

# THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY MEDIEVAL MIYONKOL VALLEY – ISHTIKHAN IN SOGD CONFEDERATION AND PECULIARITIES OF RULING

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*Abstract*--In the beginning of the middle ages there was confederation govern in Sogd. Confederation was the center of Samarkand, Zarafshan Panch, Maymurg, Ishtikhan, Kabudan, Kushaniya and he controls and monitors areas as Kesh and Naxshab. In this article, based on written sources given the ability to make some judgment about the history of Confederation SogdIshtikhan kingdoms.

*Keywords*---Medieval Ages, Chjaovu (Jamuk), Chinese chronicles, Tsao, Korzanch

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Natural factors had a great importance in political borders of Sogd confederation which was fully formed in early Medieval Ages. Confederation domonation located in Zerafshan and Kashkadarya oasis had their borders. Inflow of these rivers was served as the basis to divide the territory of the confederation. So as the result of geographic factors Sogd confederation was divided into borders. They were situated in different distance from the center. Every domonation of confederation had its own place in it. That's why according to this factor, it is important to prove the historical truth by investigating the history of confederation.

It is necessary to study critically the relations between central domonation and others in Sogd confederation, and to define the general political position of confederation. In that case, it is necessary to underline the importance of Ishtikhan in Sogd. It is convenient to study other features of this issue and to deduce the role of Ishtikhan in Sogd confederation.

### General characteristics of Sogd confederation

Sogd confederation as the term “Sogd Union” was known as political unity which included Samarkand, Panch, Maymurg, Ishtikhon, Kabudan, Kushoniyadomonation in Zerafshan river valley and Kesh, Shakhrisabzdomonation in Kashkadarya river valley, and every part had its own independent ruling. Each of them had such domonation features as an administrative center- capital city, dynasty of rulers, symbols of state (coin, stamp etc.) and army. There were only such factors as obeying to leading lordship (or dynasty), their only origin or doing social-political and cultural duties in connection with one political union-confederation. For instance, majority of lordship was originated from the family *Zhaowu* (Jamuk) and dynasty in Samarkand was a leader. Representatives of lordship who was responsible for fighting against the enemies together had religious ceremonies, in particular, Zoroastrizm traditions in definite time of the year. The presence of several titles and names of lords in some coins of Samarkand, Panch, Kesh and Nakhshab in this confederation proved the information of researchers about the importance of Central Sogd confederation, connection

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between half independent domonations, their origin, basis and conditions of union, difference between confederate lordships, the leading or dependent lordships (Goyibov, 2017. p. 14).

### **The findings from Chinese chronicles about the origin of Sogdian rulers in the epoch of the *Kang* (Kangyuy) kingdom**

Some information, found in Chinese chronicles, can bring light to this problem. More often than not, in Chinese chronicles, like «Bei Shi», «Sui shu» and «Tang shu» we can see that the origin of *Kan* (Samarkand) rulers come from the territory of *Zhaowu*. Moreover, it was mentioned blood relations of the rulers of the government of *Kang*, the capital city of which was Chach and there was a pool of the middle Sirdarya, with the ruling family of *Kang* in Samarkand. In the sources we can see the following things about this: «Initially the people of *Yuezhi* in the northern part of the Sinlyan mountains in the city of *Zhaowu*, after being invaded by *tyukue* (turks), they moved to the south and settled near the Sunlin mountains (Alliaceous mountains / Pamir). There they settled in the inner lands and separated into nine ruling houses: *Kan* (Samarkand), *An* (Bukhara), *Tsao* (Kabudhan), *Shii* (Chach), *Mi* (Maymurg), *Khe* (Kushaniya / Katta kurgan), *Khosyun* (Khoresm?), *Maodi* (Bitik?), *Shi* (Kesh). The rulers of the seproperties, whose power passed down to the next member of dynasty, was called «nine houses / generations» and all the properties held the surname of the family dynasty *Zhaowu* (Xo'jayev, 2014. p. 21-48) A. Khodjayev started to relate this historical process to 177-176s bringing more clarity to the problem (Xo'jayev, 2004. p. 51-54).

*Kang* government (or Kangyuy) existed from III century till our era, and during its most prosperous period *Kang* from the II century till our era, Sogd, situated in the valley of Zarafshan, was the part of the territory of the Kingdoms (Shoniyozov, 1990. p. 52). It would be pertinent to mention the following in formation of the Chinese chronicles at this stage: during the fifth summer period of ruling of *Chjen-guan*, the ruler of which was *Guyumuchja* (Kyumuchji), the ruler of *Kang*, asked to accep them to the Chinese nationality. The prince *Tayn-szun* said: «unpleasant is forme to ruin a nation in order to obtain inane reputation; going in a slow pace and a fast pace are equally opressive in being a part riality of *Kang*. Shall I indeed send my troops to a thousand of distance?» (Bichurin, 1950. p. 311). Seemingly, after this event Sogd rulers became more concerned about the defense of Turkish khaganate, and eventually these kings of Samarkand main tained family relationships with khagans.

