

About Confederative Administration Ruling of Sogd

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Abstract: The article gives the analysis of administrative system of Sogdian confederation in the area of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The administrative center of the confederation was Samarkand. Sogdian confederation which had a long history was originally situated in the center of Central Asia and amalgamated with other historical cities such as Samarkand, Kesh. Nahshab, Maymurg, Panch, Kabudan, Kushaniya, Ishtikhan, Fay which were in the surroundings of the Zarafshan and Kashkadarya rivers. Each of them had their own administrative system. The leaders of Sogdian confederation originated from Zhaowu (a clan) in 656 there was the administration of mixed tribes which was resulted from the implementation of governmental system of turkish-sogdian tribes. Central and local titles were fundamental in the administration of the government of Sogdian confederation. The main central titles were ikhshid, ahvirpat and ispakhbad whereas local titles were dapirpat, avazipat, framandar, gupat, bozkrom, arspan, katiyabshauz. In addition, tarhon, chur, tudun, eltabar were the other Turkish titles which were important for the administration of the government. Sogdian confederation was relatively an autonomy administrative system, and it maintained its financial system on the account of revenue which was paid to its dominating countries from other countries of the world. The main

problems of the research work have been analysed according to the written documents and numismatic materials.

Keywords: Management, Turk Qaghanate, Chinese chronicles, Sogdian documents, Samarkand, Kesh.

Introduction

Sogd confederation holds an important place in the state forming processes which have taken place on the lands of Uzbekistan. Favorable natural and geographic location of Sogd on the valley, in the midst of Zarafshan and Kashka-Darya, its rich natural resources and economic potential were the main incentives which caused this land to play the role of mediator in international, commercial and cultural relationship of different countries. Because of these reasons different kingdoms of different eras attempted to take the lead of this place seeing it as the source of great revenue. However, despite being the part of different states, it continually preserved its relative autonomy. The reason being was dominating countries benefited from its autonomy. This in turn created opportunities for the formation and development of internal confederation of Sogd state. Particularly, in the period of Graeco-Bactrian kingdom and Kang (Kanguy) the process of unification into a confederation increasingly intensified.

The Origin of the Ruling Dynasty of Sogd Confederation

The information given in Chinese chronicles has assisted significantly to sort out this problem in question. In particular, in Chinese chronicles such as “Bei shi”, “Sui shu” and “Tang shu” it is noted that the origin of the first generation of Kan rulers goes back to *Zhaowu* (Bichurin, 1950a). As well as this, it was distinctly emphasized and stressed that the

family in Kan (Samarkand) was one of the nine dynasties among which it had its special political and administrative reputation. In chronicles it is mentioned that roots of He (Kushaniyya) and Mi (Maymurg) rulers were from the “Zhaowu” family who settled down in Kan (Samarkand) and the evidences found about them coincide with the facts mentioned above (Bichurin, 1950a). This in turn can contribute to the accuracy of the assumption that *Zhaowu* family arrived in Samarkand at first and build up its own family dynasty making the city an administrative center, and in relation with this dynasty other dynasties generated independently in other areas.

O.I. Smirnova separately dwelled on the term of “Zhaowu”, explaining that the Chinese spelling of the word “Zhaowu” in the period of Tang family was *t’siä-miu*, and the Chinese spelling in the period of Kan dynasty was different as *tlog-miwo* and this way she tries to compare them with the word “Jamūk” which was mentioned in Arabic and local sources as the name of the group of ruling generation before the arrival of Islamic religion. According to the scientist, this word may originally be connected with *yabyu*, a title which was assumed by her as has been generated from the ‘Yuezhi’ group (Smirnova, 1970).

The information derived from Afrasiab murals is inevitably valuable. The name of the family of the ruler Varkhuman is given as *wnš / unaš*–“unash” (Livšic, 1965). V.A. Livšic regarded it paleographically true to read as ‘The king Varkhuman belonging to the family of Unash’ and he proved this fact by saying that its alternative in Chinese chronicles is given as *Wen-shu*, the family name of Kan (Samarkand) rulers (Livšic, 1979. p. 69).

According to some researchers, the ideas brought forward by V.A. Livšic is unable to prove itself (Babayarov & Kubatin, 2007). Chinese chronicles N.Y. Bichurin brought forward this information in the following way “*the owner himself was nicknamed as Vin; descended from the House of Yuezhi*” (Bichurin, 1950a). In its French translation by E.

