

Classes In The Society Of Central Asia (Class Of Khodja)

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Abstract: In this article analyzed social classes in society of Central Asia about "khvodja", which is read as "khodjas". Hence, in the historical documents bearer of the title "khodja" meant the representatives of higher religious class. But, at the same time, our respondents in relation to the same people used in their conversation only the term "khodja". The term "khodjas" was used in relation to the people accomplishing "khadj".

Index Terms: Central Asia, class, generation, khodja, social, society, territory.

1. INTRODUCTION

The present report is a product of social and anthropological investigations conducted by the project of French research institute on Central Asia (IFEAC). Analysis of scientific research of Soviet period on the study of social, cultural, religious and ethnic processes in Central Asia, in particular on the territory of Uzbekistan shows the absence of due attention to the study of special socio-cultural group of people having religious titles. With the exception of some mentioning on this subject in the encyclopedic collections, few scientific publications don't exist practical works considering this issue. At the same time, it worthwhile to state that after the invasion of Uzbek khanates by Russian empire some scientists and officials of the latter made some efforts to study the issues of origin and social status of the group of people belonging to the higher religious classes and having religious titles. Formation of peculiar social classes in local conditions began from the times of expansion of Islam on the territory of Central Asia along with the development of Muslim culture among the aboriginal population. As it was common to all structures of the society, people in these regions, members of separate social groups who actively participated in the wide-scale dissemination of Islamic ideology, were encouraged by the ideologists of Islam and awarded the status necessary in their social life. Having such a status they could strengthen their level in the society and many additional rights as well. It was very important that this status, obtained according to special decrees and resolutions, created the basis for having it from generation to generation as an unofficial label (tamga). Later it was found out that the status obtained by one or the other family gave great opportunities to the owners and it was very important for the wide use in political, economical and social spheres of the life. Owners of such titles stand out as an individual social-cultural group representing particular social class.

As a result of peculiar stratification in Central Asia among the local population with religious-social point of view some people began to be distinguished and claim to have the title of "white bone" (ok suyaklar). The representatives of representatives socio-cultural group belonged to this class: "sayyid", "khodja",

"ishan", "amir", "tura", "khabib", "makhdum" (often "makhzum"), "mirza", "musa", "sho" or "shokh". Ordinary people were called as "koracha" (in word by word translation black people), "citizen" (in word by word translation ordinary people), "khalkiya" (in word by word translation people of the nation), "avom" and "raiya" (in word by word translation crowd, mass of people). Mainly in the region which was fit for the community life, groups originated in the result of stratification of people were addressed as "kavm", "toifa", "generation", "urug". People belonging to the higher social and religious classes consider themselves as descendents of the Prophet Mokhammed, or his 4 righteous caliphs, or fellows of the Prophet (askhob). As the researcher A. Muminov states "It is known that in the early years of Islam "accepting Islam" meant "becoming Arab", involvement of neophyte into tribal structure of Arabs. That's why the local inhabitants of the first regional group in Central Asia accepting Islam became the mavals (clients) of famous Arabs or Arabic tribes living in this territory. Islamisation of distant urban and mountainous regions of Mavarunnakhr took place in absolutely another way". (end of the citation). Other researcher E. Belyaev thinks that "... neomuslims who became famous by the name "maula", or "mavla" (in plural mavlas) were people from aboriginal population that accepted Islam. But acceptance of Islam, religion of conquerors, couldn't place them in the equal position with Arab-Muslims". (end of the citation). Thus, non-Arabic population from conquered regions after the Islamic campaign began to be called "mavalo". This population was formally under the protection of Arabs. Unlike the "ordinary" nomadic and settled population the process of stratification among the social-religious layers went on otherwise. For instance, to the question "Who are you?" ("Siz kimsiz?") representative of this stratification usually answer stating "We are from sayyids" ("Biz sayyidlardanmiz") or "We are descendants of khodjas" ("Biz khujalar avlodidanmiz"), etc. This question sounds otherwise in the nomadic population of Central Asia "What kin are you from?" ("Siz qaysi urugdansiz?"). Answer – "I am from the kin of naymans" or "I am from the kin of kangli" ("Men nayman urugidan bulaman"). This question sounds like this in settled population: "Where are you from?" or "What place are you from?" ("Siz asli qayerliksiz?"), and answer is "I am from Margelan" ("Asli Margilonlik bulamiz"), "I was born in Bukhara" ("Bukhoroda tavallud topganmiz"), or "he is considered to be pure by origin" ("nasl-nasabi toza kishilardan sanaladi"), "he is of humble origin" ("asl zoti past avlodan"), "people from his kin had a features of holiness" ("bu qavmdan utgan odamlar avliyo sifatlarga ega bulganlar"), "honorable and great people were in our kin" ("bizning ajdodlarimiz elug va buyuk kishilar utgan"),

