

ARAB CAMPAIGNS TO THE MIDDLE OASIS: THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FERGANA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 8TH CENTURY

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Abstract

The article analyzes the military campaigns of arab troops to Fergana at the beginning of the 8th century, the political situation between the local rulers of Central Asia in this situation.

Keywords: Fergana, arab Caliphate, arab invasion, coalition, Salih ibn Muslim, Sughd, Nasr ibn Sayyor.

Introduction

We can learn about the next March of the Arabs to Fergana from the work of Balazuri. It records that when Qutayba became Viceroy of Khurosong, he left an army at Movarounnahr, led by his younger brother, Salih^{*1}. Salih, on the other hand, would occupy Koson and Urasht in 86/705. Nasr ibn Sayyor was also with him in his army. Nasr ibn Sayyor seizes the fortress of Bey'anhar^{*2} in Fergana [1].

Now let us return to the March of the Righteous to Fergana. Other Arabic-language sources do not mention Salih ibn Muslim's march to Fergana. Tabari records that Salih as-Saganiyon conquered the land called Bosoro or Bosoron, which was located between Saganiyon and Washjird [2]. It seems to us that it was impossible for the righteous to penetrate so much into the inner districts of Fergana in 705, and that is why Balazuri's thoughts above are somewhat puzzling.

After a series of bloody battles fought between 705-712, the Arabs laid siege to the city of Samarkand, conquering Balkh^{*3}, Poykand^{*4}, Bukhara, Shuman^{*5}, Nasaf^{*6}, Khorezm [3]. The Arab invasion prompted the rulers of Central Asia to collect and form a unified military

* Note 1.: Solih ibn Muslim – One of Qutayba's brothers. The year of birth is unclear. During the revolt of 715 in Fergana, his brother died after being shot in the chest while defending Qutayba. Футух ал-булдон. – Б. 290.

* Note 2.: Balazuri's critical text, published in 1863, states Bey'anhar بنعجر looks 1, 2 va 4 the dots of the letters are written down. And in the Uzbek translation, which Kamolliddin made in 2017, this place passed in a multi-point manner without introducing the name. In Turkish and Russian translations of Balazuri بنعجر – Bey'anhar and Bi'anxar looks them. But there are no exact data on where this city is located. It seems to us that Bey'anhar was one of the strongholds on the northern borders of Fergana. Al-Balazuri. Liber expugnationis regionum. – P. 420; Футух ал-булдон. – Б. 251; El-Belâzurî. Futuh-ul-Buldan. – S. 482; Ал-Балазури Завоевание Хорасана. – С. 78.

* Note 3.: Balh – In the Middle Ages, the city was the center of the historical region of Tokharistan. It corresponds to the territory of the present-day Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

* Note 4.: Poykent – The city in the Bukhara region is located next to Farabr, next to the Khurosan. It also appears in historical sources under the name Baikand. According to Narshahi, Baikand is older than Bukhara, and before Islam it housed a royal residence. By the 10th century, Baikand had a large shopping centre. Абу бакр Наршахий. Бухоро тарихи. – Б. 100.

* Note 5.: Shuman – Also the name of the state according to historical provincial and Chinese sources. It is on the upper reaches of the Kofirmigon River and is localized near Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

* Note 6.: Nasaf – In the Middle Ages (9th — 12th centuries), Kashkadarya is the largest city in the western part of the Valley. Before Islam, the city located here was called Nakhshab.

alliance against the enemy. In this regard, the following lines in the letter of the soghdians, who were under attack by the Arabs, to the rulers of Choch and Fergana, deserve attention: “if the Arabs overcome us, they will sing you, so at least act for yourself” [4]. In particular, the sources give the following information: “[‘Ali] said: Qutaybah reached Soghd-‘Abd al-Rabin had reached it before him-with twenty thousand (men]. Qutaybah reached it, accompanied by Khwarazmians and Bukharans, three or four nights after ‘Abd al-Rabman had stopped there, and said, “When we light on a people's courtyard, how evil will be the morning of them that are warned.” He besieged them for a month; in the course of being besieged, (the Soghdians] fought [Qutaybah’s men] several times from a single direction. Fearful throughout the siege, the Soghdians wrote to the king of al-Shash and the Ikhshad of Farghanah, “If the Arabs vanquish us, they will visit upon you the like of what they brought us.” [The king of al-Shash and the Ikhshad and their followers] agreed to go to [the Soghdians] and sent [word] to them: “Send [against the Arabs] those who may distract them, so that we may make a night attack on their camp” [5].

