

**OPEN ACCESS**

SUBMITTED 29 March 2025

ACCEPTED 25 April 2025

PUBLISHED 30 May 2025

VOLUME Vol.05 Issue05 2025

COPYRIGHT

© 2025 Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 License.

Urban Planning And Its Development In Central Asia During The Early Iron Age

Ibrokhimov Nozimjon Ikhtiyorovich

Lecturer Of The Department Of Social Sciences At Bukhara State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan

Abdurayimov Sobirjonshuhratovich

Student Of The Department Of Social Sciences, Bukhara State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article discusses the regions where Central Asian cities emerged during the Iron Age and their development. The distinctive features of the Early Iron Age include the noticeable processes of formation of the first city-states in the territory of our country. Based on historical sources, the article comprehensively analyzes how the population built fortresses surrounded by strong defensive walls, leaving behind significant archaeological layers.

Keywords: Iron, Turtkultepa, Elatan, Sangirtepa, Dagistan, Jondavlattepa, Daikovo.

Introduction: We know about the beginning of the Early Iron Age in Central Asia in the 9th-8th centuries BC from the tools found by archaeologists during excavations. By the Early Iron Age, agricultural culture was formed in all regions of Central Asia. The discovery of iron in Central Asia at that time became the basis for fundamental changes in tools. As a result of the use of iron, significant changes occurred in the socio-economic life of society. A second major division of labor occurred during the Iron Age. As a result of archaeological excavations, it was established that craftsmanship separated from agriculture in the Iron Age. This, in turn, led to an increase in labor productivity, a revival of commodity exchange, the development of private property, and the strengthening of the state.

At the beginning of the Iron Age, strong fortifications were built throughout Asia and Europe, and cities flourished. In general, people were familiar with iron as

early as the Eneolithic period, but did not know its practical significance. In nature, pure iron is found only in meteorites. We know from excavations that iron jewelry and beads were found in the graves of tribes inhabiting the ancient East. Until the 1st millennium BC, iron was used as a material for making rare ornamental items for the population. Since the early Iron Age, cities in Central Asia have also undergone a significant stage of development. For example, in the region of Sogdiana, agricultural culture began to take shape during the Early Iron Age.

This culture has been discovered in the monuments of ancient agricultural civilizations such as Koktepa, Sangirtepa, Daratepa, Uzunqir, and Lolazor, as well as in the lower layers of Turtkultepa, Afrasiab, and Yerkurgan. From the location of archaeological sites, we know that the monuments in Sogdiana were primarily situated along riverbanks. This is particularly evident in the Kashkadarya oasis. Here, several oases dating back to the Early Iron Age can be identified. Based on the results of excavations, archaeologists have studied settlements by categorizing them into the following types according to their size and functions:

1. Ruins of cities with defensive walls - Ark (Uzunqir, Yerkurgan);
2. Villages: Daratepa, Karokchitepa, Beshkutontepa;
3. Settlements with specific functions, surrounded by defensive walls (possibly temples).

Yerkurgan is considered one of the cultural and political centers of Sogd. Its area is 150 hectares. During excavations in the lower layers of the settlement, the era of the pre-millennium. The location of residential and economic buildings dating back to the 8th-7th centuries has been determined. In the 6th century BC, its interior was expanded and surrounded by a defensive wall. Luxurious administrative buildings were erected on the inner side, but no traces of the citadel have been found so far.

The Uzunqir monument is located in the Kitab district of Kashkadarya region. It was formed as a small settlement in the 8th-7th centuries BC, and in the 7th-6th centuries BC it occupied an area of 70 hectares and became the center of the oasis. The rectangular tower had a strong defensive wall with loopholes. Currently, as a result of excavations, it has been established that part of the defensive wall has been preserved. The thickness of the defensive wall is 1.85 meters, the lower part is made of adobe, and the upper part is made of adobe and adobe bricks.

The monument was studied in 1981 by the staff of the Department of Central Asian Archaeology of Tashkent State University. As a result of archaeological research,

it was established that craftsmanship developed in the city as a result of the discovery of pottery vessels made of iron and military tools. In the 7th-6th centuries BC, the regional center, called Nautaka, was Uzunqir. BC. In the 3rd-2nd centuries, the regional center moved to a new city, that is, to the place of the present-day city of Kitab. Uzunqir is considered an example of a city in the territory of Uzbekistan.

