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THE ANALYSIS OF CHACH TOPONYM IN WRITTEN AND ARCHEOLOGIC SOURCES

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ABSTRACT

This article is based on an analysis of information provided in written and archeological sources on the toponym Chach, and it analyses issues related to the etymology and toponymy of the oasis name.

The article is based on information from various sources including Greek, Chinese, Persian, Arabic and other ones, as well as the toponymic location of the oasis and the socio-economic life of the population is analyzed.

KEYWORDS

Chach, sak, Avesto, Sughd, Yaksart, Shak, Persipol, species, Bexustun, Chayechasta, Chachanapch, Kultobe, stater, chach, chash, feruza, Bey-shu, Suy-shu, Chje-shi, Chje-chje, se, Tashkent.

INTRODUCTION

We know from the history that every region has its own history. The study and research of this history is one of the most important issues of our time. In the regard, the research on the history of the oasis can be assessed as a scientific result. Because the historical processes related to the past of the oasis, especially its

etymology, are still one of the most pressing issues awaiting resolution.

When it comes to the ancient names of the Tashkent oasis, we find that in the sources it is mentioned under various names at different times. In particular, some researchers have noted that the name Chach is

associated with the name of the sacred lake – “Chayechasta”, mentioned in the hymns “Avesto”(1), and some scholars point out that the Saks, who lived north of the Syrdarya River, were called “Saka haomavarka” in ancient Persian inscriptions, and that they were referred to as “Saks behind Sughd”(2). In Persepol palace inscriptions they are mentioned as saks who live behind Yaksart. Based on similar data, a number of researchers associate the ancient ancestors of the chachs with them(3). That is, according to ancient Persian and Greek sources, the Chach oasis was an area in the Yaksart (Syrdarya) River basin in ancient times, especially in the last quarter of the last millennium BC, where part of the Scythians (saks) lived.

THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The authors of the ancient period Herodotus’s History, and the works of Hellenic and other authors also called the Sak haomvarge as the Amirgy Saks(4). According to Pliny, the tribes living close to the Persians were called Saks(5). Ancient Iranian sources also use the ethnic name Shak (sak)(6). According to the Iranian scholar Abayev, the Saks are the species mentioned in the Yasht section of the Avesto, which are referred to as “The Central Asian Saks” and “fast riding horse species”(7). And according to ancient authors, Yaksart-Danay-Syrdarya was the boundary between nomadic and peasant communities. But the lifestyle and culture of the Sak tribes were much closer to those of the settled peoples of Central Asia – the Sogdians, the

Bactrians and the Khorezmians. Even in Behistun’s rock paintings we can see that they are designed to resemble each other. I.Gershevich, on the other hand compares the above – mentioned authors of the ancient period and the information in the Avesto, and argues that the great species were the peoples (nomadic sak who lived around sacred lake Chayechasta in Avesto) who made sacred drinks (hauma). The researcher acknowledges that the location of the sacred lake is connected with the Aral Sea on the one hand and the Chach and Tashkent oasis in the Syrdaryas basin on the other (8). However, the above – mentioned data and assumptions have not found a sufficient geographical scientific basis and are still one of the issues awaiting resolution.

Written information about Chach mainly dates back to the period of separation of the Qang state and its independent states. In particular, the term “Shoch” first appears in the Sogdian inscriptions on baked bricks found in the Kultobe monument near Shymkent in the 2-3rd century BC and occurs in the inscription “Kabayi Zoraoster” by the Sassanid king Shapur I of 262 (9). It is known from these monuments that the territory of Chach included the lands up to Sogd “Mountains of Chachistan” (Mountains in the northeastern part of the Chach oasis).

Copper Coins with Sogdian Inscriptions and various seals dating back to the 3rd-4th centuries AD have been found to prove the existence of a unique writing

culture within the Qang Dynasty. A clay plaque dating back to these centuries was found at the Kultobe monument and it was found in it that the Sogdian inscription contained the sentences that “the chachs built the city and tied the nomads to the tribute”(10). According to researchers, this plaque was mounted on the roof of the city gate so that the inhabitants of the city and the settlers could read these sentences and take an example from them. This indicates that the political and administrative management of Chach was highly developed. Also, in a 3-4th century pottery found in the village of Karchevo in the Urals there is an inscription in Sogdian “From the belongings of the Chach people”. Besides this, there are items belonging to the Chach ruler. In particular, the term “Chachannapch” (chach people) occurs in silver drachmas dating back to the 6th year (584-585) of the reign of the Sassanid ruler Hormuzd 4. V. A. Lishvis reads one of the inscriptions on this type of silverware as MY’R s’w c’c’nn’pc 3+3+320+10 strk |xuv(u) Saw cacanna fc sisnu sterak| Ruler Shav, the leader of Chach people. (Salmon) – 39 starter.(11). Also, the term “chach” occurs in Chach coins depicting the Sogdian inscriptions of the rulers of the oasis, which study the history of the period of the Turkish Khanate in the 6th – 8th centuries and a Turkish runic inscriptions on a pottery found in the ruins of the city of Qanqa.(12).

V. Lukonin who was directly involved in the history of the Sassanid period geographically analyzed the

history of the oasis as follows. He considers Kash to be one with Kashgar and Choch to be one with Shosh. (13). Among the areas put forward by the researcher, Kash may also be this medieval Kesh. He admits that Shosh may have received this name only in the time of the Arabs. (14). There is also a lot of information about the person born or living in Chach in the Moni texts (15) and in the inscription written in a silver vessel dating back to the 4th century that its owner was “Shav from Chach” (16), and these terms have been the basis of scientific research by many European scientists.

