# SCIENCE, LITERATURE AND ARCHITECTURE IN THE KARAKHANID STATE

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the stages of development of science, literature, and architecture in the Karakhanid State, as well as their role in the development of society. It also highlights, on the basis of historical sources, the examples of Turkic written literature created during this period, the activities of scholars who contributed to the advancement of science and education, and the architectural monuments constructed at that time. The cultural heritage of the Karakhanid period and its influence on the scientific and spiritual development of later periods are also revealed.

**Keywords:** Karakhanid State, development of science, Turkic literature, Yusuf Khass Hajib, Mahmud Kashgari, Kutadgu Bilig, Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk, Burana Tower, Uzgen Architectural Complex, Islamic culture, architectural heritage.

During the reign of the Karakhanid dynasty, distinctive traditions emerged in the development of architecture. On the one hand, the number of cities in the country increased due to the emergence of new urban centers. On the other hand, large-scale construction projects enhanced the beauty of existing cities and expanded their boundaries. Thirdly, alongside the streets filled with magnificent buildings belonging to nobles, wealthy people, and merchants, narrow, treeless streets with densely built houses also appeared. Large cities were divided into such parts as the inner city (shahristan), the suburbs, and the outer areas. The settlement of the urban population was also connected with their economic status. The population of major cities, including Samarkand, reached 500,000. Necessary conditions were created in the cities for both domestic and international trade. In the first half of the 11th century, the social life of the Karakhanid Khanate began to deteriorate. This serious

situation was especially noticeable in the territory of Turkestan, where the system of elikhan and iqta had been introduced. Conditional iqta lands became private property, and the Karakhanid rulers lost their direct ownership rights over these lands. The negative factors characteristic of the medieval countries of Central Asia turned into a political force that led to the decline and collapse of the Karakhanid Khanate. Despite numerous wars at the end of the 10th century, the Karakhanid dynasty created conditions for raising the country's cultural development to a new stage. In economic relations, agriculture continued steadily during the Karakhanid period. This was achieved through the proper functioning of artificial irrigation systems, their repair whenever necessary, the construction of underground and surface pipelines, canals, reservoirs, and dams, as well as the preservation of the traditionally high level of agriculture, especially in the regions of Bukhara, Samarkand, Fergana, and Tashkent. It is also known that all the main types of agricultural crops continued to be cultivated. During the period under study, mining activities also remained active. For example, copper, silver, and lead mines operated around Ohangaron (Qoramozor); gold, mercury, silver, iron, copper, turquoise, ammonium chloride, oil, copper sulfate, and tar were extracted in Fergana; gold, copper, lead, mercury, and marble were mined in the Nurata Mountains; while gold, oil, turquoise, and iron mines functioned in Bukhara and Surkhandarya. It is natural that another important field closely connected with agriculture and mining—craftsmanship—also flourished. Therefore, more than thirty branches of handicrafts, including blacksmithing, pottery, glassmaking, jewelry making, weaving, and leatherworking, developed. For example, in glassmaking it became customary to produce household utensils, decorative ornaments, inkpots, flowerpots, and other items in various colors. This was undoubtedly a great achievement for its time. In addition, the possibilities of glassmaking were widely used in decorating and furnishing buildings. The windows installed in buildings could be both colored and decorated with patterns. It is also worth mentioning that colored glass was inserted

between window grilles to enhance the beauty of buildings.1

When speaking about the textile industry, first of all it should be particularly noted that Bukhara and Samarkand remained the leading regions in this field. Various types of cotton fabrics woven there were famous both within the region and in foreign countries. Among leather products, the sources mention fur coats (ichuk) made from the skins of squirrels, sables, and other animals, leather footwear (izlik), warm garments (kars) woven from camel and sheep wool, patterned felt carpets, and others. It can also be learned from Mahmud Kashgari's work that a mixture called arzuat was used in leatherworking for removing fur, which was considered one of the finest processes in this craft. As noted earlier, the steady development of agriculture and handicrafts played an important role in accelerating trade. During the Karakhanid period, the political unification of the vast territory stretching from Eastern Turkestan to Khorezm created favorable conditions for expanding the trade potential of the eastern regions of the area. The trade route that we know today as the Silk Road connected Eastern Turkestan with the Arab lands. At that time, one end of this route began in China, passed through Eastern Turkestan, Fergana, Tashkent, the Zarafshan Valley, and Bukhara, then extended northward along the Volga to Eastern Europe, and southward through the Middle East to the Mediterranean Sea. Great attention was paid to maintaining markets and caravanserais located along the route and to providing various services for merchants, thereby generating income. Trade fairs were regularly organized in different places. There is also information that such trade exhibitions were held regularly.2

1 Хўжаев А., Турдиева Д. Қорахонйлар хоқонлиги тарихи: Хитой Халқ Республикаси олимлари тадқиқотларида. – Т.: “Фан зиёси”, 2021. – Б.71.

