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EXPLORING THE SARATEPA FORTIFICATION CASTLE AROUND SAMARKAND

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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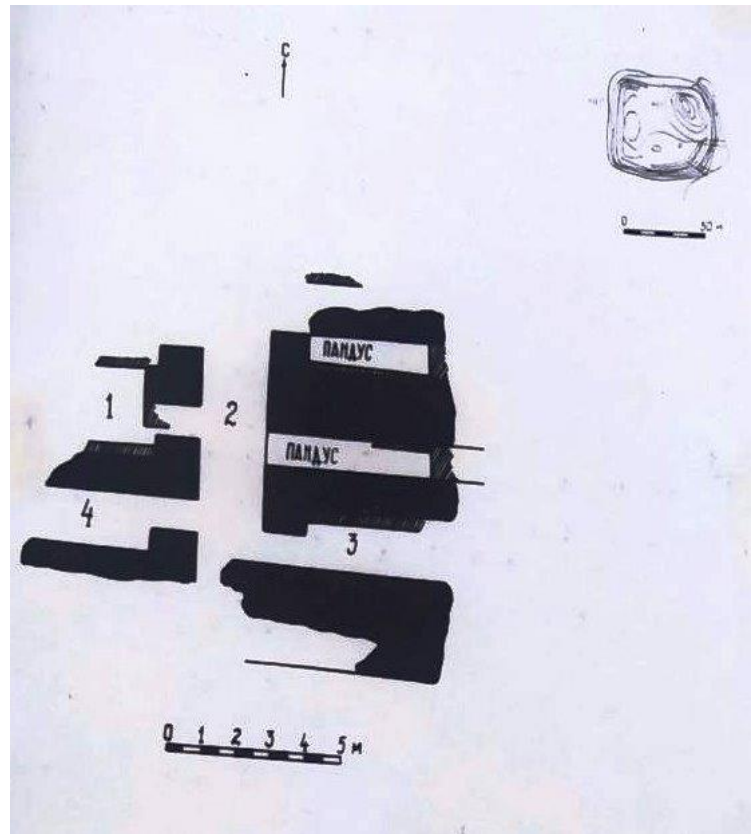
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**Abstract:** This article highlights the history of the unique Saratepa fortress castle in the Samarkand region, destroyed during the creation of collective farm fields before construction began in the 1980s. The work is based on the results of the author's study of the development of the historical part of Samarkand on the example of the modern residential area of Satepo. The significant contribution of Samarkand archaeologists Lebedeva T.I. and Buryakova E.Yu. to the study of the early medieval Saratepa castle is indicated. Such studies are important in order to find a balance between preserving the true cultural values and updating the historical and architectural appearance of the city of Samarkand for its further development. It is noted that defensive castles near water resources, connected by a chain of long protective walls of the area, were of great importance in studying the history of the development of urban fortification in the early Middle Ages.

INTRODUCTION

Saratepa is the ruins of an early medieval Sogdian castle located near the village of the same name on the southeastern outskirts of Samarkand, destroyed during the creation of collective farm fields in the 1980s. Central Asian historians believe that the castle was part of a group of early medieval fortifications erected in the 7th century along the defensive wall of Devori Kiyamat to strengthen its defenses and was a guard post, which is confirmed by the characteristic structure of the building: its premises form two relatively symmetrical groups on the sides of the axial corridor.



Saratepa Castle was built on a monolithic pakhsa platform with a height equal to one block of pakhsa—1.2 meters. The total size of the square, slightly skewed building is 18x18m.

The castle was not completed. After the construction of the lower floor, even before the arches of the ramp were blocked, construction was stopped, and the finished rooms of the lower floor were carefully laid with raw materials, thus turning them into a solid platform for a new, higher building. However, it retained the previous planned structure with minimal changes (1, p.288).

