

Samanids Of Ferghana

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Annotation

The article covers the activities of the rulers of the Samanids: Ahmad ibn Asad, Abul Ashas Asad ibn Asad, Iskhak ibn Ahmad, Muhammad ibn Iskhak and Muhammad ibn Asad, based on historical sources and literature. The political situation on the eve of the rule of the Samanids in the valley, the rule of the Samanids in Ferghana, the events of 823 and 828, the conflict between Nasr and Ismoil, several uprisings at the beginning of the tenth century and the process of transferring Ferghana to the hands of the Samanids are highlighted.

Key words and expressions: Ferghana, the Arab Caliphate, Mahdi, Ahmad ibn Asad, Chungjung, Karluks, Jabgu, Jabuya, Samanids, Rafei bin Lays, Shawdar Ismoil, Nasr, Suffarids, Iskhoq ibn Ahmad, Muhammad ibn Asad, Toghon.

Political events in Ferghana at the end of the VIII century are widely covered in historical sources [12, 13, 16, 19, 20, 27, 28], with insignificant information about the ruling people. For example, Ahmad ibn Asad, the deputy Movarounnahr during the Caliph Mahdi (775-785), invaded Ferghana with a large army, and the king of Ferghana in Koson officially recognized the authority of the Caliphate. In Chinese sources there is evidence that the ruler of Ferghana was called Zhongji and he sends his son Shuei to China in 771 [12: 319] Thus, it is likely that Zhongji [22: 285] was the ruler of Ferghana during the reign of Ahmad ibn Asad, but the Turkic name and the years of his reign are not known yet.

It is worth noting that throughout the eighth century, karluks has been a priority in the political life of the Ferghana Valley. Due to the defeat of the

Chinese at the Battle of Talas in 751, the pressure on the elderly from the east decreased, and they had the opportunity to create an independent state. Since the northern and eastern parts of the valley at that time were bordered by the Karluk state [28:20], a conflict arose periodically between the Arab Caliphate and the Karluks about borders in general, and the Ferghana region in particular.

In the 90s of the 8th century, Ferghana was captured by jabgu of karluks. Nevertheless, the karluks did not do away with the local dynasty that ruled the valley. On the contrary, they supported their struggle against the Arabs. Therefore, the Arabs had to return to Ferghana again during the caliph Harun ar-Rashid (786-809). This time, Harun al-Rashid's deputy in Maverannakhr, Guithrif Ata sent an army under the command of Amr bin Jamil to Ferghana [6: 276]. The main goal of the march was to expel the karluk's jabgu Jabuy [6: 276], who encouraged the Ferghana ruler in struggle against the Arabs. However, Amr bin Jamil was defeated, and the Arabs could not achieve their goal on this campaign [10: 26].

The uprising of Rafe ibn Lays in Maverannakhr in 806 had a significant impact on the political processes in Ferghana. As a result of this uprising, the local dynasty in the valley was abolished, and power passed to the descendants of Somonkhudot, and there are no historical records of the ancient Kushan or Turkic dynasties of Ferghana. The administration of Maverannakhr and Ferghana, an important part of the Caliphate, passed from local rulers, whom Caliphs did not trust, to the Samanid family, which proved its allegiance to them. Thanks to the active participation of the residents of Ferghana and Khujand in the uprising [18: 141], Harun al-Rashid was sent there officials with a special program to protect the inhabitants of Ferghana from the ideas of Rafe bin Lays [23: 283], because the rebels could receive help from the karluks living along the border.

The uprising of Rafe bin Lays showed that although the Arabs entered Ferghana almost a century ago, their position here was not strong. With the exception of the Arab settlements in Ferghana, Islam was not widely spread in the

valley. This was the political situation in the Ferghana Valley at the turn of the VIII-IX centuries.

The suppression of the uprising of Rafe bin Lays with the sons of Asad led to the strengthening of the political position of Caliphate and Samanids. The founder of the Samanid dynasty - Somonkhudot was the ruler of the village of Saman. Historical sources give different answers to the question of where this village is located. Some authors claim that the village was located in the Balkh territory, others claim that it was in the vicinity of Samarkand and the third possessed it near Termez [21: 19].

