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THE NAYMAN SUB-ETHNIC GROUP IN THE ETHNIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE JIZZAKH OASIS

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article examines the history of scholarly research on the Nayman tribe, which occupies an important place in the ethnic composition of the population of the Jizzakh Oasis. It considers the origin and semantic meaning of the ethnonym “Nayman,” the internal subdivisions of the tribe, and the geographical distribution of its constituent groups. Particular attention is devoted to the role played by the Nayman tribe within the ethnic environment of the Jizzakh Oasis, as well as to the processes underlying its formation and historical development. Drawing on historical and ethnographic sources, the article offers a comparative analysis of the scholarly perspectives and approaches that have been applied to the history and ethnocultural characteristics of this ethnic group.

Introduction. The term *ethnos* derives from the Ancient Greek words *ἔθνος* (“people”) and *onym* (“name”), meaning “the name of a people.” [1, 56-b.]. The scholarly study of ethnonyms is important not only from a linguistic perspective but also from the standpoint of historical research, since each ethnonym contains valuable information about the origins, ethnic history, and cultural and historical relations of a particular people.

The history of ethnic groups is closely intertwined with the development of the oasis’s economy and culture, demographic processes, political events, and changes in its social structure. Therefore, studying the history of the ethnic groups that have lived and continue to

live in the Jizzakh oasis, their interactions with one another, cultural heritage, and migration dynamics contributes to reconstructing a comprehensive historical picture of the oasis.

There is no nation in the world composed exclusively of a single clan or tribe, and the Uzbek people are no exception. According to the written sources that have survived to the present day, the Uzbek ethnos was initially divided into 24, subsequently into 32, and ultimately into 92 tribal groups [2.53]. In particular, Turdi Farog'iy, a prominent representative of classical Uzbek literature who lived and worked in the seventeenth century, called upon these tribal groups to maintain unity and harmony, writing:

*O narrow-minded beks, do not be self-conceited,
Be broad-minded; the ninety-two tribal groups constitute the Uzbek land.
Do not say, "One is Kipchak, one is Khitay, one is Yuz,
and one is Naiman";
Though numbering forty, one hundred, or a thousand,
Live in harmony as one under a single khan [3.4].*

Materials and methods. The study employed historical-comparative, historical-genetic, source-critical, etymological, and systematic-descriptive methods to examine the origin, ethnic composition, and historical role of the Naiman in the Jizzakh oasis. The historical-comparative approach served as the principal method, allowing different scholarly views on the ethnic history of the Naiman to be compared and examined in relation to one another.

The main sources of the study consisted of statistical and ethnographic materials dating from the late nineteenth century. Particular attention was paid to I. M. Virsky's Collection of Materials for the Statistics of the Samarkand Region for 1887–1888, N. A. Aristov's study on the ethnic composition and population of Turkic tribes and peoples, A. D. Grebenkin's ethnographic account of the population of the Zarafshan district, as well as the works of O. Buriev and M. Usmonov. These sources were examined through source-critical and historical-comparative analysis, making it possible to compare data concerning the number, settlement patterns, and ethnic composition of the Naiman in the Jizzakh oasis.

The historical-genetic method was used to trace the stages of the formation and historical development of the Naiman, while the etymological method was applied to analyze the origin and meaning of the ethnonym "Naiman." A systematic-descriptive approach was employed to identify and characterize the clans and smaller groups within the Naiman tribal structure. The combination of these methods made it possible to assess the historical position of the Naiman within the ethnic environment of the Jizzakh oasis on the basis of historical and ethnographic sources.

Result and discussion. The last major migration of Turkic peoples to Central Asia (from the Latin migratio — “to move” or “to change one’s place of residence”) took place in the sixteenth century, when the Uzbeks of Dasht-i Qipchaq migrated under the leadership of Shaybani Khan. As a result, the ethnic diversity of the peoples of Central Asia increased further [3.506].

When Shaybani Khan marched into Transoxiana with his army, his forces included cavalymen representing 92 tribal groups [4.271]. Not all of the ethnic groups that migrated from Dasht-i Qipchaq to Transoxiana were large in terms of population. Some of them—in particular, the Kipchaks, Saray, Qongirats, Yuz, Ming, Naiman, Manghit, and Qitay—constituted relatively large ethnic groups compared with the others. The population of each of these groups may have ranged from 30,000–50,000 to as many as 200,000 people [5.414]. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Kipchak population numbered approximately 270,000 [4.275].

The Naiman tribe is regarded as one of the oldest Turkic peoples. According to Abulg‘ozi Bahodir Khan, kings named Qarqish emerged from this tribe. Later, his younger brother Aynat ruled the country. During the time of Genghis Khan, the ruler of the Naimans was known as Tayan Khan, who had a son named Kuchluk. They resided in a place known as Qaraqorum [6.56].

In the mid-tenth century, the Khitans conquered them. The Eight Oghuz were subjugated by the Khitans, who began to refer to them as the Naiman. Thus, the Naiman were originally a Turkic people.