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etc. Generally, adherence of the person to these elite strata except the feeling of pride from the early ages had the certain responsibilities as well, which was necessary to protect his status. This could be seen in choosing the name of the child, his friends, teaching the rules of behavior, in the realization of his place and status, receiving religious knowledge, learning canons of Islam, etc. The kin that could save the purity of traditions and values had a right to be proud of this status. That's why from the moment of perception by the child his "I" the kin instill such feelings as "recognizing the kin", "respecting the holy traditions of the kin", "faithfulness to his kin". The essence of all these ideas is in undertaking by the bearer the status of great spiritual and moral responsibility. Because every action and deed of the member of the kin is considered foreshortened in the honour and dignity of "holy" ancestors of this kin. How "good" or "bad" the person belonging to the kin depends on the level of perfection of obtained by him education. That's why from the moment of appearing of child into light members of the kin regularly discuss the wide spectrum of questions in their meetings connected with the noteworthy upbringing of the child, including even the following: peculiarities of breast-feed of the child, giving him worthy name and others. Later the child begins to receive a knowledge not only about the behavioral rules, ethics of wearing the clothes, but also learns how to connect dominating in the society national, common-to all values harmonically according to the norms and regulations determined by the state.

2 METHODOLOGY

We suppose that there can be objections from several representatives of today's auditorium on the last point but our opinion is based on the historical practice where the members of the higher religious strata were repressed by ruling systems as a result of change or replacement in the political powers or predominant ideology. The October overturn of 1917 and following it Bolshevistic repressions can serve as a striking example of it. Glancing over the tragic pages of the history one can find the proof of the social groups and social communities which got spiritual trauma not long ago. We can name the considered by this report classes as well. That's why the representatives of this class due to their high moral features, which was formed as a result of developed system of education, can adopt (socialize) to practically all ideology or political system. This feature was considered as mostly important for surviving and saving the kin. In the course of time this status received as a result of social-biological processes was passed on from generation to generation and achieved the level of set status in the evaluation of social status of family member. For instance, the child was born in the family of "khodja". If he is Uzbek according to ethnic origin, then he is considered as "Uzbek khodja" ("Uzbek khojalaridan"), if from the family of khodja belonging to "boy tupi", he is "boy tupi khodja" ("boy tupi khojalaridan"). If his ancestors are from the Prophet (if there is genealogical document and it is proved) then he is considered to be from the generation of the Prophet. If he is from some direction (e.g. yassaviy) or from some other place then he is considered as an appropriate khodja, e.g. Juybarski khodja, Salavot khodja, Khodjikent khodja, Turkestan khodja, Shakhimardan khodja, etc. It is worthwhile to state that the people belonging to the higher strata, including khodjas tried to prove their status in the Muslim world with the help of genealogical documents so

called "shajara", "nasabnoma" ("family tree" or "pedigree"). Such pedigree bound its owners with his ancestors up to seven knees and such tradition is in wide use up to day. One can consider it as one of the forms of person's self-knowledge. It is notable that the composition of such genealogical tables among the wide strata of population was conducted according to the principle "Yetti yot begona" (word by word translation is "After the seventh kin - next is a stranger"). Table of such principle looked like this way:

