Research Article

Central Asian Journal of Social Science & History

Central Asian Studies of Social Science and History
e-ISSN 2660-6836 | Volume 7 | Issue 3 (2026) | Page 162-166

Governance and Socio-Economic Life in the Manghit Emirate Through the Prism of Gulshan Ul-Muluk

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Abstract

This article analyzes the representation of the socio-economic life of society during the reign of the Manghit dynasty based on Muhammad Ya'qub Bukhari's work Gulshan ul-Muluk. Through the activities of Muhammad Rahimkhan, Doniyolbiy Otaliq, Amir Shohmurod, and Amir Haydar, the work reveals issues related to state governance, economic opportunities, construction and development activities, the waqf system, and social support for the population. The study highlights the reliability of Gulshan ul-Muluk as a historical source and emphasizes the significance of the economic information contained within it. Furthermore, the contribution of the Manghit rulers to the formation of a centralized state, the maintenance of social stability, and the development of science and education was evaluated on the basis of historical sources.

Keywords: Manghits, Bukhara, Economy, Rulers, Waqf, Construction, Centralization, Reforms, Historiography, Source Studies.

1. Introduction

In the history of Uzbekistan, the rule of the Manghit dynasty is considered one of the periods rich in political, economic, and social processes. Local historical sources play an important role in the study of this period. One of such valuable sources is Muhammad Ya'qub Bukhari's work Gulshan ul-Muluk, which contains important information about the state administration, military campaigns, construction activities, and social life during the reign of the Manghit rulers [1]. Alongside political events, the work also reflects issues related to economic life, the waqf system, the development of science and education, and social support for the population. In this regard, studying Gulshan ul-Muluk as a historical source is of significant scholarly importance for revealing the distinctive features of the socio-economic life of society during the Manghit period [2].

2. Research Method

The reign of the Mangid dynasty in the history of Uzbekistan is considered one of the periods rich in political, economic and social processes. Local historical sources are of great

*Corresponding author : Hamroyev Asliddin Umedovich
Article history : submitted, 2026/02/25 revised, 2026/03/23 accepted, 2026/04/21 published 2026/05/30

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importance in studying this period. One of such sources is the work “Gulshan ul-muluk” by Muhammad Yaqub Bukhari, which describes valuable information about the state administration, military campaigns, creative work and social life of the Mangid rulers. Along with political events, the work also reflects issues of economic life, the endowment system, the development of science and social support for the population. In this regard, the study of the work “Gulshan ul-muluk” as a historical source is of significant scientific importance in revealing the specific aspects of the economic life of society during the Mangid era [3].

It is well known that the work Gulshan ul-Muluk was authored by Muhammad Ya’qub Bukhari, the son of Muhammad Doniyolbiy Otaliq, one of the earliest rulers of the Manghit dynasty. In this work, the history of governments from the time of the Prophet Muhammad up to the author’s own period — including caliphates, khanates, and emirates, as well as the individuals and dynasties that held political power — is concisely described in strict chronological order and with careful adherence to historical sequence [4].

The uniqueness of this work lies in the fact that the author himself was a representative of the last ruling dynasty in Bukhara and was personally acquainted with, and directly witnessed, most aspects of the political, economic, spiritual, and cultural life of that period. Therefore, the historical events described in the work stand out from other sources due to their reliability and authenticity [5].

The work mainly describes the military campaigns of each king, khan, or amir, as well as their efforts to preserve political power, and these events are predominantly political in nature. Nevertheless, through these accounts, it becomes possible to evaluate the socio-economic and everyday life of that period. In addition, the work provides valuable information about the construction and development activities carried out by each ruler [6].

First of all, in every state, the wealth of the population determines the strength of its army. In order to carry out continuous and uninterrupted military campaigns, a solid economic foundation is required. This is a universally recognized principle. From this perspective, when Muhammad Ya’qub Bukhari describes the military campaigns of the Manghit rulers, as well as their efforts to unify the country and establish a centralized state, the economic potential and financial capabilities of the state also become evident [7].

