



ANCIENT PERIOD CITY TRADITIONS

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Abstract:

The article provides information about the use of the terms “antique”, “antique era” in the process of studying the history of Central Asia in the 4th century BC - 4th century AD, as well as about the traditions of urban planning.

Keywords: “Antique”, “antique era”, archaeologists, Sokhta, Harappa, Mundigak, Altyndepa, Sopollitepa, Zharkotan, Sogd, Kang, Davan, V. Tarn, A. Shoffman.

Introduction

Starting from the 40s-50s of the last century, the terms "antique" and "antique period" came into circulation in the process of studying the history of Central Asia, from the 4th to the 4th centuries BC. Despite the fact that some researchers put forward the idea that these terms should be used only in relation to the history of Greece and Rome, the majority of researchers engaged in the ancient period of Central Asia - archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, art historians, etc. - supported the point of view that this term can also be used in relation to the history of Central Asia.

One of the urgent tasks is to study the urban culture, historiography and source studies in the regions of Uzbekistan, the orientation of archaeological data to history, the factors and conditions for the emergence of urban-like (proto-cities) and early cities in the southern regions, the generality and specific features of the development of ancient and medieval cities, changes in southern cities during the period of certain dynasties, the historical and geographical location of cities in the Middle Ages, trade and transit routes connecting cities, cities, defensive structures of fortresses and mounds, cultural development in cities, and the characteristics of the development of cities in oases specific to certain oases.

Starting from the 4th century BC, the main agricultural oases of Central Asia entered a completely new, active path of socio-economic development, which began to collapse in the 3rd-4th centuries AD. The culture of urban planning and



irrigation, writing and monetary circulation, numerous and diverse monuments of material and artistic culture testify to this very process of development. It should be emphasized that this period is characterized by a new stage in the socio-economic and general cultural aspects of the development of society in many states of the ancient world. This new stage is distinguished by its uniqueness in different states. In addition, this period was one of the processes of similarity in some signs and characteristics of events in world history that covered all the states of the Ancient World. The word "antique" is used in European languages as "antiquite", "antiguti, antique", and can be translated as "long ago", "past antiquity", "ancient". From this period, important aspects of the development of Central Asian civilization are reflected in the continuous development of society. From the middle of the 4th century BC, the struggle between the last Achaemenids and the subsequent invasions of Alexander the Great could not completely stop this development. The most noticeable aspect of this development was the emergence of large cities with various planned structures, the increase in their number indicating that special attention was paid to urban planning in the development of society. This situation is fundamentally different from the formation of urban-like or early cities in the East, such as Uruk, Shahri Sokhta, Harappa, Mundigak, Altyndepa, Sopollitepa, Jarkotan, and has its own characteristics.

As a result of archaeological research, the discovery of dwellings, objects of material and spiritual culture, and coins associated with Hellenistic culture in the southern regions of Central Asia indicates that the local culture in these regions was strongly influenced by Hellenistic traditions (urban planning, sculpture, applied arts, alphabet, etc.). At the same time, these findings also testify to the fact that the development of local culture in the ancient (antique) period rose to the level of a unique culture as a result of the mutual integration of Eastern and Western cultures. The comparative study of written, archaeological and epigraphic data carried out by G.A. Koshelenko showed that V. Tarn and his supporters were mistaken. Considering that archaeologists have not yet discovered all the Greco-Macedonian cities, and many territories have not been well studied archaeologically, additional information confirming the ancient traditions may be obtained in the future. G.A. Koshelenko concludes: "In general, the ancient tradition can be accepted regarding the scale of the Greco-Macedonian conquest. It was quite large, and the number of cities founded here reached several dozen."



According to the results of the research, Alexandria on the Oxus (Amu Darya) was built taking into account various conditions. This ancient city was to be one of the important centers of Eastern Bactria. A convenient place was chosen for the foundation of this ancient city, which was the confluence of two rivers (Amu Darya and Kokcha). The presence of a high natural hill in this place was also important, on top of which there was an opportunity to build a city acropolis. Also, the fact that the city adjoins a very large fertile plain (about 10,000 hectares) that provided agricultural products ensured economic development.

This ancient city is surrounded by a strong wall both on the plain and along the river. There are no dwellings on the acropolis (upper city). There are two apparently small fortresses, small and simple buildings for the garrison soldiers, and an altar typical of the Iranians. All residential and public buildings are located in the lower city. Researchers distinguish the following factors that determine the appearance of the city: the "colonial" nature of the city's emergence, since the city arose as a result of the conquest of Bactria by the Greek-Macedonians; the presence of a royal residence in it; the city's role as a major provincial center. In general, although the layout of the ancient city and palace architecture resemble Greek styles, in fact, ancient Eastern traditions prevail in its structure.

The Greek population was supposed to be concentrated in these cities. For example, according to the information about Marghiana, the Syrian Greeks were supposed to have a large share among the Greek population of this city. Pliny gives the following information about Marghiana: "Alexander founded Alexandria there, but the barbarians destroyed it. Antiochus, the son of Seleucus, rebuilt it on the same site. ... He found it necessary to give the city his name." Such information is also found in Strabo. The information from these written sources is also confirmed by the archaeological data of V.I. Sarianidis. It should be emphasized that during the Seleucid kingdom, the villages subordinate to the city retained their communal structure, their subordination had a communal nature, and they were not included in the territory of the polis.

There is not enough information about the state and internal structure of the cities of Central Asia during the Seleucid period. In the east of the Seleucid state, many local cities enjoyed a certain degree of independence. Usually, the Seleucid king issued a charter to the city he conquered, which determined its status. Sometimes such a charter confirmed the existing status of the city. There were also independent



cities. However, there is no information yet confirming the idea that such a policy was also pursued to some extent in Central Asia. One of the largest cities of antiquity was in Morocco (Samarkand), where a strong fortress was founded before the Achaemenid period (Afrosiab). During the Achaemenid and Hellenistic periods, Afrosiab was surrounded by strong defensive walls. These walls even withstood the siege of Alexander the Great. According to archaeological research, the total area of Afrosiab is 219 hectares, and Curtius Rufus gives the length of the defensive walls of Marokanda as 70 stadia (approx. 12 km). This is two to four times larger than the average size of ordinary Greek cities on the Mediterranean and Black Sea coasts. In the city areas with a strong fortress and surrounded by defensive walls, numerous finds have been found and studied from cultural layers dating back to the 4th-3rd centuries BC, including Hellenic pottery.

In short, in antiquity, the cities of Northern Bactria reached a high stage of their development. The fact that Bactria is mentioned in written sources as the "land of a thousand cities" and numerous archaeological data are evidence of this idea. In antiquity, there were many opportunities for the development of cities in these regions (socio-economic, military-political, geographical, etc.). Cities were often built on the basis of a strict, predetermined plan and consisted of several parts. Each part had a specific function to perform. The cities themselves were considered socio-economic and cultural centers, and also played an important role in political life. According to the laws of development, the cities of antiquity, as in previous periods, remained the main factor in the development of statehood.

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