Ghur). Kabul.1360. P. 43–47.

[3] Ibid. P. 65.

[4] Yaqut, V. 1. P. 481.

Istakhri considered the size of the city of Bamiyan to be half that of Balkh, and writes: "It is situated on a hilltop, but it has no walls. Its region is extremely fertile, and a large river irrigates it."[1]

The ruins of the towns of Ghulghula and Zahhak city, which are currently located near the city of Bamiyan in the Republic of Afghanistan, were the administrative centers of Bamiyan during the Samanid period.

In the 10th century, other cities such as Basghurfan, Sakevand, and Lakhrob also existed in the Bamiyan region, but their locations are unknown.

Balkh was one of the four administrative centers of Khorasan, and in the 9th century, it had 13 gates and 3 walls, while during the Samanid period, it had seven gates.[2] According to the information from "Hudud al-'Alam," "Balkh was a large and prosperous city, serving as a hub for goods from India."[3]

After the defeat of Amr ibn Lays Saffari by Ismail Samani in 900, Khorasan came under the control of the Samanids. Yaqubi, who visited Balkh during the Samanid era, described its boundaries as follows: "Balkh has 74 minarets... it stretches eastward to the border of Tabbat, southward to Bamiyan, and northward to Hulbuk, Halaward, Vakhsh, and Sogd."[4] He even considered the cities of Parwan and Panjshir as administratively dependent on Balkh. The territories mentioned by Yaqubi for the province of Balkh extended on both sides of the Jayhun (Amu Darya) River. Balkh was briefly the capital of the Khorasanian part of the Samanid Empire and reached its peak of prosperity during the reign of Nasr II ibn

1 Istakhri. P. 277.

2 Le Strenge. P. 446.

3 Hudud al-alam. P. 65.

4 Jaqubi. Pp. 55–56.

Ahmad (914–943), being referred to as "Umm al-Bilad" (Mother of Cities)[1] and "Qubbat al-Islam" (Dome of Islam).[2]

The medieval city of Balkh was not only the oldest and largest in Transoxiana and Khorasan but also in the entire eastern region. The Jame' Mosque of Balkh was one of the most beautiful and largest mosques in the Islamic world. [3] It was located in the city center, adjacent to the markets. Its structure stretched for about one farsakh[4], and according to Muqaddasi's writings in the 10th century, there was no mosque of such beauty and grandeur in the entire East[5].

Balkh covered a vast area, which in general included the city of Balkh and its surrounding districts, dividing into the provinces of Juzjan and Takharestan.

Guzganan, Juzjan or Juzjanan was a district west of Balkh, situated on the road to Marvorud, which during the medieval period was considered one of the most prosperous and populous districts of Balkh. This district had several cities, but three of them, which are still referred to by their ancient names, have remained. Geographers mentioned the locations of other cities, and by referencing their works, the ruins and locations of cities that no longer exist can be determined. The primary product exported from Juzjan to neighboring regions was tanned leather. The historical geography of Guzganan was generally studied by V. V. Bartold[6], while its historical and

1 Le Strange. P. 465.
2 Dekhkhudo. V. 11. P. 236.
3 Baykhaki. P. 383.
4 Istakhri. P. 292.
5 Muqaddasi. P. 302.
6 Bartold V.V. Soch. V.7. Pp. 56–59.

architectural monuments were researched by G. A. Pugachenkova[1].

During the Samanid era, the local dynasty of the Farighunids ruled in Guzgan, who claimed descent from the legendary ancient Persian king Afridun.[2]

In the 9th century, the province of Guzgan had four cities – Anbar, San, Kandaram, and Shiburqan.[3] The cities of Faryab, Andkhud, Yahudiya, and Taliqan, which were part of Guzgan during the Samanid period, were neighboring provinces considered separate from Guzgan.[4] In the 10th century, the province of Guzganan expanded significantly in terms of size. It bordered Gharjistan and Merv to the west, Balkh, Takharestan, and Bamiyan to the east, Ghur and Bust to the south, and stretched northward to the Amu River.[5] According to Muqaddasi, the ruler of Guzganan from the Farighunid dynasty was so powerful that he only sent gifts to the Samanids and did not pay tribute.[6] The author of "Hudud al-'Alam" notes that the ruler of Guzganan was superior to other rulers of his time in terms of fame, wisdom, knowledge, and intellect. His domain was characterized by justice, stability, and peace. Some cities located south of the Hindu Kush mountains were also under the rule of the king of Guzganan.[7]

The city of Jurzivan was located toward Maymana (Yahudiya) among the mountains, where the amir of Juzjan resided during the summer. Jurzivan is

[1] Pugachenkova G. A., Mukhtarov A. M. Dva neizvestnukh arkhitekturnukh pamyanika v okruge Balkha (Two unknown architectural monuments in the Balkh district.) Narodu Azii I Afriki, 1977, №6. Pp.137-145.

[2] Hudud al-alam. P. 105.

[3] Yaqubi. P. 287.

[4] Ibn Faqih. P. 98; Ibn Khordadbeh. P. 33.

[5] Hudud al-alam. P. 105.

[6] Muqaddasi. P. 337.

[7] Ibid.

the Arabic name of the city, while Iranians called it Gurzivan. It was also written as Kurzibon, Kurziyan,[1] Kurziban or Jurziban[2] and Qurziman[3]. In coins minted during the Samanid period in Gurzivan, the province is referred to as Jurziqan.[4]The center of this province, the city of Gurzivan, was located between Taliqan and Marwrud on the border of Ghur, known for its favorable climate. In the 10th century, it served as the summer residence of the local rulers from the Farighunid dynasty.[5] Yaqut writes that all the people of this city were wealthy. The ruins of this city do not appear on modern maps, but it is believed that the ruins known as Qal'a-i Wali are its remains. These ruins are located above the Murghab River. Yaqut al-Hamawi notes that in terms of its location and mountainous character, Gurzivan resembled the city of Mecca.[6]

The cities of Maymana, Shiburqan, and Faryab were among the major centers of the province of Juzjan, and their locations have been identified by archaeologists.

Tukharistan. was a vast province located east of Balkh, stretching along the southern bank of the Jayhun River (Amu Darya) up to the borders of Badakhshan, and from the south, it was bounded by the northern ranges of Bamiyan and Panjshir. In the medieval period, Tukharestan was understood in two ways: first, as the area south of the Jayhun River

1 Muqaddasi. P. 348.
2 Yaqut, vol. 4. P. 258.
3 Yaqubi. C. 287.
4 Walker J. A Catalogue of the Arab-Sasanian coins. – London: The British Museum, 1941. P. 97.
5 Ibn Haukal. P.107.
6 Yakut. P. 443.

between Balkh and Badakhshan,[1] and second, as the entire region of ancient Bactria. However, V. V. Bartold states that the boundaries of Tukharestan included the provinces of the upper reaches of both banks of the Amu River and its tributaries.[2] Le Strange writes, "Tukharestan consisted of two parts: one was Upper Tukharestan, located east of Balkh along the Jayhun River; the other was Lower Tukharestan, situated southeast of it along the border of Badakhshan".[3]

In modern scientific literature, Tukharestan is divided into northern and southern parts, with the northern part located north of the Amu River and the southern part situated south of it. According to Ibn al-Faqih, in the 9th century, the name Upper Tukharestan referred to the city of Taliqan and its surrounding province.[4] Yaqubi also included Shikhnan (Shughnan) and Badakhshan within the boundaries of Upper Tukharestan.[5] Upper Tukharestan was located south of the Amu River, where three rivers – the Zargham, Khatlab, and Vatrob – flowed into it. In the 10th century, most of the territory of Tukharestan was mountainous, but there were also plains where nomadic people engaged in livestock farming.[6]

Taliqan was the administrative center of Tukharestan, located three manzils (traditional stages of travel; stops) from Marwrud to the north of Balkh and three stops from Faryab.[7] In Samanid coins, the city is referred to as both Taliqan and Tayqan.[8]

1 Istakhri. P. 275.

2 Bartold V.V. Turkestan v epokhu mongolskogo nashestviya (Turkestan in the era of the Mongol invasion). Part 1. Texts. St. Petersburg, 1898. pp. 21-15

3 Le Strange. P. 253.

4 Ibni Faqeh. P. 321.

5 Yaqubi. P. 292.

6 Hudud al-alam. P. 108.

7 Istakhri. P. 286.

8 Walker J. A Catalogue of the Arab-Sasanian coins. — London: The British Museum,

During the Samanid period, Taliqan was one of the largest cities in Tukharestan, and in terms of size, it was about one-third the size of Balkh. It was located in a plain and had a large river with numerous gardens and vineyards. Muqaddasi mentions two rivers, Khatlab and Torob, that flowed through Taliqan and emptied into the Amu River. The city was very beautiful and prosperous, with a lively market.[1] Sam'ani called Taliqan a "qasaba," or the central city of Tukharestan, mentioning its two rivers and its Jami Mosque. The fortress of Taliqan, known in the Middle Ages as Mansur Kuh or Nusrat Kuh[2], was so strong that it was unparalleled in height and size.

According to academician V. V. Bartold, the medieval city of Taliqan was located near the fortress of Takht-e Khatoon, and its ruins can be found near the fortress of Kaurmach, situated in the southern part of the Qal'a-i Wali valley in the upper reaches of the Murghab River.[3] The ruins of the medieval Taleqan are located near the Chachakto.[4]

Other relatively large districts under the jurisdiction of Tukharestan included Khulm, Samangan, Andarob, Baghlan, and Badakhshan, whose central cities and towns were described in detail by medieval geographers, and some of their locations have been identified by archaeologists.

The Balkh part of Khorasan during the Samanid period held significant strategic importance, as the main caravan route connecting the Near East and Iran with India and China passed through this area.

1941— 244 p. p. 169.

1 Muqaddasi. P. 303.

2 Rashidaddin Fazlulloh.Jome'u-t-tavarikh V. 1, p. 2, P. 219.

3 Bartold V.V. Soch. Volume 7, pp. 62.

4 Le Strange. P. 423.

The study and investigation of sources related to the historical geography of Transoxiana and Khorasan during the Samanid era lead to the conclusion that the information provided by historical sources regarding the cities and districts of this region is based on real facts and corresponds to historical reality. The data from medieval geographers present the administrative borders of various districts and provinces, especially the state borders of the Samanid Empire. The concentration of power in the administrative centers of the provinces and districts of the Samanid state is evidence that the state was highly centralized and strong. The existence of such administrative centers throughout the vast territory of the Samanids shows the effectiveness of governance. Regarding the study of this historical region, especially the areas of Badakhshan, archaeological research could provide substantial material. Unfortunately, such research has not been sufficiently conducted so far. Implementing such efforts could shed light on many issues and unclear aspects related to the historical geography of these regions.

§ 2.2. THE GEOGRAPHIC DECLINE OF THE SAMANID TERRITORY

In this section, we will gradually discuss the withdrawal of certain provinces from Samanid rule, which ultimately led to the fragmentation of the entire state. The factors behind the Samanids losing control over certain regions are cited based on information from reliable historical sources that are well-known in academic circles. These sources consist of works by medieval historians, written

either in Arabic or Persian, some of whom served in the courts of the Samanids or their governors in the subordinate provinces. The issue of the shrinking Samanid territory has been examined chronologically, considering political, social, and economic factors.

From the study of historical and geographical sources, as well as scholarly works written on this topic, it appears that the Samanid Empire reached its peak in terms of territorial extent and political power during the reign of Amir Ismail ibn Ahmad Samanid. Centered in Bukhara, it was a state that managed to unite the Tajik-populated lands. After the Tahirids and Saffarids, it was one of the first large states in the territory of Aryana (Greater Iran) that was established following the Arab conquests. A fascinating historical fact is that, for the second time (the first being the formation of the Parthian Empire after the Greek invasions), a great Aryan state was revived in the eastern part of this region—namely, Greater Khorasan.

During the reigns of Ismail Samanid's son Ahmad (907–914) and Ahmad's son Nasr II (914–943), despite some local uprisings, the Samanid Empire's territory remained largely intact until the early 60s of the 10th century. For about half a century, the Samanids maintained their vast empire through efficient governance. This was the period when the Tajik people were forming as a distinct nation, and the Persian Dari language and literature became globally renowned.

As previously mentioned, Nasr ibn Ahmad was removed from the throne due to pressure from fanatical clerics and military leaders who were close to them. The claim that during this time some of Nasr's close associates and possibly even Nasr

himself were attracted to the Qarmatian movement, and that Nasr paid the blood price for a Fatimid leader who had died in a Bukhara prison, is a subject that requires thorough investigation. It appears that Nasr's inclination toward the Qarmatians may have been a political move to counterbalance the power and influence of the Sunni clerics, who opposed his reforms. However, there is no clear evidence from contemporary historians that explicitly accuses Nasr of anti-Sunni tendencies. Some narratives hint at divisions that placed the clerics in opposition to Nasr towards the end of his reign. What is clear is that the opposition forces eventually succeeded, and under their pressure, Nasr abdicated in favor of his son and spent his remaining days in seclusion.

After ascending to the Samanid throne, Nuh ibn Nasr began by suppressing the Qarmatians, executing their leaders and confiscating their property. Amidst internal turmoil, the rise of the Buyids, who sought control over the western regions of the Samanid Empire, compounded the Samanid challenges.

In 944, Abu Ali Chaghani, through his military prowess, defeated the Buyid ruler Ruknuddawla, ensuring the continued loyalty of the western provinces to the Samanid Amir. However, Abu Ali's dismissal from his post and the appointment of Ibrahim Simjur in his place threw Khorasan into disarray. Scholars consider Abu Ali's removal from the governorship of Khorasan and his subsequent rebellion as the first significant blow to Samanid rule, which later led to the state's fragmentation.[1] Many soldiers sent by Amir Nuh to confront Abu Ali defected to his side, and another Samanid prince, Ibrahim ibn Ahmad, was proclaimed ruler of the state by the mutinous

[1] Nodji M. P. 112

troops. In 946, Abu Ali marched to Merv and then to Bukhara, placing Ibrahim on the throne. However, Ibrahim declared Nuh the legitimate Amir and appointed himself as his commander, leading to Abu Ali's departure from Bukhara for Chaghaniyan. Amir Nuh ibn Nasr returned to Bukhara and sent forces to suppress Abu Ali. In two battles between 947 and 948, Abu Ali was defeated and fled to Tukharistan, which he subsequently occupied.[1]

In 948, after learning that his properties in Chaghaniyan had been looted by Samanid forces, Abu Ali, with the help of the rulers of Khuttal, Rushd, and Ilak, raised an army and besieged Nuh's forces in Chaghaniyan. The conflict ended in a peace agreement, and in 951, Abu Ali was once again appointed governor of Khorasan, although he chose to remain in Chaghaniyan rather than return to Nishapur.

Ibn Athir notes that after his reappointment in 951, Abu Ali Chaghani resided in Chaghaniyan.[2] However, elsewhere, he reports that Abu Ali was later sent to Nishapur and Ray at Amir Nuh's command[3], which is corroborated by other sources.[4] This suggests that Abu Ali's presence in Chaghaniyan was temporary, as most credible historical sources describe him leading campaigns against the Buyids.

Between 946 and 951, Mansur ibn Qarotakin was the governor of Khorasan and engaged in a protracted conflict with the Buyid ruler Ruknuddawla, advancing as far as Isfahan. Upon Mansur's death in 951, Abu Ali Chaghani succeeded him.

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1 Ibid. P. 115.

2 Ibn al-Athir. V. 8. P. 493.

3 Ibid. pp. 504–505.

4 Gardizi. pp. 448–449.

In 953, when Ruknud-Dawla's forces attacked Ray and Gorgan, Abu Ali Chaghani and Vushmgir ibn Ziyar were dispatched by Amir Nuh to confront him. They laid siege to Ruknuddawla in Ray. After negotiations, Ruknud-Dawla agreed to pay 200,000 dirhams annually to Amir Nuh in exchange for retaining control of Ray.[1]

However, Vushmgir ibn Ziyar was dissatisfied with the outcome of the peace and wrote to Amir Nuh, accusing Abu Ali of favoring Ruknud-Dawla. In 954, Amir Nuh dismissed Abu Ali and appointed Abu Sa'id ibn Malik Fargani as his replacement, although Fargani never reached Khorasan due to Amir Nuh's death shortly thereafter.

It becomes clear that the first signs of the Samanid Empire's decline had already appeared during the reign of Amir Nuh[2] While the Samanids managed to retain control over their western borders through the efforts of their military commanders, Abu Ali's dismissal temporarily severed Khorasan, along with several eastern provinces such as Chaghaniyan, Shuman, Khuttal, and Ilak, from the central authority in Bukhara. By the time of Amir Nuh's death, the Caliph of Baghdad, under the influence of the Buyid ruler Mu'izz al-Dawla, had granted Abu Ali Chaghani governorship over Khorasan, effectively removing the eastern parts of the Samanid Empire from Bukhara's control until 955.[3]

After Nuh ibn Nasr's death, his son, Abdumalik I (954–961), ascended the Samanid throne. Abu Sa'id Fargani, who had been appointed governor of Khorasan before Amir Nuh's death, marched to

1 Ibid. 156–158.

2 Gafurov B. Tajiks. P. 459.

3 Gardizi. P. 158.

Nishapur and defeated the combined forces of Abu Ali Chaghani and Ruknud-Dawla. Another peace agreement was reached, under which Ruknuddawla agreed to pay 200,000 dinars annually to the Samanid Amir in exchange for governing the regions of Jibal and Tabaristan.

In 955, Ruknuddawla captured Isfahan, taking the city completely out of Samanid control.[1] In the same year, Abuali Chagani died in Ray and was buried in Chaganian. Thus, the Samanids received peace in their western borders.

In the same year, Abu Ali Chaghani died in Ray and was buried in Chaghaniyan. With his death, the Samanids regained some stability over their western borders.

In 956, Abu Sa'id Fargani was summoned to Bukhara and executed by Alp Tegin, one of the leading Turkish commanders who had taken control of the state apparatus. Alp Tegin wielded such power that he could appoint and dismiss commanders and viziers at will. The internal disarray reached such an extent that between 954 and 959, the office of vizier changed hands four times.[2] In 960, Alp Tegin was appointed commander-in-chief of Khorasan, and Abu Ali Bal'ami became the vizier. The two formed an alliance, vowing to act only with mutual consent, and essentially took control of the entire administration and military of the Samanid Empire.[3]

Abdumalik ibn Nuh died in 961 after falling from his horse during chavgonbozi (equestrian polo), and his death sparked unrest in the military and the army

1 Ibid. P. 159–161.
2 Gafurov. B. Tajiks. P. 460.
3 Gardizi. P. 159–161.

rebelled, "and everyone began to claim the power and rebel."[1]

The political ineptitude of Abdulmalik ibn Nuh left the Samanid Empire in a precarious situation. As seen, the military commanders who had worked to maintain Samanid influence along the state's western borders were victims of internal intrigue and were eventually killed. During Abdumalik's reign, state affairs were effectively controlled by Alp Tegin and Abu Ali Bal'ami, and the Amir was unable to act without their approval.

