

STUDY OF IRON AGE MONUMENTS BY S.P. TOLSTOV

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Abstract: This article analyzes the scientific work of the Soviet archaeologist Sergey Pavlovich Tolstov in the study of Iron Age monuments in Central Asia. The study first examines the activities of the Khorezm Archaeological-Ethnographic Expedition, organized under the leadership of Tolstov, the archaeological sites discovered as a result of its activities, and its scientific significance in the study of the Iron Age culture. During the expedition, numerous archaeological sites were discovered in the ancient Khorezm oasis, located in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya River. These include fortresses, settlements, irrigation canals, and monuments associated with agricultural systems. These monuments show that irrigated agriculture, crafts, and urbanization processes developed in the region during the Iron Age.

Keywords: Iron Age, archaeology, Khorezm oasis, irrigation systems, ancient cities, urbanization, archaeological expedition, history of Central Asia.

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируется научная деятельность советского археолога Сергея Павловича Толстова по изучению памятников железного века в Центральной Азии. В исследовании сначала рассматривается деятельность Хорезмской археолого-этнографической экспедиции, организованной под руководством Толстова, археологические памятники, обнаруженные в результате ее деятельности, и ее научное значение в изучении культуры железного века. В ходе экспедиции в древнем Хорезмском оазисе, расположенном в низовьях реки Амударья, были обнаружены многочисленные археологические памятники. К ним относятся крепости, поселения, оросительные каналы и памятники, связанные с сельскохозяйственными системами. Эти памятники свидетельствуют о том, что в железном веке в регионе развивались орошаемое земледелие, ремесла и урбанизация.

Ключевые слова: Железный век, археология, Хорезмский оазис, ирригационные системы, древние города, урбанизация, археологическая экспедиция, история Центральной Азии.

Introduction. The territory of Central Asia is considered one of the ancient centers of human civilization. Since ancient times, agriculture, animal husbandry, crafts, and trade relations have developed in this region. The Iron Age, in particular, was one of the most important stages in the history of Central Asia, as significant changes occurred in the economic, social, and political structure of society during this period. The widespread use of iron tools led to improvements in the production process, which in turn led to the development of agriculture and the development of new lands. At the same time, in the Iron Age, large settlements and cities began to form on the territory of the oases [1]. Archaeological research is of particular importance in the study of Iron Age culture in Central Asia. Since the first half of the 20th century, there have been many archaeological expeditions in the area. Among them, the Khorezm Archaeological-Ethnographic Expedition, organized under the leadership of the famous Soviet archaeologist Sergey Pavlovich Tolstov, occupies a special place. This expedition had great scientific results in the study of the ancient history of Central Asia, especially the area of ancient Khorezm. Tolstov's scientific work was focused on studying the processes of the formation of ancient agricultural culture in Central Asia, the development of irrigation systems, and the emergence of ancient cities. As a result of his research, many archaeological sites located

in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya were identified and introduced into scientific circulation. These sites include ancient fortresses, settlements, irrigation canals, and objects related to agriculture. These findings indicate that there was a developed irrigation farming culture in the territory of Khorezm during the Iron Age [2]. The research carried out by Tolstoy was aimed not only at identifying archaeological finds, but also analyzing them in connection with historical processes. He used a comprehensive methodological approach to the study of the economic foundations, production system and social structure of ancient society. For this reason, his scientific work occupies an important place in the historiography of Central Asia. Tolstov believes that irrigation systems developed in the Khorezm region during the Iron Age played a decisive role in the formation of oases. Through irrigation canals, desert areas were developed and favorable conditions for agriculture were created. The result was small agrarian areas – micro-oasis, which later became large economic centers [3]. This process, in turn, also influenced the formation of cities. Tolstov also notes that the development of irrigation systems during the Iron Age had a significant impact on the social structure of society. The construction and management of large irrigation facilities required collective labor. This led to the emergence of certain organizational management systems in society. As a result, social institutions were formed that controlled irrigation systems, and this process paved the way for the emergence of the first state structures [4]. Archaeological artifacts identified by Tolstoy are an important source for determining the stages of development of Iron Age culture in Central Asia. The study of castles, defensive structures and settlements in particular helps to understand the political and military structure of ancient society. These monuments indicate the existence of centralized political structures in the territory of ancient Khorezm [5].

Methodology. This research was carried out on the basis of a comprehensive methodological approach. Historical, archaeological and analytical techniques were used in the research process. These methods make it possible to study the monuments of the Iron Age as well as to determine the scientific significance of the archaeological research carried out by Tolstoy. First of all, on the basis of the historical and analytical method, written sources, scientific research and archaeological reports of the Iron Age were studied. Through these sources, the economic and social processes that occurred during the Iron Age in the territory of Central Asia were analyzed. Important information was obtained, especially about ancient agricultural systems, irrigation facilities, and the formation of oases. Archaeological method is an important component of research. Through this method, the results of archaeological excavations conducted under the leadership of Tolstov were analyzed. The fortresses, ancient settlements, irrigation canals, and agricultural sites discovered during the expedition are important sources for studying the Iron Age culture². These monuments were analyzed in terms of their territorial location, construction techniques, and functional characteristics. The study also used a landscape-geographic analysis method. Through this method, the location of Iron Age monuments was studied in connection with natural-geographical conditions. In particular, it was analyzed how water sources, soil composition and relief features influenced the location of ancient settlement sites. The comparative-historical method was also used in the research process. With this method, Iron Age monuments were compared, which were identified in different regions of Central Asia. As a result, it was possible to draw scientific conclusions about the cultural and economic ties between the regions.

Discussion. The results of the study show that the archaeological research carried out by Tolstoy led to important scientific results in the study of Iron Age culture in Central Asia. First of all, his research confirms the existence of an agricultural culture that developed in the territory of ancient Khorezm. Irrigation canals, water distribution systems, and agricultural fields discovered during excavations indicate that irrigated agriculture formed the basis of the

economic life of the region during the Iron Age. Secondly, the forts and settlements identified by Tolstoy indicate that there existed an advanced system of settlements in the Iron Age. These monuments are an important resource in the study of the social and political structure of society of the time. While the forts served as defensive structures, the settlements were centers of Agriculture and crafts. Thirdly, the development of irrigation systems led to the formation of certain management systems in society. The construction and operation of large irrigation facilities required collective labor. Therefore, social institutions emerged to manage water resources. This process laid the foundation for the formation of the first state structures. The research conducted by Tolstov made it possible not only to identify archaeological monuments, but also to analyze them in relation to historical processes. Therefore, his scientific works are of great importance in the historiography of Central Asia.

CONCLUSION. According to the results of the study, archaeological research conducted by A.S. Tolstov has been found to have significant scientific value in the study of the Iron Age culture in Central Asia. As a result of archaeological expeditions organized under his leadership, many archaeological monuments have been identified and put into scientific circulation in the territory of ancient Khwarezm. The irrigation systems, fortresses, and ancient settlements identified by Tolstov indicate that there was a developed irrigated agricultural culture in the region during the Iron Age. These studies are an important source for studying the economic and social structure of ancient society. Also, Tolstoy's scientific views provided an important theoretical framework in explaining the issues of urbanization processes and the formation of oases in Central Asia. His work served as a methodological focus for later archaeological research. In general, the research conducted by Tolstov is an important scientific legacy in the study of the history of Central Asia and is still used as an important source in the study of the Iron Age culture.

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