In the mid-eighth century, the Naiman lived to the south of Lake Baikal. In the mid-ninth century, they occupied the territories extending from the upper reaches of the Orkhon River to the Tarim and Black Irtysh. Subsequently, the territory occupied by the Naiman extended as far as the Khanboy and Altai Mountains. To the east, they bordered the Keraite; to the north, the Kyrgyz; to the west, the Kangly; and to the south, the Uyghurs.

In the mid-twelfth century, the Naiman grew stronger and established their rule in Central Asia. The Naiman state existed until the beginning of the thirteenth century, that is, until the Mongol invasion. The capital of the last Naiman khan, Tayang Khan, was located at a place called Jarshiznaur, near Karakorum.

In 1204, a large part of the Naiman were subjugated by the Mongols. Those Naiman who refused to submit to the Mongols lived in the steppes west of Lake Balkhash, in the territories extending southward to the shores of Lake Alakol, as well as along the Syr Darya, Ulugtag, and Ishim rivers. A large part of the Naiman living along the Syr Darya subsequently migrated to

Khwarazm and Mawarannahr and settled there. They gradually adopted a sedentary way of life and became assimilated with the local population [3.41].

In the 1430s, the Naimans supported Abulkhayr Khan in Dasht-i Qipchaq. Later, his grandson Shaybani Khan also relied on their support, and Naiman warriors served in the ranks of his army. In these forces, the Naimans occupied the left wing, while the Ukresh Naimans held the central section [1.175]

The Naiman is one of the largest and oldest tribes among the 92 tribal groups of the Uzbek people. Today, members of the Naiman tribe reside in almost all regions of Uzbekistan, particularly in Samarkand, Syrdarya, Fergana, and Khorezm, as well as in the Uratapa district of Tajikistan [7.56] Members of the Naiman tribe also reside in the territories of Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Bashkortostan, Altai, Nogai, and Mongolia [6.56].

In his study devoted to the ethnic groups of the Uzbek people in the Zarafshan oasis, N. Elmurodov gives particular attention to the etymology of the term “Naiman” and identifies two interpretations of its meaning. According to the first interpretation, the term is derived from the Mongolian language and denotes the number “eight.” According to the second, it originates from an ancient Turkic language, in which nay means “person,” while man is interpreted as a possessive suffix.

The available evidence concerning the Naimans tends to support the first interpretation. In particular, scholars such as V. Bartold and I. Berezin associate the ethnogenesis of the Naimans with the Mongols, whereas S. Amanzholov and N. Aristov regard the Naimans as a Turkic people. This view is partly based on references in ancient Eastern manuscripts and the Orkhon inscriptions to a tribal confederation known as the “Eight Oghuz.” According to one hypothesis, around the middle of the tenth century, the Khitans, one of the peoples of Mongolian origin, conquered the Turkic tribes known as the “Eight Oghuz” and subsequently began referring to this non-Mongol tribal confederation as the “Naimans,” meaning “Eight Oghuz.” [2.35].

Based on the fact that the earliest information about the Naimans appears only toward the end of the twelfth century, L. Gumilyov argues that their origins can be traced back to the Khitans and that they settled in the Altai region together with the Khitans. With regard to the linguistic affiliation of the Naimans, V. Bartold notes in his Eighth Lecture that the Naimans spoke the Mongolian language. Gumilyov likewise supports the view that the Naimans spoke Mongolian, emphasizing that they were able to communicate freely with the Mongols and the Kereits [8.119].

According to statistical data from 1887–1888, the population belonging to the Naiman tribe was recorded as residing in several volosts of Jizzakh uyezd. In particular, 1,345 Naimans lived in the villages of Uchma and Balaban in Bog'don volost, 1,135 in Toshkeskan village of Zomin volost, 1,780 in Mojurun village of Sintob volost, 340 in Yangiqo'rg'on village of Yangiqo'rg'on volost, and 270 in Nayman village. These statistical data indicate that, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Naiman tribe was one of the ethnic groups relatively dispersed across the territory of Jizzakh uyezd.[9.209.223]

In his study entitled *Заметки об этническом составе тюркских племён и народностей и сведения об их численности*, N. A. Aristov, drawing on the data of A. D. Grebenkin, notes that up to 18,000 people belonging to the Naiman tribe lived in the Zarafshan district. The author also states that the Naiman tribe consisted of three major subdivisions: Qo'shtamg'ali, Uvaxtamg'ali, and Sadribek. The study further addresses the question of the common genealogical origins of the Qongirat and Naiman tribes, citing accounts that trace both groups back to a common ancestor, Qozoq Ata [10.424].

