

Relationship Of Peasants And Servants With Samanids System Of Government

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ABSTRACT: Samanids (279-389 A.H) are Iranian Kings. They took rule in north-eastern parts of Iran. Prestige and social status of servants and peasants, and the confirmation and support of caliphs led to their legitimacy in the political power and influence. Peasants were one of the effective factors in forming Samanid government. Military and social background in north-eastern Iran in the second half of the third century A.H (Islamic calendar) along with the troubled and turbulent situation in these areas after the fall of Tahirids, as well as harassment and threats by Saffarids put peace, security and interests of peasants in danger and thus, peasants tried to get rid of the danger and maintain their position by supporting Samanids in taking power. This was the introduction of their influence in the government and power to the extent that servants like Albtakin, Baktozen, Tash, Ghratakin and Faiq took positions as doorkeepers, generalissimos, or division commanders and had an important and effective role in the structure of army.

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Introduction:

In Samanid era, peasants and servants in addition to getting seriously and effort fully involved in political and military developments, they were in change of provinces and even after the fall of Samanids, they managed to establish government dynasties. Active role of peasants and court servants in removing and appointing and the even killing rulers, kings and bureaucrats including the murder of Abu Naser Ahmad Bin Ismail Samani(331 A.H), and murdering, removing, or appointing ministers such as Abu-Al-Ghasem Baramaki and Abu-Al-Rahman Parsi in this era, and their effective role in political conflicts indicate their influence in political events in the history of Samanids. Authority and influence of peasants and servants in this area due to distrust of Samanid political system in local people and relatives on one hand, and confronting with Abbasid power on the other hand, made necessary the need for servants.

The Relation Between peasants and Samanids (by Ezzatollah khodadadi)⁽¹⁾: prior to getting involved in political power structure of caliph governors in the province of Khorasan, Samanids were among peasants lived in Khorasan and Transoxiana.⁽²⁾ In early Islamic centuries, peasants were one of the most significant strata of the Iranian society that originated in Samanid era. Peasants were not considered political affiliates or components of Samanid government. In addition, economically they were deprived of the wealth that came from extortion on people. Peasants often inherited little agricultural land from their ancestors, and they supervised and managed it with great.

Tact and effort. This segment (stratum) of population had sympathy towards people and they and high popularity among them. They were engaged in agriculture work and they were very successful in their work. However less educated, peasants were aware of the situation of society, and public –political situation of their era⁽³⁾. Since they had a lot of detailed information about the assets and properties of farmers and landowners, they helped the government in tax collection methods and tax rates⁽⁴⁾. Because of their honorable historical background and their good relation, peasants were trusted by people and became their representatives. Peasants had a prominent role between people and bases of government power the government used peasants for collecting taxes⁽⁵⁾. In early Islamic centuries, peasants of Khorasan and Transoxiana had different than peasants of various.

Provinces and regions such that Khorasan peasants gradually gained power, influence and credit among people. People went to them and asked them for device and guidance about their problems. Peasants, relying on public support, gathered strength to resist against invasions, and dealt with constructing trenches and defense fortifications. People helped peasants for their security and made efforts to strengthen them against invaders people's interests depended on powerful local peasants. People preferred this local stratum with common politics, culture, and economics over non-local strata and others. So, peasants of Khorasan and Transoxiana had some differences with peasants in other regions. First they had large areas of agricultural land. Secondly they had better financial resources. Also they had small military

forces settled in garrisons and Narshakhi⁽⁶⁾. Names them. And Richard frye has also confirmed it based on geological excavations around Bukhara⁽⁷⁾.

In the early Islamic period, some Khorasan peasants had superiority over others and they had good positions and they were leading other peasants⁽⁸⁾. Samanids who were among Persian dynasties in the early Islamic period, since the age of Abbasid caliph, Al-ma'mun, began to need local efficient and famous individuals and groups. So they took advantage of Asad Bin Saman and his sons to repel the riots and dominate in situation.⁽⁹⁾ During the rule of Tahirids(250-259 A.H). Samani dynasty served them and gradually increased their influence in political areas and came to command the army.⁽¹⁰⁾ With the weakness of the rule of Tahirids, Samani dynasty took over the government in Transoxiana provinces and because of their background of political and military services that cause legitimacy of Samanids among people and the caliph, they had the chance to replace Tahirids; therefore after the fall of Tahirids, peasants as a segment (stratum) who were in a socially prominent position and had gained necessary political affairs. So this peasant class got together and coordinated so that they could run political and military affairs.⁽¹¹⁾ Therefore, opposing the advancement of Saffarids in a conflict with governors and rulers of Khorasan. They took the power. The need for unity among peasants to establish a government increased, so they reached some compromise against the advancements of Saffarids which threatened the the interests of peasants. They accepted Samani dynasty for its legitimacy and good manners as their guide and leader and attempted to strengthen the Samani political and military system.⁽¹²⁾

