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TRADITIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF AFGHAN SOCIETY IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The experience of building a democratic regime in Afghanistan in the period from 2001 to the conquest of power by the Taliban in August 2021 has been considered. It has been emphasized and highlighted how the traditional foundations of governance of the Afghan society were embodied in the political system, which had a democratic structure established by the Constitution of 2004.

The main traditional power centers in the Afghan territorial communities have been identified, existing independently of state institutions and in parallel with them. The essence and mechanism of action of each of them have been revealed. The importance of informal relations and connections, which form the basis of Afghan society and determine the status of a person in it, has been emphasized. As a result, the population strive not to the ideas, but to strong leaders, which allows them to determine the political and social climate in the country. The logic of the emergence and wide existence of traditional power centers, such as jirgas, khans, maliks, battlefield commanders, based on the perception of them by the population as sources of stability and strength, has been determined.

The impact of traditional institutions and relations on the functioning of the central and local political authorities, their influence on the relationship between the population and state bodies has been shown. The process of development by traditional leaders, as the centers of power, of modern democratic mechanisms and means of control and their use in personal interests has been considered. The combination of traditional management institutions with classical democratic institutions has been noted, which manifests itself both in the use of traditional management forms without changes, and in the transfer of traditional forms of leadership and social relationships to modern political structures, which modifies the essence of democratic institutions. In addition, the existence of informal traditional structures that duplicate the functions of official ones has been noted, indicating the weakness of state institutions.

Keywords: *Afghan society, Afghan political system, traditional foundations of governance, traditional power structures.*

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Today, there are many young democratic regimes that are being created and developed in the conditions of the societies being insufficiently ready for them and the discrepancy between existing social

traditions. Our state is one of those. The process of building democracy in such states proceeds in an evolutionary way, gradually changing the existing norms of behavior and thinking. However, when carrying out any political reform, introducing new forms of political activity, and especially building a new political regime, it is important to study and take into account all social characteristics,

political culture and traditions of a certain society. This is necessary so that in the event of a discrepancy between the socio-political traditions of society, the young regime does not encounter misunderstanding or resistance from citizens.

N. Van de Walle studied the problem of building a democratic state in societies that have a high degree of autonomy due to local traditions, whose citizens identify themselves with small communities, which forms the parish political culture. One of the most traditional societies is the Afghan society. Building a democratic regime here is a very difficult task and impossible without the inclusion of traditional elements in the political system. The role of ideology and belief systems such as nationalism, Islamism, ethnocentrism in the state building of Afghanistan was studied by C. Noelle-Karimi and S. Schetter. Alternative governance strategies in Afghanistan, such as patronage and clientelism, have been the subject of the work of T. Barfield and A. Wilde. Also T. Barfield and A. Giustozzi considered the role of traditional leaders in local government and emphasized their traditional importance. In turn, in our work, we will consider the traditional foundations of governance in Afghan society and how they were embodied in the modern political system, which has a democratic structure established by the 2004 Constitution.

Power centers in the tribes existing independently of the state institutions and in parallel with them, are family communities, which the French researcher O. Roy proposed to call «kaum» - «tribe», «people» (Roy 1990). Kaum is a specific Afghan community that combines clan and clientelistic features. First of all, the Afghan identifies with this group. M. Elphinstone also noted that Afghans were more loyal to the community than its leader. «Kaum turned out to be embedded in state institutions, which provided not only material benefits (money, but unencumbered positions, exemption from taxes and military service), but mainly a guarantee of invariability of the rules of local community management» (Roy 1990).

One of the traditional elements of Afghan society is the Khan's institution. It is based on genealogy and patronage.

The importance of blood relations is evidenced by the fact that inheritance and

paternal kinship affect many areas of the tribe. Here are just a few rules and regulations. First, a person's status depends on the position of the ancestor, not on economic positions. Any candidate for high social status and power must have an ancestor of appropriate status. Second, the eldest son inherits more than the other sons. He is recognized as a leader. Third, paternal inheritance means that women rarely marry anyone of a simple origin. Most marry within the clan, and almost all within the tribe. Thus, the settlements of nomadic tribes are based on hierarchy and tied to the dominant line of inheritance, so as a khan kaum will only accept those whose ancestors were khans (Shahrani 2009).

