

Section 4. Museology

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THE ISSUES OF STUDYING AND PRESERVING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS OF THE KUSHAN PERIOD IN THE OLD TERMEZ

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Abstract

In this article, the history and description of the related archaeological monuments of Kara-tepa and Fayaz-tepa, located in the territory of Old Termiz, as well as quotes from the conclusions of the scientific research of well-known archaeologists are presented. The issues of conservation and preservation of these monuments were discussed.

Keywords: *Old Termez, monument, expedition, kushan, Buddha, Masson, museum, Kara-tepa, Fayaz-tepa, temple*

Introduction

In 1937–1938, the study of the culture of the Kushan period in the Surkhan oasis began with the activities of the Termez archaeological complex expedition led by M. Y. Masson. The main purpose of the expedition was to study the history of the emergence of the Kushan state, as well as the reasons for the emergence of Buddhism in Central Asia (Masson, 1940. p. 8).

The expedition consistently studied the monuments of the Kushan era located in the oasis. To this end, in addition to Old Termez, as a major cultural center of the Kushan period, other areas were studied. As a result of scientific research conducted in the area of Old Termez, it was established that the hey-

day of ancient Termez coincided with the era of Kushans. In the settlements of the Kushan period, located on the right bank of the Amu Darya, you can find high-quality products characteristic of almost that era.

In the center of Old Termez, that is, in the lower cultural layer of the ruins of the palace of the Termezshahs of the 9th–12th centuries, the expedition members found coins of the Kushan era. It should be noted that iron products were found in the cultural layer of the Kushanian period of Old Termez. Finds indicate the development of metalworking in Termez I–III centuries. BC. The main raw materials for these metal products are iron ores found in the Kugitang mountains, which were delivered to Old Termez.

One of the most important finds of the expedition is the achievements of the irrigation economy of the Kushan period. It is known from historical sources that during the Kushan period, the Surkhan oasis was divided into Sherabad, Baysun, Bandihan, Dzarkurgan and Termez irrigation regions. This indicates that ancient canals and ditches along the Surkhan plain were dug 2–2.5 thousand years ago and were widely used for irrigation of fields (Masson, 1940, p. 5).

Although the irrigation system was established during the Greco-Bactrian period, its heyday undoubtedly corresponds to the Kushan period. Archaeological studies carried out in Kara-tepa and Fayaz-tepa in Old Termez show that water supply to Buddhist temples was carried out through water pipes.

Some sources also indicate that a single water supply system connecting the monuments of Kara-tepa and Fayaz-tepa was possible connected by ceramic pipes.

Kara-tepa – a complex of cave Buddhist temples located in the northeastern part of Old Termez, was first opened in 1926–28 by the expedition of the State Museum of Culture of the Peoples of the East in Moscow. Archaeological research was carried out here in 1937 by archaeologists M. Yu. Masson and Yu.G. Pchelina, in the 1960s.– B. Ya. Stavisky.

In the 60s and 80s, a joint expedition led by B. Ya. Stavisky (Eastern Department of the State Hermitage Museum and Museum of Art of the Peoples of the East) excavated on the southern and partially northern elevations of the monument. During excavations, samples of ancient writing found in Karatep were studied by T.V. Grek, V.A. Livshis, Y. Harmatta, V.V. Vertogradova, Kh. Gumbakh.

The monuments of fine art discovered here were investigated by V.A. Meshkeris, numismatic finds – E.V. Zeimal, V.G. Lukonin, B.I. Weinberg and T.L. Raevskaya, ceramics, samples of fine art and architectural decoration – N.S. Sychev and V.L. Sycheva little later, all this was reflected in the study studied and generalized by V.L. Sychev (Staviskiy, 1986. p. 6).

Monuments of the Kushan period (Kara-tepa, Fayaz-tepa, Zurmala), discovered in the area of Old Termez, may have been fed by a single water supply network. Particular

attention during the Kushan period was paid to the Buddhist temple of Kara-tepa.

The Buddhist temple in Kara-tepa was called “Khadevakavihara” in Kushan. According to Stavisky, this word means that the temple was erected at the direction of the Kushan ruler, and Buddhist temples built at that time in Old Termez, including Fayaz-tepa, Zurmala, had a special privilege compared to the Buddhist temple on the northeast side of Old Termez, which did not survive (Albaum, 1955. p. 42).

It is surprising that the Buddhist temple in Kara-tepa was not built according to a well-thought-out project, and the size of the premises is different. Only in size, the palace temple with a large porch has a central square, and the temple could be designed not only for monks from a Buddhist temple, but also for residents of the city and its environs.

According to many archaeologists, Kara-tepa had separate temple caves for women. They try to make the case with a few examples. For example, in the center of the palace of the main temple in Fayaz-tepa, a statue of the Buddha was found, on both sides of which are images of women. A similar picture can be observed in the complex on the south side of Kara-tepa.

On the walls of the porch in Kara-tepa, small architectural reliefs, made in the style of stone carving, depict women holding flowers in their hands. The temples of the monument were built separately, so that women nuns on the way to the main prayer hall in front of the stupa, where the prayer ceremony was performed, did not pass through the men’s temple, which was very convenient.

Archaeological research carried out by a joint Uzbek-Japanese expedition in Karatepa in 2003 provides new information. For example, as a result of research, it was established that the architectural and construction style of the temple located in the northern part of Kara-tepa is the highest example of Bactrian architectural art based on the idea of Buddhism (Pidaev, Lerish, 2001. p. 157).

