

## CENTRAL ASIA IN THE EARLY IRON AGE (BASED ON JARQOTON MATERIALS)

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### Abstract

The article deals with the question of the dwelling of Sogd, Bactria and Fergana of the Early Iron Age on the basis of archaeological materials obtained from the layers of the Early Iron Age at the Dzharkutan settlement in the south of Uzbekistan.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The dwellings of the sites of the Early Iron Age in Sogd are divided into two types. The first type of dwellings includes dugouts and semi-dugouts. We call dugouts ordinary holes dug in the ground of a certain size, where a person could spend the night, warm up, etc. In contrast, semi-dugouts had low additional walls, niches, hearths, etc. Because of this, we distinguish dugouts and semi-dugouts into a separate group and refer to primitive types of dwellings.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sometimes the dugouts had steps in the form of steps, there were also hearths that were used to heat the "underground room". Some of the dugouts had niches dug in the walls. The overall dimensions of the oval-shaped dugouts ranged from 2.5 to 4-5 m in length and 2-2.5 m in width. The rounded dugouts had diameters on average 2.5-3 m.

Four dugouts were excavated at excavation site 4 of the Dzharkutan settlement. They were both oval and round in shape.

In particular, dugout 2 is oval in plan (290x240 cm), 412 cm deep from the reference point. The bottom is at a depth of 310 cm from the ancient surface. In the southeastern side of the pit there are steps with wide flights, each 50-45 cm high. A niche 66 cm wide, 47 cm high and 40 cm deep was opened at the floor level in the eastern side. The filling consists of loose earth with the inclusion of fragments of hand-painted painted ceramics and single bones of a human individual. Fragments of guvalyak and a fragment of a ceramic crucible with copper slag were found in the filling of the pit.

At excavation 7, the settlement of Dzharkutan, 5 dugouts were discovered, where it is possible to trace

the transformation of a dugout into a semi-dugout. Dugout 1 has survived only partially. Two building horizons have been identified. Initially, it was a dugout in terms of a rounded shape, with a diameter of about 160 cm. Two layers were recorded in the dugout. The lower one, up to 25 cm thick, is a loose soil of a grayish shade with small layers of ash, with the inclusion of an insignificant amount of ceramic fragments. It is covered by a backing layer, 20-25 cm thick. The second building horizon includes the remains of a wall of adobe bricks along its perimeter, with the construction of which the dugout became a semi-dugout with a rectangular shape. The northern (240 cm) and partially western (140 cm) and eastern (125 cm) walls have been preserved. The width of the wall is one brick along the perimeter of the pit. Three rows of bricks have survived (30-32x10-11 cm) [4; 5]. The wall is one brick wide and high. There is a hearth on the north side. Three holes from the pillars also belong to this horizon. They are located along the east wall in a north-south line. The semi-earthen-type dwellings include room No. 2, which has an oval shape and is oriented north-south. The dimensions of the semi-dugout are 180x130 cm, and the thickness of cultural layers reaches 30 cm. The filling contains a large number of fragments of mud bricks and guvalyak. A sub-triangular hearth and a sufa (80x60 cm) are attached to the western wall of the semi-dugout. The dimensions of the bricks are 41x22x16,? X20x10 cm, 41x? X10 cm. A round-shaped hearth with a diameter of 30 cm, destroyed in antiquity, is attached to the southern wall. A later third round-shaped hearth with a diameter of 40 cm and a height of 25 cm is attached to the southern wall. The dimensions of the raw bricks are 27x? X7 cm, the guvalak is 31x18x8, 32x15x8, 36x16x8 cm. A small iron ring was found on the floor near the hearth 1.

The dwelling of the Burgululyk culture consists of a number of residential buildings, mainly semi-dugouts, stretched along the riverbed. The walls were mostly a wicker frame coated with clay. Some dugouts have internal pakhsa partitions, like in Dzharkutan [3: p. 22 – 75; 6: p. 111].

Thus, the work at Excavation 7 made it possible to identify the area of concentration of residential semi-dugouts in the northern part of the Dzharkutan fortress.

The hearths were located both in semi-dugouts and outside them. Other lesions are similar in shape and size. Judging by the stratigraphy of cultural layers, they belong to the era of the Early Iron Age.