Shavannah it is translated as “*Le nom de famille du prince est Wen. C’étaient à l’origine des Yue-tche*”. Even though in ‘Sin Tang shu’ this information is given with a little bit difference as *jün xing Wen ben Yuezhi*—that is “the surname of the ruler Ven (he) came from Yuezhi”. Thus, this information about the origin of Kan (Samarkand) rulers, who reigned in the first quarter of the VII century, which can be found in Chinese sources, was initially fixed in the chronicles of “Bei Shi” (in 636) “Tang shu” (in 945) (Babayarov & Kubatin, 2007. p. 218).

They believe this statement has Turkic origin and they emphasize that the name of the western Turkic Qaghanate is given as *On* ^o*q*—“Ten arrows / clan”, and in Chinese chronicles they are found as ‘Ten / clan’. This fuels the idea that the ancestors of Avarkhuman (650 s.) the ruler of Samarkand were from western Turkic Qaghanates, to be more precise they were called “On ok”. In other words, “Vin shu” *’wnš’w* which is mentioned as the rulers of Samarkand is pronounced not like “Unashu” but like *’wny’w* (Babayarov & Kubatin, 2007). This can be a base for pronouncing the word as “Un uk” or as “On ok”. As well as this, V.A. Livšic offered one more another idea about this issue. It stressed out the fact that the word *wen-na-sha* which is given in Chinese chronicles can be as one of the sogdian names (Livšic, 2008).

Relative Autonomy of Sogd Confederation under the Dominance of Turkic Qaghanate

One of the intrinsic features of Sogd confederation was that, it was persistent for keeping its relative independence while being a subordinate of another powerful country. In order to provide the independence of its own dynasty, Sogdian governors tried to maintain friendly relations with other countries by maintaining their friendly diplomatic relations.

There are evidences which confirm that Sogd confederation retained its partial independence, at least the authority for its own inner control of the government.

We can classify these evidences in the following order:

1. The first thing to consider as the main indicative of its continual relative independence is undoubtedly *coins* minted and used in the government independently. The fact that the confederation released its own coins talks about that its internal administration was mainly independent. This shows that even though Sogd confederation was politically controlled by powerful kingdoms, in economical matters it could preserve its independence (Smirnova, 1981).

2. Powerful countries which ruled over Sogd confederation could hardly ever make amendments in its inner administrative system. The main reason being was that Sogd confederation had natural geographic favourable conditions, economical potential, and it worked efficiently as a mediator in the matters of international trade, economics and cultural matters. Therefore the countries and powerful rulers of different eras and periods of history tried to take the lead of the country and saw it as the source of great income. However, the confederation continued to keep its relative independence despite being vassal to different countries in different periods of history. Because dependent countries benefited from its partial independence.

3. It is also widely known that the Central Sogd made a wide use of authorities gifted to them (Babayarov, 2012). We can witness this if we look at Tardu qaghan (576-603) who gave his daughter to Sogd governor Shifubi, and Tun yabghu-qaghan (618-630) married his own daughter to Kyimuchji who held the position of the governor in Samarkand (Bichurin, 1950a. p. 311).

One more intrinsic features of subordinate confederations of Turkic Qaghanate (Sogd, Bukhara, Tukharistan. ...) was that unlike other settled populations, subordinate nomadic tribes had always difficulty with

keeping its inner administrative power. Therefore Qaghanate did not pay much attention to inner liberty of the confederation, and mostly concerned about taking the rule of nomadic tribes (Grenet, 2002).

The Administrative System of Sogd Confederation: Central and Local Titles

It is clear from the facts that, Sogd was the area where people used to lead a civilized style of life, because of making the right use of the resources, the development of rules and regulations for possessing land and water resources, political-territorial and administrative system of the country developed significantly. There appeared administrative bodies which dealt with the execution of the mission handed over subordinates by the main office. For example, in Sogdian documents of the mount Mug *kty'βš'yws-katiyabshauz*, “head of a clan” was the name of a title which was mentioned in B-1 Sogdian historical records (SDGM II).

The relation between central government and local administration were mainly implemented by “Council of the chiefs” which was composed of land owners (Otaxo'jaye, 2010), wealthy merchants and people of the highest position in the urban areas. The rulers with the title of “ikhšid” had the possessed restricted authority by the mission of the ‘Council of the chiefs’.