During the same period, local residents made a unique innovation in the construction of Buddhist temples, that is, the upper part of the temple premises was built in the form of a dome. The project for the construction of room domes was completed. Examples of artistic

culture found in the temple also testify to the high skill of those generations.

Sculptors and painters who worked in Karatepa were well acquainted with the achievements of the Hellenistic world and Gandharic Buddhist art and skillfully used them in their work.

Archaeological, anthropological and numismatic objects found in Kara-tepa significantly enrich previous ideas about this temple, that is, the first discovery of the bone remains of people buried around the temple was really new.

Fayaz-tepa Buddhist Temple is a Buddhist temple complex in the north of Old Termez, dating back to the 1st-3rd centuries AD. Buddhists called their monks "bhiksha", and the temples where monks live and study were called "vihara". The monument of Fayaz-tepa was studied in 1968–1976. antiquarian L. I. Albaum.

Fayaz-tepa's monument consists of three parts: in the central part – a temple, in the north-west of it – a monastery, and in the south-east of it – structures of economic importance. The total area of the complex is about 1,500 square meters.

One of the main parts of the temple structure is the stupa, which is located not in the middle of the court, as in other temples, but outside it, around the shrine.

The stupa is the main shrine of the temple. Initially, the stupas housed the belongings of the Buddha and his closest saints. Statues of the Buddha are located in the shrine of the temple, and the walls of the sanctuary are decorated with colorful frescoes. Four-meter statues of the Buddha are placed under the walls. Most of the statues were painted red, then covered with gold. On the south wall of the temple is an image of Buddha in red robes. On either side of it are two people in long outfits. One of them bows to the Buddha. There are also images of people on the east wall of the shrine. On a piece of gypsum measuring 60x80 centimeters, an image was found of two men facing the Buddha. Both figures depict Bactrian Buddha admirers in a position of worship. There are many fragments of ganch sculptures in this hall. Most sculptures are made of clay mixed with straw and then covered with ganch. The head, legs and arms of the statues were cast in special

shapes, and then glued to the body (Albaum, 1990. p. 21).

Among the sculptures of Fayaz-tepa, the head of the Buddha from the ganch is notable. According to academician B. Y. Stavisky, such an interpretation of the Buddha is first found in the monument of the Kushan period. In front of the door of this shrine was found a unique work of art from a single marl – a triad. In the center of the triad, the Buddha, wrapped in a silk robe, sits under the arch and branches of the sacred bodhi tree. Two monks standing next to him are depicted praying to him. Coins of Kushan kings Kanishka and Vasudeva were also found in the sanctuary.

In a northwest part of the yard of the temple the bathtub intended for commission of religious practices and built from marl fragments in the form of a trapeze is located, and in her lower part the opening for a water drain is made. The opening is executed in the form of the lion's head with widely opened mouth. Clear water was stored in such tanks. Was considered that when Buddhist monks turned around a bathtub and read Buddha's sutra, water in it became divine. Now such bathtub is stored in a lobby of the Termez archaeological museum.

To the southeast of the temple is its economic part. It is connected to the temple by three doors. In the economic part, 15 rooms were found, in most of which the remains of foci were found. The walls of the complex were restored with straw, suri was used for their repair, and raw brick was used for platforms and walls in the premises. All rooms are plastered with straw, only two rooms are plastered with ganch. It is assumed that these two premises were shrines of the economic part of the temple. Remains of stoves and ash piles were found in the two rooms. During excavations of stove rooms, many animal bones, hums, bowls, fragments of ceramic goblets were found. All vessels, except hums, are made on a potter's wheel and covered with light red angob. The ceramic surface is decorated with juniper leaves, patterns in the form of discs. There was also a tradition of applying Buddha foot prints to pottery. Among the ceramics there are many lamps and ceramic pots. After the completion of archaeological research conducted by academician L. I. Albaum in

1976, information about the Fayaz-tepa monument was known only to a narrow circle of historians and archaeologists. This is due to the fact that the author of the study published few articles about the temple, and the temple itself was not mothballed at the time of excavation and over the years gradually began to collapse under snow and rain.

The total area of the ancient monument of Old Termez is 500 hectares. At first, the topography of the settlements and their location were studied by the head of the Termez Archaeological Complex Expedition (TAKE) M. Masson (Albaum, 1990, p. 18).

International archaeological excavations were carried out on these monuments during the years of independence. The Uzbek-French archaeological expedition explores Bactria, the Uzbek-Japanese expedition – Karatepa and Tokharistan, Scientists from the Czech Republic, Spain, Russia also carry out scientific cooperation with Uzbek archaeologists. Important parts of the monument were reburied to protect the structures excavated in the Karatepa complex, and in 2000 the upper part of the central stupa, for conservation purposes, was covered with a metal structure.

In 2004–2006, preservation and partial repairs were carried out by the UNESCO Representative Office in the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Japanese trust fund. This

project was the first among the archaeological sites of Uzbekistan. As a result, the monument was turned into an open-air museum, and next to it the construction of a scientific center for the study of Buddhism was completed. In 2008, the grand opening of the Fayaz-tepa Buddhist temple complex and the Center for the Study of Buddhist History and Culture created under it was held.

Conclusion

On the territory of Surkhandarya region there are about 150 archaeological sites of the Kushan period, and while preserving and museum these monuments should be paid attention to the following issues:

- study of mechanical properties and technogenic impact on the durability of monuments;
- constant humidity control and rot prevention;
- biological hazard protection;
- the need will be to use the world experience of museization to preserve the original species and the widespread use of monuments for tourist purposes.

The ideal preservation of monuments in all respects allows attracting international investments to the region and serves as the main tool for the development of the infrastructure of monuments.

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