After Abd al-Malik's death, his young son Nasr III was appointed as the Samanid Amir under the guardianship of Alp Tegin. However, the rest of the military was dissatisfied with this decision and placed Abdumalik's brother, Mansur ibn Nuh (961–976), on the throne. This led to a conflict between Alp Tegin and Mansur's forces. After several battles between the two sides, peace was finally achieved in 962. However, Alp Tegin seized control of Ghazna and established his rule there. In 961, the governorship of Khorasan was entrusted to Ibrahim Simjur, who managed to maintain stability in the region for five years.[2]

From 965, the Samanids became embroiled in constant wars and costly sieges in Sistan, which broke the morale of their army and weakened the state's financial and military system. In 967-968, at the instigation of the governor of Kerman, Muhammad ibn Ilyas, Amir Mansur sent Ibrahim Simjur, Vushmgir ibn Ziyar, and Hasan Firuzan to seize the territories of the Buyid state in Rayy. However, the untimely death of Vushmgir disrupted this plan.

[1] Narshakhi. P. 175.

[2] Gardizi. P. 356.

Through the efforts of the Khorasan commander, Ibrahim Simjur, and Amir Mansur's vizier, Abu Ja'far Utbi, peace was achieved. This was a historic agreement between two local dynasties, made for the first time without consulting the caliphs of Baghdad. According to the agreement, Azud al-Dawla and Rukn al-Dawla of the Buyid dynasty were to pay tribute to Amir Mansur ibn Nuh Samanid in exchange for governing Rayy and Jibal.[1] This agreement remained in effect until the end of the Samanid Empire. From this time until the death of Mansur ibn Nuh (977), there was relative peace in the Samanid state.

During Mansur ibn Nuh's reign, the political geography of the Samanid Empire diminished slightly. In Ghazna, Alp Tegin seized power and governed independently with neighboring provinces until 963. After his death one of his close associates, Sabuktigin, took over and formally recognized himself as a subordinate of the Samanid amir. The provinces of Gorgan, Tabaristan, Rayy, and Jibal became tributary to the Buyids, and Isfahan completely left Samanid control (see Maps 18, 19). Each province's administration was in the hands of local commanders, and by keeping them satisfied; Amir Mansur managed to retain the territories still under Samanid control.

Mansur died in 977, and his thirteen-year-old son, Nuh II ibn Mansur (977–997), ascended the throne. During Nuh II's reign, the independence of military commanders reached its peak. Due to the Amir's youth, the state's affairs were entrusted to Fa'iq Khasa, the Great Hajim (Grand Chamberlain) Abu'l-'Abbas Tash, and the Khorasan commander Ibrahim Simjur. The cooperation of these individuals brought

[1] Narshakhi. pp. 177; Ibn al-Athir. V. 8. pp. 577–578, 585–586.

a brief period of relative stability. However, in 981, Ibrahim Simjur was dismissed from Khorasan and replaced by Abu'l-'Abbas Tash, leading to renewed unrest in the region. Simjur did not resist and, with his supporters, moved to Sistan and later to Kuhistan. Scholars view Ibrahim Simjur's dismissal as another disruption in the Samanid's governance.[1]

In 981, Fakhr al-Dawla of the Buyids, who controlled Hamadan before his brother Azud al-Dawla took over, fled to Gorgan, seeking refuge with Qabus ibn Vushmgir. When Qabus refused to hand Fakhr al-Dawla over to Azud al-Dawla, a battle occurred between Qabus and the Buyid army led by Mu'ayyad al-Dawla, resulting in Qabus's defeat. As a result, the Samanid-controlled territories of Gorgan and Tabaristan fell into Buyid hands. The Samanid army led by Tash, besieged Gorgan for two months, but with no success.

The deaths of Azud al-Dawla in 982 and Mu'ayyad al-Dawla in 983 gave the Samanids an opportunity to regain their former territories in the west. Vizier Abu'l-Husayn Utbi gathered an army for this purpose, but his untimely assassination in 982, combined with the intrigues of Simjur and Fa'iq in Khorasan, disrupted the plan and caused major strife.

In 982, while Tash was in Bukhara, Abu Ali Simjur (Ibrahim's son) and Fa'iq seized control of Khorasan and confiscated Tash's officials' properties. In 983, Tash marched against Abu Ali and Fa'iq with his army, but a settlement was reached: Nishapur would be under Tash's command, Balkh under Fa'iq, Herat under Abu Ali Simjur, and Kuhistan, Badghis, and Ganj Rustaq under Ibrahim Simjur.[2]

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1 Noji M. S. 129.

2 Ibn al-Athir. V. 9. P. 24.

However, the Samanid central government issued an order replacing Tash with Ibrahim Simjur over Abivard and Nisa, which angered Tash, leading to a confrontation with Simjur.[1]

In the 983 battle, with the help of Fakhr al-Dawla's Buyid forces, Tash defeated the allied forces of Ibrahim Simjur and Fa'iq, who fled Nishapur. Despite Tash's efforts and attempts to draw closer to Amir Nuh, his achievements went unrecognized.

In 987, Ibrahim Simjur regrouped his scattered army and, along with Fa'iq and his son Abu Ali, marched against Tash. After being defeated by Simjur's forces, Tash sought refuge with Fakhr al-Dawla in Gorgan, where he controlled Gorgan, Dehistan, Astarabad, and Abaskun until his death in 988.[2]

Despite vanishing Tash, the Samanids failed to recover its power, as most of the provinces were in the hands of local commanders and military leaders who did not pay taxes to the state. Moreover, Amir Nuh's youth and political inexperience turned him into a pawn in the hands of the military chiefs. Each leader sought personal gain, demanding positions and the removal of rivals, while Amir Nuh frequently changed his orders without foresight and did not reward diligent commanders. Consequently, the state became a battleground for power struggles, and the Amir's authority lost its weight.

After Ibrahim Simjur's death in 988, a conflict over the Khorasan command arose between his son and Fa'iq. Fa'iq was defeated, and the command of Khorasan, Herat, and Kuhistan was given to Abu

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1 Noji. P. 133.

2 Utbi, Abu Nasr. Tarihi Yamini (History of Yamimi. in Persian). Translation by Nasih ibn Saad Jurfadikani. Tehran, 1334 agricultural. pp. 130–140. (hereinafter: Utbi).

Ali Simjur. According to some reports, after gaining control of Khorasan, Abu Ali minted coins in his own name.[1] If this claim is accepted, it can be said that by 991, most of Khorasan had effectively left Samanid control.

Fa'iq, intending to go to Bukhara, was driven back by Amir Nuh's army and retreated to Balkh, where he stayed. From Balkh, Fa'iq wrote letters to the Turkic ruler, Bugra Khan, informing him of the chaos and urging him to conquer the Samanid territories.

Abu Ali Simjur, who controlled Khorasan, also came to the conclusion that if Bugra Khan conquered Transoxiana, Khorasan would remain an independent territory under his rule. Thus, he secretly wrote to Bugra Khan, encouraging him to invade Transoxiana. Similarly, other governors of Transoxiana were eager for Bugra Khan's arrival.

In 992, Bugra Khan led his army from Turkestan into Transoxiana advancing close to Bukhara. Amir Nuh's army, sent to oppose Bugra Khan, was defeated, and its commander Onaj was captured. Amir Nuh summoned Fa'iq to Bukhara. After being treated with honor by the amir, Fa'iq was sent against Bugra Khan but betrayed the amir by joining Bugra Khan. As a result, the Kara-Khanid army entered Bukhara and plundered the city.

Bugra Khan intended to capture other Samanid cities and sent Fa'iq to Balkh for this purpose.[2] Amir Nuh, with his supporters, crossed the Jayhun River to Amul Shatt and wrote letters to Abu Ali Simjur requesting help. However, Abu Ali, already witnessing the real decline of the Samanid Empire,

[1] Noji M. P. 136.

[2] Utbi, vol. 1. P. 160–169.

delayed with empty promises, hoping to share the Samanid inheritance with Bugra Khan.

Bugra Khan's death in 992 and the withdrawal of his army to Turkestan extended the Samanid Empire's life by a few more years. Following this event, Amir Nuh returned to Bukhara and, with the help of Ghazna ruler Sabuktigin, planned to suppress Abu Ali and Fa'iq.

In response to Nuh's actions, Abu Ali Simjur and Fa'iq formed a defensive alliance with Fakhr al-Dawla of the Buyids.[1] In a major battle near Herat in 994, Amir Nuh's forces emerged victorious. Abu Ali and Fa'iq fled to Gorgan, but a year later, when Mahmud Sabuktigin was appointed commander of Khorasan, they attacked again, driving Mahmud back to Herat. Sabuktigin, determined to reclaim Khorasan for his son Mahmud, gathered an army in 995 and defeated Abu Ali and Fa'iq near Abivard. After this defeat, Abu Ali and Fa'iq wrote letters of apology to Amir Nuh. Abu Ali's apology was accepted under the condition that he move to Jurjaniyah, but Fa'iq's letter went unanswered. As Abu Ali set off for Jurjaniyah, Fa'iq, enraged, crossed the Jayhun River and allied with the Turkic khan.[2] In 996, with the mediation of Khwarazm ruler Ma'mun ibn Muhammad, Amir Nuh pardoned Abu Ali Simjur. However, later, he was arrested along with fifteen of his military commanders and sent to Ghazna at Sabuktigin's request, where he died in prison a year later.[3]

In 997, Amir Nuh wrote to Sabuktigin, informing him that Ilak Khan, the ruler of the Turks, intended to attack the lands of Transoxiana. Sabuktigin

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1 Ibid. P. 183.

2 Utbi, vol. 1. Pp. 201–219.

3 Baykhaki. P. 62.

immediately crossed the Amu Darya, camped between Kesh and Nasaf, and his son Mahmud, along with the rulers of Juzjan, Khuttal, Chaghaniyan, and other regions of Khorasan, joined him. Ilak Khan, aware of Sabuktigin's large army, proposed peace. The lack of resolve from the Samanid Amir and his absence on the battlefield dampened Sabuktigin's spirit to crush Ilak Khan, and he accepted Ilak Khan's peace offer.[1]

According to the agreement between Sabuktigin and Ilak Khan, all the regions around the Sayhun fell under the dominion of the Qarakhanids, and Samarkand, under their protection, was handed over to Fa'iq. With this, the first capital and the origin, as some claim, of the Samanid dynasty was lost to them forever.

During the reign of Nuh II ibn Mansur (977–997), the Samanid Empire was experiencing its final years of existence. Due to internal strife and the ambition of military leaders, the state apparatus weakened to the point where it could no longer resist the invasions of nomadic tribes. The country's capital, Bukhara, one of the greatest cities of the world at that time, turned into a city of riots and plunder. The people ignored the Samanid Amir's calls to fight against the Qarakhanid army. As academician V.V. Bartold wrote on this matter: "Ilak Khan declared that he was coming to Bukhara as a friend and protector of the Samanids; the population showed complete indifference to his invasion; the commanders of Bukhara's army – Bektuzun and Yanoltegin – voluntarily went to his camp, where they were arrested. On Monday, October 23, 999, Ilak entered Bukhara without any resistance and seized the Samanid's treasury. Abd al-Malik and other members of the dynasty were sent to

[1] Noji. P. 152.

Uzgend. Ilak appointed his governors to Bukhara and Samarkand and then left for Uzgend. Thus, due to general indifference, the famous dynasty collapsed. It seems that no one at that time could grasp the seriousness of such a historical event – the complete disappearance of the native Iranian element from power."[1]

Despite the Samanid Empire becoming severely weakened and on the verge of collapse, there was still a chance to restore it until the death of Sabuktigin in 997. However, the deaths of Amir Nuh II, Sabuktigin, and Ma'mun ibn Muhammad, who all fought against the Qarakhanid Turks and sought to restore the Samanid rule, made the fall of the Samanid Empire inevitable.

After the death of Nuh II, his son Mansur II (997–999) ascended to the throne. During his two-year rule, only the name of the Samanid Empire remained. Upon hearing of Nuh II's death, Ilak Khan sent 30,000 soldiers under the command of Fa'iq to Bukhara. Being informed of this, Amir Mansur fled from Bukhara to Amul. When Fa'iq arrived in Bukhara, he wrote to Mansur, expressing loyalty and urging him to return to the city. After returning, Amir Mansur, under pressure from the Turks and without properly analyzing the situation, appointed Bektuzun as the commander of Khorasan in place of Mahmud Sabuktigin. Mahmud, who had gone to Ghazna to reclaim it from his brother Ismail, returned to Balkh and asked Amir Mansur for the command of Khorasan, emphasizing his support for the Samanids and its defense.[2] However, Mansur granted him control over Balkh, Termez, Bust, Herat, and the

1 Bartold V. V. Soch. Vol. 1. P. 329.

2 Noji M. P.157.

surrounding regions. This did not satisfy Mahmud, and he went to Nishapur, seizing it from Bektuzun in 999. When Mahmud heard that Amir Mansur was coming to aid Bektuzun, he retreated to Marv Rud. Fa'iq and Bektuzun accused Amir Mansur of favoring Mahmud Sabuktigin (Ghaznavid), blinded him, and deposed him from the throne, placing his younger brother Abd al-Malik ibn Nuh on the throne. Mahmud Ghaznavid, under the pretext of avenging Amir Mansur, marched on Nishapur and captured it, forcing Bektuzun and Fa'iq to flee.

After this victory, Mahmud Ghaznavid took control of all of Khorasan, making Balkh his capital. All the rulers of Khorasan's provinces accepted Mahmud's leadership, and from that moment, Khorasan practically and officially fell out of the Samanid domain, leaving only Transoxiana under their control.[1]

In 999, when Amir Abd al-Malik tried to gather an army to reclaim Khorasan from Mahmud Ghaznavid, Nasr Ilak Khan, under the pretext of defending the Samanid Empire, entered Bukhara. Upon nearing Bukhara, Nasr Ilak Khan sent a message of friendship to Abd al-Malik and arrested the Samanid military leaders who had gone to greet him.[2] The next day, Nasr entered Bukhara, arrested Amir Abd al-Malik along with all his close relatives, and sent them to the prison in Uzgend.

The last resort to preserve power, through the sermons of mosque preachers, also failed. Notably, well-known scholars, who held greater authority than official preachers, told the people that the war between the Samanids and the Qarakhanids was over worldly wealth, and a Muslim should not sacrifice

[1] Utbi, vol. 1. pp. 290–318.

[2] Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 442

their life for such a cause.[1] Thus, the era of Samanids came to an end.

After seizing Transoxiana, the Qarakhanids had to fight the last representative of the Samanid dynasty, Abu Ibrahim Ismail, later known as "Muntasir," to secure their complete dominance over the conquered lands. Muntasir, who had been imprisoned along with all the Samanid family members in Uzgend, escaped with the help of a servant in 1000 and arrived in Bukhara. After Muntasir's search for allies in Khwarezm failed, he returned to Bukhara and gathered the scattered Samanid forces, sending them under the command of Arslan Balu to Bukhara. In a surprise attack, Arslan Balu defeated Ilak Khan's allies, capturing several military leaders, including Ja'far Tegin, who were sent to Gurganj (Jurjaniya). Arslan Balu pursued the fugitives to Samarkand and defeated them in the vicinity of Pul-i Kuhak. Muntasir then returned to Bukhara, and the people saw his arrival as a sign of the restoration of Samanid rule.[2]

When Nasr Ilak Khan heard of Muntasir's control over Bukhara and Samarkand, he sent his main forces to Bukhara. Muntasir strategically withdrew his forces, crossing the Amu Darya to Amulshatt, Abevard, and then to Nishapur.[3] There, Muntasir allied with Abu al-Qasim Simjur and defeated Nasr ibn Sabuktigin, Mahmud's brother, capturing Nishapur in 1001. However, after Mahmud's arrival, Muntasir fled to Gurgan to join Qabus Vushmgir. Qabus advised Muntasir to go to Ray and take over its governance, but Arslan Balu and Abu al-

1 Gafurov B. Tadzhiki. P. 463.

2 Nodzhi M. P. 164.

3 Ibid.

Qasim Simjur made Muntasir suspicious of Qabus's intentions.

Muntasir launched a second campaign against Nishapur but was defeated by Nasr ibn Sabuktigin, and several of his army leaders were captured. When Muntasir sought refuge in Gurgan, Qabus refused to receive him, forcing him to retreat to Sarakhs. In 1002, Nasr ibn Sabuktigin attacked Sarakhs and defeated Muntasir.[1]

Afterward, Muntasir gathered a new army with the help of the Oghuz Turks, who declared themselves friends of the Samanids and recalled their past favors. In 1003, Muntasir defeated Nasr Ilak Khan's forces near Samarkand, capturing 18 military leaders. When Muntasir asked the Oghuz to hand over the captives, they refused, leading Muntasir, fearing a deal between them and the Qarakhanids, to abandon them.

In the fall of 1003, Muntasir, with 700 foot soldiers and cavalry, crossed the Jayhun and sought Mahmud Ghaznavid's help to reclaim Bukhara. Mahmud granted him control over Abevard and Nisa, which angered the ruler of Khwarezm. In 1004, Muntasir was defeated by the Khwarezshah army and forced to return to Transoxiana.

In subsequent battles against the Qarakhanids, Muntasir achieved some success. Near Dabusiya, he defeated Ilak Khan's army and sparked movements in several regions of Transoxiana that aimed at restoring the Samanid dynasty. The leader of the Samarkand ghazis, Haris, nicknamed Ibn al-Amdar, joined Muntasir with 3,000 troops, and the elders of Samarkand sent 300 Turkish slaves to support him. The Oghuz also joined forces with Muntasir, creating a formidable army against the Qarakhanids. In 1004,

[1] Ibn al'-Asir. V. 9. P. 157.

during the Battle of Burnamad (near Samarkand), Muntasir defeated the army of Nasr Ilak Khan, forcing Nasr to flee to Fergana and begin gathering new forces. However, this success was short-lived. In the next battle, which took place in the plains between Dizak and Khavas, the Oghuz, due to the large amount of loot they had gained from the previous battle, did not participate in the fight. At the same time, one of Muntasir's commanders, Hasan ibn Taq, defected to the Qarakhanids with 4,000 soldiers. These events led to Muntasir's defeat and his retreat to Khurasan.[1]

After suffering consecutive defeats, Muntasir did not abandon his efforts to restore the Samanid state. Accompanied by his remaining forces, he wandered through the cities of Khurasan in pursuit of Qabus ibn Vushmgir, but he found no reliable support. Finally, during the winter of 1004–1005, he made his fourth attempt to return to Transoxiana. His army, weary from failures and fruitless endeavors, abandoned him, and they revealed his whereabouts to the Qarakhanids. Once again, Nasr Ilak Khan's agents failed to capture Muntasir. In 1005, while staying overnight in the tent of an Arab in Merv, Muntasir was murdered by a group of Bedouins.[2]

According to Utbi, when Sultan Mahmud heard that Muntasir had been killed by the Bedouins of Merv, he ordered their leader to be executed and plundered the residence of Ibn Buhayyij (the place where Muntasir was slain) along with other Bedouin tribes.[3]

Muntasir was the last and only member of the Samanid dynasty who continuously fought to restore their rule until his dying breath. However, since

[1] Gafurov B. Tadjiki. pp. 523–524.