The Sangirtepa monuments are located along the Shurob River in the middle reaches of the Kashkadarya River. As a result of archaeological excavations, it was established that the total area of Sangirtepa is 3 hectares. On its southern and western sides, there were defensive walls. As a result of the research, a 6.85-meter cultural layer was discovered there, and 4 construction periods were identified. The first period of formation of Sangirtepa is considered to be the 9th-8th centuries BC. The influence of ancient Eastern civilization was strong in the formation of the economic and cultural life of Bactria and Sogdiana. Therefore, in these regions, from the early Iron Age, ancient cities were formed, and the first states emerged.

The Elatanian culture dates back to the Iron Age, which dates back to BC. It dates back to the 7th-5th centuries. Monuments of the Elatanian culture have been found in almost all regions of the Fergana Valley. The settlement of Elatan has a triangular shape and is surrounded by a defensive wall 4 meters wide.

Towers were identified in several places on the defensive walls and in the corner of the gate. People who lived in the Elatanian culture used adobe, raw brick, and clay in construction. In agriculture, wheat, rice, and barley were mainly sown. Animal husbandry was also developed, mainly small-hoofed cattle were raised. Ceramic vessels were made by hand and on a potter's wheel. From this period, the manufacture of tools and ornaments from iron became widespread. Textiles also developed in this culture from the Iron Age. The formation of ancient cities is undoubtedly connected with the settled agricultural culture of the population; cities emerged as centers of the agricultural oasis.

Monuments of the Iron Age have been comprehensively studied by archaeologists from Central Asia, partly from the territory of Uzbekistan. For example, 46 monuments dating back to the beginning of the 1st millennium BC have been identified in Southern Turkmenistan, known as the ruins of an ancient village. Such village ruins were also studied by archaeologists from the territory of Uzbekistan. For example, 8 such ruins were found in Surkhandarya and 7 in Kashkadarya. Yoztepa, Aravalitepa, Kukhnatepa, Uchtepa in the Lower Murghab, Kuchuktepa, Bandikhan I, Kiziltepa and Uchtepa in Surkhandarya, Yerkurgan, Chirakchitepa,

and Sangirtepa in Kashkadarya are also among the ruins of such cities. The most ancient cultural layers of the monuments are characteristic of the transition period to the Iron Age. The lower layer of the Yaztepa city remains - the Yaz I settlement - existed in 900-650 BC. During this period, the monument consisted of 16 hectares of rural settlements and a large rectangular building-fortress. At the site of the fortress, the remains of a palace built from raw bricks measuring 8 meters were found. During excavations, archaeologists also discovered and studied the ruins of ancient settlements. The material sources characteristic of the Yaz I, Kuchuk I, and Yerkurgan layers all belong to a close culture with one main feature.

We can see that another Iron Age city monument is Kuchuktepa, which is located 70 km northwest of Termez. In 1000-750 BC, there was a small fortress built on a platform in place of the hill. We can see that the building consists of 6 residential and household apartments, surrounded by defensive walls. According to the results of archaeological research, another important monument of the Iron Age is the development of the Chust culture in the Fergana Valley at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC. More than 70 ancient city ruins have been discovered and studied in Namangan, Andijan, and Osh regions. Chust, Dalverzin, Boztepa, Chimbay, and others are among them. The peasants who created the Chust culture lived in cities and villages built from basements, mud bricks, or raw bricks. As a result of archaeological research, we can see that the ruins of Chust and Dalverzin were surrounded by high defensive walls. The wall excavated in Dalverzin is 4.6 meters wide and 2.5 meters high.

Common pottery among archaeological finds testifies to general cultural processes. Colored pottery vessels found in Yoz I, Kuchuk I, and Chust are found in many parts of Central Asia. We see that the ruins of the cities of Anovtepa, Yelkantepa, Ulugtepa, located around Kopetdag in Southern Turkmenistan, Tillatepa in Northern Afghanistan, Djarkutan and Bandikhontepa I in Surkhandarya, and Odoytepa in the Middle Amu Darya region have been studied by archaeologists. However, the finds of ancient Dagestan, located in southwestern Turkmenistan, differed significantly from material sources of the Yaz I type. The monuments of Dagestan, consisting of ruins of cities and villages, occupied a large area. Archaeologists have discovered and examined traces of ancient canals from the city-states of Dagestan and the Atrek River. It is well-studied around the ruins of the central city of Dagestan - Madov and Izatkuli.

In the Southern regions of Central Asia during the Early Iron Age, a culture of the Yaz II, Kyzyl II, and Afrasiab

types developed. Only excavations conducted by Soviet archaeologists during the colonial period made it possible to determine the urban states and material culture of the early Iron Age tribes living in Central Asia. Only in the cities of Bactria, Margiana, and Sogdiana, 350 archaeological monuments have been discovered and studied. The urban layers of Yaztepa, Kuchuktepa, Kiziltepa, and Tillatepa, dating back to the 7th-4th centuries BC, have been extensively studied. (Summer II belongs to 650-450 BC, Summer III to 450-350 BC, Red II to 700-550 BC, Red III to 550-400 BC). The area of the ruins of the city of Kyzyltepa is 22 hectares (Surkhandarya, Shurchinsky district). The ruins of the fortress are located in the northwestern part of the city.

