



## IS BACTRIA THE KINGDOM OR THE KAVIAN?

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### ABSTRACT

*It is illuminated the history of the ancient statehood of Central Asia on the example of the Bactria Kavian in this article. The ancient Bactria Kavian was adopted up to the conquest of Central Asia by the Achaemenids, and the restoration of its history was based on the Avesta and Zoroastrian texts. Through the study of written and archaeological sources, the author emphasizes that it is historically correct to call this state the Ancient Bactria Kavian, not the Ancient Bactrian Kingdom.*

**KEY WORDS:** Bactria, Avesta, kavi, kavian, Zardusht, Vishtaspa (Goshtasp)

### INTRODUCTION

Bactrian kingdom is one of the oldest major states in the history of the peoples of Central Asia. It was formed in the region of the upper stream of the Amu Darya River in the VIII century B.C, and consists of the modern territories of Southern Tajikistan, Northern Afghanistan, and Southern Uzbekistan [4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19,22,].

Bactria has introduced to the history of our country as a "kingdom". But it was ruled not by kings, apparently by kavis, and by satraps in the period of the Achaemenid Empire. The main case of the utilization of Bactria as a kingdom in the history of the peoples of Central Asia is that is come in as the result of a translation from Russian literature, in other words the phrase of "Drevnibaktriyskoe tsarstvo" is translated as "Ancient Bactrian kingdom"[12]. We have translated and used the word "tsar", which is typical of the history of European peoples, as "king" (tsarstvo-kingdom). This term belongs not only to Bactria, but also to Khorezm, that is "Drevnkhorezmiskoe tsarstvo" is being used as "Ancient Khorezm kingdom". Even so our history was written in russian language, it is incorrect to use the word "tsar", because there had not been the rule of "tsar" in the history of Uzbekistan statehood

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the matter of illuminating the history of the Bactrian kavian is based on an analysis of archaeological and written sources. The history of the Bactrian kavi is given in the Avesta, and we can shed light on it as a result of a critical study of Zoroastrian

texts and a comparative comparison of archaeological sources.

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In order to clarify this confusion in our history, we cite references about the ancient kavis and the rulers of Bactria. There is information about Kavi Usan and Kavi Haosravah who had been the first Kavis, " striving for dominance over the whole Aryan countries" in the parts of Yasht of Avesta[1]. As well as that The singing of the samson Khausrav as " A hero who united the Aryan countries into a unique kingdom " shows that the first Kavis had built a strong state.

The matter of the country of the Kavis, or the state of the Kavis, has been included into scientific literatures by A.Christensen and I.M. Dyakonov[8]. Nowadays this idea is being developed and enriched with new scientific considerations by I.V. Pyankov[18]. According to his researches which belongs to "Avesta" and "Shahnameh", the development of the Kavis state is chronologically divided into two periods - the first and the last Kavis. The founder of the first Kavis was Kavi Kavata and his successor is Kavi Apivahu. On top of that Kavi Apivahu's four sons had been also kavi titles. Among his sons, Kavi Usan (Usadan) and his grandson Kavi Haosravah had played an important role in the political life of the Kavis. Haosravah governed the kavian into small states. Kavi Vishtaspa was one of the rulers of this type of state, and he was the ruler of Bactria. I.V. Pyankov considers Usan and Haosravah who mentioned in the Avesta as the rulers of the first Kavis. According to the scholar, the second stage of the development of the Kavi state



began with the fact that the prophet Zarathustra " unable to find refuge in their homeland " and found a place from Bactria, in the house of Kavi Vishtaspa. The first Kavis in "Avesta", that is, while the Kavis before the Prophet Zarathustra were denounced as "oppressor", "The Avesta" had a good attitude towards the Kavis who had been accepted Zoroastrianism.

According to I.V. Pyankov, the period when the First Kavis lived was corresponds to the years 900-775 BC, He bases this on the fact that the reign of Kavi Vishtaspa and the period in which Zarathustra lived in his palace are considered to be the second half of the seventh century[18].

I.M. Dyakonov believes that the monuments of Surkh-Dog which belongs to the VIII century BC, found near the village of Nadi-Ali by Girshman was the capital of The First Kavis[8,23]. Thus, according to the informations "Avesta" which is mentioned above, the existence of rulers with the title of Kavi is being confirmed. The chronological periods and regions which they lived are becoming clear.

In the Yasht part of the "Avesta", Frangrasyan (Afrosiab) who the king of the nomadic tur tribe, is mentioned as the ruler of the whole Aryan countries[2,18]. According to the "Avesta", Siyavarshan who son of Kavi Usan to Frangrasyan, that is, "run away to Tur's country" and established the stronghold of Xshatrosauka in top of "high divine Kangxe"[3]. These evidences which especially about their king Frangrasyan ruled over all the Aryans in the history of the statehood of the nomadic world can be taken as new information in the filed of the first statehood of the nomadic world. Kavi Vishtaspa (Gushtasp) is the ruler who had been accepted the Prophet Zarathustra and helped him to create the teachings of Zoroastrianism. Vishtaspa is his name, kavi is his title, namely a sign of dominance. Consequently, It is known that Bactria was ruled by Kavis, not kings. Based on this, we consider that it appropriate to use the phrase "Bactria Kavian" instead of " Bactrian Kingdom".