Somonkhudot, governor of Khorasan, represented Asad ibn Abdullah Kushayri, converted to Islam and named his son Asad in his honor [1: 133]. When Asad grew up, Mamun became the next ruler of Khorasan. His sons, i.e. the grandsons of Samankhudot, Nuh, Ahmad, Yahya and Ilyos, also serve in Mamun and help the Caliphate, and such as Tahir bin Hussein, crush the rebellion. In exchange for their services, the caliph appointed Nuh the ruler of Samarkand, Ahmad of Ferghana, Yahyo the ruler of Shosh and Ilyos of Herat [12:66, 19: 1].

Around the same time, the governorate of Khorasan was also transferred to the local Tohirid dynasty. In 821 Tahir ibn Hussein, a year later, after his death his son Talha was appointed ruler of Khorasan. The rulers of the Samanids in the provinces of Movarounnahr were vassals and obeyed the tahirids who were deputies in Khorasan.

Ahmed ibn Asad, appointed governor of Ferghana, was not involved in political activities here. Mirhond's "Ravzat al-Safa" claims that in 828 Turkic tribes invaded Ferghana [19: 2; 24:13]. The book says that opponents will take Ferghana from Ahmad. Therefore, Ahmad had to leave Ferghana. It is safe to assume that he left Ferghana and set off his brother Nuh. Ahmad bin Asad, who officially became a vassal of the deputy of Khorasan Talha bin Tahir, sought help. Taking into account the request of Ahmad, Talha bin Tahir sent troops to Ferghana, led by his influential minister Ahmad bin Abu Khalid. It is noteworthy

that Caliph Mamun personally appointed Ahmed bin Abi Khalid as Minister, and his position in Khorasan and Maverannahr was much higher. Only after the “enemies of religion” were expelled from the Ferghana by Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid [20:57] Ahmad could return to Ferghana and rule for a long time. Mirhond does not report when this happened. Barthold, based on the story of Mirhond, also does not mention the date of this event [8: 257]. However, the book of Mirhond states that after the death of Tahir, the Caliph Mamun sent Ahmad ibn Abu Khalid as minister to Talha. Along with these events, events in Ferghana are also mentioned. Thus, we can conclude that the date of the expulsion of Ahmed ibn Assad from Ferghana by his opponents and the subsequent seizure of power by Ahmad ibn Abu Khalid occurred between 822 and 823 years.

It is noteworthy that Mirhond wrote his work at the end of the fifteenth century, but the events he mentioned in 822-823 in Ferghana are not mentioned in sources telling us about this time. Thus, Mirhond used some of the original sources that we had never heard before when writing his fourth volume “The Tale of the Samanids and Other Dynasties”. Nasafi also mentions an interesting story about 20s of 9th century in his “Al-Kand fi zikri ulamai Samarkand”. According to the information provided there, Talha ibn Tahir expelled the “Ferghana kings” from the valley in 828 [13: 57, 27:73].

The personality of the ruler, called the "Ferghana kings", is not mentioned either in historical sources or in scientific literature. First of all, let's clarify who the Ferghana kings are. Caliph Mamun transferred the Ferghana, like other provinces of Central Asia, to the grandsons of Somonkhudot. In the case of the former Turks of Ferghana who ruled the valley, Mamun could not have given it to Ahmad ibn Asad as a gift. Only if Ferghana dynasty was abolished or expelled. Consequently, the rulers of Ferghana were expelled from the valley during the Mamun period, and the grandson of Somonkhudot was appointed to his liberated province. If the Ferghana dynasties were not expelled to the valley, attacks 822-823 and 828 would not have occurred. By the expression “Kings of Fergana” in the

aforementioned work, Nasafi may have meant the former rulers. The second assumption is that the term "kings of Ferghana" probably does not refer to the former local dynasty, but to the leaders of Turkic tribes on the borders of the Ferghana Valley. Earlier, Karluk's thorns several times invaded Ferghana and fought with the Arabs. Thus, the power of Ahmad bin Asad in Ferghana was not yet strong. For this reason, attacks by Turkic tribes adjacent to Ferghana were frequent. In the 820s there were two attacks by the Turkic people on Ferghana. It is noteworthy that Ahmad ibn Asad took Ferghana into property from Caliph Mamun, but Tahirids was a guarantee of his activities in the valley. That is why Tahirids repeatedly helped Ahmad.