The peculiarity of the Chach oasis is also evident in its name. Interestingly, the word “chach” also meant “turquoise” in ancient Turkic language. This is confirmed by the occurrence of the word “chach”, “chash” meaning “turquoise, precious stone” in early medieval Turkish written monuments. (17). Our archeologists have confirmed that there were turquoise deposits in the mountains of the Tashkent oasis in ancient times. (18). Later, by the first centuries AD, the Chinese recorded the oasis as Chje-shi, Chje-chje, close to the name Chach, without translating it into their own language. (19). Finally, by the 5th century AD, they began to refer to Tashkent as Shi “Stone” or Shi-go “Country of the Stone State”. (20). Since the 11th century AD, the oasis has been called “Tashkent – Stone City” in Turkish. This name first appears in the works of our ancestors Abu Rayhan Beruni and Mahmud Qashqari and its content is

interpreted in the same sense. (21). So, all of these names are integrated in the word “tosh”. How can it be explained, why the oasis was called “Tashkent – Stone City”?

According to some experts, just as in a few ancient countries of Europe and the East, in our region there was a custom of naming cities by their proportions, their peculiar qualities. Bukhoroi Sharif as “honorable Bukhara”, Kashi dilkash – as Cache close to the heart”, Huqandi latif as graceful Kokand”, the Tashkent oasis was also known as “Chach”, “shash” as a country where brave, courageous and strong people live.

It is no coincidence that Chinese and Arab sources provide information about the population of the oasis in the form of “courageous”, “brave and warlike”. (22).

During the study in Chach and in the neighboring medieval numismatic materials found in neighboring kingdoms, especially from Sught a lot of information was given about the name of Chach. In particular, as a result of the study of these coins, one can see the inscription on them “Money of Khagan yagbu”. According to these data, Chach is interpreted as semi – independent kingdom, as an important territory during the Western Khanate.

Later, this property (Chach) played a key role in trade and economic relations with money regions, especially with China. (23).

The State of Chach is also mentioned a lot in Chinese chronicles. In particular, the annals of the Great Han Dynasty State that there was a property called Yuni on the Iosha (Syrdarya) River, and that it was one of the five small estates of the Kangyuy semi – nomadic tribal alliance. (24). On the general description and description of the relations and relations of the empire with its western neighbors, it can be seen that the name Chach is written in the form of Chjeche in the history of the “Bey – shu” i.e. northern dynasties. The historical chronicle contains information about ambassador with the ruler of the Usuns(25).

In 436, for example, the Usun ruler told Ambassador Tuan Yuanyu that he wanted Polona (Fergana) and Chjeche to be vassals of the Yuanwei dynasty, but regretted not knowing ways. (26). The ambassador then travels to the mentioned lands, and when he returns in 437 he is accompanied by the ambassadors of 16 estates, among whom the ambassador of Chjeche is mentioned. (27). In the “Sui – shu” yearbook, “Choch” is also mentioned under the name Shi along with Chje. The chronicle also states that its territory, population composition, economy, material and spiritual culture, as well as the special residence of the Shi (Chach) ruler in Iosha, also interacted with China and neighboring provinces. (28).

It is also noteworthy that detailed information about the region of Chach is given in the annals of the Tan dynasty (tan – shu). It is acknowledging in this

chronicle that Shin's (Chach) first capital was Yuni, and later Chje. It contains information about the Iosha River (Syrdarya) and later its name was also changed. Importantly, there is interesting information about the presence of a large mountain in the south – eastern part of the property and the extraction of precious turquoise (Se –se in Chinese sources) from it. (29). In Chinese sources, the interpretation of the name Chach as an etymology with the change of the name of management has in turn led to a further increase in interest among scholars. Foreign researcher E. Schwann admits that as a result of his analysis of the sources cited as a result of his scientific research, he gave the main emphasis in the hieroglyphic of the name Chach to “stone”. Since it is given in Chinese chronicles as the main successor of Chach Kang's policy, the researcher Pulleyblank compares the “stone city” in the Hunley texts with the ancient city of Khangdez or Qanqa. In the Pahlavi (Persian) literature, it is mentioned in the form of a castle whose walls are made of stone. (30). Academician Y.F. Buryakov, who has been conducting archeological research on this issue for many years, notes that no stone walls, stone walkways and structures were found during the excavations in the ancient city and he interprets that the name Chach means “precious stone” in the form of a reference to the turquoise mines. (31).

CONCLUSION

E. Schaefer, who conducted research on the etymology of precious stones “se – se” under the name “property”, dealt with this problem and he interprets “se – se” as a glittering stone, a dark blue stone that is not as clear as a lodge. (32). F. Hirt and E. Shawan, on the other hand, claim that the turquoise stone is “se – se”. In this regard, the mine was highly valued in the ancient countries of the East as a “helper of happiness and victory”, as well as “a tumor that protects from the touch of eye, the wrath of evil spirits, various poisonous insects and snakes”.(34). In China it was highly valued and called the “Persian shining stone”. This stone has a special symbolic meaning for Chach and was mined in large quantities from the south – east of the capital. And Chach played a key role in transporting this precious stone to Central Eastern Asia. Archeological excavations in the Chach oasis in recent years have revealed a number of small deposits of precious stones in the area of Ahangaran, south of Chach, such as Oktepa, Gulduran, Feruzakon, and large mines on the right bank of the Ungurlisay.(35). It can be acknowledged that precious stones were exported to different parts of Asia from these regions.

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