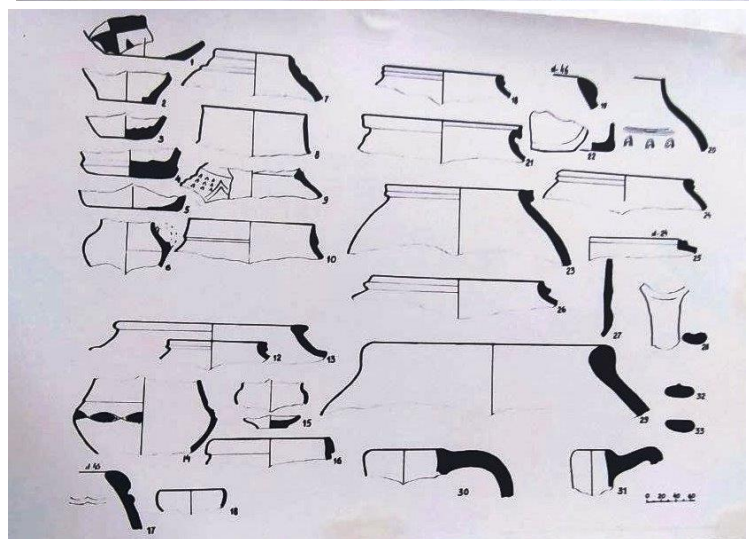
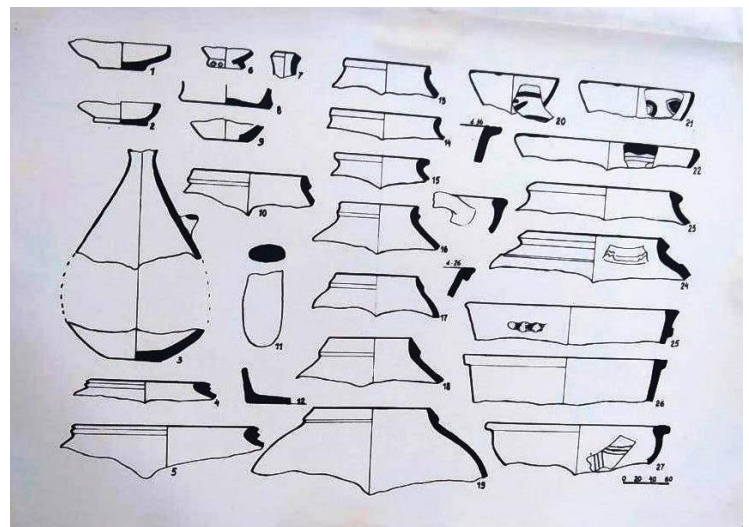
The southwestern part of Samarkand, until recently, consisted of cultivated collective farm fields between the villages of Xoja Sihat and Arab villages. With several hills towering over the landscape. In recent years, due to the intensive development of suburban lands for a new construction site, the last houses have begun to collapse.

Almost 40 years ago (1976), a hill was plowed into a mountain type, 5 years later (1981) most of Saratepa and partially Zargartepa were destroyed. They were located along a powerful plough wall, which once ran from the southwest and was called the Waterasp (embankment for horses), along which a carriage of horses was constantly patrolling, according to the older generation of local residents. Apparently, these are the remains of an ancient wall that surrounded the city from the 8th century AD. used until the arrival of Russian troops here.

Now an irrigation ditch has been built in the body of the leveled wall, supplying water to Dargoma and the surrounding collective farm fields. To the west of it, the channel of the ancient Dargoma channel can be traced, along which a defensive wall was erected on its eastern side. According to the small remains of this wall studied in the northern and southern parts of Darvozakhon, we see that the walls were built of giant gypsum blocks and large-format mud bricks. According to the reports of the eastern geographers of the 10th century, this powerful wall surrounded an area of 12 farsakhs, that is, a kilometer, was surrounded by towers and crowned with battlements. And today, 10 centuries later, the shaft in the preserved part (2, p.121) reaches 4 meters in height and 1 meter in width.