The establishing of reign of Ahmad ibn Asad in Ferghana was a great merit of his brother Nuh, governor of Samarkand. In 838-839, the conquest of the northern and eastern parts of Ferghana, that is, magicians, including Kasan, Urest, and Isfijab [4, 15, 18: 159-160], and the creation of new fortresses in the valley, no doubt, strengthened the position of Asad. Sources indicate that Nuh's campaign on Koson and Urest was a violation of the peace with the Samanids by the rulers of this land [17: 445]. Thus, we can conclude that Nuh ibn Asad had previously organized military campaigns in northern and eastern Ferghana, having made peace with the leaders of the Turkic tribes in order not to attack each other. Following this incident, historical sources did not report any attacks on the Ferghana Valley.

According to Ibn Havkal's book "Surat al-Ard", from Isfijab to the most remote parts of Ferghana, the land was adjacent to the karluks [28:20, 29:35], where there were frequent raids. Historical sources indicate that the army and army training during the reign of Ahmad ibn Asad were extremely high. Given the economic development in Ferghana and Turkish cities during the reign of Ahmad ibn Asad, data on the high level of combat training of the Samanid army are obvious. On the other hand, the military readiness of the valley bordering the settlers was quite natural. It also helped Ahmad ibn Asad unite all Maverannakhr

from Ferghana in the future. Over the years, the amount collected from residents of the Turkish cities of Ferghana and Ahmad ibn Asad amounted to 326,400 dirhams [18: 160].

Little information on the domestic politics of Ahmad ibn Asad in Ferghana. Gardisi notes that a strong earthquake occurred in 224 by hejira (839 AD) in Ferghana [6: 278]. In his work "Turkestan during the Mongol invasion" Bartold claims, that the uprising was in Shoudar in 859 [4: 268]. In Ibn Havkal's book "Surat al-Ard", Nasr ibn Ahmad led Shavdar marches with an army of 300,000, and four thousand of them were cut off from the main army during the fighting [28:20].

It is important that the Turkestan region, where Shoudar is located, was not administratively connected nor with the ruler of Samarkand, Nasr bin Ahmed and neither with Muslim, governor of Shash. Consequently, while gaining influence in Central Asia, Ahmad ibn Asad sends his eldest son Nasr bin Ahmad against the rebels. However, the accuracy of the above figure is doubtful. The author probably wants to emphasize a large number of troops with this number. Nasr reports that several thousand rebels were killed [8: 268]. However, this source does not provide information on the causes of the uprising. We believe that the rebellion was probably related to the caliphate.

According to Narshahi, before his death, Nuh will appoint his brother Ahmad [1: 147]. After the death of Nuh and Yakhyo, Ahmad ibn Asad united the entire Movarounnahr under his control. He usually divided large provinces into his sons and vassals. In particular, he handed over his sons to Nasr and Asad Samarkand and Ferghana, as well as to his nephew Muslim Shash. Ahmad ibn Asad himself retains supreme power and controls almost all of Maverannakhr from Ferghana [7: 492]. Thus, by the middle of the ninth century, almost all Maverannahr (except Bukhara, Kesh and Chaganyan) were under the rule of the Samanids. We can say that the foundation of the Samanids was laid by the ruler of Ferghana Ahmad bin Asad. Ferghana was the first center of this state. Although

the center first moved to Samarkand and then to Bukhara, Ferghana retained its political status as an important region.

After the death of Ahmad ibn Asad in 864, the reign of Ferghana became one of his sons, Abul Ash'as ibn Ahmad [15:17].