The city wall stands 10 meters tall. The city fortifications and walls, constructed with adobe, were built thick and sturdy. A special military defensive tower, 1.5 meters wide, was built atop the defensive walls for soldiers to patrol. Embrasures were left every 2 meters along the walls.

Bronze arrowheads and stone cores used as projectiles were discovered during archaeological excavations. Archaeological research has revealed that the population around Kyzyltepa engaged in agriculture. The family community of the Early Iron Age formed the economic foundation of society, jointly governing the city-states on clan lands. Members of the household community lived in large patriarchal families, sharing common dwellings (Kyzylcha I, Kyzylcha VI) and jointly owned property.

Archaeological findings indicate that architectural construction techniques and craftsmanship flourished in Surkhandarya (the northern part of Bactria) during the Early Iron Age. The territory of the centralized city-states was very large, encompassing one or more vast regions. By this time, cities began to be divided into categories based on their political position. The presence of such urban-type archaeological monuments as Bolo Hissar, Altindiler (Northern Afghanistan), Kyzyltepa, Jondavlattepa, Khaitabadtepa (Surkhandarya), Baytudasht (Southern Tajikistan) has been established in the territories of the ancient cities of Bactria. Research on the dating and classification of monuments of the Iron Age in Uzbekistan was conducted by S.P. Tolstov, A.I. Terenozhkin, and Ya. Gulyamov. Cities and state monuments of the Early Iron Age in the territory of Uzbekistan. It dates back to the 8th-6th centuries.

In the 1960s and 70s, the lower layers of Kuchuktepa, Jondavlat, and Kyzyltepa, as well as Pachmoktepa and Kyzylchatepa monuments were studied in Surkhandarya. L.I. Albaum discovered remains of dwellings dating back to the 6th-4th centuries BC,

pottery, iron household items, and agricultural tools at Kuchuktepa. In the 60s, the Khazora monument and Sarmishsay petroglyphs were examined in the Bukhara region.

Urban monuments of the Iron Age in Kashkadarya have been studied by archaeologists. Among them, the Chimkurgan site (1972) was examined. In 1973, the Chardara fortification (Konimekh district) and Romushtepa (Jondor district) were investigated. In addition, cities and fortresses of the Iron Age have been extensively studied through comprehensive archaeological and anthropological research not only in Uzbekistan but also in the northeastern regions of Central Asia. For example, iron objects in the ruins of Diakovo city, as well as Bronze Age settlements and ruins, have been thoroughly examined through extensive archaeological research.

We know from archaeological findings that during the excavation of cities and city ruins from the Iron Age, various types of unique finds were found, as well as iron weapons and household items. During the excavations of Iron Age cities, the ruins of cities and the remains of defensive buildings and defensive walls were discovered.

REFERENCES

1. B.J. Eshov O'zbekiston tarixi,- Toshkent. 2014.
2. N.A. Egamberdiyeva. Arxeologiya,Toshkent. 2011.
3. A.V. Artsixovskiy. Arxeologiya asoslari. Toshkent. 1970.
4. Ibrokhimov, N. I. . (07.11.2023). TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EMIRATE OF BUKHARA AND INDIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY - THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY. Oriental Journal of History, Politics and Law, 3(06), – P. 9–15.
5. Nozimjon I. Ibrokhimov.(31.01.2024). THE PLACE OF TRADE IN THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OF THE BUKHARA EMIRATE WITH INDIA. Oriental Journal of History, Politics and Law, <https://doi.org/10.37547/supsci-ojhpl-04-01-03>. – P. 21–27.
6. Nozimjon Ibrokhimov. (19.12.24). TRADE RELATIONS OF BUKHARA EMIRATE WITH INDIA IN THE XIX CENTURY. Oriental Journal of Social Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.37547/supsci-ojss-04-06-18>. -P. 164-171.
7. Nozimjon Ixtiyorovich Ibrohimov. XIX ASRNING IKKINCHI YARMI – XX ASR BOSHLARIDA BUXORO AMIRLIGI VA HINDISTON O'RTASIDA OLIB BORILGAN CHOY SAVDOSI. Qo'qon DPI. Ilmiy xabarlar 2025-yil 4-son, A seriya.-B.12171224.