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Original article

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## THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHICAL AND CLIMATIC CONDITIONS OF THE KARAKALPAKS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFTS

*This article explores how geographical and climatic conditions influenced the development of traditional crafts among the Karakalpak people. The author analyses how the region's physical geography — particularly its arid desert and semi-desert landscape, lack of forest resources and abundance of natural materials such as wool, reed, clay and fish bones — shaped unique artisanal practices deeply intertwined with the environment. Special attention is given to the concept of geographical determinism in the context of Karakalpakstan, where the environment imposes constraints while also encouraging the evolution of specific types of craftsmanship. Using a comparative-historical approach, the article demonstrates that Karakalpak artisanal traditions were not static, but evolved in response to both internal cultural mechanisms and external socio-economic influences. The study emphasizes that craft development was a form of environmental adaptation and rational use of available resources. Particular focus is placed on felting, weaving, reed basketry, and the use of by-products of fishing as culturally embedded artisanal techniques. Thus, craft is understood not only as an economic activity but also as an expression of cultural memory and ecological intelligence. The findings highlight the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing craft cultures through the lens of natural environment, social organization, and historical change.*

**Keywords:** *geographical determinism, traditional crafts, Karakalpaks, climatic conditions, felting, weaving, material culture*

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