The administrative reforms of Tun yabghu for the sake of Sogd confederation was of special consideration (Boboyorov, 2011). As a result, the *eltabar* who usually was sent by the Qaghanate and other rulers *tuduns* who were appointed for the control of the government, served for the development of the local control, provided internal politically peaceful life in the country (Togan, 1981). The task of appointing the *rulers*, that is *ikhšids* passed to the hands of *tuduns*. After “ikhšid” were the *azat* which was mostly consisted of the largest land owners (Smirnova, 1970).

If we refer to the notes of the Mount Mug in order to have better understanding of the matter, we become aware of the fact that the authoritative bodies of the Sogd confederation ranked in the following order:

Ikhšid-xšayatiya the “king”, was the authoritative member of the administrative part of the government which was named as MLK’ aramaic ideogram (Beruniy, 1966). *Ikhšid* was a central title.

Another position which stood on the top positions was *γwt’w-hutav*, this word mostly gave the meaning of “ruler”, “your majesty” (Is’hoqov, 1992. p. 20). This word was used for Tarkhun and Dēvaštič in the records of the archive of the Mount Mug, which was numbered with Б-19, Nov. 3.

pr’m’nδ’r’ wtt-framandar Avat-was one of the high ranking rulers mentioned in the records of the Mount Mug (Livšic, 2008a). In charge of the economical matters stood *pr’m’nδ’r’ wtt-decree* holder Avat, after Dēvaštič in the residence of Panch ruler.

’w’zypt-aavazipat, was the manager of all the irrigational (including the cleaning of the ditches, voluntary works.) (SDGM II). This duty resembled the work of “mirab” in the following periods.

γwpt-gupat, is one of the higher positions which was involved in dealing with mostly financial matters. V.A. Livšic deciphered this word mostly as “the head of financial matters”, “The head of all the income” (SDGM II. p. 184).

β’zkr’m-bazhkram, this word meant “the head of the customer office” or “the taxgatherer” (Is’hoqov, 1992).

n’ztyryw-naztrgriv, in the documents of A-14, A-15 the person who was in charge of assisting the ruler, that is the vice executive was with the word meaning “assist someone” (SDGM II). The phrase *naztrgriv* was initially had the content of meaning.

δp’yrpt-dapirpat, the word in the documents of Б-17 had the meaning of “the main secretary”, the head of the affair swas the translation

sogdian (SDGM II). In A-5 file there is details of the amount of salary paid to the person who held that position in society.

prw'nk' kr'k-parvonak krak, the title which was given in documents by the number A-5, stood for “the payer of a document” (SDGM II). However, this is not only about the position of composing or preparing a document, as it was the duty of the office which was operated by *secretariat-dapirtat*. “Parvonak krak” dealt with the papers which were mostly about awards and charity work of the rulers and the bodies of the government.

'rspn-arspan it became obvious in the paper of Б-18, this word may be the name of a person. Having said this there are details proving it to be the name of title (SDGM II). The holder of this position was someone who was in charge of managing the villages, *ky'βš'yws-katiyabshauz* gave him formal report about the business and activities of the group of the council of chiefs. *Arspan*-was also the title which was responsible for maintaining contact between the central body of the government and suburban areas of the country.

''ywyrpt-aakhvirpat, means “the manager of the horse stable”. The sogdian *xrw* which was on the line 10 of the B-9 document, and it meant “stable” (SDGM II).

In addition we can encounter in *'wrnyk'm-urnikam* (“official”, “the government figure of a higher position”) (Is'hoqov, 1992. p. 24), *'zynt* ёки *'zy'nt-azgant* (“ambassador”, “tar courier”), *βynpt-vagnpat* (“a keeper of the temple flame”), *mywpt-magupat*, “religious leader” (SDGM II) was the name of the position which gave the same meaning, they had their own special places in its local operation.

Hence it is necessary to emphasize the role of Kesh and Nakhshab leaders. In VII-VIII centuries a myriad of coins were released in Kesh (Shakhrisabz) with the sign of *kšy'n'k xwβ'xwrp't-keshinik xwabu axurpat* (the ruler of Kesh Akhurpat) and in Chinese chronicles, in 727, the signs were replaced by the name of Kesh leader Khubido (Akhurpat in

Sogdian) who used to send his ambassador to China (Smirnova, 1981). The title of *akhvirpat* had both local and central importance in the country.

