

EARLY-MEDIEVAL USTRUSHANA AS A SALES AND CULTURAL CENTER AT THE CROSSROAD OF THE GREAT SILK ROAD

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Abstract: The article reveals the place and role of Ustrushana as an important commercial and cultural center on the Great Silk Road. On the basis of research materials and historical sources, data are presented on Ustrushan, as an independent state, on its rulers and social structure. Based on materials from archaeological research, an assessment of the socio-political, economic and cultural life in Ustrushan is given.

Keywords: Sedentary agriculture, nomadic cattle breeding, earlier Middle Ages, Chinese sources, Arab sources, the Great Silk Road, religion, cultural interaction, titles and estates.

As is known from historical sources, by the end of the 3rd century AD, lands located between two rivers - the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya, on which settled population engaged in settled agriculture, were divided into several natural and geographical zones. Ustrushana described as a political entity was first mentioned in early medieval written sources, according to which it arose in the VI - VII centuries, between Ferghana, Chach and Sogd, mainly on the left bank of the Syr Darya.

Speaking about the factors of cultural interaction, we should recognize the unique stimulating role of the Great Silk Road, which began to form in the 2nd century. BC. and was a conductor of technological innovations, religious ideas and cultural achievements [1]. This transcontinental route for the first time connected the Far East and Mediterranean foci of ancient civilizations and passed through Central Asia. It is also important that the nomads in the empires they created important conditions for intercultural exchange. Nomadism stimulated population migration, which, in turn, was a catalyst for ethnic, and in particular, ethnogenetic and civilizational processes, which developed especially intensively within the contacts between a settled cattle-breeding and a settled-agricultural population.

The cultural ties of the population of Central Eurasia with Iran (Persia), China, Parthia, the Kushan Empire and other civilizations could not pass without a trace, the process of mutual influence was most pronounced in the sphere of religion. At the initial stage, the influence of Indo-Iranian, Aryan deities, especially Mithras, was present in the religious and mythological consciousness of the peoples of Eurasia. The penetration of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and other ethically oriented religions (instead of mythological) cannot be denied as a well-known indicator of the evolution of religious consciousness [2].

In Central Asia, VII-VIII centuries there were many small independent states - Chaganiyan, Sogd, Ustrushana, Parkana, Chach and some others. Ustrushana, thanks to its convenient geographical position, occupied a special place in the development of trade relations between Sogd and Khorezm with Chacham and the Ferghana Valley [3].

The Sogdian king bore the title "Malka". Its Sogdian equivalent is the title "ikhshid" (from the ancient Iranian "hshatra"). The rulers of the Sogdian rustaks bore the titles "Marya", "Marya-Khvab", "Khvab". These titles are fixed on coins and Sogdian documents. The ruler of Ustrushana bore the title of "aphsheen", and the ruler of Kesha the title of "ihrid" and "dikhkan." Judging by the Sogdian documents, the Sogdian society in antiquity and in the early Middle Ages was divided into 3 classes: 1 - Azatan (free, noble); 2 - Mugan (priests); 3 - Kishtivarzan (farmers), Hvarakan (merchants), caricoron (artisans). Slaves are also mentioned, but they stood outside the estates. The first two estates were privileged. In Muslim sources for Sogd VIII century. dikhkans, horsemen and village leaders (dikhsalar) are mentioned [4]. Basically, this division is identical to the division in the Sasanian Iran, and, in our opinion, may well be identical to the division in the early medieval Ustrushan, which at one time stood out from Sogd and preserved the Zoroastrian religion.

Early medieval Chinese sources for the first time gave names and information about the geographical position of the region [5]. Sogdian documents of the castle of Mug (VIII century) reveal data relating to the social, political and public life of Ustrushana [6]. Having studied the archaeological sites of North and North-West Ustrushana, Tuichibaev emphasizes that the early medieval monuments of the region are divided into three-part, two-part settlements, large rural settlements, castles, caravanserais, castle buildings, rural settlements, detached houses, observation posts, barrows. Settlements and caravanserais were located on important trade routes [7].

In the 70s of the twentieth century, the Jizzakh oasis, rich in archaeological monuments of antiquity and the early Middle Ages, remained outside the attention of archaeologists. Only in 1976-79, the Jizzakh detachment of the Institute of Archeology of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan under the leadership of E.B. Kodirov, large and important archaeological sites preserved in the region were studied, and a list of them was compiled. After that, archaeological excavations were carried out. Excavations carried out in monuments such as Kaliyatepe near the cities of Jizzakh, Kurgantep, Kingirtep and Almantep in the Gallaaral district, important factual materials were obtained.

As you know, in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, the crowded roads of the Great Silk Road connecting the countries of the East and West passed through the Jizzakh oasis. Important trade routes from Samarkand to Fergana and Chach passed through many towns and villages in the region, along routes that had emerged in earlier periods. For this reason, several caravanserais, sardoba cisterns and other monuments related directly to the activities of the Great Silk Road have been preserved in the oasis [8]. E. Kodirov compiled the first map of the preserved monuments. This map clearly shows the location of several caravanserais, cities and castles erected along the sidelines of the Great Silk Road. Especially important is the discovery in Kingirtep of more than 30 rare coins dating back to the beginning of the 8th century, which made it possible to study the monetary relations of Jizzakh on the Great Silk Road [9].