Let's also observe how the title of Kavi was forgotten. It is known that King of Kings Darius I (Darius the Great) carried out new reforms in the Achaemenid state. He established new reforms in the sector of the governance and finance, particularly reorganized the empire by dividing it into **satrapies**, or provinces. For each satrapy, Darius appointed a satrap-a political governor-and a military commander. The satrapic territories were divided on the basis of the former local states and the boundaries which the ethnic groups of the population were being inhabited. While the territories where were occupied in the period of the reign of Cyrus or Cambyses II were ruled by local rulers, according to the new reform, satraps were appointed from the Persians[20]. The satraps and military commander in there were under the constant control of the King of Kings and the

central government. The administration of **satrapies** and inspections were carried out by Khazarapad. As well as that He had commanded the personal guard of the King of Kings.

The method of managing the local satrapies and the composition of the divanhana exactly replicated the structure of the main divanhana in Susa, that is, the head of divanhana, treasurer, initiative suppressors, accountants, court representatives, scribes and others.

It is clear that after the Achaemenids conquered Bactria, as many other region of Central Asia, the Kavis had lost their independence. During the invasion of Cyrus, the ruler of Bactria was Tanioksark (Oxiart). Reliable written information about it has been preserved. In his work, Diodorus wrote the details of the battle of the Nin who was Assyrian King against to Bactria. In the beginning of this work, It is described informations about details of Nin's marriage to Semiramids. According to Diodorus' works, Nin had known that It was very difficult to defeat Bactria, because Bactria had the large population and they had a perfect skill in battle, as well as that there were a lot of stronghold in there. Despite that Nin gathered a large army and in the first battle he defeated from Oxiart who Kavi of the Bactria in the place where between the road of mountain and the plain area. After then, He will be prepared for a new battle with Bactria [10].

Diodorus described Bactr which the capital of Bactria that "Bactria is one of the great town, it is a beautiful and impregnable citadel". Nin had besieged the town of Bactr for a long time. The town was occupied as a result of the craftiness of Semiramids. The Bactrians were defeated. The Kavi of Bactria was killed. Nin plundered the richesses of Bactria.

These events were also illuminated by Pompey Trog, Arrian, and Xenophon in their works. However, there is some confusion in the description of the rulers and in the details of the events. In his works, Xenophon had written that the war which between Bactria and Assyria took place in the period of the reign of Kiaksar who the ruler of Assyria.

There is also a debate among researchers that, the taking into account with of the long distance between Assyria and Central Asia, especially Bactria, some informations which is mentioned above should be removed from the pages of history. It is known that this issue was clarified by I.M. Dyakonov. The informations of ancient historians remained their valid after the following indication in a letter of Assyrian spies which was written to their king which was found as a result of his researchs: "...but, after I took away the lazurite, an insurrection began against it in the country, after then I asked to send a large military force"[9]. It is clear that, Bactrian lazurites were highly valued in the Near East. Thus, information which is about Ancient Bactria Kavian was introduced to the history.



Now we are going to cite informations about the rulers of Ancient Bactria in the period of the Achaemenids. In this regard, E. A. Monchadskaya's research is noteworthy[17].

Administration period the years B.C.	The name of satrap	Appointed King	Historical sources
529-522	Tanioksark (Tanaoksar-Smerdis- Bardiya)	Cyrus, Cambyses	Herodotus,III, 30 <i>Behistun</i> Inscription III, 3
522-486	Dodarshish	Cambyses, Darius	<i>Behistun</i> Inscription III, 15
486-480	Ariamen	Xerxes	Plutarch, 173
480-465	Masista	Xerxes	Herodotus,VII, 82
465-423	Artapan, Gistasp	Artaxerxes I	Diodorus, XI, 69
423-335	No information		
335-329	Bess	Darius III	Diodorus, XVII, 74

It is clear from the table given that the title of Kavi was not used in Bactria in the period of Achaemenids, the satrapy was introduced here too as in the whole territory of the empire and it was lasted two hundred years. The phrase of Kavi was forgotten along with the administration of Kavian during the Achaemenid Empire. The title of kavi was not used in coins which were embossed in the post-Achaemenids period, especially in the period of the reigns of Alexander Makedonsky, Seleucids, Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, Kushans [21].

In his research which was dedicated to the history of state titles, E.V. Rtveldadze expressed his views on the administration of Kavi system that the Kavi title was a local method of governance which was emerged in Central Asia and it had been used for almost one and a half thousand years[21]. He based his opinion on the occurring of the word of k'w' in the Bukhor-Khudad coins that was found in the territory of Bukhara which belongs to the VI-VII centuries. He believes that the word of k'w', namely the ward of "king," was written in front of the names of the rulers of Bukhara. Bukhor-Khudad coins are well studied by experts[24]. the word of k'w' was pronounced not as "kavi" but as "kava" because the punctuation marks which was placed after the two letters (kw) have the same expression and the same sound. The taking into account of the same or very similarity of the letters W and N in the inscriptions of Bukhor-Khudad that the researchers also read this inscription as "kana" and also wrote that it was not the title but the name of the Bukhor-Khudad ruler.

### CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above information and feedback, we would like to suggest that our history would be more accurately illuminated if we used the term of Ancient Bactria Kavian instead of the term Ancient Bactria Kingdom in our histories which is being written.

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