Table 1. Principles of forms persons

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Parents (ota-ona) | 5. Great-great-grandson (evara) |
| 2. Child (farzand) | 6. Greatest-grandson (dubora) |
| 3. Grandchild (nevara) | 7. Greatest-great-grandson (novora) |
| 4. Great-grandson (chevara) | 8. Stranger (begona) |

The importance of this principle, in the opinion of the number of respondents, lies on the fact that it played an important role in conjugal-congener relations because it prohibited all conjugal contacts of the people having common relatives, i.e. could regulate conjugal relations in the kin, social group, etc. However, we don't observe the strict adherence to this principle today, especially among the representatives of social-religious classes. However, not all the khodjas or ishans had the documents proving their pedigree. On the basis of collected data and information, received from the respondents, we created a table of stereotypes existing among the wide strata of population regarding the representatives of each social group belonging to social-religious class.

Table 2. Stereotypes formed in local population about the "sayyids", "ishans" and "khodjas"

| Sayyids | Ishans | Khodjas |
|---|--|--|
| Descendants of the Prophet Mokhammed | Descendants of "holy" people | Descendants of "holy" people |
| Descendants of Arabian conquistadors | Descendants of Arabian conquistadors | Descendants of Arabian conquistadors |
| ----- | Descendants of the Prophet Mokhammed | Descendants of the Prophet Mokhammed |
| ----- | Descendants of the most close fellows of the Prophet Mokhammed | Descendants of "holy" persons from the local population |
| ----- | Descendants of "holy" persons from Maveraunnakhr | Descendants of well-known and intelligent people from the local population |
| Ranked among the descendants of the Prophet Mokhammed and named in some regions as: "tura", "ishan", "kh'adja", "khabib", "sharif". | Title obtained in the result of improving religious point of views. In some regions they are also called as: "khodjas", "shaykh", "makhdum". | Title obtained in the result of working in the important administrative positions. In some regions they are also called as: "kh'adja", "ishan" |
| Notable for their highest religiousness | Notable for their highest religiousness | Highly intelligent and very bright people |
| Notable for their high level of education and culture | Notable for their high level of education and culture | Notable for their high level of education and culture |
| Improve their religious knowledge | Improve their religious knowledge | Improve their religious knowledge |
| Combine religious and modern knowledge | Combine religious and modern knowledge | Combine religious and modern knowledge |

| Faithful to the traditions and values of ancestors | Faithful to the traditions and values of ancestors | Faithful to the traditions and values of ancestors |
|--|--|---|
| ----- | ----- | Gradually deviate from some customs and values of ancestors |
| Highly evaluate their social origin | Highly evaluate their social origin | Highly evaluate their social origin |

The number of given in this table stereotypes can be increased. In our opinion the given facts reveal the main features of social groups belonging to social-religious class.

