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STUDY OF BUDDHISM IN THE SOUTH OF UZBEKISTAN

Abstract: This article tells about the spread of Buddhism in Southern Uzbekistan. The views of archaeologists who scientifically studied the issue of Buddhism were also analyzed.

Key words: Religion, Buddhism, Termez, monument, Fayoztepa, Kushan state, Dalvarzintepa, Karatepa, statue.
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Introduction

Today, due to the sharp increase in interest in the knowledge of our history among our people, the study of ancient traditions, religious beliefs, cultural and spiritual heritage of our ancestors remains an urgent issue of historical science. The coexistence of different beliefs and religions was undoubtedly a characteristic feature for Central Asia as well.

Materials and Methods

Buddhism occupies a certain place in the development of the ancient history and culture of the peoples of Central Asia. A group of researchers believes that the introduction of this religion into Central Asia dates back to the reign of the Kushan king Kanishka (78-123) (late 1st – early 2nd centuries) [1, 447]. The second group considers the beginning of this process somewhat earlier. According to an earlier point of view of researcher B. Litvinsky, Buddhism was spread through northwestern India and southern Afghanistan (Kandahar). It began to spread to Bactria (southern regions of Uzbekistan) in the III century [2, 159].

Under Kanishka I, the population largely adhered to the Mahayana Buddhist sect. Many Buddhist temples were built. At the same time, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism are also common. Kanishka was the first in the history of Buddhism to introduce periodic singing at religious meetings. At the first meeting, this new kind of Buddhism, Mahayana, was

formalized. This led to the widespread spread of Buddhism in Asian countries, becoming one of the world's religions. This is evidenced by the fact that on the reverse side of the coins found as a result of archaeological research in the territories of Central Asia, various goddesses were depicted – Mithra (goddess of the Sun), Fire (Goddess of fire), etc. [3, 79]. Buddhist figurines or fragments of them found in Karatepe, Fayoztepe, Sairam, Kuva and other places of modern Termiz, images of Buddhist musicians on a fragment of Aivan's pedestal in Ayritam and other finds, palaces and temples are sources telling about Buddhism in Central Asia.

In the Kushan era, Buddhism was given great importance, special attention was paid to the performance of religious paintings, so special temples were built, Buddhism became an important component of the national way of life, greatly influenced the development of culture. It can be seen by the example of the role of Buddhism in the cultural and spiritual life of Termiz, one of the most progressive cultural centers of Bactria-Tokharistan.

In the 1st century BC, Buddhism gained priority in Termez. This played an important role in the fact that the residents of Hadagan adopted Buddhism and sponsored the construction of temples. Temples of Karatepe [4, 1] and Phase type were considered one of the largest shrines. They contained a large clay statue of Buddha and stupas.

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Early information about the Buddhist monuments of old Termez is based on the written sources of A.A. Stahl-Holstein [5, 9-22], and V.V. Bartold [6, 1] is covered in his work. In this regard, Xuanxian's information was of great importance.

In 1926-1928, the expedition of the Museum of Oriental Cultures (Moscow), headed by P.B. Denike, conducted scientific research on the monuments of Zarmal and Karatep of Old Termez. An employee of the expedition A.S. Strelkov studied the monument to Zurmala [7, 27-30] and identified traces of cave structures in Karatepe [8, 70-76]. In 1934, archaeological work in Karatepe was completed by G.V. Parfenov [9, 83-84], and in 1936-1939 by M. In Genghistepe and Karatepe. Under the leadership of E.Masson, the staff (A.A. Strelkov, V.A. Shishkin, B.B. Piotrovsky, E.G. Pchelina, I.A. Sukharev) conducted research [10, 1].

In the 60-80s of the last century, the architectural structure of the tarkh structures identified by the Joint Expedition under the leadership of Stavisky (the Eastern Branch of the State Hermitage and the Museum of Oriental Art) on the southern and partially northern hills of the religious center of Karatepa was studied, significant scientific materials on Buddhist architecture, art were collected, samples of writing and material culture were obtained [11, 1].