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Uzbek Naimans were divided into three major tribal groups: Qo'shtamg'ali, Sadirbegi, and Uvaxtamg'ali. In addition, the Naimans comprised a number of smaller groups, including Agrin, Ayronchi, Bachir, Biya, Bog'onati, Boltali, Budatay, Burunsov, Jag'atbayli, Jovtovon, Jilonli (Ilonli), Jumalak (Yumaloq), Bosh Olti Ota, Olti O'g'il, Oq To'nli, Segiz Uruv (Sakkiz Urug'), Sari Naiman, Turtul (To'rt O'g'il), To'rt Tamg'ali, Urguch, Ukrach, Chang'ali, Chumichli, G'ozoyoqli, Qorachadat, Qorasirak, Qarg'ali, Qiltamg'ali, Qo'ltamg'ali, and others [1.175].

According to A. D. Grebenkin, the Naimans had consistently remained loyal to the khans, and during times of war they formed separate cavalry detachments. When Jizzakh was conquered by the Russian forces, a significant proportion of its defenders consisted of representatives of this tribe. The highest title attained by the Naimans was dodkhoh. During the period of Muslim rule, the Naimans had their own biys; however, they did not exercise the same role as the biys among the Kyrgyz. Their authority was considerably limited by the simultaneous presence of qadis and beks. According to Grebenkin's data, the Naimans lived in 63 villages and winter settlements, with their total population reaching approximately 18,000 people of both sexes [11.91.93].

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the process of national consolidation became increasingly pronounced as the various Uzbek tribes gradually merged with one another. As Academician K. Shoniyozov noted, during this period, the majority of Uzbek tribal groups gradually abandoned their traditional names, came to identify themselves as Uzbeks, and

became an integral part of the Uzbek nation. The Naimans, likewise, were gradually integrated into the Uzbek community alongside other local tribal groups and became an integral part of the Uzbek people [1.182].

Statistical data concerning the Jizzakh oasis from 1887–1888 indicate that the Naimans constituted one of the important ethnic groups in the region at the end of the nineteenth century. Their presence in villages within the Bog'don, Zomin, Sintob, and Yangiqo'rg'on volosts demonstrates that the Naimans had a distinct territorial distribution across the oasis. In particular, the fact that 1,780 Naimans resided in Mojurun village, 1,345 in Uchma and Balaban, and 1,135 in Toshkeskan indicates that they had a significant demographic presence in certain parts of the region.

When these data are compared with the information provided by A. D. Grebenkin and N. A. Aristov, it becomes evident that the Naimans of Jizzakh constituted part of a broader Naiman ethnic space encompassing the Zarafshan region. Grebenkin noted that the Naimans lived in 63 villages and winter settlements across the Zarafshan district, with their total population reaching up to 18,000. This indicates that, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Naimans were not merely a small group confined to a single locality, but rather an ethnic community distributed across a relatively extensive territory.

The existence of major subdivisions within the Naiman tribal structure, such as Qo'shtamg'ali, Sadirbegi, and Uvaxtamg'ali, indicates that elements of their traditional tribal organization remained preserved. However, as K. Shoniyozov noted, from the beginning of the twentieth century, the integration of Uzbek tribal groups within a broader framework of national unity became increasingly pronounced. In this process, the Naimans, while retaining their tribal name, gradually became part of a common Uzbek ethnic identity.

Thus, sources dating from the late nineteenth century allow the Naimans in the Jizzakh oasis to be characterized as an ethnic group that was territorially dispersed, demographically significant in certain areas, and had preserved elements of its tribal identity. Their subsequent ethnic development was closely connected with the broader process of consolidation of the Uzbek people.

Conclusion. In conclusion, historical, ethnographic, and statistical sources from the late nineteenth century indicate that the Naimans constituted one of the groups with a significant demographic presence within the ethnic environment of the Jizzakh oasis. Records from 1887–1888 documenting Naiman communities in a number of villages within the Bog'don, Zomin, Sintob, and Yangiqo'rg'on volosts confirm their relatively broad distribution across the oasis. In particular, the fact that their population exceeded one thousand in some villages represents

an important indicator of the Naimans' position within the ethnic composition of the Jizzakh oasis.

A comparative analysis of the data provided by A. D. Grebenkin and N. A. Aristov alongside the statistical materials concerning Jizzakh demonstrates that the settlement of the Naimans in the oasis was connected with a broader ethnic space encompassing the Zarafshan region. At the same time, the existence of major tribal subdivisions, such as Qo'shtamg'ali, Sadirbegi, and Uvaxtamg'ali, indicates that the internal ethnic structure of the Naimans remained preserved to a certain extent at the end of the nineteenth century.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the increasing interaction of the Naimans with other local ethnic groups, together with the strengthening of a common Uzbek national identity, gradually incorporated their distinctive features as a separate tribal group into the broader framework of Uzbek ethnic identification. Thus, the study of the history of the Naimans in the Jizzakh oasis is important not only for determining the territorial and ethnic composition of the region at the end of the nineteenth century, but also for understanding the regional characteristics of the ethnic consolidation and national formation of the Uzbek people.

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