In general, khodja in Arabic, Turkish and Persian mean the variety of the class and community. This term was used even in the times of khuns regarding to the well-known and rich people. Khodja in Persian is written as "khodja" means "mister". Famous researcher Ya. Gulyamov gives the following determination to this term: "In the early years of Arabic conquer (VIII c.) this word was spread as "khuzayna" ("master" or "lord" – "khujayin"), in the literature of the late period – as "khodja (end of the citation). In the encyclopedic dictionary "Islam", 1991, we can find the following determination to this term: 1. In the States of Samanids (IX-X c.) and Gaznevids (X-XIII c.) great (buzurg) khodjas – is a title of the minister. In the Osman empire khodjas – "designation of ulama". Tutor of sultan, guardian of the library in the palace, and eunuch were also called this way. In the modern Turkey khodjas – addressed to the people professionally dealing with religion and form of addressing the teacher. In the number of modern Arabic countries khavadja (khuvadja) – means merchants, firstly non-Muslims, and also the polite form of addressing non-Muslims. 2. In Central Asia until the beginning of XX c. khodjas – honorable nickname of people claiming for the origin from four "righteous" caliphs – Abu Bakr, Umar (mainly), Usman and Ali (with an exception of the latter from the marriage with Fatima, the daughter of Mokhammed). 3. Determination for the member of Sufian brotherhood khodjagon (khvadjagon) established by Abd al-Khalik al-Ghyzduvani, later (until XIX c. inclusively) – several dynasties of emperors genetically connected with this brotherhood. (end of the citation). In Bukhara and Khiva khanates this title was used in relation to the representatives of higher religious class, imam khatibs, administrators of religious organizations, representatives of authoritative religious dynasties having different privileges from the state, including the privilege in tax immunity. As an example of providing by the state the tax immunity I want to introduce the Decree (label) of khan of Khiva Mukhammad Abulgozi V (end of the XVII c.) about granting to the family of khodja exemption from all types of taxes. This document is kept in the funds of Central State Archive of the Republic of Uzbekistan and it was kindly given to me and translated by our colleague-historian Abdurasulov Ulfatbek. In this document khan gives the order to exempt the whole number of khodjas (their names are listed) as well as their children b brothers from all types of taxes and obligations in their work (there are listed in the document). It was also mentioned in the document that all these khodjas have genealogical documents (nasabnoma) ascending to the Prophet. Besides, khan is only reaffirming the decree which was adopted by the previous emperors. Such system – providing the tax immunity to the families of the representatives of social-religious classes was widely spread in Central Asia in the period of development and late Middle Ages. Taking into account the abovementioned, it is worthwhile

to state that the title khodjas was also used regarding to the people related to well-known kin, holy people and descendants of holy people. As it was stated above, some researchers considered "khodjas" who lived on the territory of Central Asia as descendants chariyors (or four caliphs) and divide them into the following groups by origin: 1) Descendants of caliph Abu Bakr Siddik, called "Siddik khodjas" ("siddiqiy khujalr"). Ancestors of this kin came to Maveraunnakhr in XII c. under the leadership of Umar Kurayshin the personality of whom, in the opinion of respondents, was sacred by the name Arslanbab in future. Subsequently his descendants lived mainly in Ferghana Valley and on the territory of Tashkent.

2) The other kin of khodjas takes its pedigree to the Khazrat Umar bin al-Khattab, called as "farug khodjas" ("forug khujalar" or "miyon" *word by word translation "middle class"). Russian orientalist N. Likoshin used the term "miyon" in relation to ishans as well. At present descendants of "miyon khujalar" live on the territory of Chirakchi district of Kashkadarya region, and also in Samarkand and Navoi regions. Famous spiritual leader Imam Rabbaniy also claims to be from this kin.

3) Descendants of Khazrati Usman bin Affon are called "zunnur khodjas" ("zunnuriy khujalar"). In the source from the end of XIX c. "Manokib-I Dukchi Eshon" it was said that caliph Usman after the marriage to two daughters of the Minister get the nickname Zu-n-nurayn, i.e. "owner of two pharoses" (end of the citation).

4) Descendants of Ali Ibn Abu Talib (except the descendants from the wife Bibi Fotimai Zakhro). They are called "Shakhimardan khodjas" (Shokhimardon khujalari). Majority of them live in Tashkent, Margelan, Shakhimardan.

Besides such division of kins of khodjas respondents, questioned by us, from Tashkent and South Kazakhstan conducted the following division of khodjas by origin – lhodjas, descendants of Arslanbab, descendants of Lochinbobo, descendants of Kargabobo, descendants of Kiskichbobo. Thus, they connected the founders of their kins with the cult of animals which were popular among the nomadic population of deserts: Arslan – lion, Lochin – falcon, Karga – raven, Kiskich – lobster.