Thanks to the research of G.A. Pugachenkova and Z.A. Khakimov (1964-1965), it was established that the Zurmala tower is a Buddhist stupa reconstructed in the form of a large structure with a semicircular dome 16 m high [12, 257-263].

Temples usually consisted of underground and aboveground parts. There are also separate stupas, which are distinguished by the mahobati stupa "Zurmala", decorated with elaborately executed Buddha figurines made of white marble. The stupas were built in a rectangular shape at several heights. The top of the stupa is domed, and an anchor made of wood or stone is installed on it. At the anchors there were several umbrellas made of stone, which the Buddhists called "Chatra". "Chatra" is a symbol of the sacred tree.

The stupa was considered a symbol of the universe. The houses had special prayer rooms with Buddha statues. Later, small clay figurines of bodhisattvas were added to the Buddha statues. This circumstance also indicates that Buddhism had a special significance in the life of the townspeople.

As a result of extensive archaeological work in 1968-1976 by V.A.Kozlovsky and L.I. Albaum, a large structure – a Buddhist monastery - was discovered in Fayoztepe and unique archaeological finds and scientific data on Buddhist culture, architecture, fine arts, and the history of writing were obtained [13, 54].

Issues of introduction and dissemination of Buddhist teaching in Central Asia G.A. Pugachenkova [14, 23-41], B.Ya. Stavisky [15, 219-232], L.I.

Albaum [16, 18-28], E.V. Rtveladze [17, 72-77], B.A. Litvinsky [18, 188-199], V.V. Vertogradova [19, 28-33], T.K. Mkrtichev [20, 27-56], K. Abdullaev [21, 157-189], S.R. Pidaev [22, 11-27], T.J. Annaev [23, 53-66]. In the studies of M.S. Bolganova [24, 40], the peculiarities of lighting are noted.

As a result of new research by the Uzbek-Japanese expedition to Karatepe during the years of independence, the location of the monastic part of the monument on the site of the northern hill was solved and significant scientific data on the Buddhist history of Tarmita-Termez was obtained [25, 9-10]. Sh. Samples of frescoes in the monastic part of Karatepa were identified by the Termez archaeological expedition led by Pidaev. This find is an important resource in restoring the image, clothing and jewelry of the inhabitants of Bactria.

Now let's focus on the temples of Karatepa and Fayoztepa in Termiz. Because the archaeological excavations carried out in these two temples have provided very valuable information that allows us to shed light on the spread of Buddhism in Central Asia, the formation and development of Bactrian Buddhist culture. These two monuments occupy a special place among the monuments of ancient Buddhism.

Fayoztepa was a temple in the style of "vihara" (in Sanskrit means a hut, a shelter where Buddhist monks lived during the rainy season, consisting of a hut, a courtyard and a garden), in the center of which religious ceremonies were held. Statues of gold miners, pottery and marble were found in the stupa adjacent to the chapel. From here, a statue of the Buddha sitting under the sacred Boddkha tree, made of marble with exquisite processing, and two monks standing on either side of it were also found [26, 53-58].

It should be noted separately that the largest and most majestic stupa in Northern Bactria was found in the ruins of Karatepa. The base of the stupa and small stupas located on both sides of the stairs, samples of the writing of that period have been preserved to us [27, 39-45].

The original capital of the Kushan Kingdom was Dalvarzintepa. During the reign of the Kushan ruler Kanishka, Dalvarzintepa took shape as a city and became one of the centers of trade. From the Dalvarzintepa complex (a fortress city surrounded by a powerful defensive wall up to 10 meters thick), located in the Shurchinsky district of Surkhandarya region, a Buddhist temple and a dakhma with relics were found, as well as a two and a half meter ceramic jug filled with golden treasure. They point to the position of Buddhism in the socio-spiritual life of the peoples of that time and its place among other indigenous religions [28, 18-27].

