

CATTLE- HORSE BREEDING OF TAJIKS LIVING IN THE REGION OF SURKHANDARYA

Akhmedov Sardor Sayridin o'g'li
Termiz State University Phd Doctoral

ABSTRACT

A comparative study of the national Horse-breeding of the Tajik ethnic communities of the Surkhandarya oasis shows that the traditional ethnic aspects. The inhabitants of the oasis go in for horse breeding since the ancient times. Before the beginning of kupkari (goat breaking competition) the stable man who tests are called testing stable-men.

KEYWORDS: *Kupkari, Ulak, Siyobayir, Arabi, Horse, Draught horses, Saman, Jiyron, Chakir.*

INTRODUCTION

The inhabitants of the oasis go in for horse breeding since the ancient times. The horses were fed to use them a transport means and participating in to horse competitions called “kupkari”. The tribes and ethnic Tajik groups liked paid a special attention to horsebreeding. Even among Tajiks tribes the name of maydatoy (short stallion) is connected with totemism. The name maydatoy meant a small figured, short-necked horse. The following types of horses as: “jiyron”, “grey”, “chakir”, “kavut”(blue), “safedra”(white fur), “marqa”, “siyobayir”, “arabi”, “safedtaka” were fed. With the native horses were crossed the horses, the names of which mentioned above and created new stocks as “saman”, “to'riq” and others. Among the horses jiyran and turik were considered the most coloured ones. The horses were named according to their ages, jender, to the order of their use.

A new born horse - stallion, one year old – a young stallion, from one to two years – foal (yearling), two- three aged – “gunan”, three-four aged – “dunan”, after four years old, female is called mare, male – a stallion. Blue coloured horse – grey, brown coloured – chil. Draught horses were called “chubir”. A newly bore horse is mare. The herds of horses are called skeleton. The people who feed the horses in special stables are stablemen. Before the beginning of kupkari (goat – breaking competition) the stable man who tests them are called testing stable-men. Well to do families fed about ten horses in oasis. The horses which became weak and can not participate in the goat-tearing competition were used for riding after the flock to watch them. But the horses specially were kept for goat-tearing competitions (kupkari). Therefore a lot of famous riders could be found in this country. According to Tajiks people epos and miphological traditions the horses were considered a close friend and assistant

of a hero. "Horse – a fellow's wing" says a saying and it is not said in differently Old Tajiks burned the horse and its harness of a died man and took them to his grave. The people of the oasis made a sacrifice to a horse elder and sponsor bibiKambar. The inhabitants of this oasis respected the horse as a divine animal. If the horses head tied directed to dwelling house the horse with its breath brings abundance to that house. Where the horse there is no demon, say the people. The horse has its demon and demons don't enter the house, where is is a horse. The horseshoe is hung on the door as a sign of income benefit. A new born child's dress before being put on a child, it is put on a horse's stake first. The women's paranji (a kind of curtain to hide their faces) is also weaved from horse's mane. To beat the horse on the head by aknot is considered a sin. There were composed musics and verses devoted to Hazrat Ali's horse – Dul-dul, Gurigli's horse – Girot, Alpomish's horse – Baychibar among the people.

The existence of places named "Alpomish's horse's feeding through", "traces of Baychibar tells that people treated horses with kindness and respect.

Cattle breeding is considered as a well developed type of economy in Surkhan oasis from ancient times. In the meadows of arid steppes and on foots of mountations of the region, there were cultivated flocks of sheep and goats, herds of horses and camels. Cattle-breeding farming supplied the population not only with cattle-breeding products, but they provided with pack animal (beast of burden) as well.

Horses, donkeys, camels and oxen are used for carting, ploughing lands, churn oil-milling. Besides, cattle-breeding played an important role in supplying the army with pack-animals as well. The formation of cattle-breeding in the oasis dates back to the mmesolith period. Because, cattle breeding is a type of economy formed from hunting. It is not in vain the description of wild oxen huntinghunting process in the Zarautsoy pictures. The holy book of zaroostrians "Avesto" also pays great attention to cattle-breeding. There were expressed in "Avesto", the beliefs of people to horses, cattles and small hoofed domestic animals. For example, God fixed with the name Frodat-Fshova patronized small animals. Besides, Ancient Baktria was known with its camels. Ahamanids have described Baktrians leading camels on the wall pictures of Persopol city of Iran. Baktrian camels were one humped, and popular in all eastern world. Peoples of Surkhan oasis paid great attention to horse-breeding from ancient times. Particularly, there were depicted the pictures of Tohariston aristocrats riding on horses and hunting wild animals, found in Tovka castle, which was considered as a residence and customs post of Kuftan rulers of V-VI centuries. The hills on the foot of Bobotog, Kuhitang, Boysuntog and Hissar mountains, Istara and Tevat deserts of the region were used for meadowing. Cattle-beerders of the region had regular trade relations with settled. Cattle-breeders sold their sheep and goats in the markets of Denov, Sherobodbekids. At the end of the XX century Mirshodi animal market was rather populous. Cattle-breeders regularly

supplied settled people with the products : meat, milk, sour-milk, wool, leather and others. Cattle-breeders particularly dealt with crafting, made coats, chakmons, sheep-skin coat, kebanak, wine-skin, saddle and horse harness and sold to the settled people.

The biggest ethnic tribes of the region, such as Tajiks, were considered as cattle-breeders. They mainly dealt with sheep-breeding. Horses were close friends of herdsmen, who took their sheep to the meadows in mountainous and hills, after they gave births in spring. That's why, in all epic poems horses were described as close fellow-traveller and assistant of herdsmen. The population of the region has been developing the traditions of cultivating sheep-breeding, cattle-breeding, horse-breeding, and camel-breeding from generation to generation.

The people of the valley specially used cattle-breeding in agriculture. The cattle mostly were fed by settled inhabitants. Cattle meat was scarcely used. Because the cattle meat considered of low colorific value, only the calf and bull meat was used in wedding parties and gatherings. Long horned animals according to their ages were called (named) differently. Namely, a new born cow is called a calf, a calf of over one year – turpi, two years old – heifer, a muscular cattle of four years old – a bull, a two years old female cattle – heifer. Long horned cattle were close helpers of farmers in agriculture. Specially in ploughing, harrowing, separating the harvest wheat and barley from their stems, in pulling carts too were used the cattle. In many villages the settlers fatten the cattle to sell. This tradition in the valley was called “dangana”, (distributing the meat among themselves). This tradition was held on every Thursday. The settlers used the cattle skin to make handicraft shoe wares, fur-coats, bags from skin for water and so on. On some territories the cattle were fed in herds on pastures. The feeders of herds were called herdsmen. The herdsmen were paid for their feeding the cattle in the form of day food or in the form of kind, as flour, sometimes money as “oshihalol” (permitted meal). The cattle breeding had its own secrets and herdsmen know them well and obeyed to them. As the elder (old man) of cattle breeding was Zangiota (Oykhujia Ibn Toshkhujia). Before bringing the bullock to the field or making small corn they gave ceremonial rites devoted to Bobozangia. The origin, stock and health of the cattle played an important role in developing the cattle-breeding. Therefore the inhabitants of the oasis paid a great attention from the old times till the present time.

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