[2] Noji M. P. 168; Gafurov B. Tadjiki. P. 524; Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda. P. 444.

[3] Utbi. pp. 325–347.

the Samanids had lost the political and economic foundations for governance and no longer had the support of the general populace, Muntasir's personal efforts yielded no results.[1]

After his death, all hope of reviving the Samanid state vanished entirely, and Khurasan came under the control of the Ghaznavids, while Transoxiana fell under the authority of the Qarakhanids.

In conclusion, the main reasons for the decline of the Samanid territories and their eventual loss of control over their realm were rooted in broader social and political trends. The rise of large landowners, who desired autonomy and sought independence from the central government, played a key role. These landowners often allied with enemies of the Samanid dynasty to achieve their goals. As a result, centrifugal forces within the aristocracy and landowning class, which grew stronger in the second half of the 10th century, led to the fragmentation of the state into autonomous regions. Internal conflicts further ravaged the country, with heavy taxes exacerbating the political crisis during the final decade of the Samanid reign. The treasury's revenue had increased compared to its expenditure, but the deficit had become so severe that even the Samanid ruler in Khorasan regularly launched raids against neighboring states, the Buwayhids and Ziyarids, located in the northwest of Iran, to cover the costs of maintaining the royal army.

One of the key factors in the decline and eventual fall of the Samanid state was the increasing number of Turkish slaves (ghulams) in the Samanid army, who by the end of the dynasty's rule formed the backbone of the military. After each victory, the Samanids elevated their status, and promoted

[1] Gafurov B. Tadjiki. P. 524.

them to the high positions, including the post of "Hajib al-Kabir" (chief commander, Grand Vizier). Especially during the reign of Abd al-Malik (954–961), the role of the commander of the Turkish army became highly influential, with control of the state falling largely into their hands. One such figure was Alptigin, who emerged as a key political actor in the Samanid state. His influence grew to such an extent that the Samanid emir could not appoint or dismiss anyone without his approval. After being appointed governor of Khurasan, Alptigin, facing neglect from the new Samanid ruler in Bukhara, established his independent rule in Ghazna in 962.

Another reason for the collapse of the Samanid state was the loss of popular support, as the later Samanid rulers were increasingly oppressive toward the people. In a situation where local rulers and large landowners were hostile toward one another and defied the central authority, the Samanids were unable to effectively defend against external attacks. Religious disputes also weakened national unity, further fragmenting the country. As a result, the lack of internal support led to the division of the once vast Samanid territory between the Turkish Qarakhanids and the Ghaznavids at the beginning of the 11th century.

In closing this chapter, it is worth mentioning the words of the renowned Orientalist August Müller (1848–1892) regarding the fall of the Samanid state and its consequences:

"History shows no harsher mockery than when a wise and diligent ruling family, striving to achieve its goals, falls into ruin, only to be replaced by an unexpected stroke of fortune that seizes their land by force and simultaneously appropriates their spiritual wealth with complete greed. This unexpected stroke

of fortune was Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, the son of the Turkish slave Sabuktigin, who took from the Samanids not only their state but also their greatest jewel, the greatest poet of the East, Ferdowsi. He became the heir to all their realm and spiritual wealth."[1]

[1] August Müller. Istoriya islama: ot musul'manskoy Persii do padeniya musul'manskoy Ispanii. (History of Islam: from Muslim Persia to the fall of Muslim Spain). Translated from German. Vol. 2, p. 66.

CONCLUSION

The study of the historical geography of the Samanid state is of significant scientific value in contemporary Tajik historiography, particularly during the period of independence. The current importance and necessity of studying this issue are primarily reflected in the fact that various aspects of the historical geography of the Samanid state, both at the provincial and district levels and in terms of its overall boundaries have not been sufficiently explored or fully clarified in both national and international Samanid studies. The extensive borders of this state remain somewhat undefined, with some boundary lines being almost speculative. Moreover, the presence of certain territories of Central and Western Iran under Samanid control remains debatable. Additionally, the extent of the Samanid state during its period of prosperity, as well as the reduction of these geographical borders during times of political and economic difficulties, has not been clearly determined. Therefore, examining the extent and reduction of the geographical area of the Samanid state during different periods, as well as the exact location of the cities of the Samanid state and the boundaries of its subordinate regions, is a pressing and unresolved issue for historians and researchers of this period in Tajik history.

In many cases, serious errors have been made in depicting the map of the Samanid state. For this reason, efforts have been made in these lines to correct existing deficiencies in the issues of historical geography of the Samanid state to the extent possible using information from written sources, archaeological materials, and scientific research.

Research into the geographical-historical issues of the Samanid state has provided an opportunity to more clearly define the specifics of the development of this state. From the results of studying the historical geography of the Samanid state through the analysis of source information, archaeological materials, and scientific research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The study of issues related to the historical geography of the Samanid state is very necessary for a deep understanding of the political and socio-economic processes that took place in the region and played a significant role in the future of this state.

2. The direct administration of the state and absolute rule in the Samanid state belonged solely to the Amir, and in general, all state functions were carried out through two institutions: the Darbar and the Diwans. The Darbar primarily acted as the executive apparatus of the Amir. The Diwans, on the other hand, were like modern ministries, each established for specific tasks.

3. Throughout the period of Samanid rule in Transoxiana and Khurasan, the geographical extent of their power and state can be divided into three phases: 1) the period when representatives of the Samanid family were appointed as governors in the provinces of Transoxiana and Khurasan, i.e., the years 819–892; 2) the period of the establishment of the Samanid state and its geographical expansion: 892–943; 3) the period of instability, reduction in the geographical extent of the Samanid state, and the loss of Transoxiana and Khorasan from the Samanid family: the 60s of the X –1005.

4. In the first phase, the Samanids mainly controlled Transoxiana (see: map 20) and the Herat

province of Khorasan. In the second phase, the state encompassed Transoxiana, Khorasan, and central parts of Iran up to the west – Hamadan, extending to the north up to the southern borders of the Turkic tribes. In the third phase, parts of Khorasan, including the city of Ghazna, fell under Alptegins' control, and later, the southern provinces of the Caspian Sea and then Khorasan, and eventually Transoxiana, fell out of Samanid rule.

5. The territory of the Samanid state expanded mainly during the reigns of Ismail Samani, Ahmad ibn Ismail, and Nasr ibn Ahmad, reaching the western borders of Hamadan, the southern borders of Sistan and Sind, and the northern borders of Khwarezm, including the northern borders of Chach and Isfijab.

6. The extent of the Samanid state during its expansion covered about 3 million square kilometers, consisting of provinces, cities, and villages. Most provinces were administered by governors who were appointed or dismissed directly by the Amir.

7. The existence of the Samanid state within such a vast territory and their cultural policy contributed significantly to the formation of the Tajik people and their political and cultural unity.

8. The Samanids were the first to widely and officially adopt Persian Dari as the language of writing and composition in their realm and supported and patronized scholars in this regard. This process led to the increasing prominence of the Persian Dari language, making it the second language of the Islamic world alongside Arabic.

9. The correct policy of the Samanids and their respect for their national values allowed the people of this great state's territory to remain immune from

Arabization, unlike other non-Arab peoples of the Caliphate.

10. Despite the fact that the Samanid amirs sent gifts to the Caliph of Baghdad as a sign of submission, this submission was mostly symbolic, and in reality, they were completely independent.

11. The Abbasid Caliphs, when needed, sought assistance from the Samanid Amirs to suppress uprisings. In exchange for such services, the Caliphs granted the Samanid Amirs more territories.

12. The city of Samarkand, as the principal center and first capital of the Samanids, held a special position. However, from the time of Amir Ismail Samani (892), this status was taken over by Bukhara, which retained this position even after the fall of the Samanids.

13. The cities and provinces of the Samanid state were not uniformly developed economically. Bukhara, Balkh, Merv, Herat, Ray, Samarkand, and Nishapur were more prosperous and economically developed, with better living conditions compared to other regions.

14. In most distant territories from the Samanid center, local notables were appointed as governors, and the Samanids collected taxes from them, thereby maintaining the allegiance of these regions.

15. The Samanids, from the time of Ismail ibn Ahmad (892–907), were responsible for defending the northern and eastern borders of the Muslims, mainly engaging with the Turks. For a period, they also had conflicts with the Buyid dynasty over some central and western Iranian provinces, which ended in peace.

16. The Samanids themselves were officially followers of the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam.

Religious uprisings occurring in the diverse regions under Samanid control against the Caliphate were suppressed by the Samanid amirs.

17. Throughout the existence of the Samanid state, threats to its borders mainly came from the north by nomadic Turkic tribes.

18. The conversion of Turkic slaves to Islam in the Samanid state elevated them to important positions, such as the Grand Vizier, and even granted them command over the entire Samanid army.

19. The rise of Turks to high military positions in the Samanid state and their subsequent defiance of the Samanid Amirs created conditions for the decline of the state. The revolt of Alptegin in 961 was another blow to this process, weakening the Samanid Amirs further.

20. After the revolt of Alptegin, the decentralization of the Samanid provinces increased, and with the weakening of the Samanid amirs' power, the geographical extent of their state decreased. Additionally, the Turks' access to high military positions paved the way for the gradual decline of the state. By the end of the 10th century, nothing remained of the Samanid power but the name, and ultimately, due to the power struggles among the members of the Samanid family and court intrigues, the state disappeared.

21. The influence of the Qarmatians in the court of Amir Nasr II ibn Ahmad (914–943) led to dissatisfaction among most courtiers and soldiers, creating factions in the court that resulted in the deposition of the Amir and the enthronement of his son, Nuh ibn Nasr (943–954). The beginning of the decline of the Samanid state and the fragmentation of its borders started precisely from this period.

22. Starting from the 990s, the affairs of the state fell into the hands of military commanders, and the amirs became their pawns. With the invasion of Nasr al-Qarakhani (from the eastern borders) into Bukhara, the Samanid state collapsed, and on October 23, 999, the Qarakhanids captured Bukhara, the Samanid capital, and the territory of this state was subsequently divided between the Qarakhanids and the Ghaznavids.

23. The last attempts by the representative of the dynasty, Ismail Muntasir, between 999 and 1005, to restore the rule of the Samanid family were unsuccessful, leading to his death and the final termination of the statehood and complete disappearance of the geographical existence of the Samanid state.

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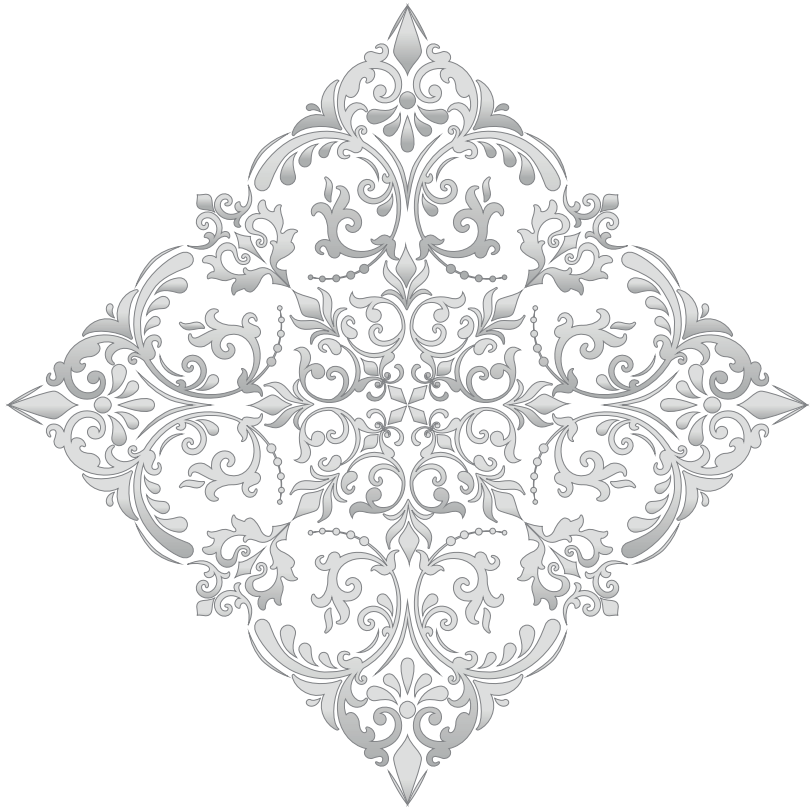
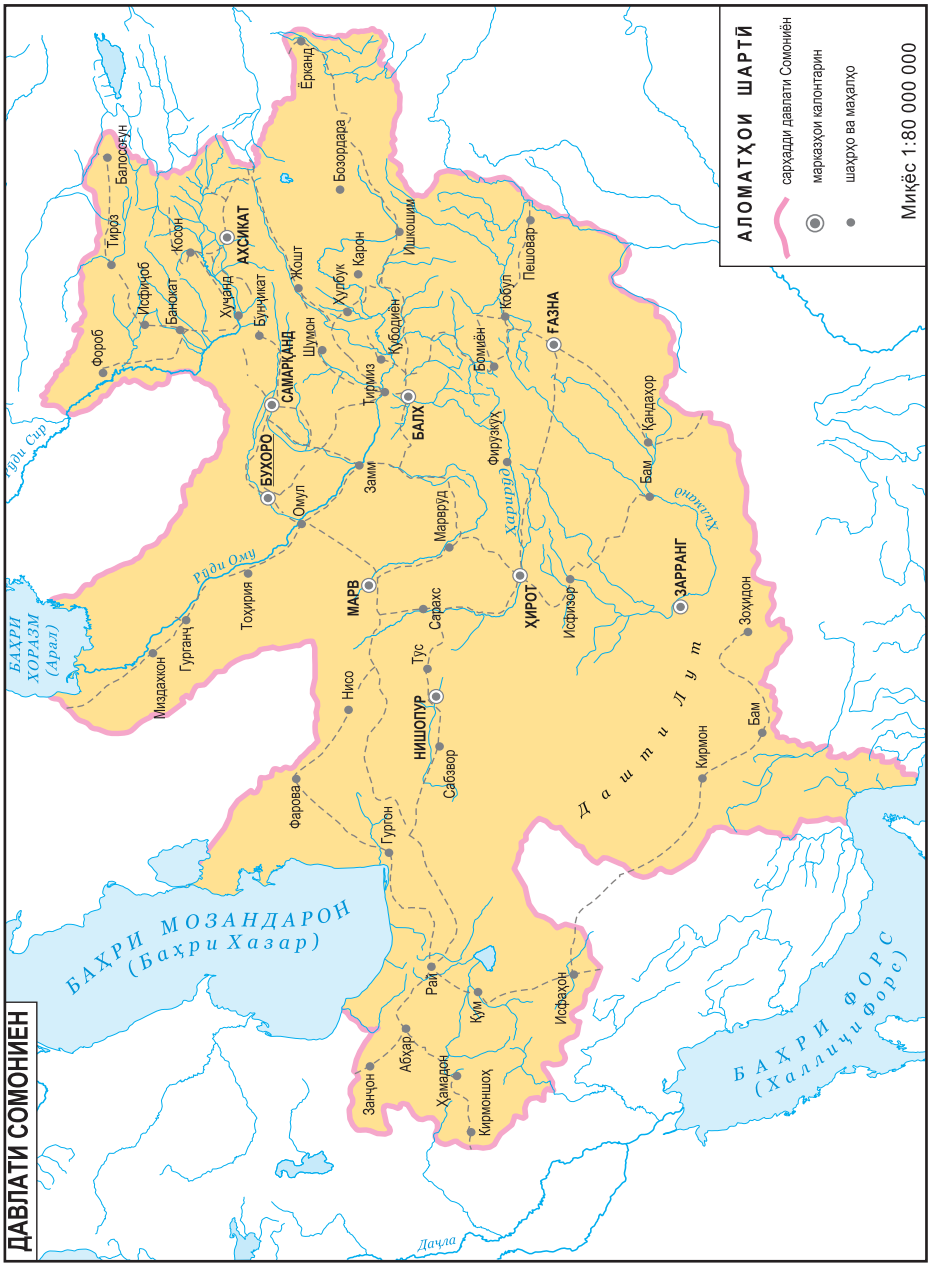
125. Walker J. A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian coins. - London: The British Museum, 1941. -244 p.