After the death of Ahmad bin Asad, his sons were divided into two groups [15:21]. The first group was led by the successor of Ahmad Nasr, and the second group was headed by Ismoil. These two groups have different political goals, and the main goal of the ruler of Ferghana Abul Ash'as ibn Ahmad is to keep the valley in their hands. Because it was Nasr who bestowed on Ferghana Abul Ash'as Asad ibn Ahmad after the death of his father. Based on this, Nasr was the guarantor of the reign of Abul Ashas al-Asad ibn Ahmad in Ferghana. Abul Ash'as Asad ibn Ahmed stood in the center of Ferghana, Ahsikat, making copper coins on his behalf and managing the entire province with great authority.

We know little about the activities of the rulers of the Samanids, such as Abul Ashas Asad ibn Ahmad and his son Muhammad ibn Asad.

It is not known whether Movarounnahr ruled one of the provinces until Ishoq bin Ahmad became Ismoil's deputy. This is what prompted Ishoq bin Ahmed to fight his brother on the side of Ismoil. From this we can say that his goal was to get the governor of the province with Ismoil. After the defeat of Nasr, in the process of redistribution of property, Ishoq received from Ismoil power of reigning in Ferghana.

It is possible that in the first years of his life in Bukhara, Ismoil obeyed his brother Nasr, sending the assigned tax to his treasury and fulfilling his vassal obligations. But later, having strengthened his position in Bukhara, Ismoil decided not to submit to the central government. According to Narshahi, he decided to save about 500,000 dirhams of taxes collected in the province and use them for local needs. In turn, Nasr receives support from his other brothers, including the Governor of Fergana Abul Ashas Asad, and sends troops to Bukhara [1: 151]. Ismoil fled from Bukhara to Farab and asked for help from Rafe' ibn Harsama, the

ruler of Khorasan. The march of Ismoil Samani and Rafe' ibn Harsama to Samarkand was unsuccessful. As a result, a peace treaty was signed between Nasr and Ismoil through the mediation of Ibn Kharsama. According to him, Ismoil was appointed in Bukhara to collect taxes in favor of Nasr.

Fifteen months later, Nasr demands that his brother Ismoil pay a fee. Ismoil did it again. That is why Nasr is about to fight Ismoil for the second time. This time, Nasr will be accompanied by his brother, the Governor of Ferghana, Abul Ashas Asad bin Ahmad. The battle between the troops of Nasr and Ismoil took place in the fall of 888 [1: 152]. The battle ends with the victory of Ismoil. Nasr was captured. However, Ismoil officially recognized Nasr as a dynasty and supreme ruler, and Nasr appointed him successor. But in fact, Ismoil was in power.

After the death of Nasr in 892, Ismoil officially began his rule in the Samanid state. Ishoq bin Ahmad helped Ismoil Samani in the implementation of his policy aimed at strengthening the state and expanding its territories. In particular, in 900 A.D. the Ferghana army participated in the campaign of Ismoil against the Khorasan and Saffarids. Historical sources do not indicate the number of soldiers on either side of the battle, but Narshakhi reminds us that there were about 30,000 soldiers from Ferghana and Turkestan in the war [1: 156].

Analyzing the data presented in Narshakhi, Ferghana troops played an important role in the attack of Ismoil Samani on Amr bin Lays. According to the source, when the army first arrived on the coast of Amudarya, Ismoil stopped a bit due to military protests and started the main battle as soon as the Ferghana troops arrived. In addition, the sources do not specify who led the hostilities in Ferghana. Given the fact that Ishoq was then governor in Ferghana, he was probably a military leader.

When it comes to Ferghana in the 10th century, first of all, the centralized state of the Samanids is a state with a strong economic base, which retains its internal independence. After the uprising of Ishoq ibn Ahmad and his son Ilyos ibn Ishoq in the early 10th century, Fergana was not mentioned in historical sources

for a long time, therefore numismatic materials play an important role in eliminating this shortcoming [30:24]. By the 20th and 30th years of the 10th century, there is little information about Ferghana.