In addition to genealogy, power relations are also based on patronage, when prestige and power are proportional to the personal wealth distributed. From long ago in the Afghan tribes, he has gained more influence and power, who distributes more, distributes, or at least gives away part of what he has received, and thus gains more supporters – customers. Therefore, power is given to a person not necessarily for all life long. This is the essence of the most important rule of the «social code of Pashtun» (Pashtunwali) hospitality, which is the principle of organization of power. Each head of the family has a khujra – a guest house, a means by which the owner in competition with other owners seeks power and influence. If his khujra is recognized, he can become a khan. The latter must provide food for others, mediate in their disputes and defend the interests of the community before the state. Therefore, the leaders of the clan, tribe in the eyes of dependent peasants were not so much exploiters as natural patrons, defenders against all sorts of «foreigners» (other tribes, nationalities, states, etc.). In general, he acts as a ruler and mediator. Thus, the process of gaining power can be divided into four stages: 1) the accumulation of wealth; 2) accumulation of the number of addicts; 3) accumulation of prestige and influence; 4) genealogical identification.

However, in the 19 century the word «khan» acquired another meaning. In addition to the head of the tribe (in this sense it is used by the Tajiks), the khan began to be called an influential person in the tribe. In early 20 century, a new institution appears – malik or

«lord», which is a khan, recognized by the state as the leader of the tribe in the countryside and which is included in the state administration. Malik acts as a mediator between the state and the village, his task is to represent the community in the external environment, mainly in relations with other communities and the state (Murtazashvili 2021).

Such a khan or malik is a bearer of public power, rooted in the community itself, other than the state. The combination of the tribe around such a center ensures its stability. Patronage relations of some strong personalities capable of effectively protecting corporate interests are developing. This network of relationships creates a support group around the leader that operates independently of any political program.

It is these relations of clan loyalty and clientelism that form the basis of society: more than two-thirds of the population have some kind of tribal ties, and the rest of the population is united by family ties and family mutual obligations. Strong feelings bind Afghans to a kind or clan (Ibrahimi 2019). These circumstances largely determine the political and social climate in the country: the masses do not gravitate to ideas, but to leaders. According to their prestige, strong personalities must be surrounded by a certain field of attraction and a relationship of dependence and devotion, which leads to political rivalry. The group around the leader is characterized by unconditional submission to him and even worship of him. Changing his views means at the same time moving to one side or the other of all supporters. Therefore, the position of local authorities greatly affects the situation in the country. They determine the attitude of the population of a particular area to any decisions and actions of the central government or other forces on a national scale. It is clear that the implementation of any political, economic or social initiatives of the central government requires first of all the support of local traditional leaders.

Closed communities and clans, with their independent and specific principles of daily life, have traditionally been the most serious obstacles to effective state-building in Afghanistan, as they are not political factors but relations of kinship and patronage that destroy the state (Afghans Question 2015).

Kaums permeate the political system and society as a whole, pass through political parties and associations, turning them into a means to achieve their goals. Thus, after the adoption of the Constitution of 1964, the leaders of the Kaums (khans) began to use new forms of activity that had just emerged – became members of parliament and resorted to political parties, which opened up new sources of resources and new opportunities. Under such conditions, the Afghan parliament was and still is very fragmented.

Another relatively new element of Afghan society, but one that has gained a strong foothold in it, is the institution of battlefield commanders. It arose in almost all ethnic groups in the late 70's of the twentieth century. At that time, in the conditions of weakening the state, the leaders of the Kaum resorted to the creation of armed detachments, which were built on the principle of clan and on the basis of «patron-client» relations. The field commanders were either the traditional leaders of the Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Hazaras and other ethnic groups, or commanders who acted under their leadership. Even if the armed detachment was created by a person who belonged to a not very high level of hierarchy, but was successful, a support group of relatives and dependent people was formed around it (Schetter 2012). Thus, the institute of field commanders fit perfectly into the traditional structure of Afghan society. In addition, the survivability and popularity of battlefield commanders is due to the fact that they performed an important function of community self-defense in the weakness of the state, which was unable to ensure security in the country. Battlefield commanders received resources from outside by providing paramilitary services in exchange for financial, material, and informational support. Revenues from drug trafficking were also sources of income for battlefield commanders. In the first half of the 1990s, with the fragmentation of Afghanistan and the disintegration of the state as a political institution, battlefield commanders gained full power over the territories they controlled.