Номгӯи шаҳру вилоятҳо дар харитаи давлати Сомониён The list of cities and regions in the map of the Samanid Empire			
Тоҷикӣ	**Русский**	**English**	**فارسی**
Табрез	Тебриз	Tabriz	تبریز
Мароға	Мараге	Maragha	مراغه
Ардабил	Ардебиль	Ardebil	اردبیل
Занҷон	Зенджан	Zanjan	زانجان
Абҳар	Абхар	Abhar	ابهر
Ҳамадон	Хамадан	Hamadan	همدان
Кирмоншоҳ	Керманшах	Kirmanshah	کرمنشاه
Бағдод	Багдад	Baghdad	بغداد
Басра	Басра	Basra	بصره
Аҳвоз	Ахваз	Ahwaz	اهواز
Рай	Рей	Ray	ری
Исфаҳон	Исфахан	Isfahan	اسفهان
Қум	Кум	Qum	قوم
Майбуд	Маибод	Maibud	میبود
Язд	Йезд	Yazd	یزد
Истахр	Истахр	Istakhr	اصطخر
Шероз	Шираз	Shiraz	شیراز
Гургон	Горган	Gorgan	گرگان
Сабзвор	Сабзвар	Sabzwar	سبزوار
Фарова	Фарава	Farawa	فراوه
Нисо	Ниса	Nisa	نسا
Тӯс	Тус	Tus	توس
Нишопур	Нишапур	Nishapur	نیشابور
Миздаҳқон	Миздахкан	Mizdahkan	مزدهقان
Гурганҷ	Гургендж	Gorganj	گرگنج
Тоҳирия	Тахирия	Tahiria	طاهریه
Омул	Амоль	Amol	آمل
Замм	Зам	Zamm	زم
Марв	Мерв	Marv	مرو
Сарахс	Серахс	Sarakhs	سرخس
Марврӯд	Мервруд	Marvrud	مرورود
Ҳирот	Герат	Herat	هرات
Исфизор	Исфизар	Isfizar	اسفزار
Заранг	Зерендж	Zarang	زرنج
Кирмон	Керман	Kirman	کرمان
Зоҳидон	Захедан	Zahedan	زاهدان
Бухоро	Бухара	Bukhara	بخارا
Самарқанд	Самарканд	Samarqand	سمرقند
Шумон	Шуман	Shoman	شومان
Тирмиз	Термез	Tirmiz	ترمز
Қубодиён	Кобадиян	Qubadiyan	قبادیان
Балх	Балх	Balkh	بلخ
Бомиён	Бамиян	Bamian	بامیان

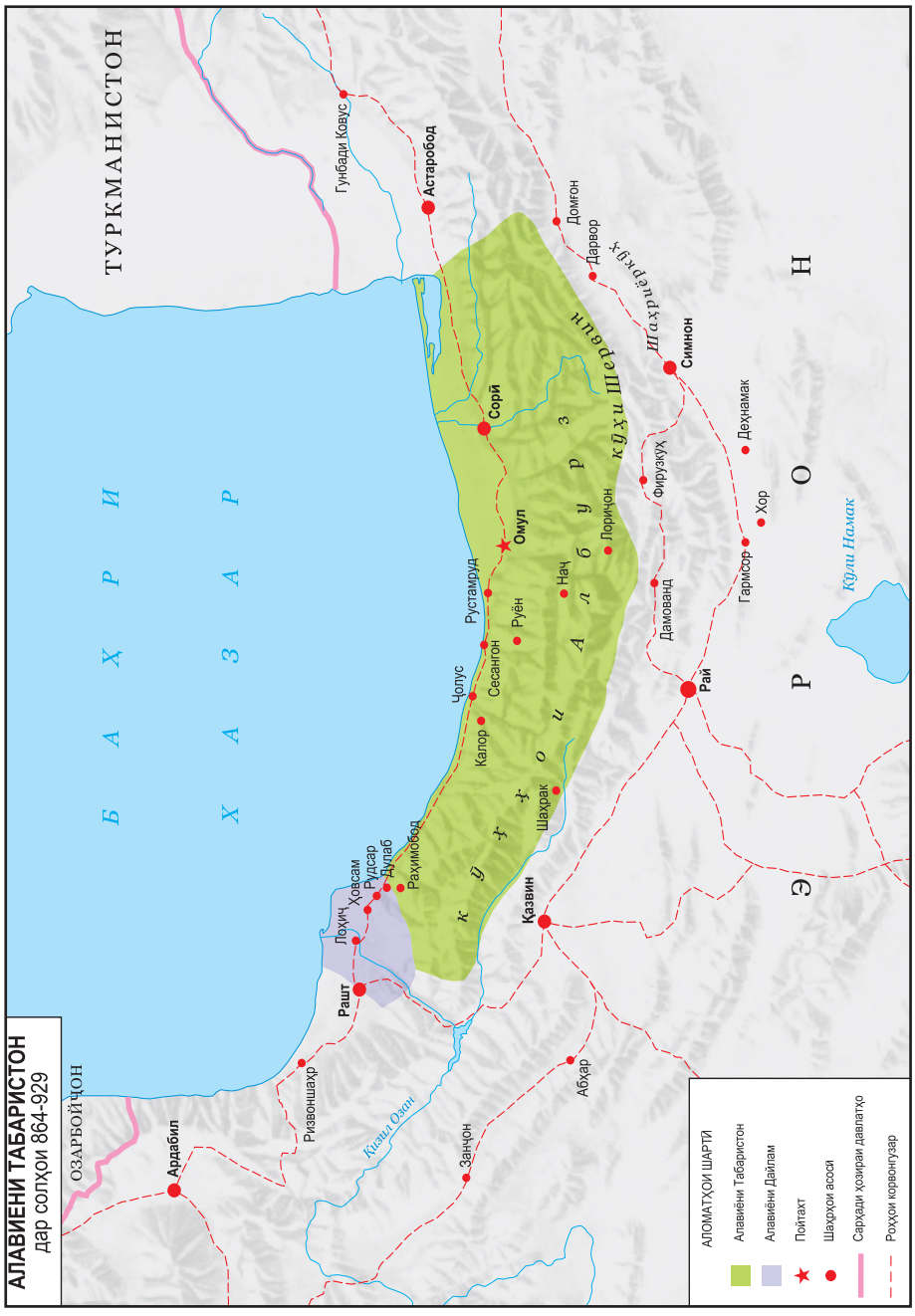
Фирӯзкӯҳ	Фирозкох	Firozkoh	فیروزکوه
Кобул	Кабул	Kabul	کابل
Пешовар	Пишавар	Peshawar	پیشاور
Ғазна	Газни	Ghazna	غزنه
Қандаҳор	Кандагар	Qandahar	قندهار
Лоҳур	Лахор	Lahor	لاهور
Ишкошим	Ишкашим	Ishkashim	اشکاشم
Карон	Каран	Karon	کران
Ҳулбук	Хульбук	Hulbuk	هلبک
Вахш	Вахш	Vakhsh	وخش
Жошт	Рашт	Zhasht	راشت
Бозордара	Базардара	Bazardara	بازاردره
Ёрканд	Яркенд	Yarkand	یارکند
Кошғар	Кашгар	Kashghar	کاشغر
Панҷекат	Пенджикент	Panjakat	پنجکت
Бунҷекат	Бунджикат	Bunjekat	بنجکت
Хуҷанд	Худжанд	Khujand	خجند
Ахсикат	Ахсикет	Akhsikat	اخسکت
Косон	Касан	Kasan	کاسان
Банокат	Бенакет	Banakat	بناکت
Исфиҷоб	Исфиджаб	Isfijab	اسفجاب
Тироз	Тараз	Tiraz	تراز
Фороб	Фараб	Farab	فاراب
Балосоғун	Баласагун	Balasaghun	بلاساغن
Номи баҳру дарёҳо ва биёбонҳо **Names of seas, rivers and deserts**			
Баҳри Форс	Персидское море (залив)	Persian sea (gulf)	خلیج فارس
Баҳри Мозандарон	Каспийское море	Kaspian sea	دریای مازاندران/خزر
Баҳри Хоразм	Аральское море	Aral sea	دریای ظوارازم / آرال
Рӯди Омӯ	Амударья (Окс)	Amu river	رود آمو / جیهون
Рӯди Сир	Сырдарья (Яксарт)	Sir river	رود سر/ سیهون
Ҳарирӯд	Харируд	Harirud	هری‌رود
Ҳилманд	Хильменд	Hilmand	هلمند
Синд	Синд	Sind	سند
Биёбони Регистон	Пустыня Регистан	Registan desert	بیابان ریگستان
Биёбони Қизилқум	Пустыня Кызылкум	Qizilqum desert	بیابان قزلقم
Биёбони «Дашти Лут»	Деште-Лут	the desert between Fars and Khorasan	دشت لوت
Биёбони «Дашти Кавир»	Деште-Кевир	Kavir Desert	دشت کویر

Замимаҳо / Приложения / Appendices / ذمایم



Харитаи 1. Ҳудуди давлати Сомониён дар аҳди Исмоил ибни Аҳмад.

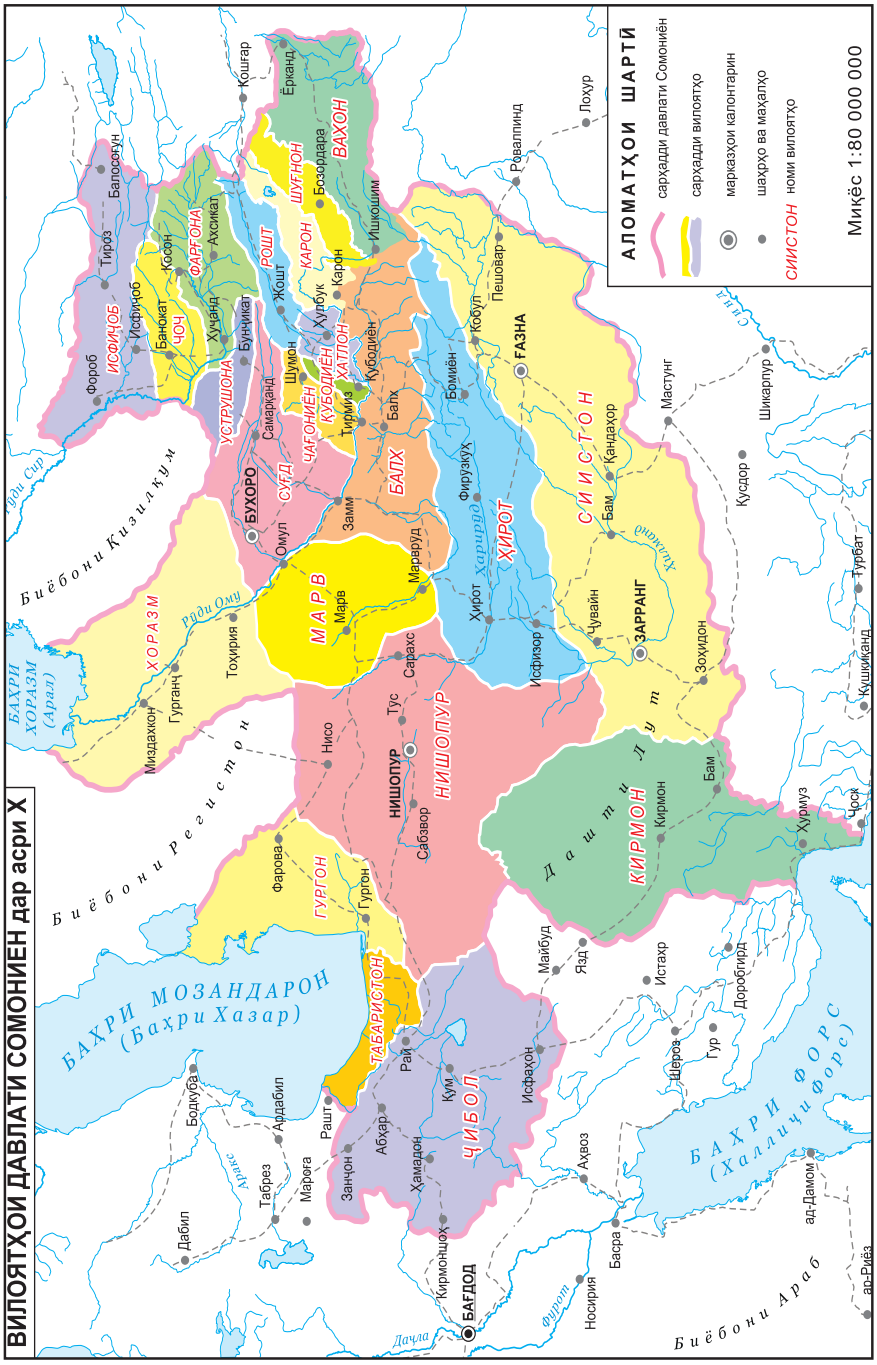
Map 1. Territory of the Samanid Empire during the reign of Ismail ibn Ahmad (892–907)

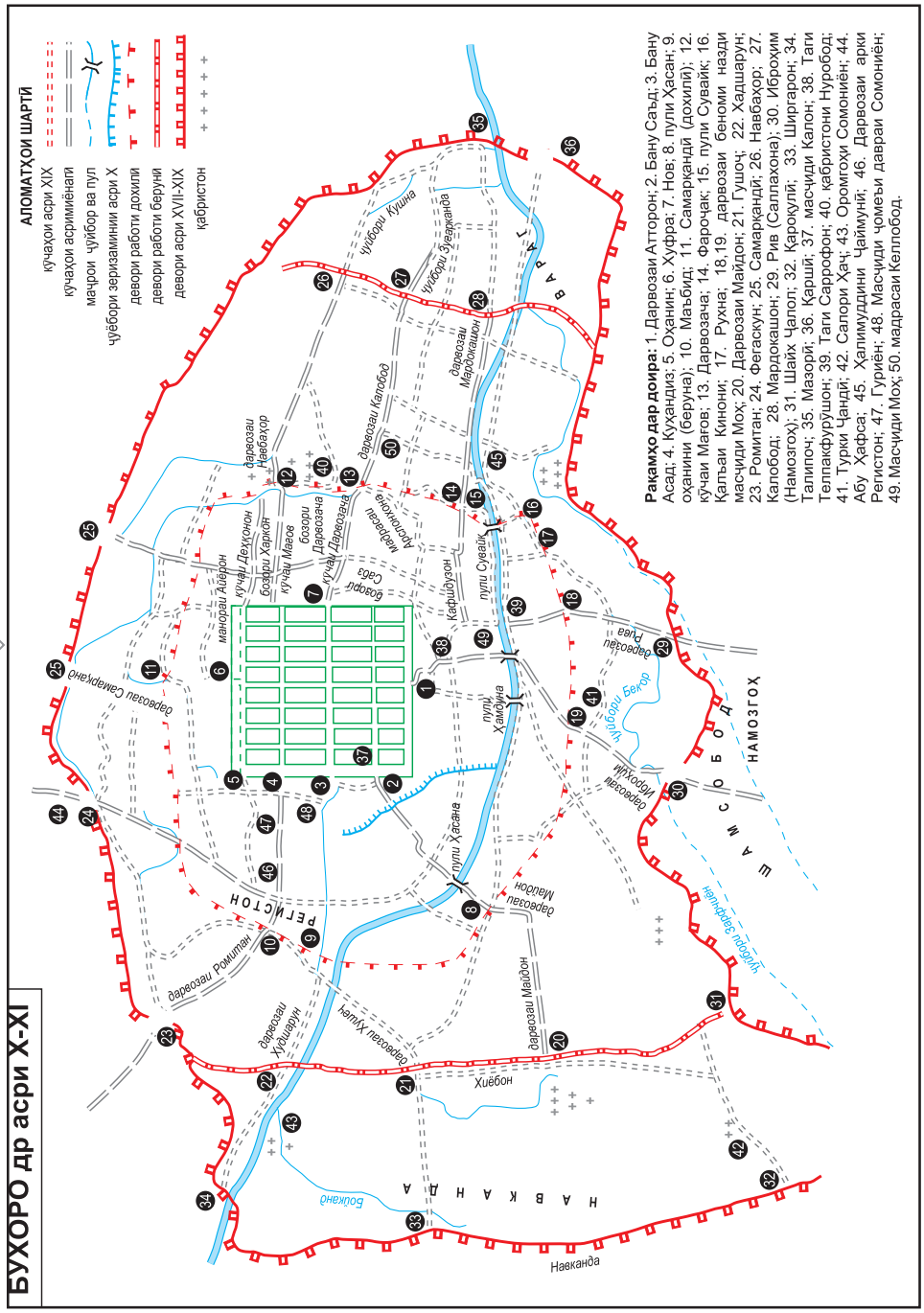

АЛАВИЕНИ ТАБАРИСТОН
дар солҳои 864-929
ОЗАРБОЙҶОН
ТУРКМАНИСТОН
Б А Х Р И Х А З А Р
Э Р О Н
Ардабил
Ризвоншаҳр
Рашт
Лоҳич
Ҳовсам
Рудсар
Дулаб
Раҳимобод
Қазвин
Занҷон
Абҳар
Шаҳрак
Калор
Сесанҷон
Чулус
Рустамруд
Руён
Нач
Сорӣ
Омул
Лориҷон
Гунбади Ковус
Астаробод
Домғон
Дарвор
Симнон
Фирузкух
Дамованд
Рай
Гармсор
Дехнамак
Хор
Кӯли Намак
Кӯҳҳои Шаҳриёр
Кӯҳҳои Ширкӯҳ
Кӯҳҳои Алвандкӯҳ
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Масҷид
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Дарахт
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Ҷариб
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Ҷуфт
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Ҷуфт
Кӯҳҳои Ҳазор Ҷуфт



Харитаи 3. Давлати Сомониён. Харитаи таърихӣ.

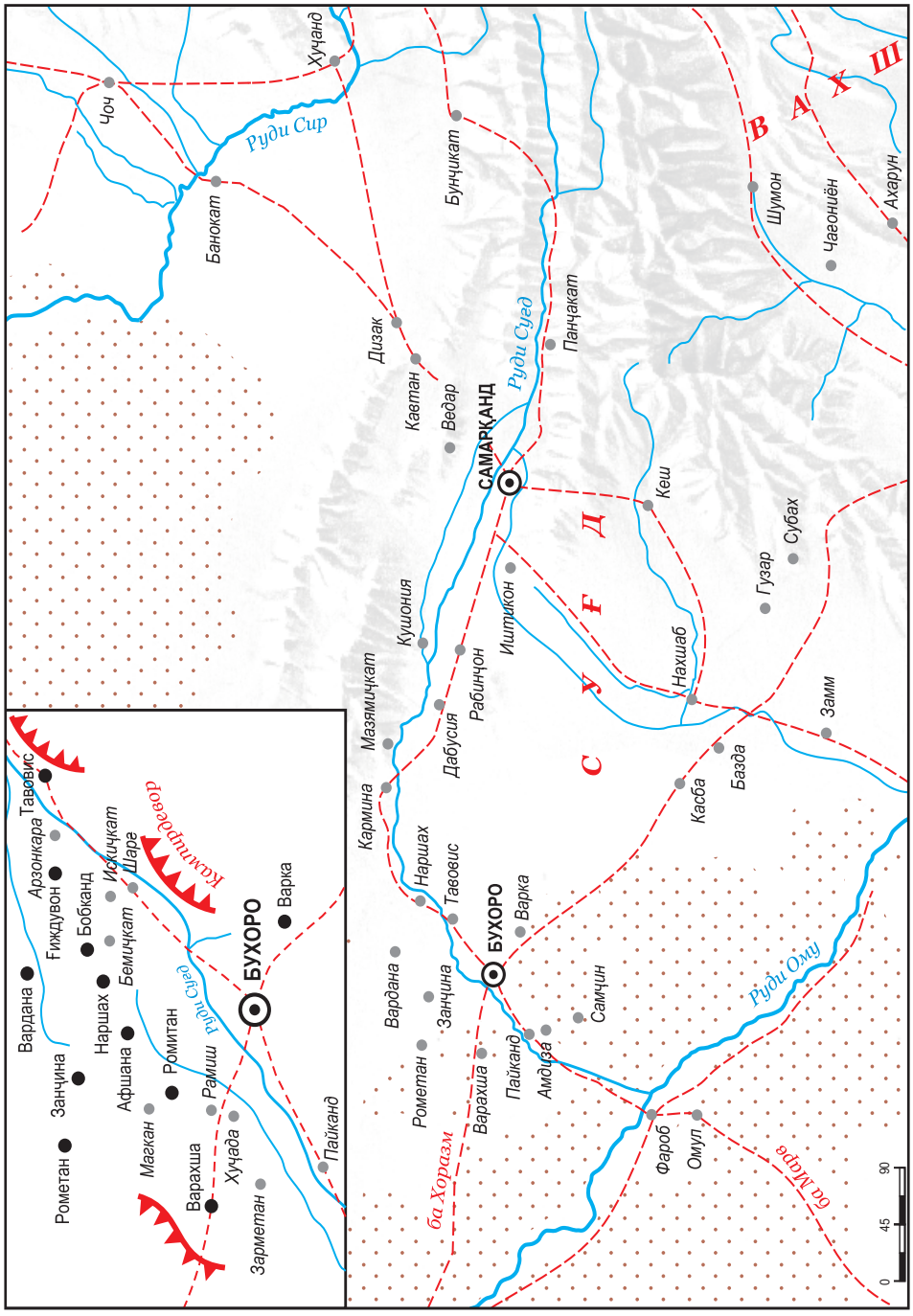
Map 3. The Samanid Empire (Historical map).


