

ACHIEVEMENTS OF UZBEKISTAN-FRANCE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITIONS

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Abstract

The activity of the Uzbek-French archaeological expeditions is briefly described in the article. As a result of wide-ranging research, the study of many monuments has brought new conclusions to science. It has been shown that cooperation with the French is of special importance in the archeology of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: scientific research, Afrosiyob, Koktepa, Bactria, Jarqo'ton, Ayokogitma, Old Termiz, Poykend.

In the period after Uzbekistan gained independence, extensive international relations and expeditions and scientific projects based on them occupy an important place in the field of archeology.

Today, the scientists of our country organize more than fifteen international expeditions with experts from France, Italy, Russia (Novosibirsk, St. Petersburg), Japan, the USA, Australia, Germany, Korea, Poland, the Czech Republic and China and conduct archaeological research. Among them, the archeological research carried out in cooperation with France is of particular importance.

The project "Civilization of Central Asia in ancient and medieval times" is conducted in cooperation with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS - Center national de la recherche scientifique). Research began in 1989, and archaeological research was carried out in the monuments of Afrosiyob (the capital of Samarkand Sogd) and Koktepa (one of the oldest urban centers, assumed to be Basilea mentioned by ancient authors) [1:68-79]. Project leaders are M.Kh. Isamiddinov, M.A. Reutova from Uzbekistan and F. Grene, K. Rapen from France.

As a result of the joint research in Afrosiyab, a more accurate stratigraphy of the ancient city was obtained and the layers belonging to the ancient Sogdian period were identified. The obtained information played a decisive role in determining the 2750-year age of the city of Samarkand. Another important find obtained by the expedition is the mural paintings from the Karakhanid era discovered in the pavilion of the palace complex. In addition, although wall paintings of the early Middle Ages are quite famous, examples of visual art from the Islamic period are the only ones in the Central Asian region.

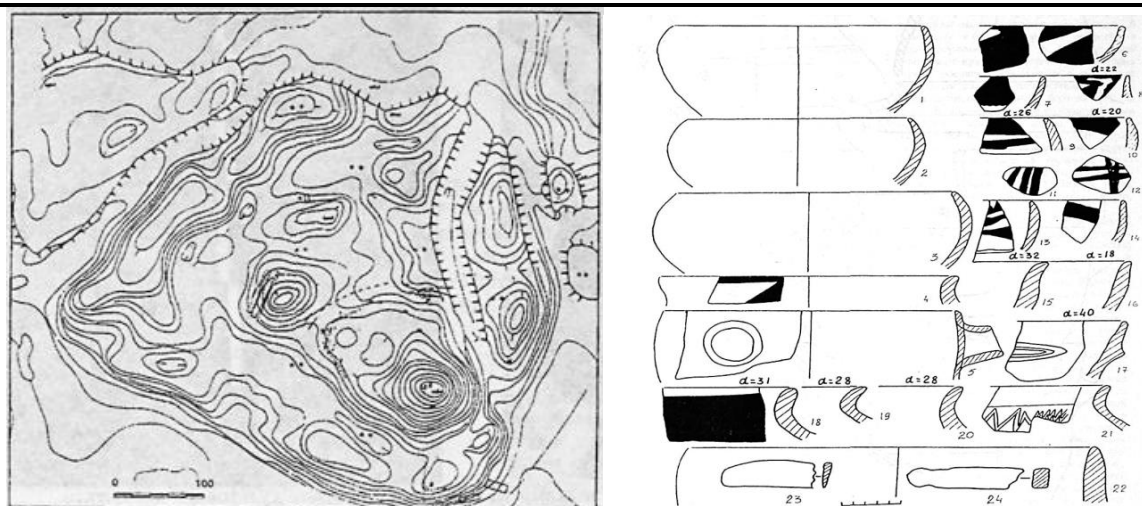


Figure 1. Koktepa and objects found in it.

As a result of the research conducted at the Koktepa monument, it was found that it consists of two parts: the ruler's palace and the city, and in the north-western part there is a fire-worshipping temple. The ancient foundations of the city were established in the 13th-10th centuries BC. The city has two defensive walls, which existed in the III century BC.

In the following years, the main focus of the Uzbek-French expedition was on the analysis, publication and museumization of the findings obtained during long-term archaeological research.

Since 1991, his research in cooperation with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) on the topic of "Ancient Bactrian Urbanism and Defense Systems" has been carried out. It will be held in the territory of the Old Termiz monument (Surkhandarya region), which was created in the middle of the 1st millennium. Project leaders were T. Annaev from Uzbekistan and P. Lerish from France [3].

According to the archaeological research conducted by the Uzbek-French expedition in the ancient monument of Termiz, the ancient core of the city appeared in the middle of the 1st millennium BC, and later the city appeared around it. By the Greco-Bactrian period, the Termiz arch and the lands in its north-western regions, together with perhaps the territory of Chingiztepa, will become a large urban center. By this time, Termiz became the main stronghold on the northern borders of the Greco-Bactrian state.