In the process of research, we paid attention to the titles by which khodjas and other strata of population called these or those kins of khodjas. For instance, our interlocutor from Balikchi district of Andijan region called his kin as "kora khodjas" (word by word translation "black khodjas"). Besides, he cited the fact of existing "oppoq khujalar" (word by word translation "white khodjas") and "malla khodjas" (word by word translation "yellow khodjas"). (end of the citation). Facts set forth by the respondents allowed us to make the following conclusions. Khodjas played an important role in propaganda of Islam among the nomadic tribes and ordinary population. That's why khodjas moving to the new place with missionary purpose became the founder of new generation or kin of khodjas. Some part of such khodjas had the copies from main pedigree where there was an information about who were they and where they were from.

However, in other parts of the region there were no such documents among the kins of khojas. In this case, main proof of this fact only their behaviour and letter of attorney issued by the local emperors. That's why local population often not knowing what kin the new arriving to them khodjas belong called them by nicknames according to their actions, behaviour and type of activity. For instance, "khurmacha khujalar" (word by word translation "khodjas making jars"),

“sariqustin khujalar” (word by word translation khodjas wearing yellow robes”), “qilich khujalar” (word by word translation “khodjas with swords”), “devona khujalar” (word by word translation strange khodjas”), etc. Families of sayyids usually lived in the places with the majority of settled population where kin of khodjas carried out energetic activities among the settled and nomadic population. That’s why representatives of the first we mostly meet among Uzbeks and Tajiks, as for the representatives of the second – equally among all Muslim countries of Central Asia. There is such an information that the representatives of the kin of khodjas belonging to the descendants of Akhmad Yassaviy live on the territory of modern Kazakhstan, in some regions of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. As the researcher from Kazakhstan Z. Jandarbek states they consider themselves from the origin of the son of the fourth righteous caliph Ali ibn Abu Talib Mokhammad ibn al-Khanafy. Khodjas from Akkurgan, Duvan, Kharasan and Karakhan belong to this kin. All the representatives of listed kin of khodjas were considered as hereditary spiritual mentors of kin-tribe unions. In every Kazakh village were several houses where khodjas lived and were engaged in enlightening and religious activities. Khodjas, as the researcher from Kazakhstan states, didn’t constitute (and will not constitute) separate ethnic group and didn’t put themselves against the people among which they lived in ethnic terms. That’s why there is a proverb among Kazakh people: Khodja jilip el bolmas (word by word translation “gathering together khodjas will not make up a nation”). At the same time, it is worthwhile to state that khodjas always were and will remain as a peculiar socio-cultural group among the nomadic population. (end of the citation). We think that it is necessary to explain in detail the meaning of the terms “khodjas” and “khvadja”. At present the number of specialists are studying the social-religious kin of Central Asia. There are different opinions as to the term khodjas among the specialists. The term khodjas is given in many scientific works (monographs, books, articles, etc.). As it was stated earlier the term “khvodja” (“khoja”) was used in regard to the descendant of the Prophet and his close fellows, as well as in regard to famous and highly educated people. In this case the question “Why the local population in regard to this social group uses the term “khodjas” (“khuja”)? arises here. Is it phonetic peculiarity of Uzbek language? I am not a philologist and that’s why I don’t dare to discuss this. However, I would like to express my opinion as to this phenomenon based on the data of sociological investigations. On the territory of Central Asia khodjas comprise the majority in number in comparison with the representatives of other social-religious layers. As it was mentioned above, they were awarded this title because they belonged to the respectable and famous kin, heritage of the estate, relations to some holy person. Respondent Turgunkhodja who worked for several years as imam khatib in the mosque “Ismoil ota” and originally being khodjas from the village Turbat of South Kazakhstan region gave the following information about the local khodjas: “Together with the famous holy person (avliyo) Ismoil-ota (descendant of Akhmad Yassavy) 40 families arrived to Turbat. They began to live here permanently and together with their teacher began “praying”. Later, population began to call the representatives of these 40 families khodjas though they had no documents proving their relation to this class. They were called this way because they were fellows of great holy person Ismoil-ota”. (end of the citation). It is interesting that our respondent Turgun-khodja

