



## **OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE NOMAD SAK, MASSAGETAE TRIBES IN ANCIENT TIMES**

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### **Annotation**

The article describes the tribes that lived in ancient times - sak massagetae. Their unity is defined in terms of their struggles and lives in tribal solidarity and lifestyle. The opinions of Greco-Roman historians about them are provided.

### **Annotatsiya**

Maqolada qadimgi davrlarda yashagan qabilalar – sak massagetlar haqida bayon qilinadi. Ularning uyushishi qabilaviy hamjihatlikda olib borilgan kurashlari, turmushi haqida yoritilgan. Ular haqidagi yunon-rim tarixchilarining fikrlari bayon etilgan.

### **Аннотация**

В статье описаны жившие в древности племена сак-массагетов. Их организация описывается с точки зрения их борьбы и жизни в племенном единстве. Описаны мнения о них греко-римских историков.

### **Introduction**

The victory of the Massagetae over the Iranians once again proved their fighting prowess. The external threat, the brutal attack of the invaders, required the unification of the nomadic tribes into a single alliance in the political arena of Central Asia.

According to the historian Herodotus, in ancient times the Turanians, especially the Massagetae, worshipped the Sun and the Earth.

Herodotus described the patriotic aspects of the Massagetae in detail. They also have a clear sense of solidarity. Because the Massagetae did not act alone in this struggle, they were quickly joined by the Saks and Derby, who were part of this alliance. According to Greek authors, the Saxon king Amorg came to the rescue with a cavalry force of 20,000 men.

According to Strabo, one of the main Scythian tribes was the Doy (Dakhs), who lived in southern Turkmenistan, in the eastern part of the Caspian Sea. Thus, in the VII-V





centuries BC, in their northeast, on the southern shores of the Aral Sea, the Sak-Massagetae tribal alliance was living on the base of military-political rule. In other words, in the territory of Khorezm there was a union of Sak-Massagetae tribes (confederation) consisting of Atasians, Derbiks, Alans, Saks, Kharsmiys, Kanglys. Each tribe in the alliance had its own genius.

The Khorasmians ruled the Union of Sak-Massagetae living in the Khorezm oasis. These ethnic groups formed the ancient roots of the population of the Khorezm oasis. The ethnogenesis of the Khorezm people involved mainly two ethnic elements - Turkic and Persian-Tajik. According to Abu Rayhan Beruni, the Turkic tribes are one of the oldest ethnic groups in Khorezm, and the Khorezm people are descended from that ethnos. That is why they consider the ancient Turkic tribes as their ancestors. However, the population living in the desert-sand zone was semi-nomadic, semi-sedentary, engaged in animal farming and hunting.<sup>1</sup>

The Saka people lived in the lower reaches of the Syrdarya before the conquest of Alexander the Great, and later moved to Karki Khalif, northern Afghanistan. Strabo calls them, as we have mentioned, "Dakh," "Day," and "Dev." Ancient Chinese sources say that they were called "daha", who lived in the south of the Amu Darya. Ancient Greek and Iranian sources state that the saka people of Parthia, Margiana, and Sogdia paid tribute to the Achaemenid state. The Saks lived as nomads in the mountains, deserts and steppes of present-day Kazakhstan and East Turkestan, from northern Amudarya and Syrdarya to southern Siberia.

They settled in Sogdia, Bactria and Parkana. As mentioned above, the history of nomadic ancient tribes is studied in relation to the history of the Iranian state. The Achaemenid king Darius I (522-486 BC) was a prominent statesman and military commander of his time. He put an end to the independent actions of the local rulers. In foreign policy, he organized invasions of neighboring territories to expand the borders of the empire.

In the third year of his reign (519 BC), Darius I marched on the Saka-Tigrauxadas. Behistun's account of Darius I's march against the Saks is as follows: "King Darius says: .... then I marched the Saks' land. After that the Saks who wearing sharp pointed hats began fighting. When I crossed the river, I completely crushed the Saks, and took the rest captive.... the leader named Skunkha was captivated and brought to me.... At that time, I selected another leader for them. That's what I wanted. "

That is to say, Darius' conquests in Central Asia were not easy. This time, also, the Iranians faced strong opposition from the free-spirited people of homeland everywhere. Nevertheless, the armies of Darius I managed to conquer the southern





and central regions of Central Asia, some parts of the Amu Darya and Syrdarya - Parthia, Bactria, Ariana and Sogdiana, as well as the Saks, a part of Khorezm.