In the IV-V centuries. AD Ustrushana stands out as an independent possession. The Chinese chronicles of the time of the early Middle Ages, as mentioned above, quite accurately convey both the name of the new state and its borders. In due time N.N. Negmatov delineated these boundaries on the map [10]. Some experts cite the oldest name of the region as Sutrushana. Early medieval Chinese sources refer to the region as the "Eastern Tsao", which is also associated with Ustrushana, Shuaydushana, and Suduyshana Sudushini.

According to Smirnova, the meaning of the word "Ustrushana" is still unknown, but it resembles the name of one of the Buddhist deities - Sudurshan. At that time, ties with India were close, as evidenced by the coins of one of the Ustrushan rulers of Satachari III, on the front side of which an elephant is depicted. The name of the ruler goes back to the Sanskrit Sadacharya, which means "teacher" [12].

Arab historians and geographers IX-X centuries. they described Ustrushana in more detail, however, the names of the first Ustrushan rulers were not preserved. Their names were read by O.I. Smirnova by coins, which were first attributed to the Late Kushan coins of the local Central Asian coinage. Then, the steady nature of the findings of such coins in the Kalai Kakhkakh settlement in Shakhristan [13], where the capital's center is located, made it possible to talk about their origin. According to O.I. Smirnova, the first of the rulers or athenes known to us, was Chirdmish. The name of this king is translated from the Sogdian language as "descending from Mithra" - the Zoroastrian deity of the treaty associated with sun worship [14]. On coins, Chirdmish, like the rest of Ustrushan's billboards, is depicted in a winged crown dating back to the samples of the royal crowns of Sassanid Iran. At the same time, the image can be borrowed from Buddhist iconography. In the ears are large pendant earrings. On the neck is a hryvnia with three large stones or beads. On the reverse side of the coins are generic signs and inscriptions. On the coins of the poster of Satachari III on the front side there is an image of an elephant, which, as you know, is the Indian emblem of wisdom, the elephant-like god Ganesha was the patron saint of trade [15]. Engaging in trade in the East has always been a godly deed. During the reign of the first athenes, its unprecedented rise was observed, especially along the numerous branches of the Great Silk Road. It is no accident that it was in Ustrushan, near Zaamin, that the first earliest pre-Arab caravanserai of Azlyartep was found, which functioned in the 7th - early 8th centuries AD [16]. At that time, land routes, which played a leading role in trade with China, led from Sogd via Ustrushana to Eastern Europe [17]. T.S. Yernazarova and B.D. Kochnev, having studied numismatic data, noted at that time close contacts with Chach, where coins of the Rakhancha and Satachari afshins were found [18]. Thus, trade in Ustrushan contributed to the rapid growth and heyday of cities and settlements, the enrichment of local merchants. A significant part of the proceeds went to the treasury of the state, whose ruler strongly encourages and patronizes trade.

On the back of the Rakhanch coins (type III) is a Christian equilateral cross. Similar crosses are found on the coins of other Central Asian rulers. On the one hand, this may be the influence of the Byzantine coinage [19]. On the other hand, the cross is an ancient, pre-Christian symbol of the fire-savior and the sun, a sign of eternal life and blessing and is widespread in the symbolism of the East [20]. Starting from the VIII century. the names of kings of another ruling family are mentioned on coins.

As you can see, Ustrushan coins bear the symbolism of three world religions - Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity [21], from which it can be assumed that all these three religions were recognized in the state, and its kings were distinguished by religious tolerance.

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According to sources, the territory of Ustrushany was divided into rustaks (districts). Their exact number has not yet been established. Apparently, their number was not constant. Al-Mukaddasi cites the number 17, although only 12 rustaks are mentioned in the sources, however, it is stipulated that all major cities had their own rustak. Based on this, scientists suggest that there were 18 rustaks, of which the Bundzhikat, Sabat, Zamin, Burnamad, Harakana, Feknan, Havas, Shavkat, Fagkat were located in the steppe, and the Mast, Asbanikat, Biskar, Bangam, Wavr, Shagar, Mascha, Burgar and Buttam - in the mountainous part [27]. According to A.A. Gritsina, Nudzhikat should be added to the listed rustaks, since it is named among the cities of Ustrushany; at the same time, Havas should be excluded, not named either among the cities or among the rustaks, but is mentioned among the large villages of Ustrushany [28]. Among mountain rustaks that did not have cities are called Bushagar (Shagar), Mascha, Burgar (Fargar), Bangam (Bagnam), Mink, Biskun (Biskar), Isbasket (Arsubanikat, Asbanikat), Vavr, Buttam [29].