2 Асқаров А., Мақсудов Ф.А., Пидаев Ш.Р. ва бошқ. Ўзбекистон тарихи. VIII-қисм. –Т.: “Маънавият”, 2023. –Б.161

Looking at the construction activities during the Karakhanid period, it becomes evident that the Kalyan Minaret, a number of mosques in Bukhara, minarets in Jarkurgan (Surkhandarya) and Vobkent, mausoleums, a minaret and mosques in Uzgen, and madrasas in Samarkand were built. There is also information that the Karakhanid rulers did not refrain from charitable deeds. For example, in 1066, the Karakhanid ruler Ibrahim ibn Nasr endowed two caravanserais in Samarkand, together with all their buildings and market stalls, to a hospital as a waqf. According to the document, the income generated from these two caravanserais was used to provide food and medicine for patients and to pay salaries to physicians and other service personnel. Another document testifies that Ibrahim ibn Nasr also endowed three guesthouses, one caravanserai, one public bath for men, a water distribution facility, a vineyard, several plots of cultivated land, and other sources of income for the maintenance of a madrasa established in Samarkand. During the Karakhanid period, many talented individuals also emerged. Among them were the above-mentioned Yusuf Khass Hajib and Mahmud Kashgari. Yusuf Khass Hajib, a man of profound knowledge and intellect, became famous for his work Kutadgu Bilig ("The Wisdom of Royal Glory"). Indeed, this work presents valuable and historically enduring ideas on state administration, laws, politics, ideology, relations among social groups, and issues of ethics and morality. In particular, he identified four pillars of society: justice, the state, wisdom, and contentment. It is noteworthy that among these four pillars ensuring the happiness and prosperity of society, he placed knowledge in the first position: "Where there is learning, there will be greatness; Where there is knowledge, there will be nobility." If we consider his views regarding state officials, ministers should be wise, courageous, faithful, and honorable. Governors (beks) should be knowledgeable, mature, and content in both heart and mind. If they possess corrupt morals, the order of the age will collapse, people will turn away from them, and they themselves will fall into misery.

Yusuf Khass Hajib says the following about military commanders: "Do not fear the anxiety within his household; rather, know it well, and then you will be aware of all his capabilities. If the enemy attacks in order to test you, remain steadfast and do not retreat (for by doing so he is only testing you)." Kutadgu Bilig also contains wise thoughts about scholars, poets, farmers, herdsmen, merchants, family life, and the upbringing of children. Mahmud Kashgari also left behind a magnificent and priceless legacy. This is his encyclopedic work on the Turkic languages and, in a broader sense, on the Turkic-speaking peoples, Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk. The work is an incomparable source for studying the history of the Turkic languages, particularly their morphology, phonetics, vocabulary, and etymology of that period. In addition, it contains extremely valuable information about the ethnic history of the peoples of the region. It is well known that the Turkic-speaking peoples were both numerous and diverse. Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk is of great importance for illuminating the history of relations among them. Furthermore, the work contains abundant information on statehood, socio-economic relations, handicrafts, customs and traditions, and cultural life. Another valuable feature of Mahmud Kashgari's work is the world map drawn by the author. The map is circular in shape and contains symbols indicating that it is surrounded by water on all sides. At its center are the regions of Semirechye and Eastern Turkestan, while in the four directions various cities, countries, seas, lakes, rivers, and mountains are depicted. In general, this work is considered a unique source for studying the development of human civilization.[3]

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the Karakhanid State occupied an important place in the rise of science, literature, and architecture in the history of Central Asia. During this period, Islamic culture and Turkic traditions were harmoniously combined, creating a favorable environment for scientific and cultural development. As a result, various branches of knowledge flourished, the activities of madrasas

3 Азамат Зиё. Ўзбек давлатчилги тарихи. –Т.: “Шарқ нашриёти”, 2001. –Б.108-109.

expanded, and many scholars and writers emerged. The works created in the Turkic language during the Karakhanid rule played a significant role in the formation of national literature. In particular, the development of the state language and literature had a profound influence on the culture of the Turkic peoples in later periods. At the same time, the mosques, mausoleums, minarets, and other architectural monuments constructed during this period became outstanding examples of the architectural art of the age. The Karakhanid State occupies a special place in the history of Uzbekistan and Central Asia not only because of its political and economic achievements but also because of its scientific, literary, and architectural heritage. This rich cultural legacy continues to serve as one of the important sources of our nation's national values and spiritual development today.

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