Figure 2. Excavations of old Termiz.

In the following years, the main focus of the Uzbek-French expedition was on the analysis and publication of the findings obtained during long-term archaeological research.

"Stone Age Archeology of North-Western, Southern and Central Regions of Uzbekistan" is being carried out in cooperation with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). Expeditionary research began in 2005 and was located in the settlement of Ayakogitma, located in the northeastern part of Kyzylkum. The head of the project is M. Khojanazarov, F. Brunet [4].

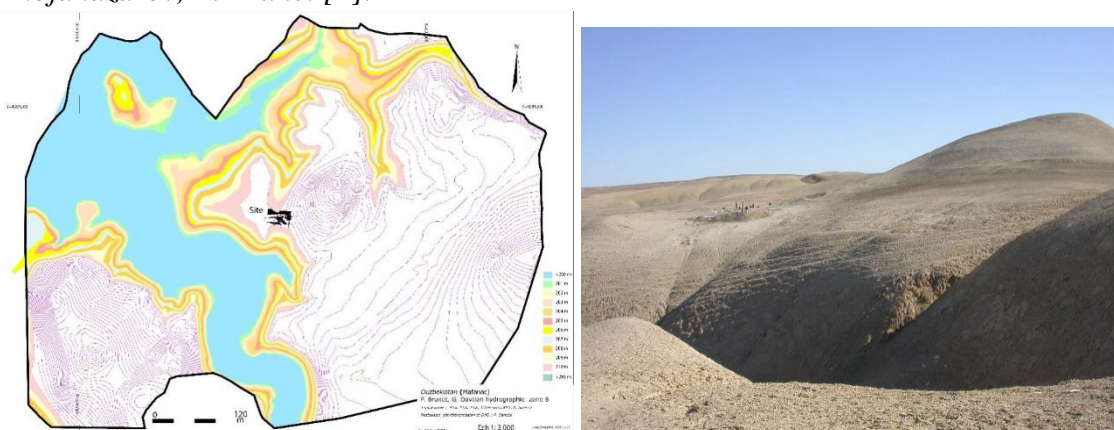


Figure 3. The location and appearance of the shoe monument.

As a result of the research, it was found that according to the geomorphological strata of the VII-V millennia BC, domestication of oxen, camels and goats began for the first time in Kyzylkum region. Along with this, some species of flora of the ancient Neolithic period were clarified. For the first time, the trasology of Neolithic stone tools was studied. An ancient topographical map of the monument will be drawn up. The main stages of the economic and cultural development of the tribes of the Neolithic period in the Akchadarya delta were determined, and the ecological conditions of the tribes of the Neolithic period were studied. The topic "Ancient Burials and the Development of Urbanism" is being worked on in collaboration with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). Archaeological research began in 2008, and the largest monument of the Bronze and Early Iron Age of Southern Uzbekistan is located in Jarkoton. Project managers: S. Mustafauqulov, M. Khasanov, H. Bendezu[2:191].

The purpose of the research was to study the stratigraphic layers of the monuments in the Zharkoton 3 cemetery and the fortresses of the city of Zharkoton, thereby obtaining new anthropological materials and studying them using new anthropological methods.

The main achievements of archaeological research are:

- Semi-basement dwellings with hearth frame construction were found at the Jarqo'ton monument;
- ceramic cooking furnaces from the Bronze Age were found throughout Bactria;
- Several types of burial rites of the early Iron Age of ancient Bactria were recorded in the Jarqo'ton-3 monument;
- In Bactria, a circular object made of iron, a ceramic seal with an anthropomorphic image, and a bronze antidote with the image of a sheep were found.

In the following years, the main focus of the Uzbek-French expedition was on the analysis of findings obtained during long-term archaeological research, preparation of a joint monographic work.

The topic "Appropriation, material culture and urbanization processes of the Bukhara oasis in antiquity and the Middle Ages" is being implemented in cooperation with the French Louvre Museum (Musée du Louvre). Archaeological research began in 2010, and the attention of the international expedition was focused on the large urban centers of the Bukhara oasis - Poykend and Romiton [2:147]. Project leaders are J.K. Mirzaahmedov and Rocco Rante.



Figure 4. Poykend excavations.

As a result of archaeological excavations, interesting information about the way of life, material culture and architecture of Poykend city Shahrstan 1 was obtained. The earliest examples of monumental architecture made of raw brick are the caravansary, unique in Central Asia, which indicate the prosperity of the Great Silk Road and the location of Poykend, a "merchant city" along this route.

In conclusion, it can be said that Uzbekistan currently has two scientific research institutes operating in the field of archeology: the National Center of Archeology and the Samarkand Institute of Archeology. In addition, archeological scientific research is being carried out in a number of higher educational institutions.

Based on its potential in the field of archeology, Uzbekistan has sufficient archeological resources to further expand relations with French scientific research organizations. This is one of the factors that will lead to more archaeological discoveries in the future.

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