Yaqub leys Saffari had a dominant rule over eastern and northern lands as well as Khorasan. This was a source of concern for Abbasi Caliph-Motamed. The caliph took advantage of Samanids to confront and remove him, and send a charter of governance for Ahmad Bin Asad Samani⁽¹³⁾. Nasr and his brother Ismail established relative peace in Transoxiana, and the people of Khorasan who yearned for this peace, welcome and supported them warmly. After the death of his brother, Ismail made Bokhara his political-administrative center. Samanid Mausoleum (Ismail Samani) believing that his government owed to the services of peasants, used them in the structured of government. Peasants were effective in strengthening Samanid government from various political, social, economical, and military aspects. Amir Ismail used peasants to run the provinces in his territory and instigated the peasants' satisfaction and fulfillment. In return, peasants highly supported his government. Regarding the role of peasants in the

Islamic culture and civilization, Richard Frye says: “this group of peasants converted to Islam, but they kept the traditions and epic literature of Iran.” All their rituals and behaviors were according to Iranian customs without any connection to Arabic customs. They maintained their social status and Islam would not put any pressure on them.⁽¹⁴⁾

The Relation Between servants and Samanids: assimilating elements of army servants by Samanids began prior to Amir Isamil Samani with the assimilation and applying army servants by Abbasid caliph. Abbasid Caliph Motasem (218-227 A.H) appealed to Nooh Bin Asad Samani for procuring and supplying an army of servants.⁽¹⁵⁾ In the time of Amir Ismail Samani (279-295 A.H) there were a lot of army servants such that he was forced to do something about their deployment in Bukhara.

On top of the organization of Samanid court we often face with experienced servant titled as Hajib (court doorkeeper) or great Amir Hajib (head of court doorkeepers). They undertook affairs such as ceremonies, meeting the gentlemen and Emir Samanei, and the solemn duty of informing. Bares – the servant of Amir Ismail – who was previously trusted by Amir's father-Ahmad–was Amir's Hajib(court door keeper) and a source of consultation in important affairs.⁽¹⁶⁾ The position of door keeping which was undertaken by prominent army servants such as Albtakin, Sima, Faiq, Baktozen, Tash and Ghrtakin for some time, was of great grandeur and dignity. This position was also a launch pad for achieving the positions of army commanding or generalissimo of large provinces especially Khorasan. Some of the army servants, while keeping their position of court door keeping, were appointed as generalissimos or army commanders.⁽¹⁷⁾

Appointing and selecting army servants and governors of provinces had always been regarded by Samanid rulers such that Amir Ismail Samani gave the rulling of Gorgan to his servant, the great bares.⁽¹⁸⁾

He conceded the Emirates of Tabarestan to a Turkish servant Named Salam.⁽¹⁹⁾ He also gave the rulling of Sistan to Simjour Davati, one of the servants under his order. Presence of Turkish servants in Samanid army was so high that Mikawayh (421 A.H) considers Samanid army as a Turkish army.⁽²⁰⁾ With the expansion of Samanid lands, especially after Ismail Samani's victory over Amro, and the necessity to deploy troops in the conquered areas or sending troops to provinces such as Khorasan, Sistan, and Tabaristan, the presence of army servants became urgent more than ever.

The backbone and main elements of new army were servants who were submissively ready for being deployed at any time or place because of their spiritual

or material independence. In other words, with the expansion of Saffarid and Samanid lands, and local rulers becoming the rulers of the extensive lands, the necessity to have army servants was felt more than any time.

Conclusion:

Before getting involved into political power of caliphs in Khorasan, Samanids were peasants of Khorasan region or Transoxiana. Peasants provided troops and facilities against invasions through public support. Ancestors of Samanid dynasty got involved in Abbasid power structure since the time of Ma'moun. They participated in running the affairs in Tahirid period with the weakness of Tahirids, Samani gained mere power in Khorasan region and Transoxiana. They were regarded by the caliphate as

An alternative power to Tahirids. Further, peasants Samanid government in the region that threatened their interests and position. Peasants made great efforts to strengthen Samanid government. In return, Samanids concede peasants with lots of privileges. They mutually benefited from each other's interests. Using servants in armies was not as expected; that is, providing an army which was fully obedient, reliable, and spiritually and materially independent after being involved in political structure of Samanids for a while, army servants acquired enough experience and got close to and familiar with power. They lost their obedient manners and due to having substantial economical and financial privileges and backings. They were dominated by material and spiritual belongings. Formation of a trans-local army relied on Turkish servants with the attitude that they are more reliable compared to local centrifugal forces and that they are useful in the ups and downs of political life, was not efficient. More careful investigation show that court servants were highly involved in the collapse of Samanids.

Footnotes:

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