According to K.Shaniyazov, the genesis of *Kang* kings (Samarkand), mentioned in Chinese chronicles, is connected with the ruling dynasty of *Kang*. Starting with the epoch of Khans (in 206 before our era to 220 of our era) the power was handed down from generation to generation, and in the following century, more or less, this tradition continued. The ruler *Kan* came from the ruling class *Yuezhi* (Shoniyozov, 1990. p. 53).

However, this information needs to be commented upon. It is well known fact that the administration of this dynasty in China is divided into two stages: Western Khan (206 y. before our era. – 25 y. of our era.) and Eastern Khan (25-220 yy.). The rear I see question interm soft his change, starting from which of these two stages the power of *Kan* dynasty began going down to the next dynasty, and it causes difficulty to a certain degree. B.Gafurov relates the inclusion of Sogd government to the constitution of Kushan Empire with the epoch of ruling system of Kanishka (78-123) (Gafurov, 1989. p. 189). However, most researches leave the question of the inclusion of Sogd in the empire of Kushan open to debate. The

researchers haven't come to an agreement about this matter. The main reason of this case is the paucity of sources, and archeological materials do not always allow us to come to favourable conclusions.

Now we will dwell on the records of Chinese chronicles, connected with the origin of Sogdian rulers. In the chronicles, we can see the ruler of *Kan* (Samarkand) was one of the nine dynasties, and his central position was especially accentuated along with the names of other rulers. Moreover, the records of the chronicles «Bei shi» and «Sui shui» confirm the above mentioned facts about that the rulers *Khe* (Kushaniya) and *Mi* (Maymurg) who came from the dynasty of *Zhaowu* and they by origin had relations with the family of *Kan* (Samarkand) rulers (Bichurin, 1950. p. 272, 274-275, 282, 286-287). This record puts ground on the fact that the members of the ruling family, who came from the city of *Zhaowu*, laid foundation to their own dynasty arriving in Samarkand. This also talks from the fact that, the opinion by K.Shaniyazov, according to which the authority of the rulers passed to the next generations, starting from 206 till our era, is close to reality.

### **General characteristics of Miyonkol valley**

Miyonkol – historical-cultural valley called Miyonkol is situated between rivers Akdarya and Karadarya of present Republic of Uzbekistan, nowadays Akdarya, Ishtikhan and Kattakurgan (partly Payarik district) regions are located there. The name of Miyonkul valley in early middle ages isn't known. When the hydronym “Miyonkol” is translated from Persian, it means “between river”, it was famous as *NimiSogd* (Half Sogd), *Sogdi Khurd* (Small Sogd) as nearby region to Samarkand Sogdian.

### **About geographical location of Ishtikhan.**

Ishtikhan was not so large, but it was at the center of confederation according to its features (political, geographical etc.) and it is called Ishtikhan region. It is located in ancient Miyonkol valley, between two channels – Akdarya and Karadarya of Zerafshan river, it was bordered on Kushoniya, Fayy in early middle ages. The northern part of lordship was full of hills and highnesses; they served as natural border of lordship. According to archeological investigations held in these hills and highnesses, there were lots of castles and fortresses (Adilov & Mirzaaxmedov, 1996. p. 128-140).

### **Ishtikhan is the camp of Sogd citizens**

It is known from some sources that the second camp of Samarkand lordships was located in Ishtikhan. Samarkand rulers built their camps in strategically convenient and close to center places. In 712 Samarkand was captured by Arab khalifat, Gurhak did all the requirements given in “Samarkand agreement” and asked Kutayba ibn Muslim (705-715) to stay in Samarkand throne. But Kutayba didn't let him. That's why Gurhak left for Ishtikhan camp in Afarinkent center (Bartold, 1964. p. 380-388). It is supposed that in early middle ages the toponym “Ishtikhan” was formed as “ishti+khan”.

### **About term “Tsao”**

In Chinese chronicles which were early written sources about Ishtikhan, it was called as “Tsao”. When it was written without symbol water, it meant “drought”, “desert”. Western Tsao was also written without symbol water (Bichurin, 1950. p. 275, 286). It meant that the main part of Tsao was a desert. Nowadays it can be the eastern parts of Karnab desert.

According to the chronicle “Tan shu”, *Tsao* in Sogd was consist of three parts: Western Tsao – *Tsao* near Samarkand (Ishtikhan), Central Tsao – in eastern part of Western Tsao (Kabudan / present Akdarya region) and Eastern Tsao – eastern part of Mirzachul (Ustrushona) (Bichurin, 1950. p. 312-313).

Historical explanation of toponyms given in Chinese chronicles needs scientific researches. Because they may be given in different periods to this or that object and authors didn't know the historical processes. Sometimes the same toponym can be used in several places due to people migration, war, spreading of illnesses. *Tsao* lordship was used in different places of Samarkand.

For instance, according to chronicle "Tan-shu", the place called Western Tsao was located in Ustrushona territory (Bichurin, 1950. p. 311-318). The word Tsao was used as hydronym and due to location along Zerafshan river, was named Western and eastern Tsao.