In the threatening political situation that arose, the rulers of Choch and Fergana, the Turkish and Turkish*⁷ khagans of the 7th century, made the right decision and took an active part in the fight against the Arabs from the beginning of the invasion. The ferganians have repeatedly reached the bukharhudotlar Qabaj khotun*⁸ and his son Tughshoda*⁹ as well as the Sughd ikhshids Tarkhun*¹⁰ and Ghurak*¹¹ for help [6].

When the Arabs attacked the city of Samarkand, as noted above, the sughdi asked for encouragement from the Choch rulers, Fergana ikhshidi and the Turkish Khagan. The army sent to their aid was commanded by Inal hakon *¹², the son of the Turkish hokon. Tabari wrote that the Turkish army consisted of “the sons of the king and his bravest young soldiers”. But, informed of this through his spies, Qutayba sent a sorted arab Army against them, led by his brother. The Arabs ambushed and managed to crush the Turks [7].

In the fight against the Arabs, the Devastich¹³ laid hope for the help of both Choch, Fergana and the Turkish Khaganate. In order to form a single coalition against the enemy, the Choch ruler sent his envoy Fatufarn to the Farghana King and the Turkish Khan. The messenger's letter from choch to Devastich (A-14) reached us as part of documents found at Mount Mug [8]. In it, Fatufarn informs the Choch that he has arrived, handed over Devastich's letter to the Choch ruler (tuduni), and conveyed “spoken words” to tudun and his assistant. Then the ambassador, unable to find a way to meet the Turkish khagan, reports that by the presumption

* Note 7.: Turkash hokons – A state that existed from 704-738 in the territories from Choch to Turfon and Beshbalikh. The capital is Suyob and Kungut.

* Изох 8.: Qabaj xotun – Widow of Bukharkhudot Bidun, who died in 673. Also referred to as Khutak khotun. Mother of bukharhudot Tughshoda I. Litvinskiy B.A., Ahmad Hasan Dani. History of Civilizations of Central Asia: Tre crossroads of civilization, A.D. 250 to 750. UNESCO, 1996. – P. 418.

* Изох 9.: Tugshoda I – Representative of the bukharhudot dynasty, which ruled Bukhara in 692-724. Bukharkhudot Bidun's son. Смирнова О.И. Сводный каталог согдийский монет. Москва, 1981. – С. 59.

* Изох 10.: Tarkhun – Sughd ikhshidi, from the beginning of the 8th century, began to operate Samarkand. In 709, he was dethroned for making peace with Qutayba, and imprisoned in the palace. Tarkhun committed suicide there. His two sons flee to Panjikent afshini Devastich. История ат-Табари. – С. 184-188.

* Изох 11.: Gurak – One of the last Sughd ikhshids of Turkish origin. Tarkhun came to power after his abdication. Active 710-738. Смирнова. О.И. Очерки из истории Согда. – С. 170. (сўнгги Сўғд ихшидлари Тургар (738-760) ва Баничур – Мо-чжо (780-800)).

* Изох 12.: Inal hokon – Younger son of the eastern Turkish Khagan Qarogon, who ruled from 692-716. Отаҳўжаев А. Илк ўрта асрлар Марказий Осиё цивилизациясида турк-сўғд муносаблари. – Б. 101.

of the situation, he had given the khakan and the Fergana King the corresponding letters through the Fergana tutu, who came to the Choch in those days [9]. But Devashtich's hopes did not come true, because the rulers of Choch and Fergana and the Turkish khagan preferred to help the “legitimate” king Gurak, and not Devashtich, who was contesting the throne of Sugd.

Nevertheless, Devashtich did not give up his passion for getting help from them. In a letter he sent to Afarun, the governor of the Khachsar estate (village), located near the city of Samarkand, he informs the King of Fergana and that he is waiting for help from the Turks and Chinese [10]. In conclusion, the military campaigns of the Arabs to the Fergana Valley were carefully thought out, the interaction of the local rulers of Movarounnahr was carried out in a state aware of the contacts of Turkish khaganate with them.

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