The involvement of traditional forms of leadership in modern socio-political activities and their mastery of the means of socio-political influence began in the 1960s, when the most influential traditional leaders created political parties. But these activities

flourished in the run-up to the 2005 parliamentary elections. Thus, at the end of 2006, the number of officially registered political parties reached eighty-five. The connection of parties with traditional leaders determines their personification and thus factionalism. The parties are dominated by individual figures, not ideologies or political programs. The presence of several influential figures in the party leads to factionalism and divisions. Thus, the country's largest party, the Islamic Society of Afghanistan, split into about ten factions and new parties that seceded from it. After 2001, field commanders began to open their own television channels and radio stations. Only in 2006 did several new television channels and radio stations open.

Thus, over the past 50 years, the institution of traditional leaders has acquired four new forms: the leaders of the Kaum began to act as deputies, battlefield commanders, leaders of political parties and media owners.

Borrowing traditional tribal institutions takes place in political authorities. In Afghanistan, such a traditional tribal institution as Jirga (meeting of leaders) is widely used. In the tribe itself, all important issues of its life, disputes, claims, misunderstandings (personal, tribal), war and peace are resolved by convening a Jirga. The decision of the Jirga is binding on all members of the tribe, and those who did not obey it were punished or expelled (Shahrani 2009).

Currently, the Jirga Institute operates at three levels: local, tribal and national. Local Jirgas are the most common governing body in the village and urban district. Such Jirgas are usually convened to address drought and local conflict issues. In some cases, they function as a meeting of the mayor's office. Tribal Jirgas operate at the level of one or more tribes. They are convened in case of tribal clashes or conflicts on the initiative of both tribal leaders and the state (Goodson 2003: 93-94). In 1980, the Jirga of 961 tribal leaders rejected the fundamentalist trend of Islam. In Kabul in 1992, a Jirga of Pashtun tribal elders expressed concern about the growing role of northern ethnic minorities in the country's leadership.

The National Jirga, or Loya Jirga, is made up of representatives of Afghan society's elite, tribal leaders and public

figures. Convened in case of difficult circumstances in the country, it is to elect a new head of state or approve a new constitution. According to Article 111 of the 2004 Constitution, the Loya Jirga is convened to address the following issues:

- 1) decision-making on the issues of independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the highest interests of the country;
- 2) amendments to the Constitution;
- 3) if the parliament has brought charges against the president (The Constitution 2021).

It is the highest supra-parliamentary authority in Afghanistan. The Loya Jirga has been an important part of Afghanistan since the founding of the Durrani State (1747) to the present day. However, the Loya Jirga Institute gradually changed. In particular, in the twentieth century, it included an educated stratum of Afghan society. It began to include deputies from both houses of parliament, members of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Supreme Court. The current meeting of the Loya Jirga was held, for example, from December 14, 2003 to January 4, 2004, at which the Constitution of Afghanistan was adopted. In 2013, about 2,500 Afghan elders approved the presence of a limited number of U.S. troops after 2014. In 2019, 3,200 delegates gathered to agree on a common approach to peace talks with the Taliban.

Afghanistan recognizes the existence of traditional informal jurisprudence, which plays a very important role in the country. Afghans still prefer to use the informal justice system, as the formal state system is considered highly corrupt. People see more stability, predictability and consensus in the jirga institution than in democratic structures based on competitive individualism. Some communities, which usually consist of local elders, landowners, and religious leaders, have their own traditions of conflict resolution and their own "legal codes," which include, for example, Pashtuns.

According to the 2004 Constitution, the convocation of the Loya Jirga is the responsibility of the President. However, Afghanistan's presidency itself is also influenced by tribal traditions. It is arranged in such a way that the head of state and each of the vice presidents represent one or another large tribe or ethnic group. Such electoral procedures do not allow persons belonging to

national minorities to occupy other tribes as president and vice president.