### **Information about political history of Ishtikhan in Chinese chronicles**

There some interesting information about *Tsao* was given in Chinese chronicles: "Eastern Tsao lordship has four names *Shuaydushana*, *Suyduyishana*, *Kiputana* and *Suduchjini*. .. ruled from *Sidikhan* (Ishtikhan) town. During *Vu-de* lordship (618-626) it had the relations. On the first spring of *Tyan-bao* lordship the ruler *Gelo-pulo* (Kora-bugra) sent the legate with gifts" (Bichurin, 1950. p. 311-318).

Mentioned in Chinese chronicles *Kora-bugra* was *Gelo-pulo*, he was the ruler of Ustrushona. At that time Ishtikhon and Kabudan might be dependent to Ustrushona, so he was mentioned as ruler of Ishtikhan. It is necessary to mention that these information in Chinese chronicles was not confident, Ishtikhan was situated in the center of Sogd and the place where camp of Sogd rulers located, the ruling of Ustrushona in Central Sogd was not true. It is conjecture that there was wrong localization of areas on the term *Tsao*. Historian Tabari wrote in his work that in 737 the ruler Khara-Bugra governed Ustrushona (Istoriya at-Tabari, 1987. P. 251.).

O.I.Smironova also paid attention to it, noticed that Khara-Bugra was mentioned as *Gelo-pulo* in Chinese chronicles and he ruled Ustrushona in 720-740, in Kabudan in 740-745 years (Smironova, 1981. p. 425, 428). His ruling period was after capturing Samarkand by Arabs (in 712), at that period Ishtikhan had a great importance in ruling confederation. So the ruling of Khara-Bugra in Ishtikhan was not proved.

Thoughts given above show the importance of defining the title of *Tsao* in confederation in studying the history of Sogd confederation in early middle ages.

### **Ishtikhan and Kabudan**

Ishtikhan and Kabudan were neighbouring lordships and they noticed as *Tsao* and *Szenbudana* in memories of Chinese historian travellers *SyuanSan* and *Khoy Chao*. And also, every lordships had their military army – *chokars* (Gafurov, 1989. p. 314). The rulers of Ishtikhan and Kabudan participated in all ceremonies, in particular, in sacrifice ceremonies devoted to spirit of ancestors in Samarkand (Bichurin, 1950. p. 281). These lordships were dependent of Samarkand, in comparison with Panch or Kesh.

As written in Chinese chronicle "Suysu", the governor of Samarkand in 600-620, *Tayshebi's* son *Ugyan* was consigned as ruler of Ishtikhan and Kabudan (Bichurin, 1950. p. 280-287). After capture of Samarkand, Gurhak ruled the state till 738 living in Ishtikhan, then the throne was inherited to his son Turgar (Bichurin, 1950. p. 311).

According to information of historian Tabariy, SobitIshtikhoni was peasant, he participated in fights of Korzanch and Khujand in 720 and died there (Istoriya at-Tabari, 1987. p. 187-188). Historical data about Ishtikhan and Kabudan confederation enrich the imagination.

### **Ishtikhan as one of the centers against Arabs**

It is known that before capturing the territory by Arabs sogdiy were divided into two groups, the first group was ruled by Korzanch, ruler of ishtikhan and his nephew *Chalanj*, the second group by *Devastich*, ruler of Panch (Matbabayev, 2009. p. 55).

It is difficult to define the events of that time according to resources. Due to information of O.I.Smirnova the name Korzanch in the book of Tabari was written without stressed vowel and it can be read as *Kazuranch*, this word is Arabian. The reason of it, in absence of ... sound in Arabian script. This term is translated from Persian as *kazur* – skin tanning or cleaner the cloth (Smirnova, 1970. p. 246). So, Korzanch was called by thus name because he was master of skin-tanners. This name was not real name, but it was nickname.

According to data of Samoni, there was called Karzan in Sogd of Samarkand and it was located in present Arbinjon (Kamaliddinov, 1993. p. 89). Though the place of Karzan wasn't found, it is supposed to be placed in present Ishtikhan and Kattakurgan.

The presence of place named *Khujakarson* also proves this fact.

In the work of Tabari Korzanch was mentioned as the governor of Ishtikhan, and he with Fayy and a group of ishtikhanids moved to Ferghana through Ustrushona (Istoriya at-Tabari, 1987. 185).

Craftsmen of Karzan also had an important place in the revolution. It causes to conclude the reason of execution of Devastich in Arbinjon. When he was arrested, Said al-Kharoshi came to Arbinjon with his supporters to debate, but athwart to him Devastich was brought to Arbinjon to execute.

### **Abbreviations used in the article**

IMKU – IstoriyamaterialnoykulturiUzbekistana

## **II. Conclusion**

Ishtikhan was the lordship in the center of Sogd confederation in favourable geographic condition. Data of Chinese chronicles and Arabian resources is the basis of it. It is clear from given information, before Arabian capture one of the places which fought for the fate of Sogd confederation was ishtikhan in Miyonkol region. Ishtikhan also was the center of camp. It can be concluded due to suppose, but also written resources.

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