

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF CITIES AND VILLAGES OF NORTH-WESTERN BACTRIA DURING THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

Tulkinjon Chorshanbiyevich Xoliyarov

PhD, Termez Institute of Engineering and Technology

E-mail: txoliyarov@mail.ru

Abstract. *This article analyzes the historical geography of the towns and villages of Old Termez, Kampirtepa, Suragana in the Hellenistic period of North-western Bactria. It is based on the fact that the city of Alexandria Oxiana is correctly located in the area of Old Termez, not the monument of Kampirtepa*

Keywords: *Northwest Bactria, Alexandria Oxiana, Antiochia on the Oxus, Dharmamitra, Tarmita, Old Termez, Kampirtepa, Suragana.*

INTRODUCTION. It is known that most of the cities and villages of North-West Bactria were destroyed by the march of Alexander the Macedonian's troops. Residents of Kiziltepa in Mirshodi, Kuchuktepa in Muzrabot, Pishaktepa, Tallashkhan Castle in Sherabad oasis, and villages in Bandikhan were forced to leave their homes. Part of the population who lived in the Bandikhan oasis went down to the plains along the stream and settled in the vicinity of Jarkurgan. The people who lived in the Mirshodi oasis founded the city on the site of Dalvarzintepa. Part of the population that lived in the Sherabad oasis moved to the Angor oasis, where they built villages in the center of Aisaritepa and Angor. [1, B. 34-35].

The Kampirtepa monument on the banks of the Oxus (Amu Darya) in northwestern Bactria is one of the important monuments of the Hellenistic period. It was opened in 1972 by E.V. Rtveladze during the preliminary archaeological study of the area. Kampirtepa is a city founded in the 3rd century BC. It is located on the right

bank of the Amudarya, 30 kilometers west of Termez and 1.5 kilometers from Shorab village of Muzrabot district in the same direction.

The castle consists of fortified and unfortified parts, the total area of which is 4 hectares. The structure consists of the necropolis, the area between the necropolis, the outer fortress wall, residences and buildings used for various purposes.

The necropolis is located in the center of the fortress, on the bank of a high terrace facing the Amudarya. It is 150 meters long from west to east and 100 meters from north to south. The area is 1.5 hectares. From the outside, it is surrounded by a 10-meter-deep trench, right-angled tire towers, and a 5-meter-thick wall.

The unfortified part of the castle consists mainly of burial structures. This city flourished during the Kushan dynasty, in the 1st-2nd centuries and was invaded 3 times. [2, C. 3-11].

According to archeological data, settlements of the population appeared in the place of ancient Termez, occupying an area of several hundred hectares on the banks of the Oxus (Amu Darya) in the VI-IV centuries BC. In this regard, archaeologists T. Annayev, Sh. Shaydullayev [3, P. 31-34], Sh. Pidayev [4, P. 12-25], Sh. Rahmonov, J. Annayev [5, P. 215-223] research is very important. According to a group of scholars, this settlement was called Tarmita (Termez), which existed until Alexander the Great conquered Transoxiana (the area between Syr Darya and Amu Darya) in 329-327 BC. The first explanation of the name Tarmita was given by the Austrian scientist V. Tomashek in the 19th century. According to V. Tomashek, Tarmita originates from the ancient Avestan word "taro maetha - that is, the village on the other side of the river" [6, P. 27].

MAIN PART. It is worth noting the historical topography and geography of Termez, based on archaeological evidence, that there was a residential address on the site of Old Termez before the campaigns of Alexander the Macedonian [7, p. 748-758]. According to some scholars, Termez was founded by Alexander the Macedonian. In particular, according to the 10th century Arab historian Abu Jafar al-Tabari, Termez is one of the 12 cities built by Alexander the Great [8, P. 702]. This tradition is also found

in the 16th century historian Hafizi Abru. This group of scientists transforms the inhabited part of Tarmita (Termez) into a strong fortress-city when Alexander the Macedonian passed through Oxus (Amu Darya) in 329-327 BC. After that, the city became known as Alexandria on the Oxus or Alexandria on the Oxus - Alexandria of the Oxus. From this period, a militarily important place, the island of "Paygambar" (from the 8th century, this island was called Osman's island, that is, Jazirati Osman. This name of the island is related to the name of the Arab commander Osman, the Arab troops sent by the viceroy of Khurasan under the leadership of Osman to the troops of Musa ibn Abdullah who occupied Termez were stationed on this island. That is why the island was called Osman's island for many centuries) through this port, Bactra (Balkh) and Marokhand (Samarkand) located on the trade route, this city began to gain special importance in the economic and cultural life of the Central Asian countries [9].