For example, the first representative of the Manghit dynasty to ascend the throne was Muhammad Rahim Bahodirkhan. Since he had no male heirs, his grandson Fazil To‘ra, born to his daughter, was placed on the throne. However, groups dissatisfied with this decision supported his younger brother, Muhammad Doniyolbiy, who at that time held the position of ataliq, and elevated him to power. Subsequently, all later Manghit rulers of Bukhara descended from his lineage [8].

The author of the work highly praises Muhammad Rahimkhan, his uncle, and gives great recognition to his services rendered to the state and the people. In particular, he writes: “He united the ninety-two Uzbek tribes and brought them under his command. No one had the ability to oppose his orders by saying either ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ He passed away in 1172 (1759). Concerning his death, the following verse was composed:”

“The parrot of the soul flew from the cage of the body.”

Translation:

“The soul, like a parrot, departed from the cage of the body.”

“His reign lasted eleven years, from the assassination of Abulfayzkhan until his death” [9].

The fact that he united the ninety-two Uzbek tribes, which had been living in a scattered manner across Central Asia, undoubtedly demonstrates his ability in governance and state administration, as well as his success in harmonizing the socio-economic and spiritual interests of each tribe at the state level. Furthermore, the author of the work evaluates Muhammad Rahimkhan's political capability as follows: "His greatness and distinction lay in the fact that, among the Manghit sultans, he conquered Hisor and Shahrisabz through the strength of his state. After his death, this achievement was not granted to anyone else. Likewise, no one was able to follow his methods of governing the state" [10].

3. Results and Discussion

When Muhammad Ya'qub Bukhari writes about his father, Muhammad Doniyolbiy Otaliq, who ascended the throne after his uncle and became the true founder of the Manghit dynasty, he, in accordance with his style, describes his attempts to transform the state into a centralized polity, the military campaigns carried out for this purpose, as well as his victories and defeats. Summarizing these processes, the author evaluates his father's activity as follows: "During the reign of His Excellency and benefactor Doniyolbiy, various heresies and oppressions remaining from the period of the previous khans disappeared."

It is known that Doniyolbiy also carried out certain activities aimed at the development of science and education in the country. For instance, he commissioned the construction of a large madrasa on the western side of the Bahauddin Naqshband shrine, and he himself was later buried in this madrasa. Today, this madrasa has been reconstructed on the initiative and under the directives of the President, and it has once again become a place visited by pilgrims [11].

Within the accounts presented in the work regarding Muhammad Doniyolbiy's military campaigns and battles, we also encounter certain information about the construction and development activities he carried out based on the economic strength of society. For example, the author notes that he also built fortresses: "After a short period, a fortress was built in a place called Mirmiron, and Bo'tabiy was relocated from Koson and appointed as its governor" [12].

Likewise, the work also describes the activities of Amir Shohmurod, the eldest son of Doniyolbiy who ascended the throne after him, aimed at developing the state, establishing justice, and maintaining peace. In particular, the narrative focuses on his military campaigns and the incorporation of Khorasan into the territory of his state.

When the author describes the history of his brother Amir Shohmurod in the work, it becomes evident that the book itself was written during the period of his brother's rule: "At present, Shohmurodbiy, widely known as Amiri Ma'sum, may his abode be paradise, was one of the most righteous sons of my benefactor (that is, my father). Owing to his actions and policies, Islam was strengthened in Movarounnahr, and the ancient waqf properties of madrasas and mosques were restored" [13].

Through the above information, we become aware of the activities carried out by Amir Shohmurod for the development of society. It can therefore be understood that he effectively organized the waqf system, which was a distinctive institution of that period, in order to improve mosques and madrasas and to ensure the regular payment of salaries and stipends to teachers and students working and studying there. In turn, this not only restored the social prestige of intellectuals such as scholars and teachers, but also improved their economic

conditions. At the same time, this demonstrates that the reforms currently being implemented in the educational system of our country possess deep historical roots.