However, most of the warring Sak tribes and the Khorezm state managed to maintain their independence. They were ruled by their own rulers.<sup>2</sup>

The historian Polyene (2nd century BC) described the Persian conquest of the Saka-Tigrauxadamas in his book *The Military Tricks*. The play also tells the story of the Scythians and Sak tribes of Central Asia who were entrepreneurs.

Also, if we look at the information in the work, we see that Darius was the first to instruct the governors to determine the amount of tax and collect it so as not to make himself look bad to the peoples under his control. Darius did not believe the Saks defeat them right away. He does not move his residence to deceive them. Leaving a few warriors in the camp, he ordered them to light fires in several places at night, and retreated with the main army. Later, the Sak tribes realized that this was Darius' trick. But now it was hard to catch up with Darius.

Capturing a detachment of Saks, Darius puts his warriors in their uniforms and sends them to the Saks. The Saks greeted them as their friends who came to help. Thus, the rest of the Saks were killed, too.

The story "Shirak", which is called a legend in the oral tradition of the Uzbek people, has come down to us through the work of Polyen. It is said that when Darius surrounded the Saks, their commanders, Sak Esfar, Omar, and Famirn, gathered for a verbal consultation. A horseman named Shirak came and said that if you give my children a house and a lot of money, I will destroy Darius' army alone.

The Saks agreed with this offer. Shirak cuts his nose, ears, and other parts with a razor blade and sets off, and enters Darius in a sad state, saying that I must take revenge on the Saks for putting me in this situation, and that I will help you. Darius believed what he said.

So Darius leads his army and leads them to a distant desert. There was no water, no tree there. The military chief Ranosbat asked Shirak, "Where did you lead us?" Then Shirak laughed and said, "I defeated you. In this way, I helped to protect my country." Upon hearing this, Ranasbat immediately beheaded Shirak. Then Darius begs Apollo, "Bring me some water." After that, it rained in the desert and many warriors were saved from death. With this they reached the Bactrian River.

There are many legends about Darius's journey to the Scythian land. Almost all of them tell the story of Darius' defeat of the Scythians, while the story of Shirak, quoted by Polyenes, tells of Darius's defeat of the Scythians, and of Herodotus, Darius himself took part in the battle with the Scythians.





Herodotus (Herodotus, History, 1, 215) and Strabo (Strabo, Geography, x 1, -8) include the Khorezmians in the composition of massagetae; The writings of Darius and Cyrus, on the other hand, refer to the Khorezmians, who are like the Saks and sogdiys who paid tribute.

Apparently, the Union of Massagetae was not a nomadic union, but united under the rule of the Khorezm kings. These kings were the descendants of Farasman, who owned the oases of southern Turkmenistan bordering Bactria and Media before the expansion of the Achaemenid lands.<sup>3</sup>

The Farasman ambassadors came to Zariasp to Alexander not as Achaemenid deputies, but as Khorezmian political representatives who had retained their independence. Khorezm kingdom in the 4th century, according to King Farasman (Arrian, Alexander the Great, IV, 15), was bordered by a powerful Achaemenid state and probably extended its borders to the Volga region and the northern Caspian region.

As mentioned above, the expulsion of the Scythians to the Cimmerian lands by the Massagetae in the lands of Southeastern Europe testifies to the unification of the Khorezm-Massaget union before the time of Herodotus. This political alliance was apparently led by Khorezm. That is why the Sogdian and Bactrian fortifications, which played the role of fortifications called "rocks", were built in the form of cattle-style cities built inside large castles and agricultural oases. Initially, this type of city was a large rectangle surrounded by two rows of thick walls, the walls of which protected the population from nomads who often attacked the oasis, and even during military operations, the population found themselves inside these walls.

The cultural traditions and customs of the nomads did not differ much from each other in terms of their economy and living conditions.