uses the term “khodjas” in relation to the descendants of Ismoil-ota and his fellows as well (e.g. Ergashkhodja, Azlarkhodja, etc.). Thus, this proves our opinion about the fact that not only descendants of the Prophet and his fellows, famous and educated people, but also ordinary people who was at that moment by the side of famous people or holy people or historical personalities dealing with the propaganda of Islam in certain periods had an honour to be called khodjas. To this end, soviet researcher Belyaev E.A. stated: “... mavali consisted of craftspeople of the most different specialties and people of “free” professions, including doctors, copyists-secretaries, astrologists and even poets”. (end of the citation). Academician Y. Gulyamov gives the following information from his work: In the feudal system khodjas considered themselves belonging to the higher Islam kin – Arab luminaries, and even recorded this fact in the document and certified it with the stamp of the state powers. The most part of khodjas were exempted from all taxes, according to the rules of Islam paid only part of taxes (one of ten)”. (end of the citation). The expression given in this article by the famous researcher deserves the respect “urib bolmas khujani, sukib bolmas khujani, khudo ursine khujani” (word by word translation is “don’t beat the khodjas, don’t swear at the khodjas, let the God punish him”), and is widespread among the people. (end of the citation). People belonging to the considered kin played an important role in social, economic, political, legal, spiritual, religious spheres of life, including the development of the system science and education on the territory of Central during all the period of history of their existence. One of our interlocutors considering himself as sayyid – Khamidulla from Andijan, stated the following: “in the families of khodjas, unlike in the families of sayyids, not only men but also women were attracted to the sphere of modern science and technique and administration. That’s why we can meet such last names as Khodjaeva, Faziikhodjaeva, Sharifkhodjaeva in all spheres. Among sayyids it is rare case” (end of the citation). We could watch the proof of it during all the period of investigation. Families of sayyids made efforts to save the centuries-old traditions and values and their transfer to the next generations. However, khodjas are not so conservative in this respect.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

In all documents, investigated by us, we meet the writing “khvodja”, which is read as “khodjas”. Hence, in the historical documents bearer of the title “khodja” meant the representatives of higher religious class. But, at the same time, our respondents in relation to the same people used in their conversation only the term “khodja”. The term “khodjas” was used in relation to the people accomplishing “khadj” (e.g. “khodja-aka”, “khodja-bobo”, “khodja-ona”, etc.). Famous researchers-orientalists – B. Babadjanov and A. Muminov recommend to use in relation to the representatives of this religious class the term “khodja” which is read as “khvodja”. I want to bring also several elements of national folklore which helps us in some extent to understand the etymology of the word “khodja”. Addressing the people with a title khuja, such sayings are spread among the people: “khujalar obeddan keyin ayniydi” (word by word translation is “khodjas lose their senses in the afternoon”), or “urib bolmas khujani, sukib bolmas khujani, khudo ursine khujani” (word by word translation is “don’t beat the khodjas, don’t swear at the khodjas, let the God punish him”). After the comparison of collected by us facts we came to the following conclusion. The