During the excavations at the Dzharkutan settlement, moments were recorded where the sequence of the transition of the ancient agricultural culture of the Late Bronze Age to the agricultural culture of the era of stucco - painted ceramics is quite clearly traced. In particular, an inclined layer of black coals up to 4 cm thick was recorded at the northern wall of the dugout in excavation 9 (9030). The fencing of this layer with adobe bricks (35x16x9 cm,? X15x9 cm) indicates that it was a reusable fireplace.

The altar is located in the southwestern part of the dugout (9032) and has dimensions of 180x110 cm. The wall (9033) of the altar is made of whole and fragments of adobe bricks to a height of two rows of masonry. The masonry is sloppy, with spaces filled with fragments of adobe bricks, pebbles, and fragments of ceramics. The length of the wall is 160 cm and the width is 40 cm. The dimensions of the bricks (32x16.5x8.5 cm;? X20x7.5 cm; 36x20x7 cm; 33x26x9 cm;? X17x7.5 cm,? X14.5x7 cm). On top of one brick, a large fragment of a vase of the Dzharkutan time was found, and on the other a fragment of a large stone grain grinder was found. A large number of animal bones and pottery from the Late Bronze Age and several fragments of pottery from the Early Iron Age and large pebbles were found in the filling.

In the first building horizon, the dugout was a dwelling. In the second horizon, the dugout may have already been a cult place, as evidenced by altars and fireplaces.

The second type of dwellings includes frame-type premises. They are round in plan with a diameter of about 1 m. The filling of the pit consists of a groin structure, in the middle there is a hole. There is a small hearth in the center. On the eastern side of the pit, six holes from the pillars were revealed, located in the form of an arc. They are round in plan, 14–16 cm in diameter and 10–18 cm deep. The distance between them is 15–40 cm.

Hip-roof dwellings have a rounded shape in plan, with a diameter of about 160 cm, a depth of about 20 cm. They are wrapped in dense clay. In the middle there is a hole for pillars about 20 cm in diameter and 10-15 cm deep.

In the pit, six poles were uncovered, which form an arc in the plan. The nests are round, 14-16 cm in diameter, 10-18 cm deep. The distance between them is 15-40 cm. To the west of these nests, a site is open, which together can be defined as a semi-dugout with an economic hearth in the middle.

Dwellings of the third type are classified as raw architecture. Remains of the architecture of the Early Iron Age were found in the southeastern part of excavation 9 of the Dzharkutan settlement. A wall of adobe bricks is oriented along the north-south line, up to 50 cm wide and up to 5 rows of bricks high. The length of the excavated section of the wall is 2 m. Since the wall is located along the slope of a natural hill, it is buried into the continental soil to a depth of 3 bricks (26x? X9 cm, 27x? X9 cm). They are made of poorly mixed lumpy continental clay of reddish and greenish shades, with uniform additions of small pieces of limestone, small stones and chopped vegetation. This is not adobe. The wall is fixed at a depth of 100 cm from the reference point. The wall goes down to the west. A brick wall adjoins it perpendicularly from the west. Its length is 180 cm, but the width could not be determined. From the east, another brick wall adjoins the wall perpendicularly. The length of the excavated part is 95 cm, but the width could not be determined. A characteristic element in the construction technology of these three walls is adobe brick. For the manufacture of bricks, mainland clay of red and green shades was used. The brickwork is very sloppy. These walls form several rooms. Room 1 is formed by two walls, partially excavated. The length of the room is more than 300 cm, the width is more than 150 cm. There is a hearth in the north-western corner of the room. It is rectangular in plan, measuring 80-85 cm (west-east) and 45-47 cm (north-south). The mouth of the hearth faces north. The walls are built of mud bricks, two rows of masonry high and one brick wide. The inner surface of the hearth has traces of prolonged firing to a red color. The eastern wall of the hearth is a single brick (? X12x11-8.5 cm), placed on the edge. On the east side, a large fragment of a stone grain grinder is leaning against the wall of the hearth at an angle. The southern wall of the hearth is a piece of guvalyak laid flat. The preserved dimensions of the guvalak: length 30 cm, width 15 cm, thickness 6 cm. The western wall of the hearth consists of two rows of bricks laid flat, both whole and fragments (34x17x9 cm, 33x17x9.5 cm, ? X16.5x10 cm, ? X15x10 cm). The width of the hearth chamber is slightly widened to the north and measures 33-40 cm. The hearth chamber is deepened by 10-12 cm. One small fragment of molded ware of the Early Iron Age was found in the filling of the hearth.

