

BRONZE AGE MONUMENTS OF SOUTHERN UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation: This article analyzes the Bronze Age archaeological monuments discovered in the territory of Southern Uzbekistan, their history of study, material culture, and their role in shedding light on the development of ancient society. The main attention is paid to the Sopollitepa and Jarkuton monuments in the Surkhandarya oasis, as well as archaeological complexes associated with the later stages of the Sopolli culture.

Keywords: Southern Uzbekistan, Bronze Age, Surkhandarya, Sopollitepa, Jarkuton, Sopolli culture, archaeological site, agriculture, crafts, urbanization.

The territory of Uzbekistan is one of the important historical and cultural places where ancient civilizations were formed. In particular, the southern regions of the country are characterized by the emergence of ancient farming cultures, centers of crafts and the first cities. Archaeological monuments of the Bronze Age found in the Surkhandarya oasis occupy a special place in the study of the ancient history of Central Asia. The Bronze Age in the history of mankind is characterized by the improvement of the productive economy, the development of metallurgy, the deepening of the division of labor, the complexity of social relations and the formation of large settlements. In the territory of southern Uzbekistan, these processes are clearly observed, first of all, in the example of monuments belonging to the Sopolli culture. The study of Sopollitepa, Jarkuton and other archaeological complexes associated with them provides important information about the lifestyle, economy, architecture, religious views and social structure of the ancient population.

The discovery of Sopollitepe was an important stage in the systematic archaeological study of the Bronze Age in Southern Uzbekistan. As a result of archaeological research conducted in the Surkhandarya oasis, many settlements and cemeteries belonging to the Bronze Age were identified, and on their basis the concept of Sopollitepe culture was introduced into scientific circulation. The study of the Sopollitepe culture has shown that there were settled farming societies that developed in the Bronze Age on the territory of Uzbekistan. The architectural structure, material culture and economic activity of the settlements of the population belonging to this culture indicate that they had a highly organized society.

Sopollitepe is one of the most important monuments of the Bronze Age in Southern Uzbekistan. The planning of the monument, the defense system, the location of residential and utility rooms indicate that the ancient builders had a certain architectural experience. Among the archaeological materials found at the site, ceramic vessels, tools made of bronze and stone, and various decorative items are of particular importance. The basis of the economy of the Sopollitepa population was agriculture and animal husbandry. Natural and geographical conditions and archaeological evidence indicate the formation of irrigated agriculture in the oasis. Along with agriculture, animal husbandry also played an important role in the life of the population. Pottery, metalworking, textiles and other types of crafts were developed.

The Jarkuton monument is of particular importance in studying the history of the Bronze Age in Southern Uzbekistan. Jarkuton is one of the largest archaeological monuments of the Sopolli culture in the Surkhandarya oasis, and its structure is much more complex than previous settlements. As a result of archaeological excavations in Jarkuton, residential buildings, defensive structures, traces of craft activities, architectural complexes associated with religious ceremonies, and a large cemetery were studied. The separation of areas that performed different

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functions in the internal structure of the monument indicates the complexity of social and economic relations in ancient society.

One of the important features of Jarkuton is the presence of examples of monumental architecture. The architectural complexes here have reached a high level in terms of construction techniques and planning. Some researchers consider Jarkuton to be one of the proto-urban centers reflecting the early urbanization processes in the territory of Uzbekistan.

The handicraft products found in Jarkuton are also an important indicator of the development of ancient society. The variety of pottery products, the presence of metal products and other production remains indicate a certain degree of specialization of labor. This suggests that in addition to agriculture, groups of the population engaged in special crafts may have formed. One of the important issues in studying the Bronze Age of Southern Uzbekistan is to determine the stages of development of the Sopolli culture. Based on the characteristics of archaeological materials, the shape and decoration of ceramic products, funeral rites and changes in architectural traditions, several stages of development of this culture have been distinguished.

In scientific literature, names such as Sopolli, Jarkuton, Kozali, Moulali and Boston are used to describe the development processes of this culture. During these stages, certain changes occurred in the size of settlements, architectural structure and material culture. While a relatively compact and fortified form of agricultural settlement can be observed in Sopollitepa, in the Jarkutan stage the territory of the population settlement expanded, and its internal social and economic structure became more complex. In the following stages, along with the continuation of cultural traditions, new features also emerged. Archaeological materials from the Bronze Age monuments of Southern Uzbekistan indicate that the population had a complex economic system. Agriculture was one of the main economic sectors, and the use of water resources and crop cultivation played an important role in the life of the settled population of the oasis. Animal husbandry developed as an economic sector that complemented agriculture. Raising domestic animals provided the population with meat, milk, leather, wool and other products. Thus, the harmony of agriculture and animal husbandry ensured the economic stability of the ancient population.

Among the crafts, pottery stands out. The high-quality production of ceramic dishes, the variety of shapes and the existence of production traditions indicate a certain degree of specialization of pottery. The development of metallurgy created the opportunity to make various tools, weapons and decorative items from bronze. The presence of weaving and other types of home crafts is also reflected in archaeological materials. As a result, the population of Southern Uzbekistan in the Bronze Age is not represented by simple peasant communities engaged only in agriculture, but as a society with a complex economic system that combined various economic and craft sectors.

The scientific significance of the Bronze Age monuments of Southern Uzbekistan is first manifested in the fact that through them it is possible to trace the development processes of the first settled agricultural cultures in the region. Monuments such as Sopollitepa and Jarkuton serve to illuminate the process of transformation of settlements from simple forms into centers with complex architectural and social structures. These monuments are also important in studying the cultural ties of the territory of Southern Uzbekistan with ancient Eastern civilizations. The geographical location of the Surkhandarya oasis connected it with the southern regions of Central Asia, including Bactria and neighboring ancient cultural sites. Some commonalities in archaeological materials indicate the existence of cultural and economic ties.

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