Such features of the socio-political life of Afghanistan allow us to conclude that traditional tribal institutions permeate the entire political system of Afghanistan. The local community, built on clan, clientelistic relations (kaum), was built into the political system. In particular, leaders of local communities began to master new forms of activity – to become members of parliament, resorted to the creation of political parties. In the 1980s, they became battlefield commanders. After 2001, they began to open their own television channels and radio stations. The Khan's institution has largely determined the status of the country's leader, whose position resembles that of a khan who redistributes resources. In addition, the state directly borrowed tribal institutions, including jirga. Tribes throughout the history of the country had tax benefits, and by the middle of the twentieth century, the armed militias of the tribes outnumbered the government troops. At present, field commanders often collect taxes themselves and have their own armed groups. All this indicates the weakness of state institutions, which, in their turn, is manifested in corruption and other negative phenomena.

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ТРАДИЦІЙНІ ОСНОВИ АФГАНСЬКОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА У ПОЛІТИЧНІЙ СИСТЕМІ

Розглянуто досвід побудови демократичного режиму в Афганістані у період з 2001 р. до завоювання влади Талібаном у серпні 2021 р. Акцент зроблено на висвітленні традиційних основ управління афганського суспільства, а також на тому, як вони втілювалися в політичній системі, що мала демократичну структуру, встановлену Конституцією 2004.

Виділено основні традиційні владні центри в афганських територіальних спільнотах, які існують незалежно від державних інституцій та паралельно з ними. Розкрито сутність та механізм дії кожного з них. Підкреслено значення неформальних відносин та зв'язків, що становлять основу афганського суспільства та визначають статус людини у ньому. Як наслідок населення тяжіє не до ідей, а до сильних лідерів, що дозволяє останнім визначати політичний та соціальний клімат у країні. Визначено логіку виникнення та широкого існування традиційних владних центрів, таких як джирги, хани, маліки, польові командири, засновану на сприйнятті їх населенням як джерел стабільності та сили.

Показано вплив традиційних інститутів і відносин на функціонування центральної та місцевої політичної влади, їхній вплив на взаємовідносини між населенням та державними органами. Розглянуто процес засвоєння традиційними лідерами, як центрами влади, сучасних демократичних механізмів і засобів управління та використання їх в особистих інтересах. Відзначено поєднання традиційних інститутів управління з класичними демократичними інститутами, яке проявляється як у використанні традиційних управлінських форм без змін, так і в перенесенні традиційних форм лідерства та соціальних взаємин на сучасні політичні структури, що змінює суть демократичних інститутів. Крім цього відзначено існування неформальних традиційних структур, які дублюють офіційні функції, що говорить про слабкість державних інститутів.

Ключові слова: афганське суспільство, афганська політична система, традиційні основи управління, традиційні владні структури.

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ТРАДИЦИОННЫЕ ОСНОВЫ АФГАНСКОГО ОБЩЕСТВА В ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ СИСТЕМЕ

Рассмотрен опыт построения демократического режима в Афганистане в период с 2001 г. до завоевания власти Талибаном в августе 2021 г. Акцент сделан на освещении традиционных основ управления афганского общества и на том, как они воплотились в политической системе, имевшей демократическую структуру, установленную Конституцией 2004 г.

Выделены основные традиционные властные центры в афганских территориальных сообществах, которые существуют независимо от государственных институтов и параллельно с ними. Раскрыты сущность и механизм действия каждого из них. Подчеркнуто значение неформальных отношений и связей, которые составляют основу афганского общества и определяют статус человека в нем. Как следствие население тяготеет не к идеям, а к сильным лидерам, что позволяет им определять политический и социальный климат в стране. Определена логика возникновения и повсеместного существования традиционных властных центров, основанная на восприятии их населением как источников стабильности и силы.

Показано воздействие традиционных институтов и отношений на функционирование центральной и местной политической власти, их влияние на взаимоотношения между населением и государственными органами. Рассмотрен процесс освоения традиционными лидерами, как центрами власти, современных демократических механизмов и средств управления и использования их в личных интересах. Отмечено совмещение традиционных

институтов управления с классическими демократическими институтами, которое проявляется как в использовании традиционных управленческих форм без изменений, так и в перенесении традиционных форм лидерства и социальных взаимоотношений на современные политические структуры, что видоизменяет суть демократических институтов. Кроме этого отмечено существование неформальных традиционных структур, которые дублируют функции официальных, что говорит о слабости государственных институтов.

Ключевые слова: *афганское общество, афганская политическая система, традиционные основы управления, традиционные властные структуры.*