On natural and artificial elevations (3, p.33) in a chain on the inner side of the city walls at a small, no more than 0.5 km from each other distance. These are the guard posts and were the destroyed redevelopment of new buildings. On the mountain type, Saratepa and Zargartepa in the new construction massif of Satepa.

The issue of castles and castle construction in Central Asia is the subject of a number of scientific works by Soviet scientists in the territory of Zarafshan - the works of A. Yu. Yakubovsky (1950) and O. M. Smirnova (1950), in the Bukhara oases of V. A. Shishkin (1963), in the Surxondaryo Valley - S. K. Kabanov (1951-1956 a), in Khorezm - S. P. Tolstoy (1948 a, b, 1962) and E. E. Nerazik (1966), in Fergana and Semirechye - A. N. Bernshtam (1940, 1941, 1950, 1951), E. A. Davidovich and B. A. Litvinsky (1955). Yu.A.



Zadneprovsky (1954) works on Tajikistan - M. Negmatov, Zeymal, U.P. Pulatov, S.G. Khmel'nitsky (1959, 1966, 1973) on southern Uzbekistan G.A. Shishkin (1973) T.D. Aminov (1986).

The partially preserved Saratepa Hill is a 50x50 square feudal castle located on a natural hillock of large size. By the time the architectural work began, it was half demolished. In the remaining part, as a result of the work, it was revealed that the monument had undergone at least 2 major construction periods.

A later building was erected on a natural platform above the lower rooms, which were layered from pakhsa and mud bricks (48.47. 42x30x31. 28x10 cm). The rooms of the 1st construction period were partially preserved and after filling and filling with mud bricks were used as a platform for the 2nd lock, shifted by 20x30 cm compared to the walls of the 1st period. The walls of the building were constructed of gypsum blocks from 1 to 1.5 meters long, with a height of 70 cm, which gave a comb-like layout after excavation of the backfills (4, p.70). According to preliminary data, life in the castle existed from the 8th to the 9th century AD.

Architecturally, the monument is a series of parallel rooms located on the left and right sides of the central axis. The central corridor-shaped room No. 2, running along the c-y axis, is a corridor measuring 1.40 x 8 m. with meter-high openings leading into the room from the west and east sides. The discovered rooms on the 1st floor were most likely of utility value. We see this in many other monuments, castles that are better preserved, where the lower floor is of economic importance. With storage barns for food products, kitchens with small fireplaces, storerooms under the ramp. We observed the same thing in this case. Room No. 1 branches off to the west side, which most likely had a rectangular layout. In the preserved part, it is traced in the size of 3x3, with plastered walls. Only the entrance and a piece of the western and south-western walls have been preserved. Two coins were found in the passage to that room. One measuring 1x1cm is very poorly preserved, the other with a square hole, possibly Varhuman (657-675). Fragments of 10th century ceramics were also found here (5, p.3).

Adjacent to the south is room №4, also with an exit to room №2. It is 1.6x4 in size. Three levels of the floor were exposed in rooms №2 and №2. On the lowest. In room №2 there are traces of mat remains. In the two upper ones there are remains of hearths on the western side of the wall.

Three rooms lead to the eastern side. Two of them, measuring 90x4 cm and 5 meters, were used as a ramp and did not have an exit to room №2.

Room №3 with an exit to room №2 is about 2 meters wide and 4 meters long. It clearly had economic significance. Here, in the northwestern corner and in the southern part, remains of hearths and a lot of fragments of kitchen and tableware from the 8th-9th centuries were discovered. then a set of pots, huns, cauldrons, basins, braziers of various shapes and sizes, along with thin-walled elegant jugs and mugs.

