

## HISTORY OF MAHALLAS OF UZBEKISTAN AND THEIR EVOLUTION DURING THE HISTORICAL PERIOD

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### Abstract

The territory of Uzbekistan is a center of ancient civilizations in cultural, economic, and social terms. The main organizing link of society here is the mahalla institution, which is closely connected with the lifestyle, customs, and social relations of the people. The mahalla institute has been formed and developed in Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, for many centuries. This article highlights the history of the emergence and development of the mahalla institute, its socio-historical significance from a long historical perspective.

### Introduction

The mahalla is a historically formed socio-territorial structure in Uzbekistan, occupying an important place in the lifestyle, customs, traditions, and spiritual life of the population. In ancient times, the mahalla functioned not only as a social, but also as an administrative structure. In the mahallas, the population was located according to their profession, for example, there were mahallas of potters, blacksmiths, and weavers.

The word "mahalla" comes from Arabic and means "city within a city." This term first appears in ancient sources. For example, in the work of the historian Narshakhi "History of Bukhara," the mahalla is mentioned as a way of governing the people. It is noted that in the Middle Ages, the city of Herat consisted of small "towns" like a hundred mahallas.

The mahalla was formed as a self-governing body. Article 105 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan recognizes the mahalla as a body of citizen self-government and strengthens its legal status. In 1993, the Law "On Citizens' Self-Government Bodies" was adopted, further strengthening the legal basis of the mahalla.

Today, the mahalla is an important institution that acts as a bridge between the state and society. The mahalla actively participates in the social, economic, and cultural life of citizens, in protecting the rights and interests of the population, in the upbringing of youth, and in spiritual and educational work.

In such cities as Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, there were many ancient mahallas. For example, the Beshofayni, Yalangkar, and Kashgar mahallas of Tashkent were famous for their historical significance, population, occupations, and cultural life.

The formation of the mahalla institution in the territory of Uzbekistan has a long historical process. In the lands of ancient Turan, people united and lived in small groups from the time of the first communal system. These groups, starting from the primitive communal system and with the development of agriculture and crafts, laid the foundation for the emergence of such structures as mahallas in cities and villages.

In the Middle Ages, mahallas were formed as a kind of social institution and constituted the main unit of cities and villages. During this period, mahalla leaders (usually called "aksakal" or



"mirzaboshi") played an important role in resolving social conflicts and regulating religious and spiritual issues.

In the life of people in the Middle Ages, mahallas were formed as a very important social institution and played a key role in their social, economic, and cultural development. Mahalla, as a rule, is understood as a community living in a certain geographical area, having close relations with each other, having common customs and traditions. In the Middle Ages, mahallas were not only a location point, but also a center of social management and self-government.

Social relations in the mahalla were more important than the law, because a system of living in mahallas based on mutual trust and responsibility was developed. During this period, mahallas had their own internal regulations, customs, and forms of self-government.

In the Middle Ages, the main task of the mahalla was to strengthen mutual solidarity among the population, resolve conflicts, and provide mutual assistance. Each mahalla was governed by its own chief or manager (often a puppet or elder), who played an important role in resolving problems among community members. Observance of religious and social traditions was guaranteed in mahallas, and various social events were held, such as wedding ceremonies, funerals, and holidays.

In the Iron Age and later periods, the population was divided into mahallas according to occupation, ethnic or religious affiliation. In the early Middle Ages, the population of cities and villages was called "naf," which is also one of the primitive forms of mahalla. Mahalla communities performed the functions of mutual assistance, protection, and social control.

With the spread of Islamic civilization, the mahalla institution was further strengthened. Mosques, madrasas, teahouses, and other social facilities were built in the mahallas. The mahalla was formed as the main link of citizen self-government and occupied an important place in the life of society.

Mahallas were also centers of economic activity. In the Middle Ages, the local population often jointly engaged in agriculture, trade, and crafts. Cooperation and solidarity between mahallas contributed to ensuring economic stability.

During the Soviet period, the mahalla institute was entrusted with certain administrative functions. Although the mahalla was preserved as a traditional social structure, some of its functions were controlled by state bodies. At the same time, the mahalla continued to preserve the traditions, spiritual life, and harmony of the people.

The Soviet government viewed mahallas as the main link in the management of society and the implementation of party decisions. Through local committees and councils, state policy was communicated to the population, and social order and control were ensured. The mahalla actively participated in the management of public life through its own organizational structures of local significance (for example, mahalla councils, Komsomol and party groups).

During the Soviet period, the mahalla was also active in providing social assistance and organizing cultural and educational work among the population. Mahalla committees, in cooperation with governing bodies, organize various cultural events, sports competitions, and educational work to assist those in need of pensions or social assistance.

During the Soviet era, the mahalla institution played an important role, especially in the organization of communal and domestic services. Work on housing and communal services,



cleaning, and landscaping were supervised and organized by mahalla councils. This made the mahalla the main link of state and public administration.

After Uzbekistan gained independence, the mahalla institution became even more important as a bridge between the state and society. The legal status of the mahalla was strengthened, and it developed as a body of citizen self-government. This process was formed on the basis of the historical roots of the mahalla, national values, and modern requirements.

After Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991, large-scale changes began in the country's social and political system. In this process, the mahalla institute acquired even greater significance as one of the main social institutions of Uzbek society. The mahalla has become an important institution that ensures a unique social connection not only as a community in a specific territory, but also as a territory of national customs, traditions, and people.

After independence, the state paid great attention to the mahalla institute. The legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan clearly defines the role of the mahalla institution in the social, cultural, and economic spheres. Tasks for solving the problems of the population, providing social assistance, spiritual and educational work, and maintaining public order have begun to be implemented in mahallas.

In Uzbekistan, the mahalla institution has become an important element of social management on the ground. The citizens' assembly of the mahalla is the most important organizational structure of the mahalla and acts as a bridge between the public and the state. Through mahalla citizens' assemblies, local residents raise their problems and discuss measures to solve them.

During the period of independence, the mahalla institution has become the main source of social assistance. Providing material assistance to low-income and needy families, supporting young people and the elderly, and stimulating the activities of women are the main areas of activity of the mahalla.

Another important function of the mahalla institution is the preservation and promotion of national culture, customs, and traditions. In the mahallas of Uzbekistan, national holidays and traditional ceremonies are widely celebrated, and national values are taught to the younger generation.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the mahalla is a key factor in the lifestyle, traditional values, and solidarity of the people of Uzbekistan. For centuries, it has played an important role in the issues of citizen self-government, the organization of social life, and spiritual and moral education in Uzbek society.

Historically, mahallas of Uzbekistan, starting from the primitive communal system, have performed various social and administrative functions at the stages of Islamic civilization, traditional society, and modern statehood. The institution of mahalla encompasses a historical period when it was formed as the main pillar of the spiritual life of the people, self-government, and collective solidarity.

During the Soviet period, the mahalla institution served as an important institution in many spheres of public life - political, social, cultural, and everyday life. It was an effective tool for implementing state policy on the ground and maintaining social order among the population. This structural and social significance of mahallas made them a strong and active part of Soviet society.



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