At the beginning of the tenth century, Ferghana was ruled by a minority of Samanids, Ishoq ibn Ahmad, who was the governor of Ismoil Samani in Ferghana. Ishoq participated in almost all of his military campaigns as a supporter of the creation of a powerful state under the leadership of Ismoil Samani.

V.V. Bartold notes that although Ismoil did not become a political figure in his family after the Samanids, his ruling system ensured the functioning of the state for almost a century [10: 300, 26: 103]. In addition, the rule of Ismoil, built by such great states as the Khorezmshahs, Ghaznavids, Timurids in Central Asia, has been effectively used in recent centuries.

The son of the successor Ismoil Samani, his son Ahmad, was known for his extreme piety. If government documents were made in Persian during the time of Ismoil, Ahmad again tried to give the Arabic language the status of the state language. The government's defense of Arabic-speaking administrative officials has sparked protests from the Shurat military. As a result, in 914, Ahmad was killed by his slaves [1: 158].

In written sources there are no details about Ismoil bin Ahmad, the brother of Ismoil Samani. About twenty years after he became governor of Ferghana (since 888), more information about him appears in written sources. After the death of Ismoil Samani in 907, Ishoq ibn Ahmad strove for supreme power as the oldest man in the dynasty. However, as mentioned above, his nephew Ahmad, the son of Ismoil Samani, is seated on the throne. Ishoq did not hide his discontent. As a result, the followers of Ahmad imprisoned him. But the son of Ishoq Mohammed ibn Ishoq retained his right to rule Fergana [7: 493]. In conclusion, Ferghana took a high position in the forces supporting Ishoq ibn Ahmad and his heirs. That is why Muhammad bin Ishoq did not lose control of Ferghana, even when his father and brother rebelled against the Amir.

In 910–911, he had mercy on his uncle, Ahmed ibn Ismoil, and commissioned him to rule Samarkand. However, in 914, Ahmad died, and his eighth son Nasr II was placed on the throne. Unhappy with this, Ishoq will again begin an uprising in Samarkand. This time, Ishoq supported his son Ilyos. However, the rebellion is crushed, and Ishoq is thrown into prison and dies there. Ilyos flees to Ferghana [15:17, 16:99, 19:15, 24:13]. After this incident, the descendants of Ishoq bin Ahmad were denied the right to rule Ferghana. Historical sources about the son of Ishoq ibn Ahmad Muhammad ibn Ishoq have not reached our days.

Nasr II trusted the descendants of another uncle, Asad ibn Ahmad, and in 915 handed over to Ferghana Muhammad ibn Asad. Among the members of the Samanid dynasty, the name of Muhammad ibn Asad as governor of Ferghana is almost not mentioned in written sources. The main reason for this may be that Muhammad ibn Asad did not participate in the struggle for power. However, the name of the commander named Abu Amr Muhammad ibn al-Asad appears in the rebellion in Ferghana in 922 [15:17, 19:15, 24:13]. This person is the last Samanid governor of Ferghana, which is known to us by numismatic materials.

The death of Amir Ahmad and the weakening of central authority led to the strengthening of separatist movements in several provinces. Although the Ferghana governors officially recognized the central government, they practically pursued an independent policy. According to Ibn al-Asir, Ilyos ibn Ishoq was defeated after his first rebellion, retreated to Ferghana and lived there until the second rebellion. The right question arises: why did the Ilyos family lose control of Ferghana, and his brother Muhammad ibn Ishoq fled to the Fergana in the event of his dismissal? We believe that the Turkic tribes living in Ferghana, recognizing the power of the Samanids, were ready to intervene in the disputes of the dynasty in the hope of favorable conditions. In 310/922, Ilyos bin Ishoq rebelled against Nasr II ibn Ahmad in Ferghana. With the help of Muhammad ibn Hussein Mutt, he gathered an army of 30,000 and went to Samarkand [16: 100]. Nasr II sent a squadron of