In addition, the work mentions several examples of Amir Shohmurod's personal example in restoring honesty and justice within society: "After these events, in 1215 (1800), Amiri Ma'sum departed from this mortal world. His reign lasted sixteen years, and he was sixty-one years old. Amiri Ma'sum was such a ruler that throughout his life he dressed modestly and lived in poverty. The robe he wore was made of coarse colored cloth, his turban consisted of six layers of plain white fabric, his shoes were made of rough leather, and his boots were sewn from old hardened leather. The fur coat he wore cost only two tangas, while the value of all his clothing did not exceed seven tangas. His food consisted of barley bread, mung bean soup, and porridge. Once a week, using the jizya tax revenue, he purchased a quarter measure (approximately 250 grams) of meat to provide for his family. He was also such a man that he did not wear the royal crown and avoided sitting on the throne. Renouncing the title of khan, he was content with the title of amir. Moreover, during his reign, he never attended the weddings or ceremonies of nobles, officials, or ordinary people. He also refused to accept gifts or offerings from anyone. Among the Manghit rulers, he was one of the first to eradicate the remnants of old tyranny and abolish various innovations that were not in accordance with Sharia" [14].

In addition, other historical sources also contain information about the monetary reforms carried out by Amir Shohmurod, as well as the changes he introduced into the military and palace administration systems. During his sixteen-year reign, the economic life of society significantly improved, and the status and authority of the state's official monetary unit increased.

After Amir Shohmurod, his son Amir Haydar ascended the throne. Like his father, he sought to govern the state and society with justice and fairness. However, following his father's death, various conspiracies and opposition movements emerged within the state. If we examine the themes related to the lives of the Manghit rulers described in Gulshan ul-Muluk, it becomes evident that the period of Amir Haydar's reign was the most turbulent and was marked by continuous anti-state movements and internal conflicts.

Amir Haydar spent his twenty-seven-year reign continuously overcoming conflicts, struggles, and various political problems. He was not occupied solely with military campaigns, but also devoted his efforts, as much as possible, to the development of the people and the state. This can be seen in the following description given in the work: "He was born in 1194 (1780) and ascended the throne at the age of twenty-two, in 1215. He ruled for twenty-seven years. He was independent-minded, compassionate toward his subjects, wise, learned, generous, pious, and a hafiz who had completely memorized the Holy Qur'an. Despite being occupied with state affairs, he taught four hundred scholars. Every month, he provided stipends to thousands of poor and needy people. He also allocated support for travelers. He showed great respect toward spiritual leaders and generously distributed grain and wheat. He never neglected the Ishraq and Tahajjud prayers. However, he showed less affection toward his relatives and greater kindness toward strangers" [15].

The fact that Amir Haydar allocated monthly stipends to thousands of poor people and travelers — that is, labor migrants who had relocated to Bukhara due to difficult living conditions in other regions — and provided them with social protection demonstrates that the economic and financial capacity of the state was sufficiently strong to carry out such measures.

In general, Muhammad Ya'qub Bukhari's work Gulshan ul-Muluk is a source that briefly covers more than a thousand years of our history. From this work, it is possible to obtain a great deal of new information, particularly valuable data concerning the rise of the Manghit dynasty to power and their system of state administration. This, in turn, expands our opportunities to provide an objective and impartial assessment of our past history.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Muhammad Ya'qub Bukhari's work Gulshan ul-Muluk serves as an important historical source for studying the socio-economic life of society during the reign of the Manghit dynasty. The work provides valuable information not only about political events and military campaigns, but also about economic conditions, construction activities, the waqf system, social protection, and the development of science and education. Through the activities of Muhammad Rahimkhan, Doniyolbiy Otaliq, Amir Shohmurod, and Amir Haydar, it becomes evident that the Manghit rulers paid considerable attention to strengthening centralized statehood, maintaining social stability, and improving the welfare of the population. Furthermore, the source reflects the rulers' efforts toward justice, religious tolerance, and support for scholars and intellectuals. Therefore, Gulshan ul-Muluk holds significant scholarly value in providing an objective understanding of the political and socio-economic history of the Manghit period.

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