The name of al-Ashkand is mentioned in Arab sources as the leader-*ispakhsbad* of Nasaf in the 730s. Al-Ashkand reigned Nasaf between 734 and (Istoriya at-Tabari). Tabari informed that Al-Ashkand was committed to Turkic Qaghanate, he was the *ispakhsbad* in Nasaf. Persian words “sipakh”, “sipakhsbad” mean “the leader”, “military leader” (Forscha-o’zbekcha o’quv lug’ati, 1975).

The Role of Turkic Titles in the Ranking of State Figures of Sogd Confederation

During the period when Western Turkic Qaghanate maintained its control (569-712) over Sogd confederation and strengthened their power over them by giving them the titles of *eltabar* and *tudun*. The patterns of evidences found from the Mount Mug inform about the fact the top ranking position in Sogd confederation was *eltabar* and B-13 can be found in the form of *dytptyr* and B-15 and A-15 appear as *rytptyr* (Babayarov, 2012).

It is mentioned in Chinese chronicles that Western Turkic governor Tun Yabghu-qaghan (618-630) gave his vassals the position of *silifa* (*eltabar*) and presented each of them with one *tutun* (*tudun*) (Bichurin, 1950). However, there are some self-contradictory ideas about the usage of these titles in the area of Sogd confederation (Skaff, 2002). There are not any sources confirming that the title of *tudun* has been in usage since 560s. Also, the Qaghanate retained the titles such as *ikhšid*, *afšin*, alongside with making a wide use of the Turkic titles 1) *eltabar*, 2) *tudun*, 3) *chor* and 4) *tarkhan* in its operation (Togan, 1981). For instance, in Samarkand which was the heart of the confederation, the rulers (650-750) Tarkhun, Turgar, Bekčur had Turkic names and they continued using the title of *ikhšid* while carrying out the administrative work of the country

(Smirnova, 1970). Similarly, Turkic authoritative figures of Nakhshab used a foreign name of *ispakhbad* for promotion (Istoria at-Tabari, 1987).

On the contrary, Dēvaštič being Sogdian, received the reign of Panch (Panjikent) from the Turkic family tribe entitled as *čor*, and used the name of *afšin* as well as *čor* for running his country ruling work, as mentioned in the Arab sources (Livšic, 1979). *Čor*, however, was not the only military title which was widely spread throughout the confederation. *Tarkhan* was another pervasive military as well as official title which had relevant role in the operation of the whole confederation. In A-13 document of Mug archives ‘the message sent from Panjikent to Tarkhan’ makes this subject even more clearer for the public (Is’hoqov, 1992). The underlying reason for the wide use of the title ‘Tarkhan’ is assumed to be that powerful countries were concerned about the income coming to the country budget at that time, and took strict measures for consolidating the control over the country.

Conclusion

The administrative and political division of Sogd confederation is connected with its natural possibilities. In fact, every minor kingdom situated on the riverside, or was surrounded by a mountain ranges which divided the country from other areas. Geographical factors-rivers, hills, mountains, etc. were of the major importance for the division of the kingdoms.

The high ranking titles which were in operation in Sogd confederation differed significantly within the countries (in Samarkand-*ikhšid*, in Kesh-*ikhrid*, in Nakhshab-*ispakhbad*, in Panch-*afshin* etc.) and this fact differed them from the positions of Bukhara and Tukharistan.

The dynasty which ruled Sogd confederation is called “Zhaowu”, and its local form “Jamūk” or “Chamūk” is quite similar to *yabghu*. This means the ethnic background of Sogd people involves meddling the

generation of Sogdians and Turkic people. Chinese “Bei shi” and “Sui shu” chronicles also state the facts that the rulers of He (Kushaniya) and Mi (Maymurgh) came from the dynasty of “Zhaowu” which means their basic generation was from the family of Kan (Samarkand).

In short, the people who were in charge of ruling the country were called *tudun*, *eltabar*, *čor*, *erkin* and *tarkhan* and they were the main figures who fulfilled the main work in the country. We can deduce from the function and sources of *tarkhan* that this title equaled or relatively differed from *čor* and *erkin* as it described in historical heritage of the country. It is due to the fact that, the military titles *čor* and *erkin* can be found not as the chief executives in the country but as comparatively lower authoritative figures of the government.

Abbreviations used in the article:

SDGM-sogdian documents of the mount Mug

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