Ceramics of the upper layer, mixed here along with materials of the 10th century, presented in the form of thin-walled bowls and plates with a slightly thickening edge bending inward, where the drawing is made with dark brown and swamp-green paint on a white background, under a colorless azure (6, p. 26; 7, p. 47) there are chirags (lamps) in the form of a flat bowl with a slightly pulled out, pressed obliquely on a flat bottom with a trimming thread, clearly of an earlier 8th century time (7, p. 38). All the dishes, except for braziers and several pots, were made on a potter's wheel - this is handicraft ceramics made from well-washed, mixed light yellow clay, covered with light engobe on the outside. Several objects with strokes of red and a cauldron with dark engobe. For thin-walled dishes, clay was taken without admixture, for coarser ones, finely crushed stone, gypsum and fine sand were used as an admixture. The variety of dishes made on a potter's wheel is quite impressive. It is clearly divided by purpose into large groups:

1. Household utensils for storing food and carrying liquids, kitchen utensils for cooking over a fire and
2. Tableware.

**Household tableware.** Hums are represented by two fragments of rims of thick-walled massive unscrewed ovoid vessels with a flat bottom. In the first case, the vessel walls thicken at the top. Forming a low ridge-shaped neck - 28 cm with the same bottom diameter. The rim of the second hum is sharply bent outward with a diameter of 42 cm. The third type of hum is represented by one with a stepped shape for the lid on the inside. They are covered with light engobe, the dough is cream-colored with a large admixture of uniformly fired chamotte. Tagora - the first is an opening, conical deep basins, where the walls at the top are slightly compacted into horizontal edges. The diameter of the mouth is from 6 to 36 cm. The dough is well-kneaded, cream-colored with inclusions of ganch. One of them is gray clay dough with a belt of appliques-handles, finished at the bottom. There are two fragments of basins-bowls or deep bowls of hemispherical shape with an inwardly curving mouth and a horizontally placed rim, serving as a stop for carrying. Moreover, the rim is decorated with deep carving in the form of transverse and horizontal stripes. The outside is covered with red engobe with traces of soot and smoke. The second basin of the same shape has been preserved with the remains of a powerful loop-shaped handle attached to the body under the rim (5, p. 5).

Tagore 1st order are found with materials of the 8-10th centuries. Afrosiab and similar to Paykend and the Bad-Asiya castle dated to the 10th century. (8, pp. 98-99). Wide-necked and narrow-necked jugs are represented by two types. Jugs with and without a drain. With drains, they most likely belong to tableware.

Wide-necked jugs are usually ovoid and decorated with belts of wavy or parallel straight lines scratched in the upper part of the body, the bottom is thickened, flat, stable. The neck is highlighted and ends under a triangular rim widening towards the mouth. In some cases, a wide flat handle descends from the rim onto the shoulder of the body. There are jugs where the rim of the neck is highlighted by a corrugated ledge, and a strainer descends inside.

Pots and jar-shaped vessels - have a strongly bent rim with a sharp projection along the rim from the inside. This projection is intended for a lid. Such vessels are found in the upper layer of Panjikent ceramics (9, p. 22). There they appear as human vessels with shelves for lids and openings directly under the rim and are dated to the 7th-8th centuries. This vessel was obviously intended for storing products that require limited access to air.

Boilers are represented by a spherical body with a rounded bottom, slightly overstated, profiled under a triangular or square crown. Ear-shaped handles are attached to the upper part of the body. The dough from which the boilers are made has a lot of impurities, finely ground coarse-grained ceramics in a fracture of gray clay are only red in color, the walls of the boiler are thin, made on a potter's wheel. Kitchen utensils include hand-molded braziers with low walls 2-4 cm high, their dough with a large admixture of coarse-grained sand and crushed ceramics. Tableware is represented by jugs, scythe bowls, mugs. The narrow-necked jug has a very elegant pear-shaped shape, where the rounded bottom of the body smoothly merges into a stable flat bottom. In the upper part of the body, there is a remnant of the handle that connected it to the narrow neck. Most likely, the neck on the opposite side of the handle ended in a socket- a drain is a convenient form for spilling liquid. Such vessels are found in the upper layer of Panjikent.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that studying the archaeology and architecture of this unique Saratepa castle will provide new material and a task for architects to graphically restore it. This helps to close the white spots in the urban planning of the historical city of Samarkand.

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