ВИЛОЯТҲОИ ДАВЛАТИ СОМОНИЁН дар асри X
АЛОМАТҲОИ ШАРТӢ
сарҳадди давлати Сомониён
сарҳадди вилоятҳо
марказҳои калонтарин
шаҳрҳо ва маҳалҳо
СИИСТОН номи вилоятҳо
Миқёс 1:80 000 000
Биёбони Қизилқум
Рӯди Сир
Рӯди Ому
Биёбони регистон
Дашти Лут
БАҲРИ МОЗАНДАРОН (Баҳри Хазар)
БАҲРИ ФОРС (Халиҷи Форс)
БАҲРИ ХОРАЗМ (Арал)
Биёбони Араб
Дарё
Фурот
ХОРАЗМ
МАРВ
БАЛҲ
ХИРОТ
СИИСТОН
НИШОПУР
ГУРГОН
ТАБАРИСТОН
ҶИБОЛ
ФАРҒОНА
ШӮҒНОН
ВАХОН
РОШТ
ХАТТОН
ҚУБОДИЁН
ЧОҒОНИЁН
СӮҒД
УСТРУШОНА
ИСФИҶОБ
ЧОҶ
ҚАРОН
ҲИРМАНД
ҚИРМОН
ҒАЗНА
ЗАРРАНГ
БУХОРО
Ёрканд
Кошғар
Балосағун
Тироз
Исфиҷоб
Фороб
Бинкат
Ахсикат
Хунанд
Бунжикат
Кӯқон
Бозордара
Ишкошим
Ҳӯлбук
Шумон
Самарқанд
Ҷӯшт
Кубодиён
Тирмиз
Балх
Бомиён
Кобул
Пешовар
Ғазна
Лоҳур
Мастунг
Шикорпур
Қандаҳор
Бам
Қусдор
Туробат
Кушкинҳанд
Зоҳидон
Чӯвайн
Исфизор
Хирот
Ҳирмонд
Фарёб
Мурғоб
Марв
Марвруд
Сарахс
Нисо
Тус
Нишопур
Сабзавор
Фарова
Гургон
Кирмон
Бам
Ҳурмуз
Чоҳ
Маибуд
Язд
Истахр
Дорабгирд
Шероз
Гур
Исфаҳон
Кум
Рай
Рашт
Абҳар
Занҷон
Ҳамадон
Кирмоншоҳ
Багдод
Носирия
Басра
Аҳвоз
ад-Дамом
ар-Рияз
Бодкуба
Дарбанд
Ардабил
Табриз
Марога
Дабил
Урмия
Хӯй
Сӯҳ
Ҳирот
Ҳарирӯд
Фирӯзкӯҳ
Ҳӯлмӣ
Ҳирмонд
Ҳирмонд
Ҳирмонд

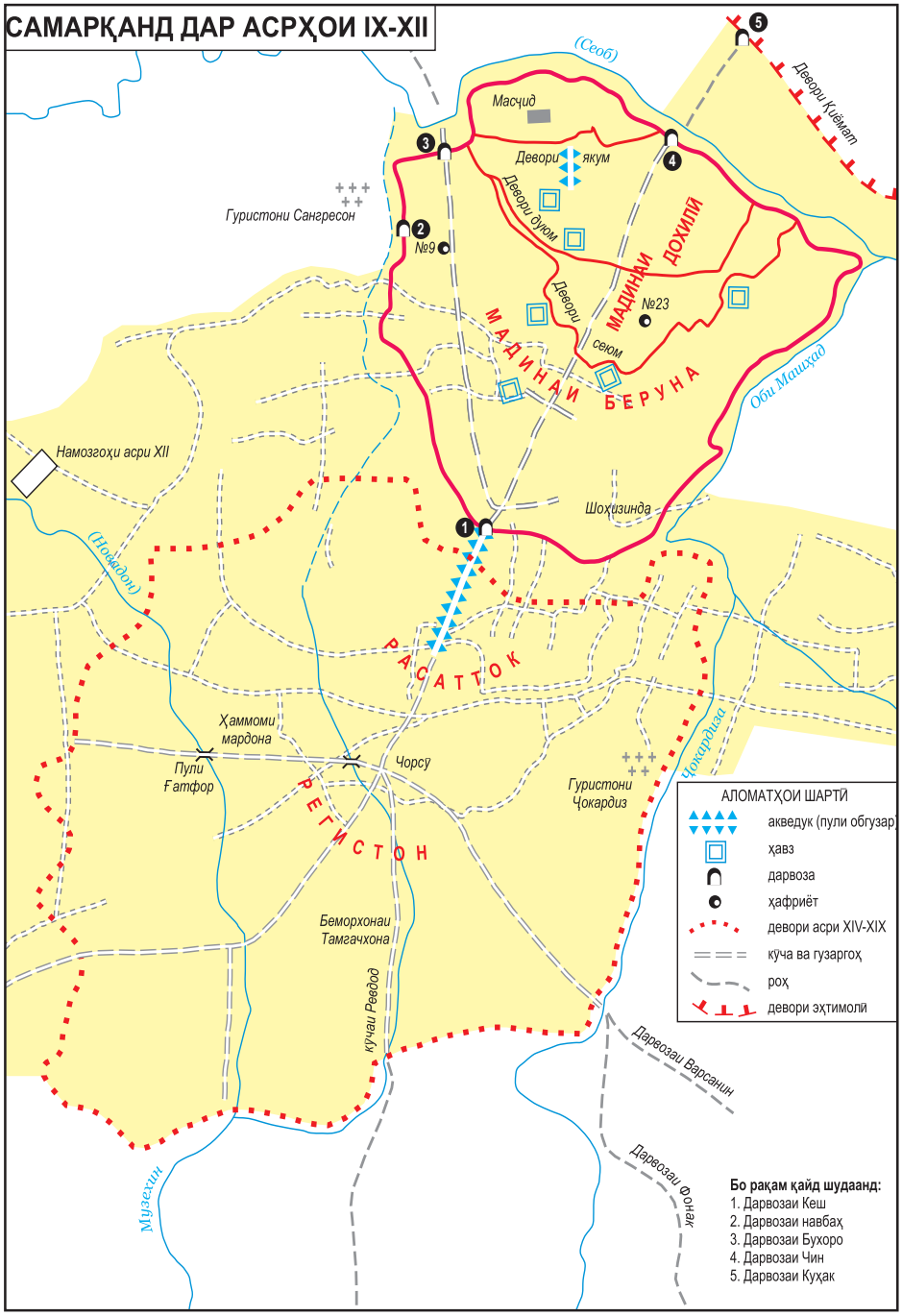


Харитаи 5. Шаҳри Бухоро.

Map 5. City of Bukhara in the 10th century.

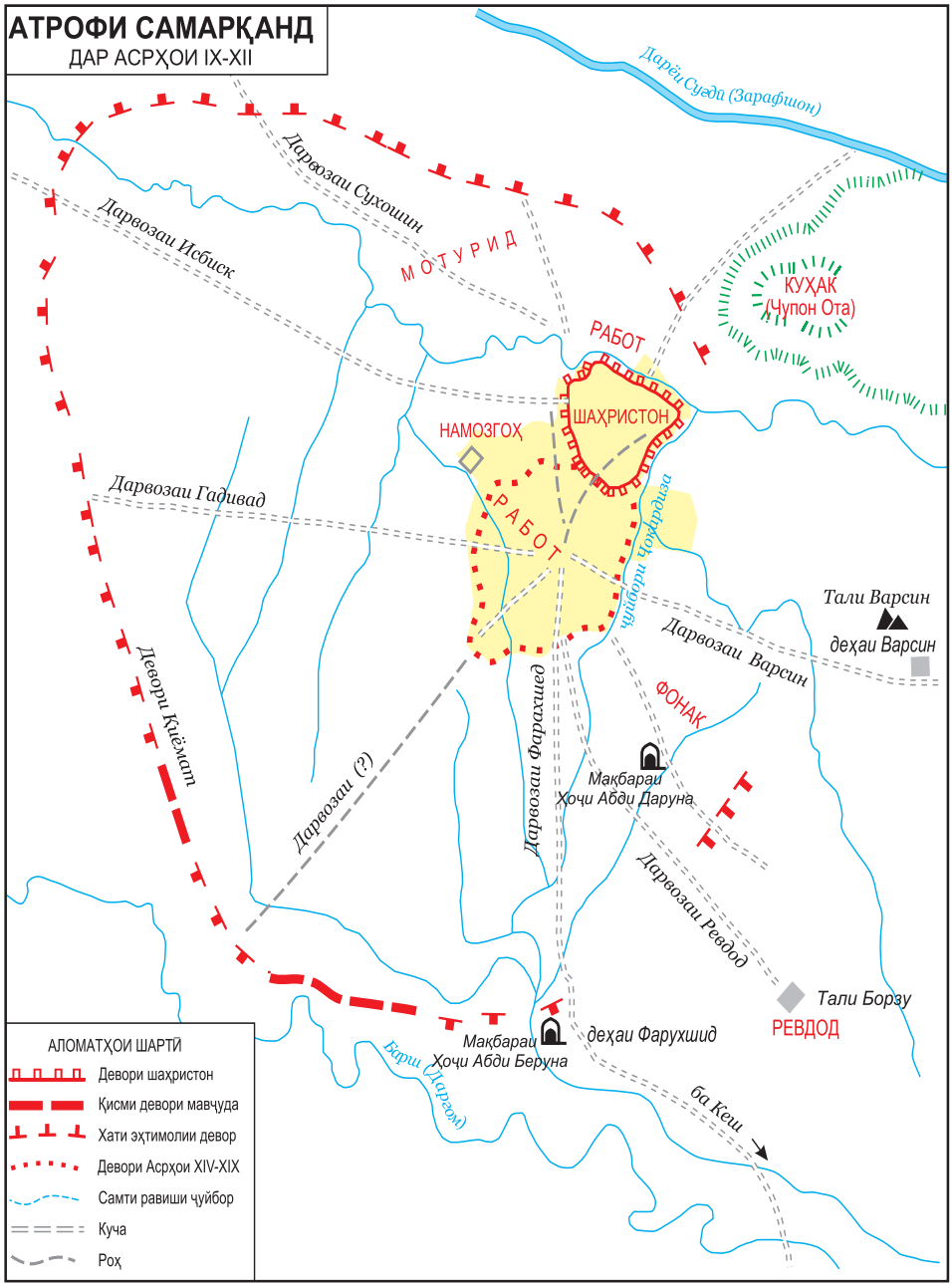


Харитаи 6. Бухоро, Самарқанд ва рустоҳои атрофи онҳо.
Map 6. Bukhara, Samarkand, and their surrounding villages.

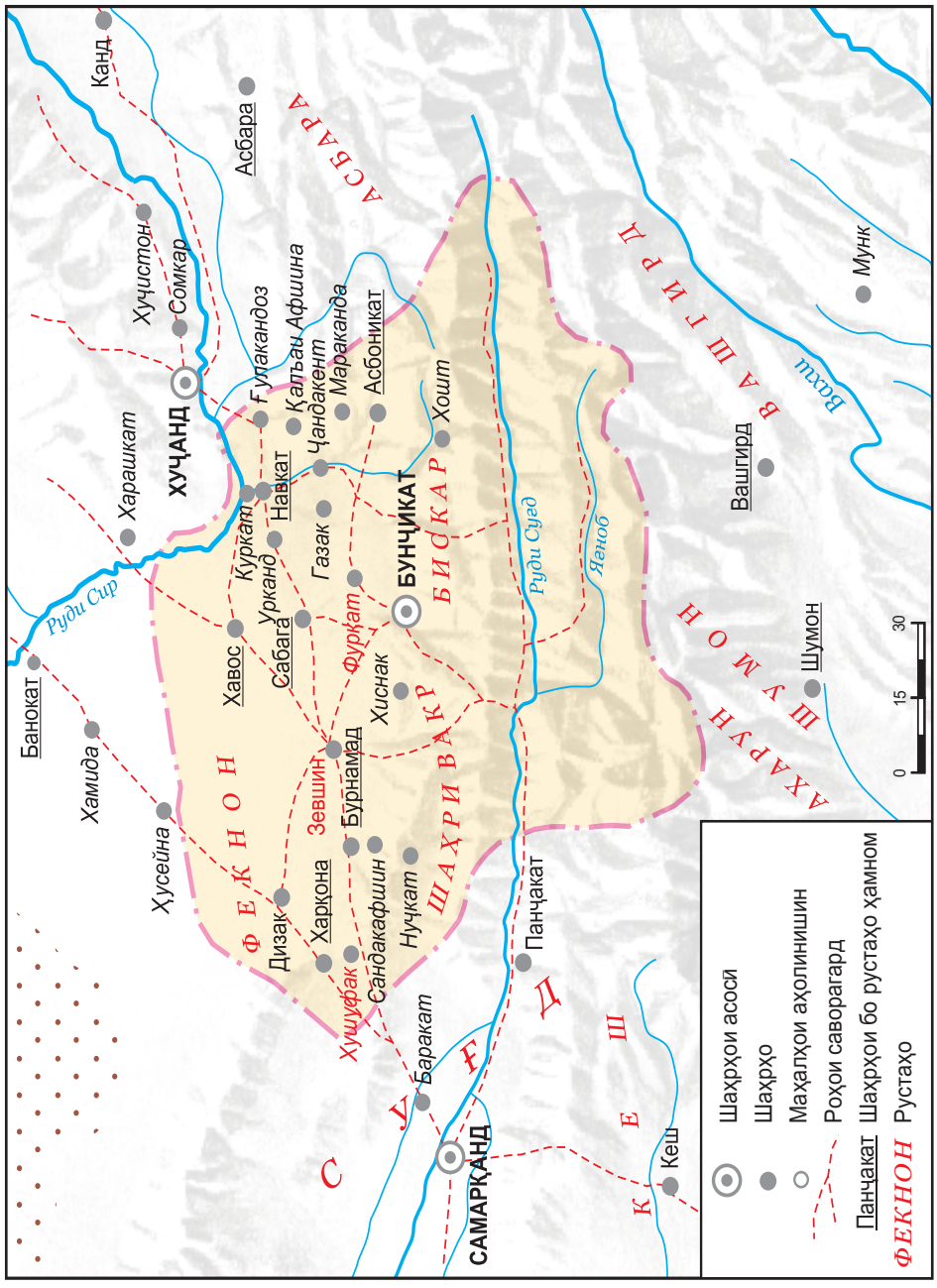


Харитаи 7. Шаҳри Самарқанд

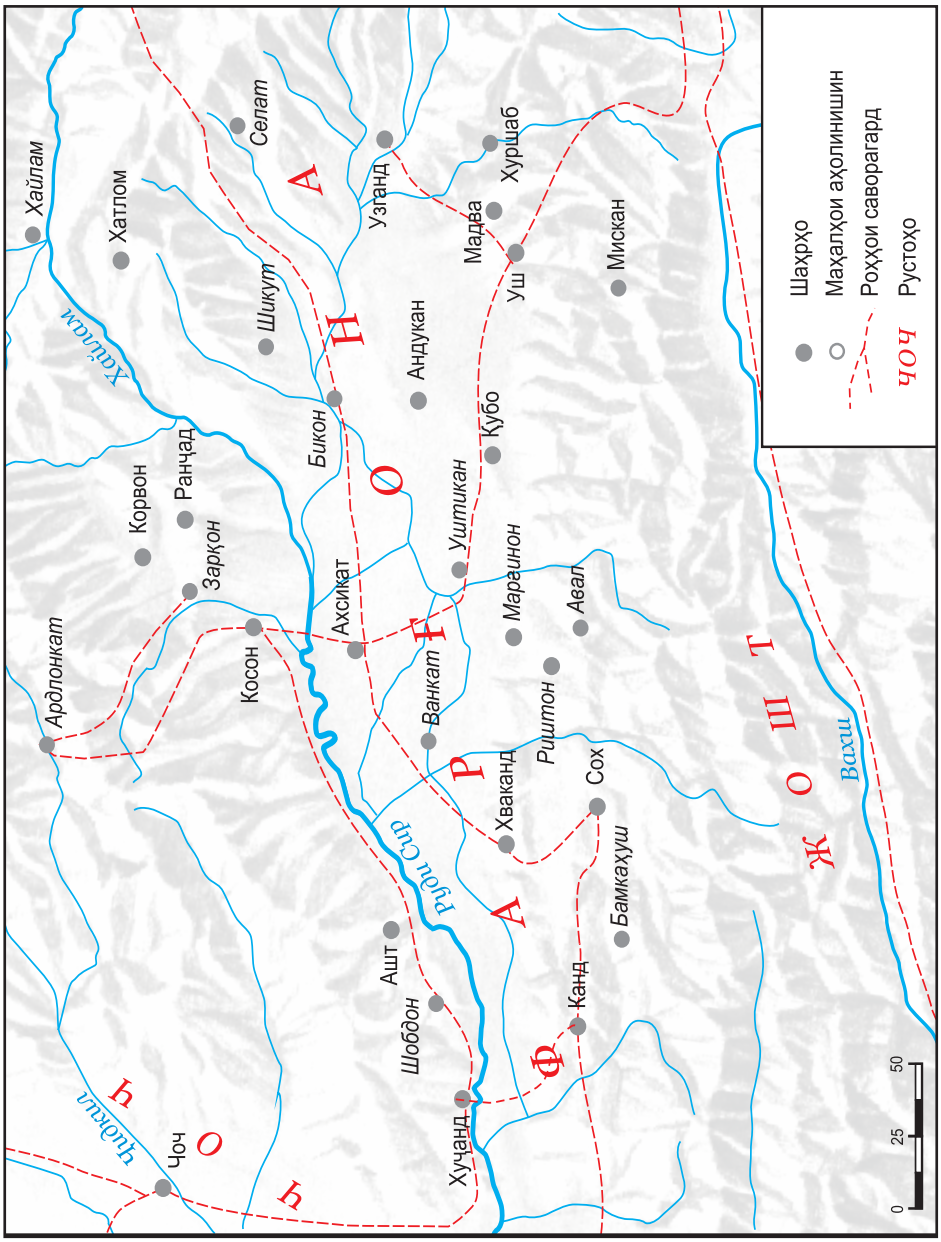
Map 7. The city of Samarkand.



Харитаи 8. Атрофи шаҳри Самарқанд
Map 8. Districts surrounding the city of Samarkand.