It is known that Alexander the Macedonian became famous as a ruler who built several cities, according to Plutarch, Alexander the Macedonian built more than 70 cities [10, I, 5]. According to researchers, about 60 of these are pre-existing settlements, rebuilt by the Alexander's army or surrounded by fortress walls [11, C. 368]

The tradition in historical literature that Termez was founded by Alexander the Macedonian is based on the information of the Hellenistic historian Diodorus of Sicilian (1st century BC). The city of Alexandria on the Oxus or Alexandria on the Oxus mentioned in Diodorus's "Historical Library" was first placed by the English scientist V.V. Tarn at the place of Old Termez [12, LX].

Archaeologist Sh. Pidayev, who has been excavating the Old Termez monument for many years, supports V. V. Tarn's opinion and covered this problem in several of his articles [13, C. 46-59]. In 2001-2005, as a result of archaeological excavations in the area of Kolab city, remains of material resources from the Greco-Bactrian period were found in the lower layers of the Charmgaroni Poyon and Kupchinor fortresses, as well as in the area of the Tebalay coast. The authors of the archaeological excavation suggested that Oxus Alexandria could be one of these monuments [14, p. 25-31]. The stratigraphic studies carried out by E.V. Rtveldze in Kampirtepa were of great

importance, because the layers of the first period are often covered with layers and buildings of the Kushan period. The oldest Greek-Macedonian (φρούριον) - frurioni (guard post, fortress) was built by the scientist during his campaigns in 329-327 AD on the right bank of the Oxus (Amu Darya) during the reign of Alexander the Macedonian and emphasizes that it was and localizes it to Alexandria of Oxus [15, C. 60]. But in our opinion, the reasons why Kampirtepa is not Alexandria on the Oxus are:

Firstly, Kampirtepa was not built in the Greek style of urban planning;

Secondly, the constructions of the Macedonian Alexander period were mainly built in the part that later became the "necropolis" of Kampirtepa;

Thirdly, in Kampirtepa, the stone decorations typical of Greek urban planning traditions were not used in practice;

Fourthly, the production complexes built in Kampirtepa, including the pottery kilns, belong to the period of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.

Taking these aspects into account, during the military campaign of Alexander the Macedonian between the two rivers in Central Asia, the Alexandria of Oxus, founded on the banks of Oxus-Amudarya, existed not in Kampirtepa, but in the place of Old Termez [16, p. 601-604].

The following reasons can be given for the fact that Old Termez was a city founded by Alexander the Macedonian:

Firstly, archaeological materials from the end of the IV century BC were found in the area of Old Termez;

Secondly, in our opinion, on the right bank of the Amudarya, there was no bigger city fortress than the Old Termez fortress. In particular, the height of the wall of the Old Termez fortress was 18-20 meters, the thickness was 7-8 meters, and there were towers every 20-25 meters. The wall of the old Termez fortress extended 470 meters to the southwest and 230 meters to the northwest, and the total area of the fortress was more than 10 hectares;

Thirdly, the Old Termez fortress requires almost complete archaeological research. Because two 4 x 4 meter trenches were dug in the castle to a depth of 11

meters. If the castle is fully explored from an archaeological point of view, there is a high probability of finding structures and rich archaeological materials from the time of Alexander the Great;

Fourthly, Sh. Pidayev denies the opinion of researchers such as V.V. Tarn, M.E. Masson that Darmamitra is a Sanskrit pronunciation of the name of the Greek-Bactrian king Demetrius, and in turn, the modern term Termez arose from this name.

