



DĒWĀŠTĪČ

DĒWĀŠTĪČ (Ar. Dēwāšanj, Dēwāšenī), ruler of Sogdia (87?-104/706?-22), referred to as “prince of Panč” (Panjīkant) and as “king of Sogdia, ruler of Samarkand” in the portion of his archives discovered at the castle on Mount Mug (Mōg), east of Samarkand, on the upper course of the Zarafšān river. The latest dates given in the archives are in legal and economic texts in which his “fourteenth year of rule at Panč” and his “second (year of rule) at Samarkand” are mentioned. Before the accession of Dēwāštīč, whose father was Yodksetak, Panjīkant was ruled by the Turk Čukin Čur Bilgä, and Dēwāštīč’s descendants actually considered Čur to have been his father (Livshits, 1979 pp. 56-68). This anomaly could be explained if Dēwāštīč had married Čur’s daughter and immediate successor, a possibility suggested by Sogdian coins from the time of Dēwāštīč, which are inscribed with the phrase “Nana, mistress of Panč,” ostensibly referring to the goddess “Nana the mistress.” The reference is unusual, however, as Sogdian coins of the 7th and 8th centuries always bore the names and titles of the rulers, rather than those of deities. The Parġar region east of Panjīkant was under Dēwāštīč’s rule, though lands closer to Panjīkant are not mentioned in the documents as his possessions, which suggests that Parġar may have been his personal estate. It was included in the region of Bottam (Ebn Kordāḍbeh, p. 40).

While at Panjīkant Dēwāštīč shared power with the notables who presided over the urban community. The fragmentary nature of the sources does not permit acceptance of any of the ingenious hypotheses proposed for the date of his assumption of the Sogdian throne at Samarkand (variously given as 711-13,



718, and 721). King Ṭarḳūn perished in a coup in 91/709-10, and the usurper Ġūrak became king of Samarkand (Ṭabarī, II, pp. 1229-30). Ṭarḳūn's two minor sons were taken under the protection of Dēwāštīč at Panjīkant; he thus attained grounds for his own pretensions and claim to the throne (Arabic** letter from Mount Mugh, *Documents* 1:1; *Sogdiiskii sbornik*, p. 56). After Samarkand, was occupied by the Arabs under Qotayba b. Moslem in 93/712 Ġūrak was temporarily driven out (Ṭabarī, II, pp. 1250, 1508). Although both men had partisans among the Sogdians of Samarkand, Ġūrak was incomparably the stronger. Both alternately submitted to the Arabs and sought help against them from the Turks and Chinese. Ġūrak appealed to China in 100/719 (Chavannes, p. 204), while Dēwāštīč remained loyal to the Arabs in 99-101/718-20. He was considered a Muslim and enjoyed the protection of Jarrāḥ b. 'Abd-Allāḥ, governor of Khorasan, to whom he was obliged to send Ṭarḳūn's two sons at the beginning of 719 (*Sogdiiskii sbornik*, p. 55). Nevertheless, local cults also flourished in Panjīkant (Grenet, 1984, pp. 17-26). When Sogdia rebelled in 103/722 Ġūrak, in a reversal, called upon its people to submit to Arab rule. Dēwāštīč, whose active participation against the Arabs has not been documented, feared an alliance with Ġūrak, and before the new Arab governor, Sa'īd b. 'Amr Ḥarašī, marched against the rebels in 104/722-23 he left for the citadel at Abḡar (modern Mount Mug) in Paṛḡar. After a number of episodes the Arabs sent a detachment against the Sogdians, who were defeated near the village of Kūm and retreated to the castle of Dēwāštīč. Dēwāštīč and others in his party surrendered to the Arabs (Ṭabarī, II, pp. 1439-49).

Excavations at Panjīkant have revealed that the Arabs burned one of the temples, the palace of Dēwāštīč, and houses, conceivably only of those citizens who had departed with Dēwāštīč. After his capture Dēwāštīč was treated as an honored prisoner, and, though Ḥarašī's superior in Baghdad seems to have wished to set him free, he was subsequently killed and his head sent to Iraq, one of reasons for the removal of Ḥarašī as governor of Khorasan (Ṭabarī, II, pp. 1148, 1453). In Ṭabarī's account of the events of 104/722 (II, p. 1446) Dēwāštīč is identified as a "noble" (*dehqān*) of Samarkand; together with one document from Mount Mug (*Documents*, no. 1:1), this evidence confirms that Dēwāštīč's claim to the Sogdian throne was considered legitimate by the Arabs until the events of 104/722. The wall paintings of his burnt palace in the Panjīkant citadel include depictions of the coronation of a Sogdian king and the reception of an Arab by the king of Sogdia, probably Dēwāštīč himself (Azarpay et al., pp. 64-67, figs. 30-31, pl. 24).



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