It is known that in the "Avesto", the oldest pastoral and nomadic tribes of Central Asia were called "tur", "danu", "xyaono". They lived in the era of military-political tribal associations among the nomads. This period corresponds to the period of the military campaigns of the heroes and kings mentioned in the Avesto. In other words, Kavi Vishtasp's victory over Darshin, the "treasure of the giants" by Ashtarvant, is in line with this.

It is known from history that BC. Beginning in the second millennium, cattle-breeding nomadic tribes settled within the boundaries of agricultural oases and established new ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and political processes.

In later times, other nomads settled in the lands of the Sak-Massagetae. They were also located on the borders of Central Asian settlements (Sogdiana, Khorezm, Bactria and Parthia).





In the study of the history of the first settlers in the Lower Syrdarya BC. Pogispens' tombs date back to the 7th century. They were rectangular, ring-shaped tombs made of mud bricks. Immigrant leaders and community elders were buried here. <sup>4</sup>

The burial mounds of the Saks were found and examined in the Pamir Mountains near the Bactrian lands, on the borders of Sogdiana, in Lower Zarafshan, around Khorezm, and in the Lower Syrdarya.

The history of the pastoral tribes and the farming population is inextricably linked, and the history and culture of the peoples of Central Asia have developed on a new basis.

In historical sources, the kings of Iran also mobilized the local population in Central Asia to fulfill various obligations, including the construction of canals and dams, castles and palaces. Irrigation networks have been skillfully used to generate additional income. In his writings, Herodotus records that five huge dams were built on the Atrek River (Tajan) by Darius' order, that the locals were left without water, and that the citizens begged for water. The dams were then allowed to open one by one. In return, the population had to pay an additional fee. During the Achaemenid period, the administration of the provinces was entrusted directly to the tribal chiefs and local rulers. The kings of Iran try to influence them as much as possible. To this end, local rulers were given great privileges.

It is known that the Saks and Khvarasmians paid taxes to the Iranian state on the basis of a separate satrap.<sup>5</sup> Considering the superficial dependence of Khorezm and the Saks, Darius I organized a march on the Scythians on the North Black Sea coast in 512 BC. The aim was to cross the Scythians to the rear and then strike Khorezm, Saks and Derbeks across the Caspian and Aral Seas, thus extending the empire's borders to the Aral, Caspian and Northern Black Sea coasts. As we have already mentioned, Darius' march on the Scythians did not work.

Thus, it is clear from the above data that the way of life of the tribes that joined the Sak-Massaget union was determined by the geographical location of the area, the natural climatic conditions, and the specifics of daily activities. As the existence of the productive economy developed, the appearance of the first political alliances began to take shape.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the results of the study of the emergence of tribal associations or the first problem of statehood in the nomadic tribes of Central Asia:

- Until the 1930s, Western historiography focused mainly on the state of Bactria and Khorezm, with little focus on the emergence of tribal associations in nomadic tribes or the problem of early statehood;





- In Soviet historiography, this issue was studied on the basis of a comparative analysis of written and archeological data, the development of a nomadic tribal confederation-type state in the vast steppes and deserts of Central Asia before the Achaemenid period. recognized;
  - Various publications published in the 60s and 80s of the XX century contain extensive information about the political association of nomadic "tour" tribes, led by Francesyon, Ashtarvant, Arjatasp, mentioned in the Avesto, but this issue is still discussed. controversial and unresolved;
  - Soviet historiography states that the first nomadic states in Central Asia appeared under the influence of ancient Eastern civilizations, and their formation required hostility, confrontation, governance and the emergence of the state. However, comparing the historical processes that took place in the Ancient East, and transferring them directly to the conditions of Central Asia, is a matter of historical controversy;
  - It was noted that the process of statehood formation in the nomadic pastoral regions of Central Asia in the late 80s of the twentieth century began in the northern regions of the region in the Early Iron Age, and the chronology of the development of the first states was considered on the basis of new data.
- In general, in the modern historiography of the region, including Uzbekistan, there are not enough scholars who specialize in the management system of the ancient nomads and the problems of the first statehood.

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