The city of Antioch Tarmita is also mentioned in the "Pevtinger Map" compiled in Ravenna in the 7th century AD. V. V. Tarn notes that Alexandria of the Oxus was destroyed and rebuilt by nomadic tribes (barbarians in Greek tradition) and was named Antioch on the Oxus after the ruler. According to V. V. Tarn, this happened in 293-290 AD [15, LX; 4, B. 13].

M.E. Masson compared Termez with the city of Dharmamitra, mentioned in Tibetan Buddhist sources, based on the results of the Termez archaeological complex expedition, which conducted research in the area of Old Termez in 1936-1938. According to V.V. Tarn, M.E. Masson, Darmamitra is the Sanskrit pronunciation of the name of Demetrius, king of the Greco-Bactrian state, which in turn gave rise to the modern term Termez. Sh. Pidayev rejects the groundlessness of connecting the origin of the name Termez with the name of the Greek-Bactrian king Demetrius based on the following physical and written sources:

First of all, the presence of coins minted in the name of the Greco-Bactrian king Demetrius in the cultural layers of Old Termez indicates that this city was founded in the centuries before the reign of king Demetrius;

Secondly, the mention of the name Antioch Tarmita in the "Pevtinger map";

Thirdly, if Termez was founded by the Greek-Bactrian king Demetrius, this city would have been called Demetrias in Greek in ancient sources;

Sh.R.Pidayev cites an inscription written on the wall in building "B" of the complex of the Karatepa Buddhist Center in Old Termez as a confirmation of his opinion. According to the well-known linguist V. B. Hen, this inscription indicates the name of Antioch. This inscription is dated to the 4th century. Sh. Pidayev said that even

though the city was called Tarmita during this period, its ancient name Antiochia was preserved.

CONCLUSION. During the reign of Alexander the Macedonian, his successors, the Seleucids and the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms, the territory of Termez mainly occupied the fortress part of Old Termez, with a total area of more than 10 hectares [17].

E.V. Rtveladze mentioned in Ptolemy's "Geography" Oxus (Okhos) to Amul (Charjoi (now Turkmanabad)), Kha(t)rakharta (Χαρ(ρ)άχαρτα or Κατραχάρτα 110°, 44°10') to Kerki castle instead, Zariaspa (Ζαριάσπα or Ζαρίσπα 115°, 44°) to the Mirzabek fortress located on the right bank of the Amudarya in southern Turkmenistan, Khoana (Χοάνα; 117°, 42°) to Kalif, Suragana (Σουράγανα or Ζοραχάνα; 117°30, 40°30) to the territory of Eagle Hill or Khoja Gulsuyar (total area 9 ha) located 40 km from Termez on the right bank of the Amudarya, Fratrua (Φράτρου or Φρατρούα 119°, 39°20) [18, C. 122, 124-125] was localized instead of one of the monuments of Khotinrabort, Takhti Qubot, Tepaishoh and Takhti Sangin.

The city of Suragana was localized by E.V. Rtveladze directly instead of Khoja Gulsuyar. The toponym "Suragana" consists of two parts, "sur" from Turkic language "saur/sour" "horse's hoof", "mountain like a horse's hoof" or Sanskrit "suria (sūr)"- can be interpreted as the sun god. For this reason, E.V. Rtveladze interpreted the toponym "Suragana" as a combination of Turkic-Bactrian words "mine on the mountain" or "abode of the gods" in Sanskrit. Another important meaning of the word "sur" in the Suragana toponym is that in the 50s and 80s of the 20th century, on both sides of Khoja Gulsuyar, in particular, from Lake Tuzkon to Khatinrabort and along the upper reaches of the Amudarya to the Otonjar region. A large number of flocks of sheep of the Termez district were bred and a unique fodder was obtained from them. This ethnographic information confirms that the nature of Khoja Gulsuyar-Khotinrabort region was a very important place for cattle breeding, including sheep breeding.

In conclusion, it can be noted that the research of the historical geography of Northern Bactria during the reign of Alexander the Macedonian, Seleucids and Greek-

Bactrian kingdoms through the works of Greco-Roman authors and the results of recent archaeological researches requires special attention.

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