2,500 men under the command of Abu Muhammad ibn al-Asad. The army set a trap around Samarkand and waited for Ilyos. While Ilyos was camping near Samarkand, the army left the forest and attacked the army of Ilyos. As a result of an unexpected blow, Ilyos's army broke up and began to retreat. Ilyos himself fled to Ferghana. On the other hand, Muhammad ibn Hussein Mutt went to Isfijab, and then to Taraz. A letter to ruler of Taraz under the command of Nasr II indicated that he would be very rewarded if he captured Ibn Mutt [16: 100, 17: 337]. The ruler obeyed the orders of the governor and captured Muhammad ibn Hussein Mutt, who arrived in Taraz. Ibn Mutt was executed and his cut head was sent to Bukhara. Although Abu Muhammad was weak, he was able to defeat Ilyos [16: 100].

However, Ilyos did not rest. He counted on the help of the governor of Shash Abul Fazl ibn Abi Yusuf and rebelled again. But his move was not successful. Ilyos's army was defeated by troops led by Muhammad ibn Yasa, and the defeated Ilyos retreated to Kashgar. The governor of Shash who helped him was captured and sent to Bukhara, where he was executed [16: 100].

In Kashgar, Ilyos ibn Ishoq entered into an alliance with a ruler named Togun Takin and again went to Ferghana. Muhammad ibn al-Muzaffar, who was then governor of Ferghana, was a provincial defender. As a result, Ilyos was defeated again [17:99].

As for Ilyos, after the above events, Muhammad ibn Muzaffar wrote a letter with Ilyos, trying to take him to his side. All these efforts were successful, and Ilyos stopped his separatist actions. Thus, peace will be established in Ferghana, an important eastern border of the country. When Ilyos received refuge, he was able to live in Bukhara and establish a relationship with Nasr II [16: 100]. It is noteworthy that Minister of Nasr Abdullah Jayhani played a huge role in suppressing various rebellions in Ferghana and other regions [21:29].

It can be concluded that the last invasion of Ilyos in Nasr II in 922 in Ferghana was the legacy of his inheritance – the return of Ferghana. Ilyos's father,

Ishoq bin Ahmed, was appointed governor of the Ferghana region in 888 with the help of Ismoil Samani. Ishoq ibn Ahmad and his son Muhammad bin Ishoq ruled this province until 914.

Ilyos bin Ishoq could not again capture the Ferghana region. But the rule of the descendants of Asad ibn Ahmed did not go too far. In the 30s of the 10th century, the reign of Ferghana was transferred from the Samanids to Turks of ethnic origin. According to numismatic sources, the last governor of the Samanids, Abu Muhammad ibn Asad, surrendered his position to Turkish commanders.

In conclusion, the first Samanid ruler of Ferghana, Ahmad ibn Asad, mastered the historical context in his work and began work on turning the scattered Samanids into an independent state. Although Ahmad bin Asad could not commit this noble act in life, he laid the foundation for a future powerful and centralized state. In addition, his successors, the Samanids, paid special attention to Ferghana, and in most cases only their cousins preferred Ferghana rule.

But, on the one hand, thanks to the youth of Nasr II, the position of high-ranking government officials repeatedly rose during the time of Ismoil Samani. The appointment of senior officials throughout the country has already begun not on the initiative of the emir, but on the part of senior officials. Although Narshakhi in his work portrays Bukhara emirs as rulers with all the power in their hands, the situation shows that the opposite is true. Now the Bukhara emirs did not personally manage military operations, like their ancestors Nasr and Ismoil, but lived in Bukhara with luxury.

On the other hand, representatives of the Samanid minority in Ferghana lost the trust of their comrades in them as a result of the ongoing uprising. Ferghana Samanids were not supported by the great Samanids, the great emir of Bukhara, who ruled the state. Under these conditions, the Emirs of Bukhara began to rely more on Turkish pilgrims than on their rebellious colleagues, who increasingly relied on them to rule the state. Thus, the rule of the Samanid rulers in Ferghana was terminated.

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