### 3. RESULTS

Three grain grinders were found on the floor next to him (one whole and one large fragment). The premise was erected in two construction periods: the first floor is inclined from east to west to a depth of 98-114 cm from the reference point. The filling was up to 30 cm thick. The filling contained single, expressionless fragments of ceramics and one fragment of the bottom of a molded vessel from the Early Iron Age. Ash, animal bones and humus were not recorded in the filling. In the eastern part of the room, a large amorphous cluster of pebbles was noted, the thickness of which in some places reaches 15 cm. The second floor is located 20 cm above the first and it is also inclined. The infill above the floor consists of a fairly dense soil of a light shade with small inclusions of ash with single coals. Several inexpressive pottery fragments were found. Room 2 is located east of room 1 behind the wall. There is no doorway. Only a small part of the room, 170x140 cm in size, has been uncovered. There is a layer of pebbles on the floor, extending under the wall. Apparently, before the construction of the transverse wall, rooms 1 and 2 were a single compartment. The second floor was identified 20 cm above the first. Found single fragments of pottery from the early Iron Age.

In the era of the Early Iron Age, tribes of the culture of molded painted ceramics of the Kuchuk-I type appeared on the territory of Bactria. It is part of a large group of archaeological cultures of the Early Iron Age type Yaz I. In this era, there was a sharp change in the cultural and economic appearance of

the population of many regions of Central Asia. As noted by V.M. Masson, the break with ancient local traditions looks especially impressive [6: p. 105]. If we consider the materials of excavations of cultural monuments of colored ceramics in the southern regions of Central Asia, then there are some facts. In the overwhelming majority of these sites, adobe bricks and architectural structures have been identified. Raw bricks are made from elutriated clay with adobe. The architecture of the buildings sometimes reaches quite large sizes and they were built using the traditions inherent in the farmers of the Ancient East. There is a certain continuity in the ceramic complexes. At the same time, there is the fact that with such a large number of monuments (only in Northern Bactria up to 20 sites), there are practically no dugouts.

V.M. Masson noted that Yaz-Depe, apparently, represents a late phase of an already established culture [6: p. 105 – 106]. B.Kh. Matbabaev noted that there are two traditions in the economy of the tribes of the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. The first is the construction of dwellings, consisting of dugouts and light buildings with pillar structures (such as a hut), the second is adobe houses built of adobe bricks [7: p. 47 – 48].

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The study of ceramic materials from the monuments of the Kuchuk I time allowed a number of researchers to subdivide them into the Kuchuk Ia and Kuchuk Ib stages. The ceramics of the Kuchuk I period was obtained from the lower layers of Kuchuktep, the upper layers of Jarkutan I, and lifting materials from Boburtepa. Due to the limited scale of excavation work, no dwellings were found on these sites [1: p. 25 – 30; 2; 8: p. 80 – 87]. It should be noted that the identification of the archaeological complex based only on ceramic materials is justified only at the initial stage of research. For the correct historical interpretation of the complex, it is necessary to study other constituent parts. All researchers note the appearance on the territory of Bactria and Margiana at the end of the 2nd millennium BC. tribes of the "Yazov circle". The monuments of the type Yaz I, Kuchuk I, Tilla I studied up to now give archaeological complexes in which there are few compatible elements. For example, in excavation 4 Koktepa, along with dugouts and semi-dugouts, houses built along the fortress wall according to a single plan of an agricultural type were uncovered. Several rooms are connected by a common corridor-like room. We also note the ceramic complexes, a characteristic element of which is molded ceramics, including painted ones. Such ceramics have also been found in buildings constructed of adobe bricks according to the techniques and traditions of the building industry of the Ancient East. This is usually explained by the synthesis of the cultures of the nomadic newcomers and the ancient agricultural autochthonous population. Apparently, this process was proceeding at a rather fast pace and its result is obvious. This is how the urban culture was formed in these territories. And if the first component of this synthesis of cultures - the ancient farmers of the south of Central Asia - has been studied quite well, then with the second component - the tribes of the cultures of molded painted ceramics, the situation is completely different.

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