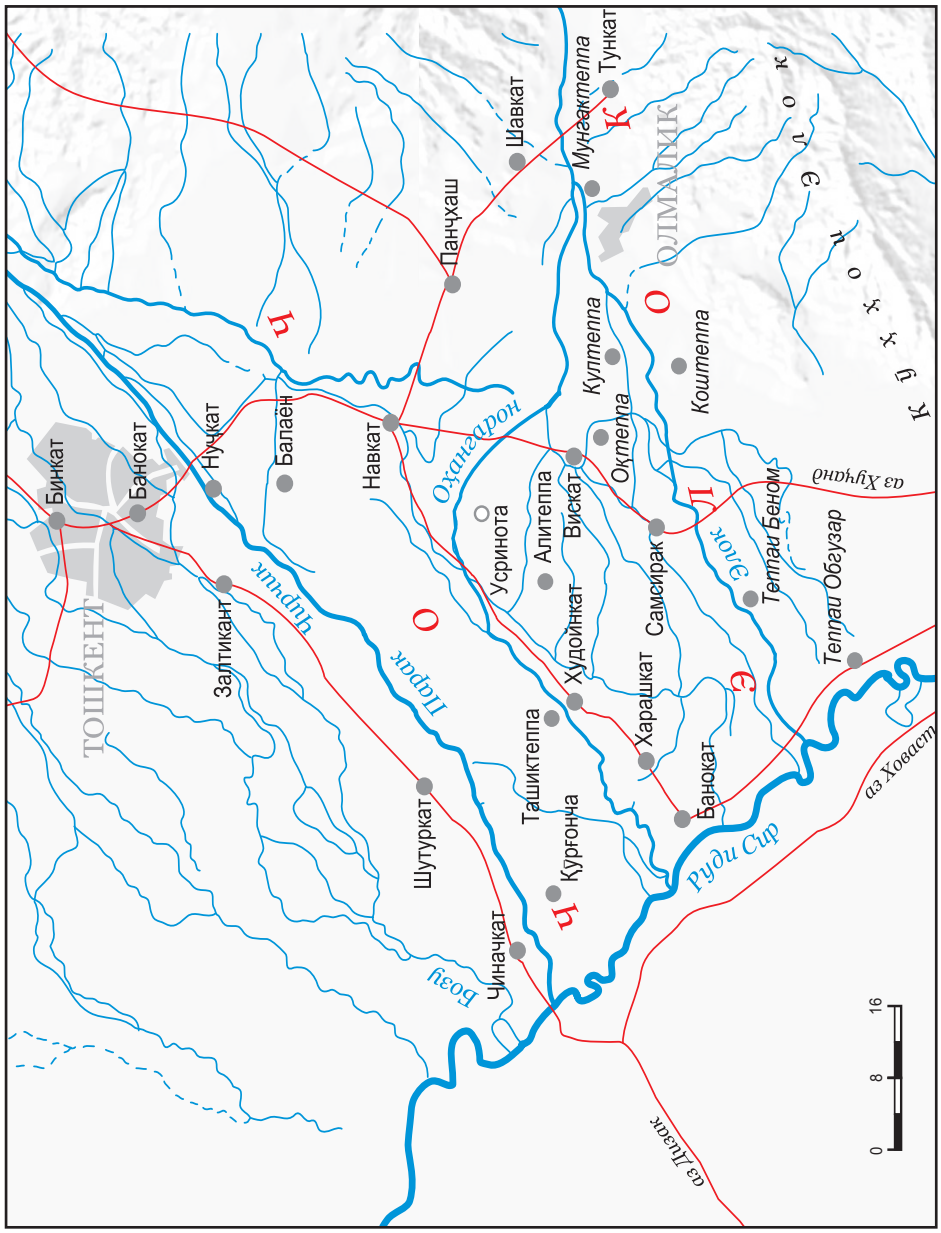


Харитаи 9. Вилояти Усрушана ва шаҳрҳои тобеи он.
Map 9. Usrushana Province and its subordinate cities.



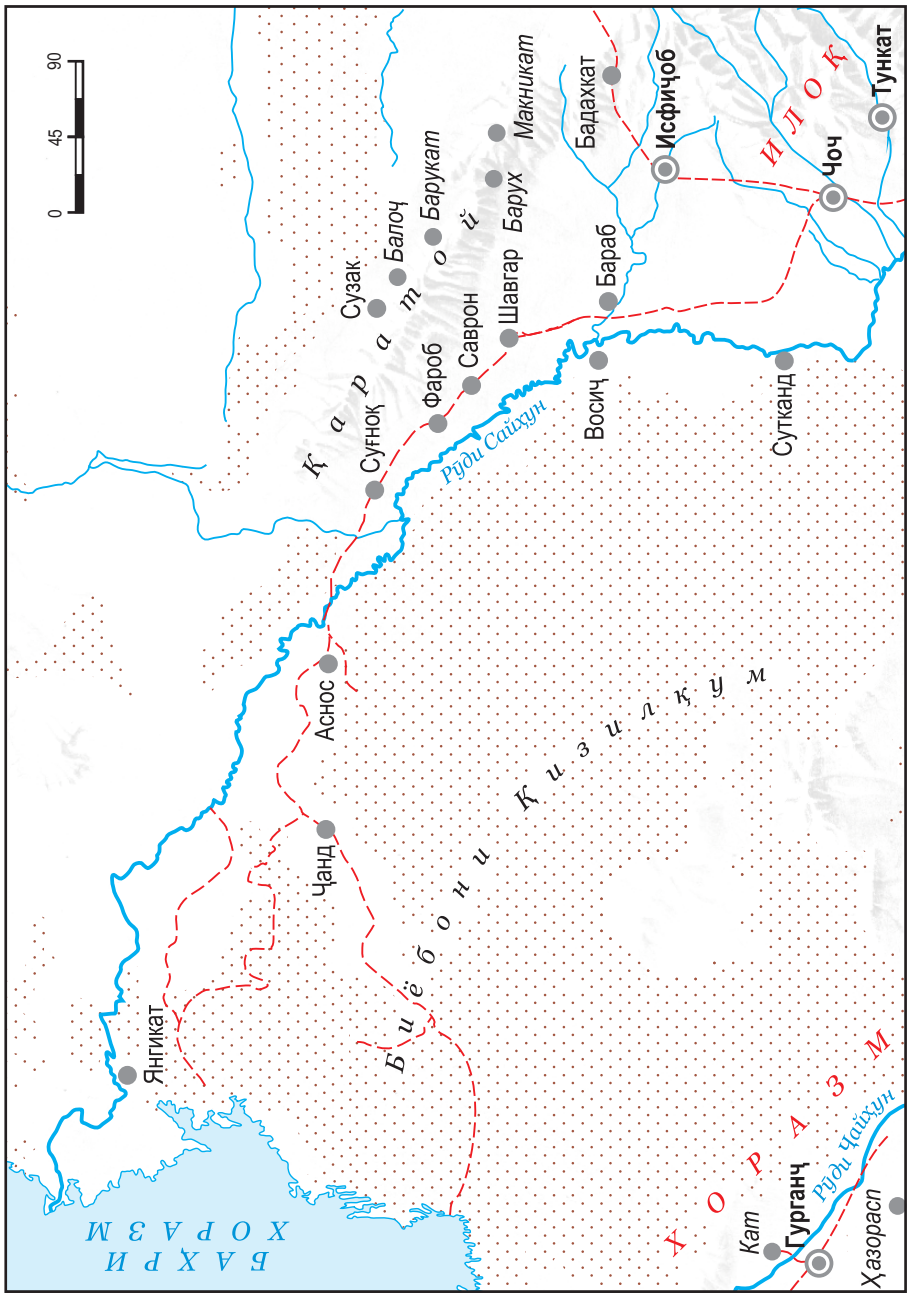
Харитаи 10. Фарғона.

Map 10. Ferghana.

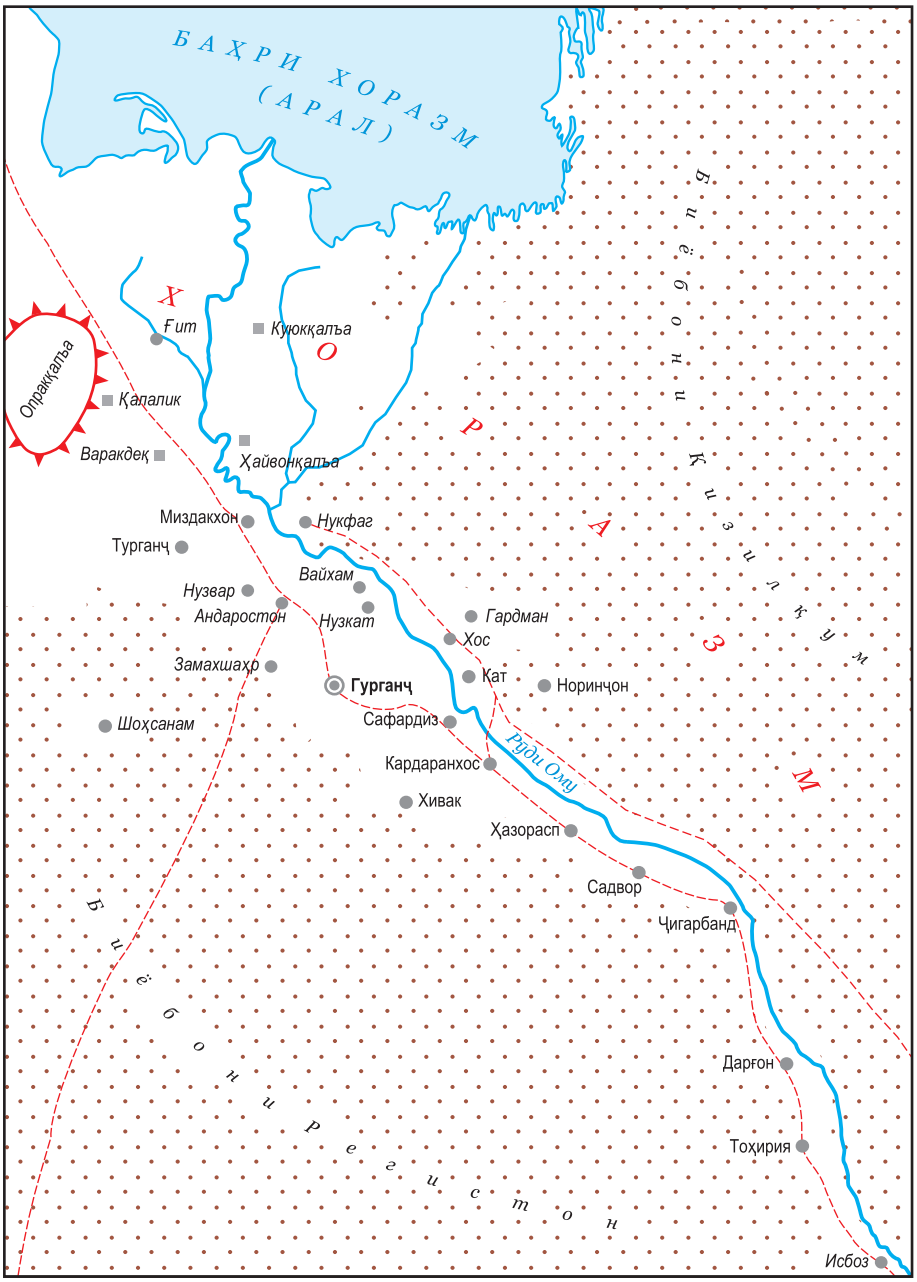


Харитаи 11. Чоч ва Элок.

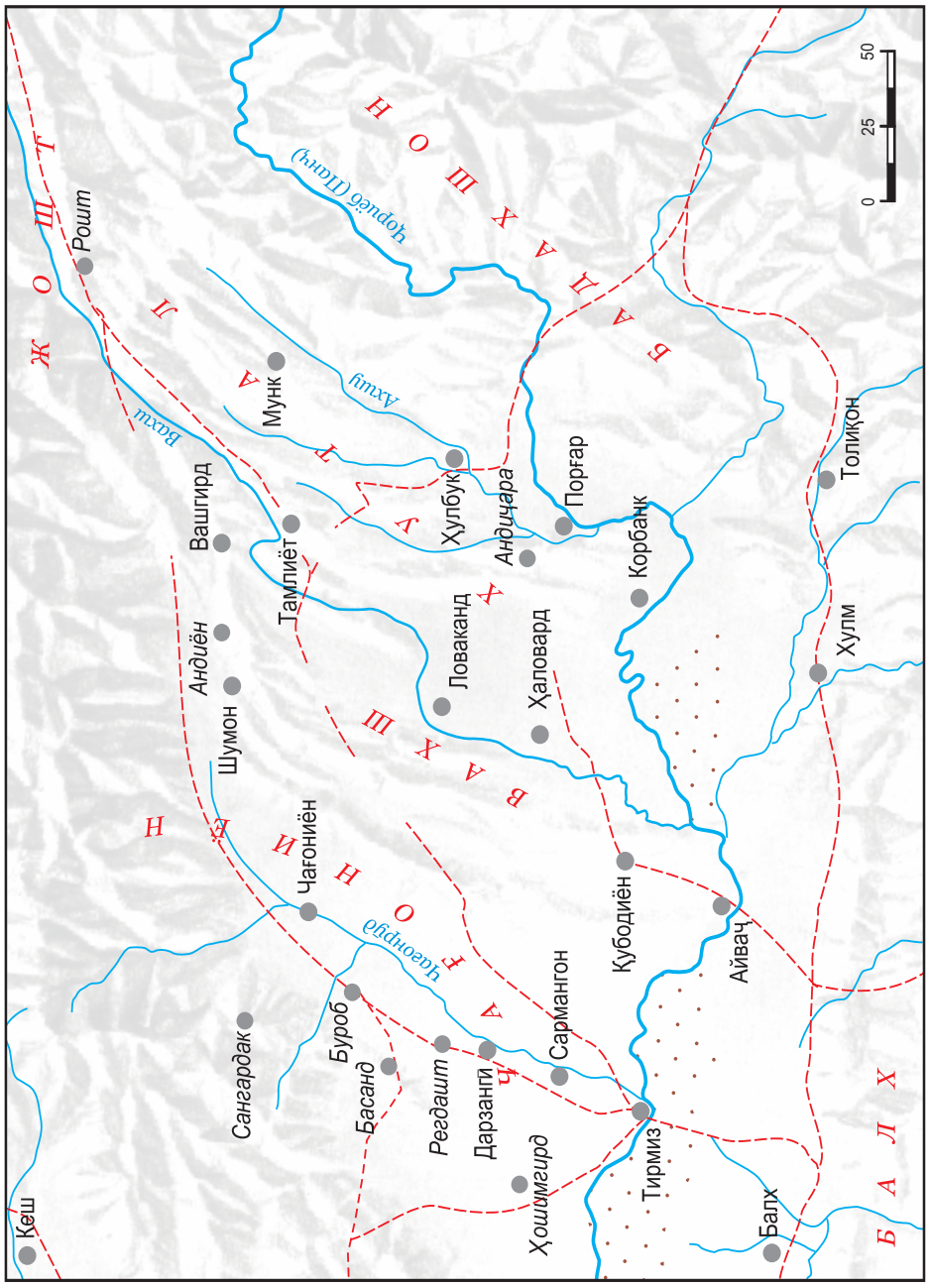
Map 11. Chach and Ilak.



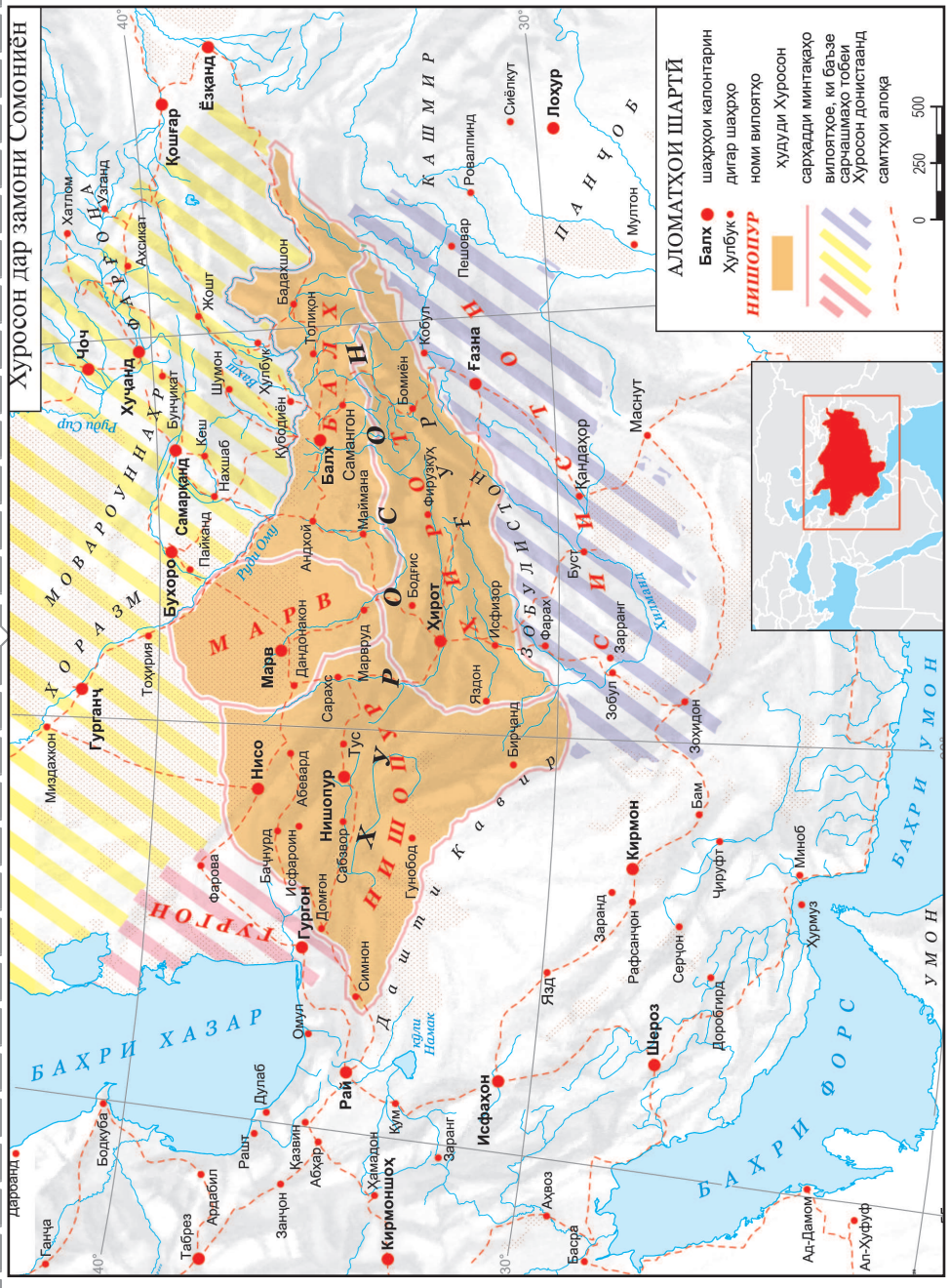
Харитаи 12. Исфиҷоб ва шаҳру рустоҳои тобеи он.
Map 12. Isfijab and its subordinate towns and villages.



Харитаи 13. Хоразм ва шаҳру рустоҳои он.
Map 13. Khorezm and its towns and villages.