In a large prayer complex found in the ruins of ancient Termez, 25 Buddhist complexes were discovered (statues of Buddha standing, sitting and lying in clay up to 3-4 meters high). These findings

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are fundamental proof that Buddhism occupies a special place in the cultural, spiritual and ideological life of Termez. Recent studies show that the religion of the Buddha first came to Termiz at the end of the 1st century BC, as well as at the beginning of our era. Most of the city's population was converted to Buddhism and practiced comprehensive preaching on this topic. The mayors also paid special attention to the prevalence of Buddhism here. They built Buddhist temples. Two of these central temples are now known as Karatepa and Fayoztepa. There were also separate stupas. One of these stupas is now called Zurmala. This stupa amazes people with its perfection. At one time, the monument was decorated with statuettes made of white marble. The sculptures, mainly related to Buddhism, are executed skillfully. Unfortunately, only some of these sculptures have come down to us. The townspeople also had special prayer rooms in their homes. There were terracotta Buddha statues in these rooms.

Buddhism and its culture also had a great influence on the material culture of Northern Bactria. In particular, most of the ceramics of the late Kush period are decorated with various Buddhist symbols. Here we come across icons such as "The Heel of the Buddha", "The Wheel of the Buddha". There were also statues of monkeys. It is known that monkeys were considered animals revered by the Buddha.

Until then, such images were unknown in Bactria. The statuettes depict the Buddha standing or sitting on a board made with great skill. Koroplast-potters for the production of ceramic figurines made of clay, who tried to express the holistic state of the Buddha, his spiritual maturity, perfection. A warm tenderness spreads over his face. The position of the Buddha's hand takes on special significance. In particular, when the Buddha stands with his right hand raised, it means "to drop fear" [29, 11-22].

Scientist-ethnologist K.Shonievov cites the fact that among the inhabitants of the territory of the Karluk state there were also ethnic groups professing Buddhism. Buddhism penetrated to the Turkic peoples in the 4-5 centuries. In the second half of the VI century, some Turkish kagans adopted this religion. Archaeological excavations also confirm the existence of Buddhist temples in several cities of the Chu Valley, including Suyob, Bolosogun, Sukuluk, Sarig, and Jul [30, 115].

In recent years, archaeological studies of the Buddhist monument Tarmita – Termez have been carried out in the Termez area. In cooperation with Uzbek and foreign scientists, significant archaeological work was carried out to study the Buddhist monuments of Tarmita-Termez, and thanks to Tarmita-Termez, the peculiarities of the spread of Buddhist teaching in Margiyan, Sogd and East Turkestan were revealed.

In his research, Zhannaev focused on analyzing the results of the archaeological study of the Buddhist monuments of old Termez, highlighting the architectural structure of the first Buddhist monastery erected on the territory of Northwestern Bactria. Scientific processing of new material resources acquired in Tarmita-Termez Buddhist structures and objects, disclosure of the issues of the task of the Buddhist centers of Tarmita-Termez, comparison of Tarmita-Termez and ancient Indian Buddhist structures,

Next to the mausoleum of Muhammad Hakim Termizi, his archaeological group, headed by T. Annaev, as well as as a result of research with the participation of Zh.Annaeva [31, 67-78] more than a dozen Buddhist cave structures and two Buddhist lighthouse structures have been studied on the territory of Chingistepa.

Conclusion

New research related to the Buddhist question continues: several years of archaeological research by J. Annaev in Surkhandarya [32, 7] led to the successful defense of a research paper on the topic "Tarmita – Termez culture of Buddhist centers" in 2021. In this study, based on new stratigraphic data and periodization of archaeological materials, the Buddhist monastery of Fayoztepa in Tarmita Termiz and Muhammad Hakim determined the period of construction of cave structures around the mausoleum of Termizi, as well as the main stages of activity. At the same time, as a result of comparing the stages of the formation of Buddhist structures, Fayoztepa turned out to be the first Buddhist monastery built on the territory of Central Asia, and the original settlement of Tarmita-Termez, from where Buddhist teaching penetrated into the territories north of the Amu Darya.

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