term “khodja” was used in relation to high standing, rich people and not all the people were satisfied by their widespread opportunities. Possibly, the reason for this is that the term “khodja” is associated among the local population with the term “khujayin”, i.e. master (owner). Further the term “khodja” was tightly consolidated by the representatives of this religious class. Perhaps, these expressions widely spread among the people soundly: mood of the master regarding the work and the people often changes, he can fail to keep his word because of some new circumstances or the change in his mood. There is also Kazakh expression “Khodja jillip el bolmas” (word by word translation “gathering together khodjas will not make up a nation”), which is interpreted among the people in the meaning of – “when the masters (owners) were the friends of people?” (“khujayinlar qachon odamg el bolgan?”), etc. In accept the terms “khodja” and “khuja” considerable role was played by the soviet tradition to write the names of people in the documents. And such last names asFazilkhodjaev, Fayzullakhodjaev, Khodjaev appeared at that time. Later this brought to the change of names Fayzullo Khodja and Fozil Khodja into Fayzullakhodja and Fozilkhodja. Or meanings of names changed, e.g. Solikh Khodja – Solikhujja, Azizlar Khodja – Azlarkhujja, Rizkli Khodja – Rikhsikhujja, etc. The words “khodja” and “khuja” merged and began to mean one and the same in essence. As a result of such merging the expressions “asil khujja” (“real khodja”), “chala khujja” (“dubious khoja”) and “aldmchi khujja” (“pretending khoja”) was developed. Let’s see other aspects. We can often hear such expressions from the local population in regard to khodjas as: “asl khujalar” (word by word translation is “real khodja”), “chala khujja” (word by word translation is “dubious khoja”) and “aldmchi khujja” (word by word translation is “pretending khoja”). On this subject the respondent Ziyovutdin brings an interesting information, which he heard from his father: “... some people became khodja cutting the ox, some - becoming khakim (mayor), and some performing “khadj” in Mecca (“khoji”). In fact, real khodjas had a sign (belgi). (end of the citation). Other respondent named Ergashkhodja has the same opinion. What do they mean by this sign? Maybe the pedigree or the adherence to some holy person or emperor, maybe – this is a craving of khodjas for the knowledge? We also give some information from Anvar Yusupov: Majority of khodjas living in Samarkand and Kashkadarya regions are considered to be the descendants of Daniyar-shaykh. Daniyar-shaykh lived in modern village Daniyar-shaykh in Kitab district of Kashkadarya region. Modern khodjas are originated from the ancestors of sons of Daniyar-shaykh – Iskhak, Yusuf and Madali. There was the fourth son also, the ancestors of whom had no more than one son. According to the old men once upon a time Daniyar ata asked his elder son to come and bring to him felled branches of young tree. But the elder son didn’t want to break the tree and reassigned to his younger brothers. At the beginning his brothers also refused to accomplish this task, however soon the youngest brother being a young cut the plant and thus couldn’t pass the exam of his father. Knowing about this his father being in anger cursed him with these words: “There will be no more than one son in your descendants” (word by word translation is “bitta novdang ikkita bolmasin”). He asked his elder sons to take care of the youngest brother and provide all necessary things for him. In future his sons fulfilled this will and provided their relative convicted to be the father of only one son. Serious contradictions took place in family relations

of khodjas. Aziza originally from Margelan, at present living in Tashkent, who introduced herself as a descendant of “real khodja” told us the following: “sayyids and khodjas never married their daughters to the people from “halkiya” (from the ordinary people) (in Ferghana Valley people of ordinary class are called “halkiya”), that’s why majority of their daughters remained unsettled. They could marry only educated fellows”. There are different interesting opinions among the people, for instance if the boy from the ordinary class marries the girl from khodjas or sayyids, then during the first marriage night the groom goes into bed after the bride, besides that he lies beginning from the bottom side of the bed accepting the superiority of wife’s social status. Part of the respondents stated that this ceremony was obligatory during all the period of their joint life. For instance, our interlocutor from khodjas named Nazira stated that her husband – originating from “ordinary people” (mening erim korachalardan) follows this tradition every day. But at the same time she said that in other family this tradition was accomplished formally only the first night.

4 CONCLUSION

Consequently, making conclusion to our today’s report we would like to state that khodjas as an individual social group traditionally played an important role in social-cultural life in Central Asia. In spite of efforts of isolating of representatives of this class from ordinary population, number of owners of this title increased as a result of different social processes in the society. Due to the increase of the quantity of representatives of this class the terms “khodja” expressing the descendants of the Prophet, his 4 caliphs and fellows was mixed with the term “khodja”, initially used in regard to famous and high rank people.

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