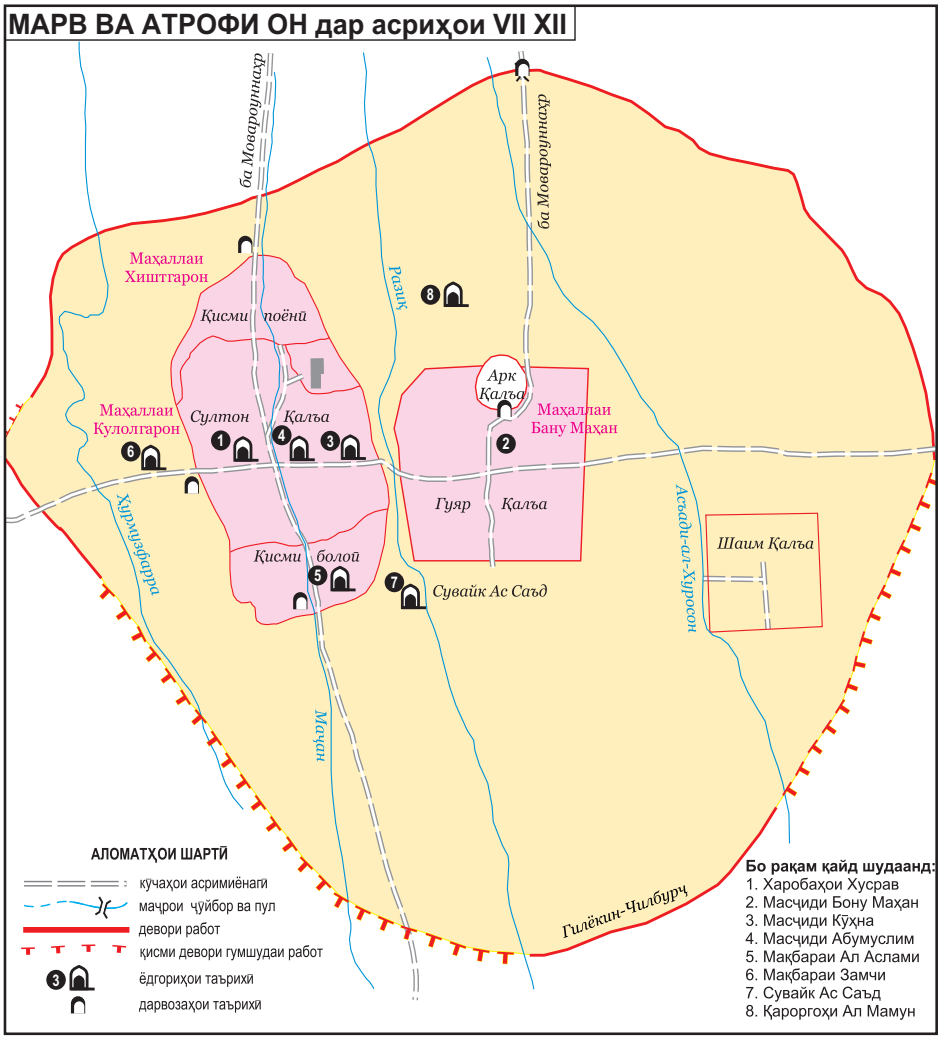


Харитаи 14. Чағониён, Рошт ва Хуталон.
Map 14. Chaghaniyan, Rasht, and Khutalan regions.

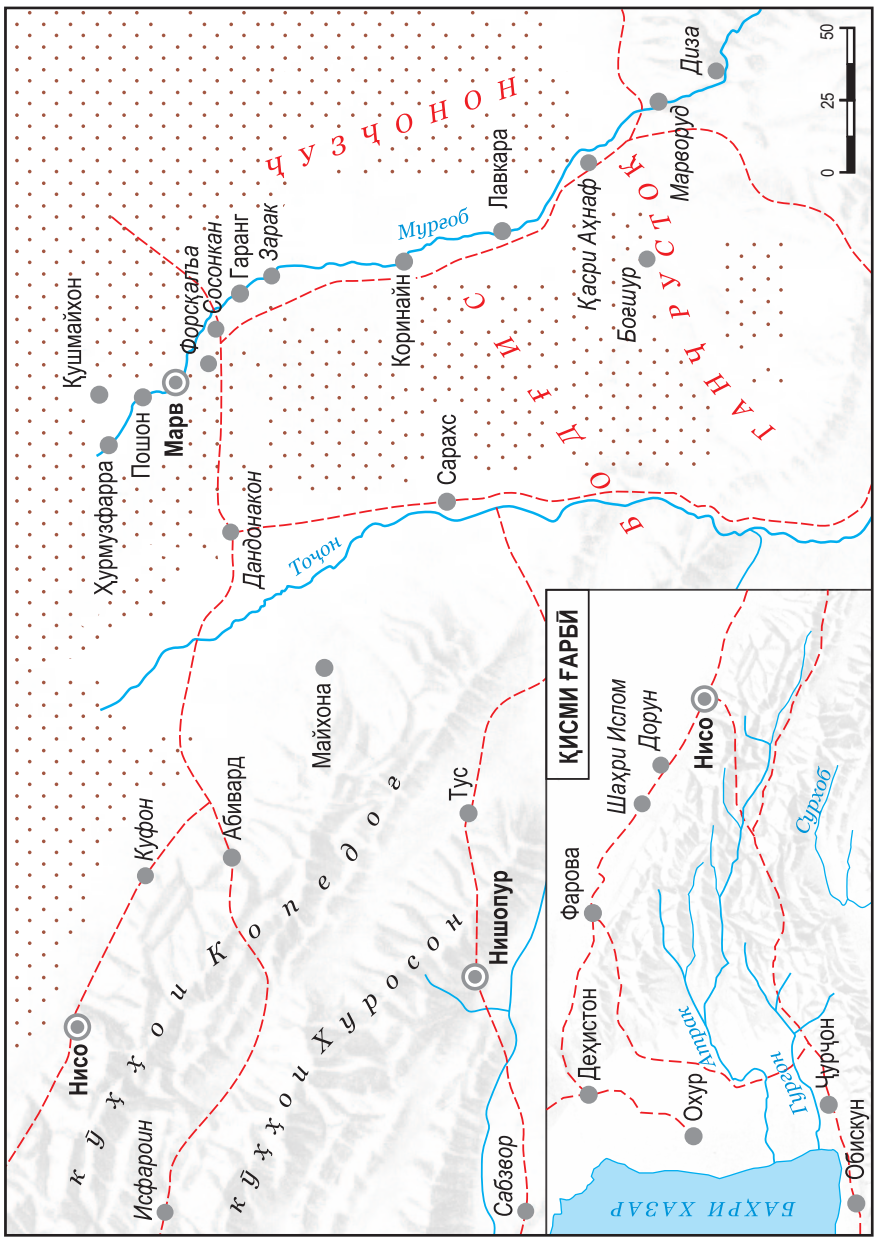


Харитаи 15. Тақсимоти маъмурии Хуросон дар аҳди Сомониён.

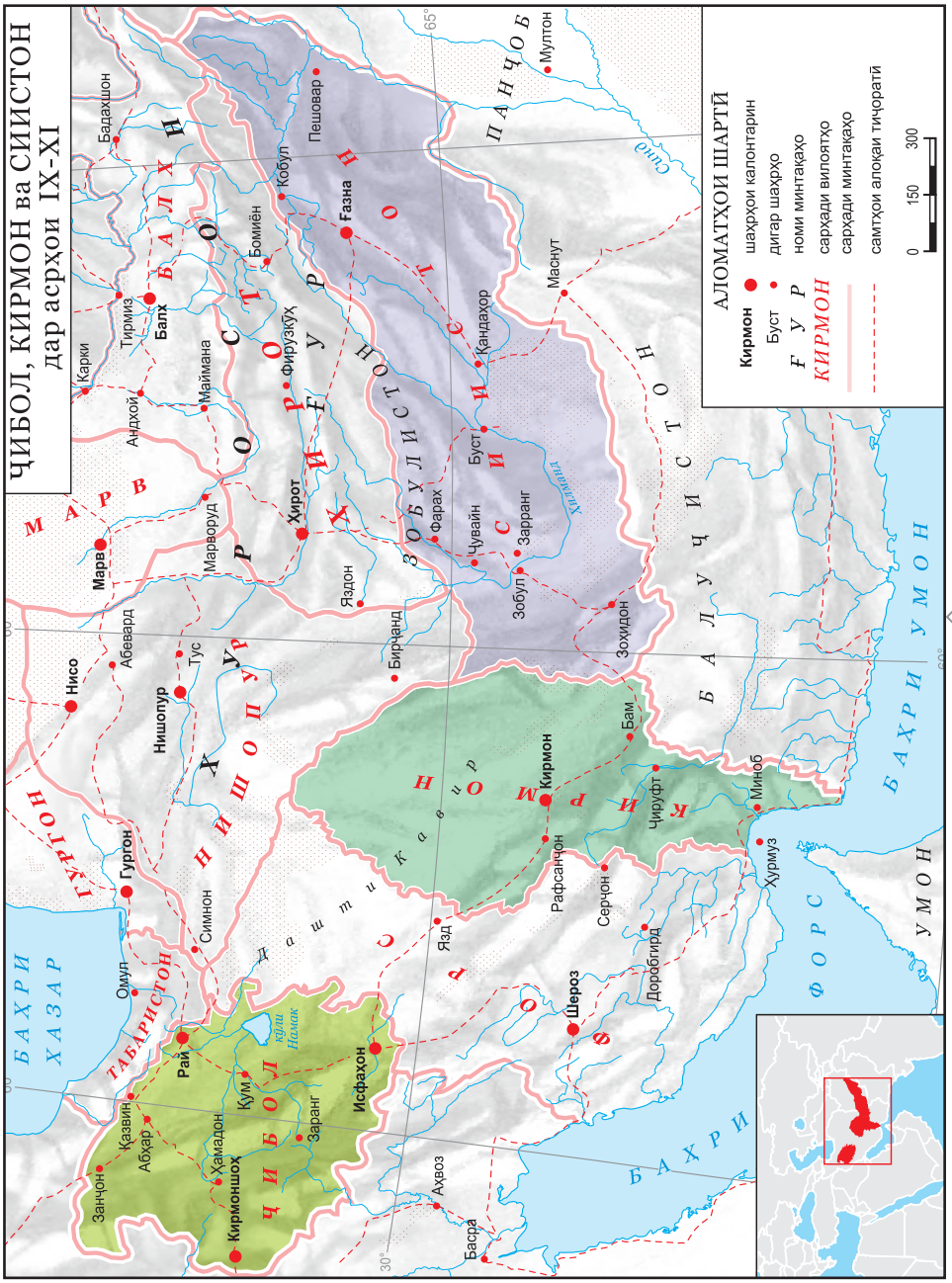
Map 15. Administrative division of Khorasan under the Samanids.



Харитаи 16. Марв дар асрҳои миёна.
Map 16. Merv in the Middle Ages.



Харитаи 17. Шаҳрҳои шимолу ғарбии Хуросон.
Map 17. Northwestern cities of Khorasan.


ЧИБОЛ, КИРМОН ва СИИСТОН
дар асрҳои IX-XI
АЛОМАТҲОИ ШАРТӢ
Кирмон
шаҳрҳои калонтарин
Буст
дигар шаҳрҳо
ном и минтақаҳо
сарҳади вилоятҳо
сарҳади минтақаҳо
самтҳои асосии тиҷоратӣ
КИРМОН
Ғ У Р
Б А Х Р И Х А З А Р
Б А Х Р И У М О Н
Ф О Р С
Д а ш т и К а в и р
Ч И Б О Л
Ҳ А Ш Т А Д У Р
Ғ У Р Ғ О Н
Т А Б А Р И С Т О Н
М А Р В
Р О Ҳ И Ғ У Р
С И С Т О Н
З О Б У Л И С Т О Н
Х И Н Д У К У Ш
Б А Л У Ч И С Т О Н
П А Н Ҷ О Б
Ҳ И Н Д
Ҳ А М О Н И Р О Н
Ҳ А Ш Т А Д У Р
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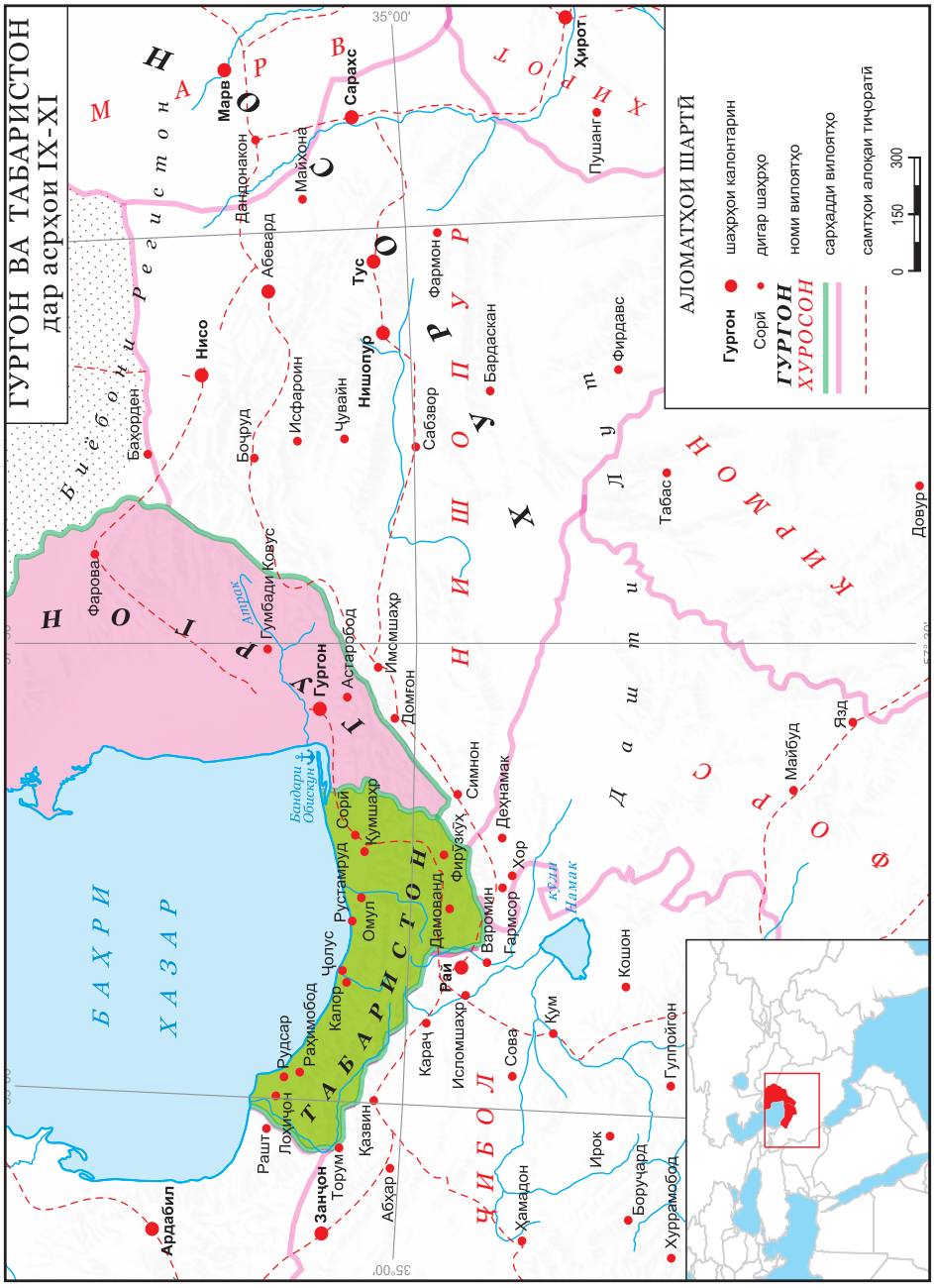
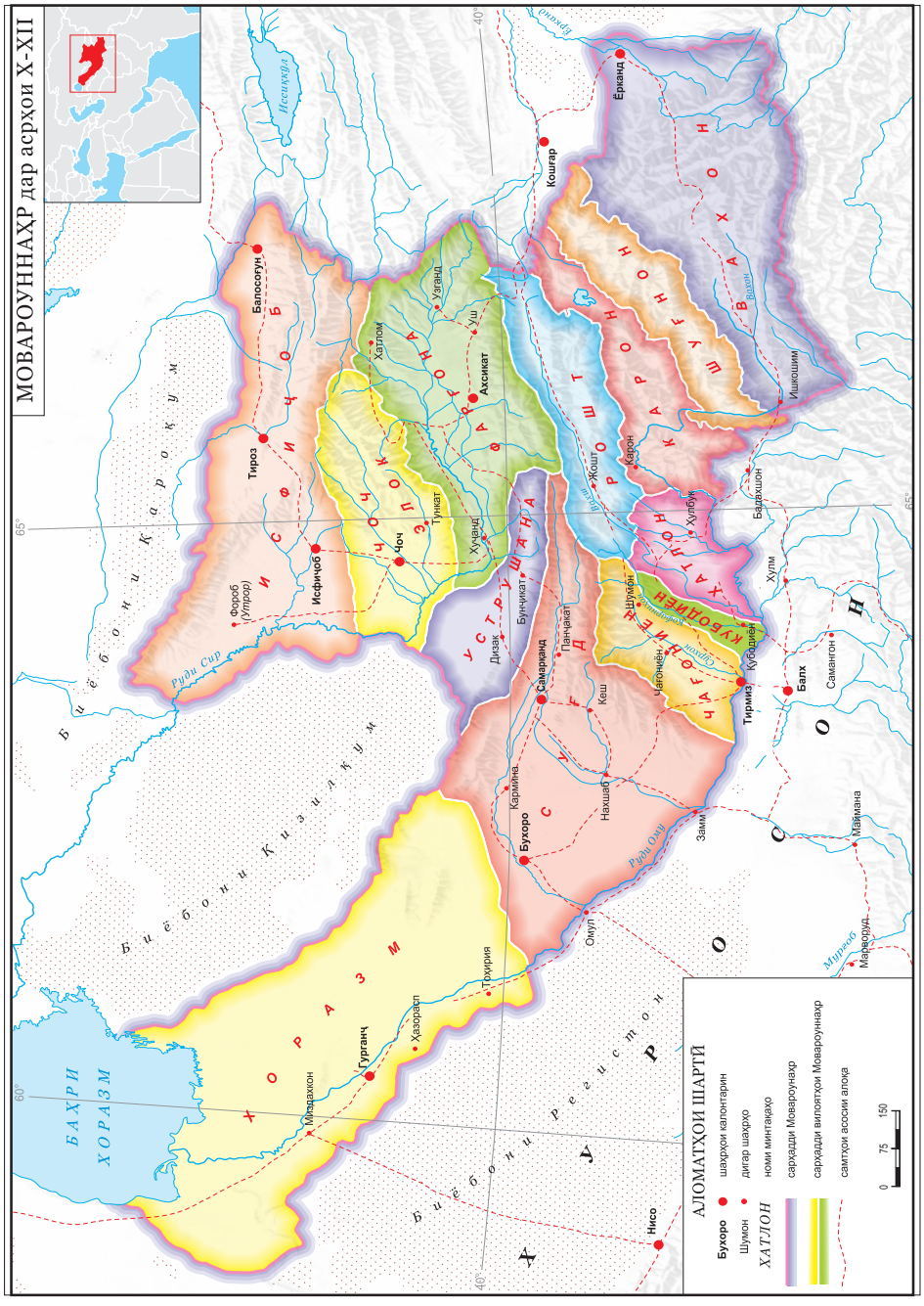


Харитаи 19. Гургон ва Табаристон.