According to Ibn Haukal, Ustrushana was famous for its abundance of agricultural products, which were exported beyond its borders, which also predetermined the high level of development of artificial irrigation and irrigation. Bazaars and several large, regularly operating fairs flourished in the cities, including indoor ones, which gathered residents of rather distant places. But the iron-ore weapons (made in the vicinity of Mink and Marsmanda), which were "in general use in Khorasan and which are armed to Baghdad and Iraq", were especially proud of the Ostrushans [30].

The capital of Ustrushana was the city of Bunjikat, which, according to al-Idrisi, lay on the side of the mountain. According to al-Mukaddasi, "Bundjikas is ... a big, fertile, important city, the waters are plentiful, people are plentiful, surrounded by gardens, beautiful houses ..." [31]. According to al-Istahri, Ibn Haukal and al-Mukaddasi, the city had a circumference of about one farce (6-8 km). He was surrounded by two rows of walls. The city had castles, courtyards, orchards and vineyards, as well as a cathedral mosque and a prison. There was an abundance of water in it, channels leaked, numerous mills operated. Only the male population was up to 20 thousand people. In the outer wall there were four gates (darbes): Zaminsky, Marsmand, Nujikat, and Kakhlyabad [32].

In addition to the Bunzhdikat, the largest cities in Northwestern Ustrushana were Zamin, Dizak and Sabat, to which the sources pay the most attention. However, al-Mukaddasi, which gives sufficiently detailed information about the largest urban points of Northern Ustrushana, Dizak only mentions without giving other information [33]. Located on the border with the nomadic steppe at the intersection of important trade and migration routes, it quickly turns from a small fortification surrounded by discounts into a small town. Its main core is initially localized at the site of the Kalyatep ancient settlement on the southeastern outskirts of the modern city of Jizzakh [34]. After the conquest of Ustrushany, in the IX century. Dizak moves to a new place.

According to sources, Dizak was famous for its many discounts and the manufacture of fine woolen clothing, known far beyond its borders.

In addition to the indicated sources refer to Marsmanda, Sabat and other cities and settlements, castles and fortresses.

In total, 14 Ustrushana affinities are known [35]. Seven of them were representatives of the first “monetary” dynasty and seven were representatives of the second and last dynasty of rulers. Among the names of the first dynasty, perhaps, lies the nameless young king, whom the Chinese chronicles mention. Here is a sequential series of their rule [36]:

First Dynasty (rules from about 600 to 720 CE): Chirdmish; Satachari I; Rakhanch I; Satachari II; Satachari III; Rakhanch II; Rahanch III.

The second dynasty: Kharabugra (720-738 gg.); Hanahara (738-800 gg.); Cavus (800-825 gg.); Haydar (al-Afshin) (825-840 gg.); Hassan (840-860 gg.); Abdallah (860-880 gg.); Sayr (880-893 / 894).

Subsequently, Ustrushana became part of the Samanid state, which went down in the history of Central Asia as the first, after the Arab conquest, independent centralized state founded by the local dynasty.

The Great Silk Road played a huge role in the transfer of material and cultural values and connected the civilizations of the Near, Middle and Far East, as well as the peoples of Central Asia. In the Central Asian section of the Great Silk Road, a special place was occupied by the city of Khujand. Ancient Greek and Roman authors considered it the border of Asia. It was here that Alexandria Eskhata was erected by Alexander the Great. As a result of archaeological excavations of 1972, layers belonging to the 7th-5th centuries were revealed here. BC. Arab geographers X-XII centuries. called Khujand “Tyrosi Jahon” (Bride of the whole world). After Khujand, the Great Silk Road highway leads to Istaravshan (Ura-Tyube), which from ancient times was famous for its artisans and the bazaar. Located near the village of Kurkat, the ancient settlement of Shirin was one of the cities of Ustrushany. Near Kurkat are the ruins of the Zoroastrian temple of Aktepe (IV-VII centuries).

Not far from Istaravshan, in the town of Shahristan was located the capital of Ustrushany - Bundzhikat, the ruins of which were studied by an archaeological expedition under the leadership of N. Negmatov. Near the city of Kurgantuyube (Tajikistan), the temple-monastery complex of Aginatepe (VII-VIII centuries) was studied, which is a vivid example of Buddhist architecture. Here are a palace-temple, a stupa, a 14 meter high Buddha statue in nirvana, wall reliefs and murals, and statuettes depicting a Buddha. In the mountainous Badakhshan in the Pamirs, there are also several monuments associated with the Great Silk Road, as Mount Kokhi-lal, where the famous Badakhshan lal and other precious stones were mined, is 47 km from the city of Khorog.

Thus, thanks to the Great Silk Road, a continuous dialogue of cultures of the countries of the West and the East was carried out over the centuries. In the history of the dialogue of the peoples of the two continents, the exchange of knowledge, cultural and spiritual values, in the history of trade the role of the Great Silk Road is immeasurable. While the Central Asian region played an important role in the collection, development and transfer of cultural achievements, Ustrushana occupied an important place in this process both within the region and in the road system, since it was located at the crossroads of the main trade routes. The culture of the Ustrushany peoples at different periods of history was subject to external influence and at the same time influenced the development of trade and cultural ties of neighboring countries.

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