Map 19. Gorgan and Tabaristan.


МОВАРОУННАҲР дар асрҳои X-XII
Баҳри Хоразм
Хоразм
Бухоро
Самарқанд
Шумон
Ҳатлон
Суғд
Чағониён
Тирмиз
Балх
Ушрусана
Фарғона
Исфиҷоб
Тироз
Бапосоғун
Ҳазорасп
Гургонҷ
Миздахкон
Нисо
Кеш
Нахшаб
Кармина
Замм
Омул
Тохирия
Ахсикат
Уструшана
Кӯшғар
Ёрканд
Хутталон
Бадахшон
Ишкошим
Хулбук
Кубодиён
Чағониён
Самангон
Маймана
Марверуд
Марв-рӯд
Ҳулм
Ҳисор
Ҳазорасп
Хатлон
Ҳисор
Ҳулм
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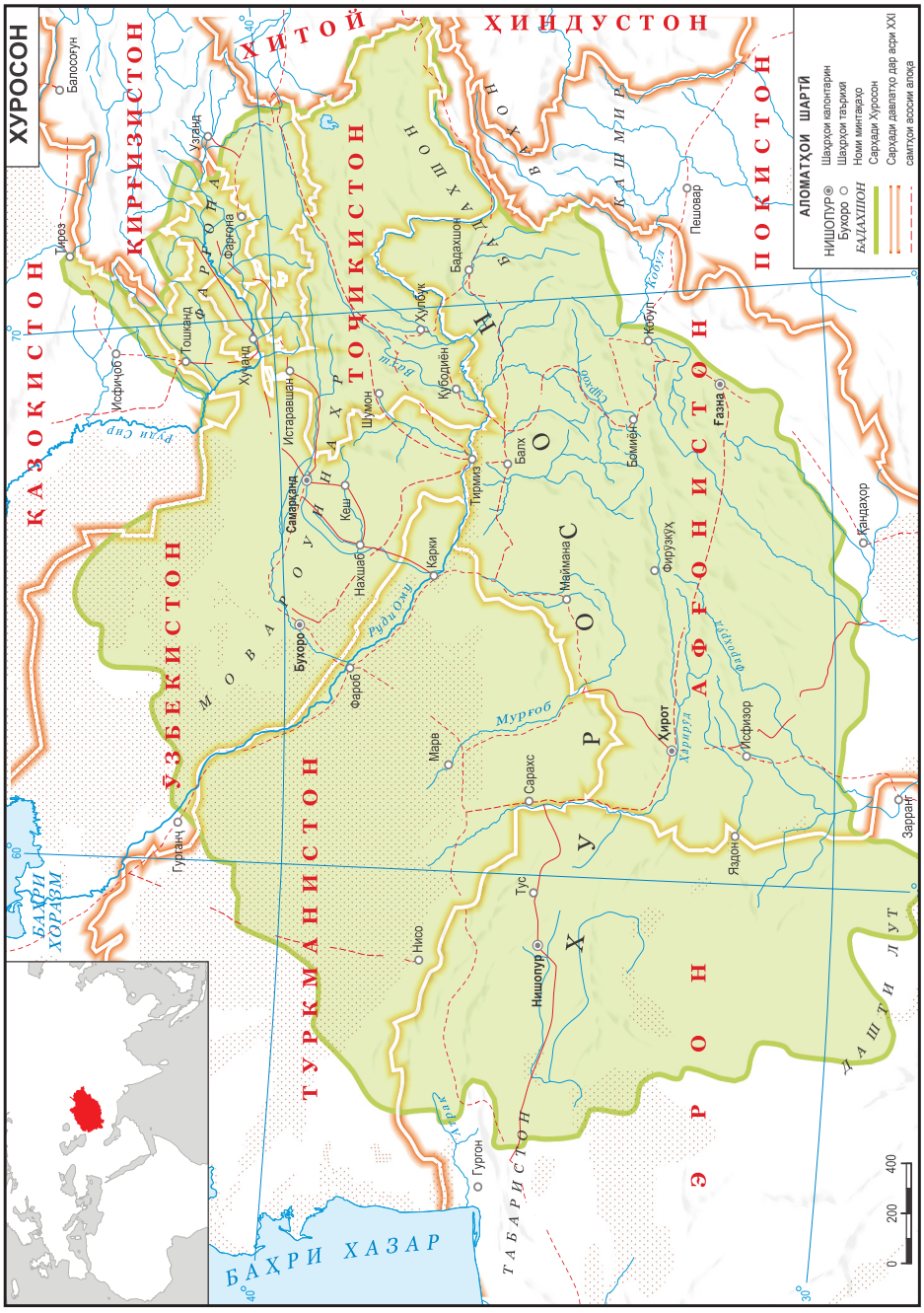
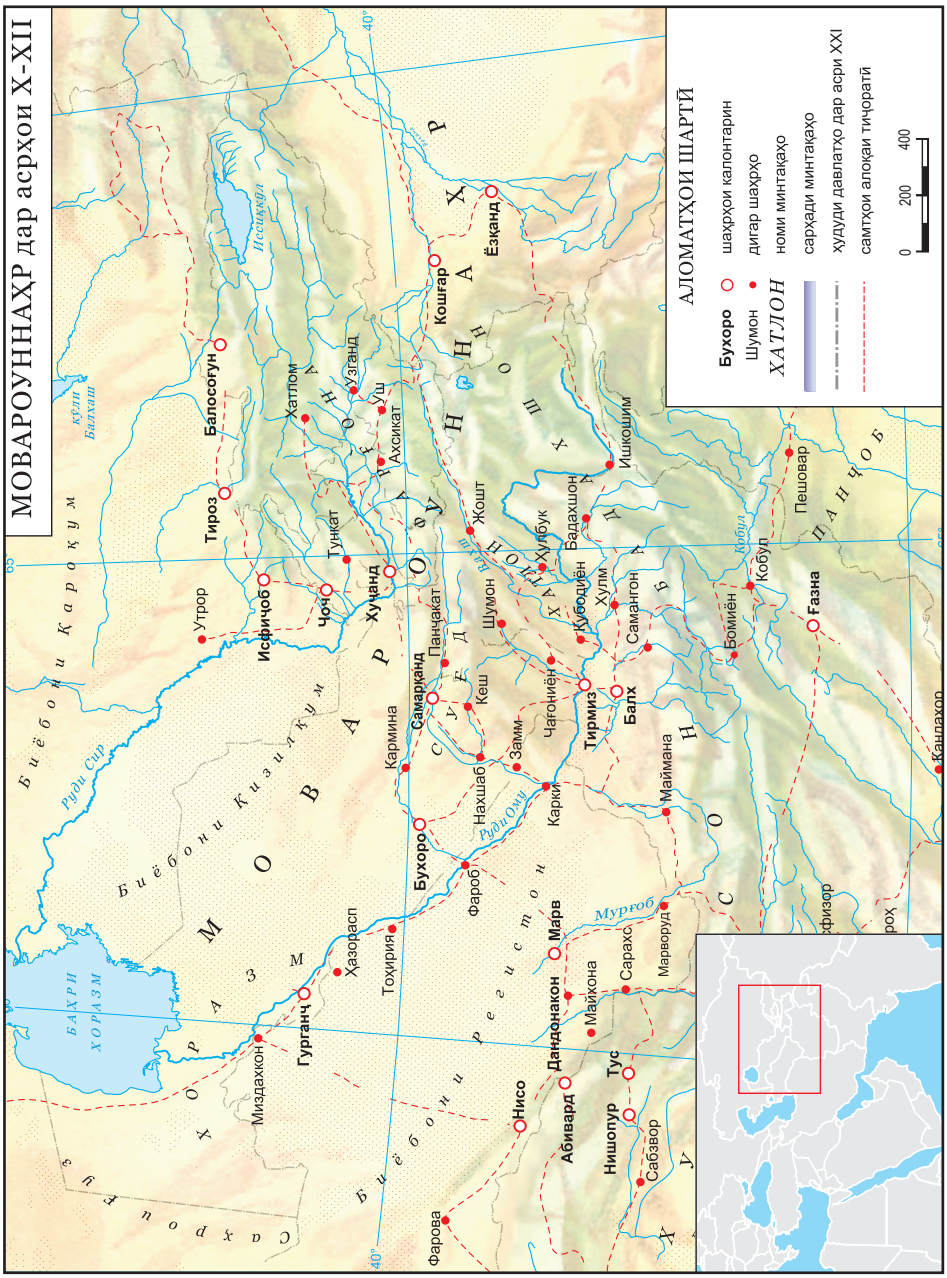
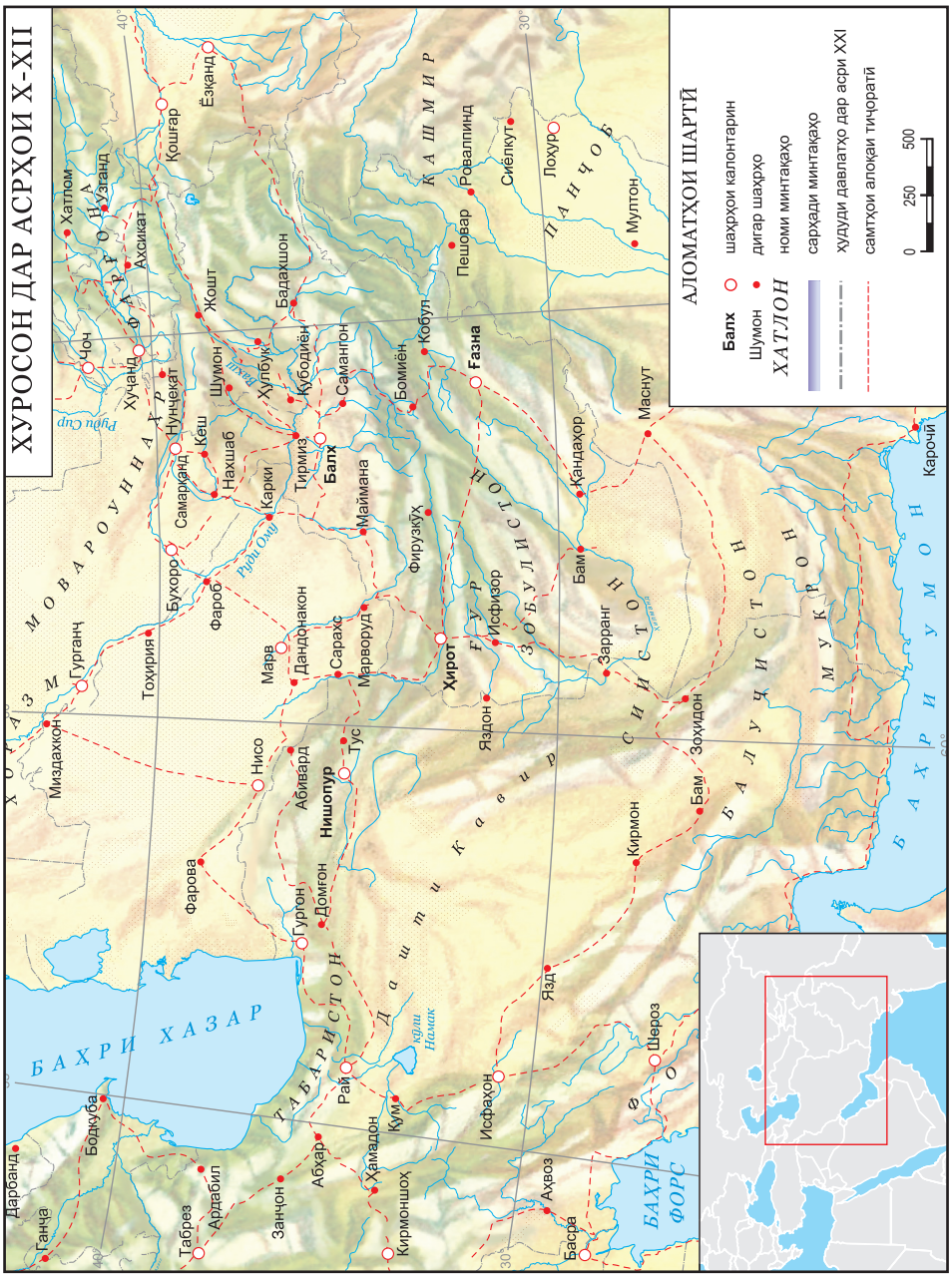
Ҳулм
Ҳазорасп



Харитаи 21. Хуросони Бузург дар харитаи имрӯзии Осиёи Марказӣ.
Map 21. Great Khorasan on a modern map of Central Asia.



Харитаи 22. Мовароуннаҳр. Харитаи таърихӣ-ҷуғрофӣ.
Map 22. Transoxiana (Historical-geographical map).


ХУРОСОН ДАР АСРҲОИ X-XII
АЛОМАТҲОИ ШАРТӢ
шаҳрҳои капитарин
дигар шаҳрҳо
номи минтақаҳо
сарҳади минтақаҳо
ҳудуди давлатҳо дар асри XXI
самтҳои алоқаи тиҷоратӣ
ХАТЛОН
Балх
Шумон
0 250 500
МОВАРОУННАҲР
ХОРАЗМ
ТАБАРИСТОН
ДАШТИ КАВИР
ЗОБУЛИСТОН
БАЛУЧИСТОН
МУКРОН
ПАНҶОБ
КАШМИР
БАҲРИ ХАЗАР
БАҲРИ ФОРС
БАҲРИ УМОН
Самарқанд
Бухоро
Хуҷанд
Ёзканд
Кошғар
Ахсикат
Нуҷкат
Ҳатлом
Чоч
Фарғона
Рӯди Сир
Рӯди Зар
Рӯди Ом
Рӯди Ҳирмонд
Рӯди Ҳилманд
Рӯди Ҳабос
Рӯди Ҳаш
Рӯди Ҳунд
Рӯди Ҳинд
Рӯди Ҳиндустон
Рӯди Ҳиндустон
Рӯди Ҳиндустон

САФАРЗОДА НЕКРӮЗ ШОДӢ

ҶУҒРОФИЁИ ТАЪРИХИИ ДАВЛАТИ СОМОНИЁН

Муҳаррир:
Искандари Ориф

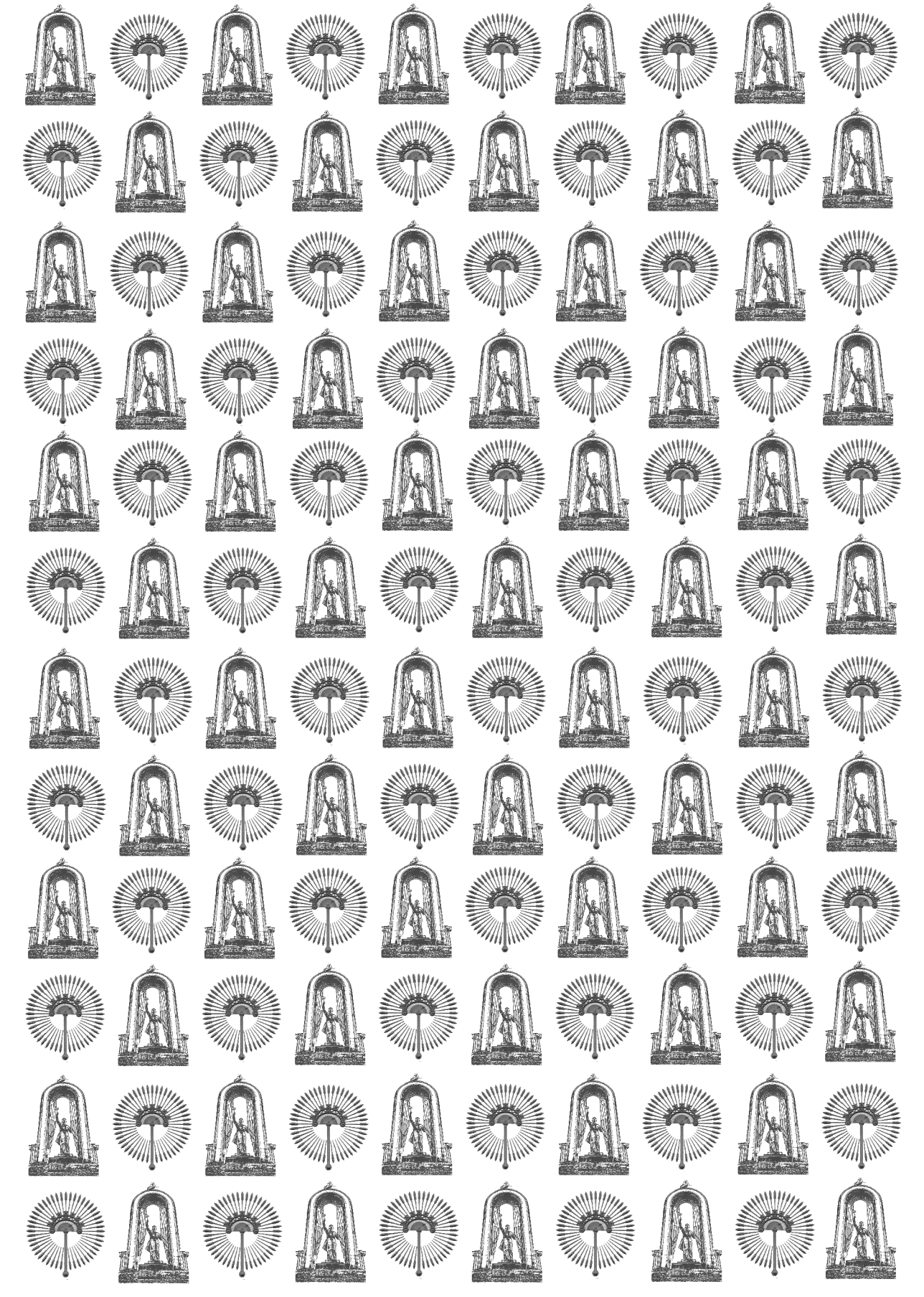
Мусаҳҳеҳон:
Шодӣ Сафаров
Раҷабмоҳ Давлат

Саҳифаоро:
Илҳом Ғиёсов
Харитасоз:
Шарофиддин Шарипов
Ороиши муқова:
Фурӯзонфар Неъматов
Барно Сотибалдиева
Ҳуруфчинон:
Назира Саид
Назира Ғуломова

БИ №1

Ба чопаш 31.10.2024 имзо шуд. Андозааш 70х100 1/16.
Коғази офсетии №1. Гарнитураи Palatino Linotype.
Чопи офсет. Теъдод: 1000 нусха. Нархаш шартномавӣ.

Дар ҶДММ "Бебок" чоп шудааст.



NEKRUZ SAFARZODA

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SAMANID EMPIRE

نیک‌روز صفرزاده

جغرافیای تاریخی دولت سامانیان

