

# Illumination of Issues of Public Life in the Surkhan Valley of the Bronze Age in the 60-80s of the Xx Century

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**ABSTRACT:** In the article, in the 60s-80s of the 20th century, the coverage of social life issues of the Bronze Age of the Surkhan oasis in scientific literature is analyzed. It was shown that the study of socio-economic processes in the Surkhan oasis and the analysis of the characteristics of the development of ancient farming communities were shown.

**KEYWORD:** Ancient East, civilization, Surkhan valley, Sapalli culture, social relations, property, etc.

## Topicality

Over the years of independence, certain work has been carried out on archaeological research and the restoration of the historical processes of the rich past and cultural heritage of the centres of civilization that have developed in Uzbekistan since ancient times. Particularly in recent years, new monuments dating to the Bronze Age have been uncovered, and much information has been obtained through research. This serves to analyze the research related to the Bronze Age of Surkhan oasis in terms of historiography, to compare scientific data, to determine the dynamics of historical knowledge, to better understand the scope and significance of the contribution of the historical and cultural region to the development of regional civilization.

## Methodology

Various historical methods were used in writing the article. In particular, it was aimed at scientific research based on the methods of periodization, chronological, systematic approach, historical and comparative analysis of basic historiographical data, as well as methods of partly problematic approach. Attention was also paid to showing historical processes in dynamics.

In the 2nd millennium it served to highlight various issues such as the development of productive farms, the emergence of regional neighbourhood communities and the development of large family communities in the Surkhan oasis.

## Results of research

In 60-80s of 20th century as a result of expansion of archaeological data on Surkhan oasis Bronze Age it became possible to analyze features of ancient farming communities in different researches.

V.M.Masson, A.A. Askarov, V.I. Sarianidi, I.S. Masimov, T.Sh. Shirinov and other scholars who studied monuments of the Bronze Age in Central Asia have noted the development of socio-economic relations

<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC" under Volume: 3 Issue: 12 in Dec-2022 <a href="https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR">https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR</a></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Copyright (c) 2022 Author (s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY).To view a copy of this license, visit <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a></p>
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during that period. Specialized crafts - pottery, locksmith, textile, jewellery and construction, agriculture based on artificial irrigation indicate different production activities in different farming areas of the region (6), (1), (9), (11). One of the important findings of the researchers is that the development of bronze metallurgy has increased the types of working tools. This, in turn, increased productivity and led to the emergence of multi-profile craft industries [3].

According to A.A.Askarov's research, there were eight large family communities in Sopollitepe. They consisted of small families and lived in separate houses [2]. Each house consisted of residential, household and outbuildings. In the social system of the population, large families had their own households and formed economically independent communities. In the archaeology of Bronze Age Uzbekistan these data served to address various issues.

In the process of determining the total number of people who lived in the Bronze Age settlements of the Surkhan Oasis, researchers relied on information available in Central Asian archaeology and written sources relating to the history of the Ancient East. The list of families found in Sumerian documents, a small family in the Ancient Near East mil. cf. This indicates that it consisted of 4-5 people in the III-II millennium [4]. Considering these facts, V.M.Masson [5] and A.A.Askarov [2] came to the conclusion that a family of the Bronze Age included 5-6 people. Accordingly, A.A. Askarov wrote that at the first stage 154 people lived in Sopollitepa, at the second stage - 314 people, at the third stage - 242 people [2]. This takes into account the area of living quarters and the total number of cooking cookers. The cases of putting forward and resolving these issues can be regarded as a new approach in the archaeology of the Bronze Age in Uzbekistan.

Members of large families lived in common dwellings, and such houses were formed by *guzars* (regions) which belonged to clan communities in the settlements. Evidence of the development of relations characteristic of the seed-growing system in the social relations of the society of that period suggests that the economic work was done jointly by members of a large family, and as a result, the foodstuffs of the community became common property. Under such conditions, equal distribution of foodstuffs among community members is a basic feature of the primitive system.

The material objects found in Sopollytepe testify to the high development of crafts (pottery, weaving, bronze processing). A.A. Askarov said that the development of agriculture and crafts entailed significant changes in the social life of the population [1]. On this basis, we can conclude that with the development of society and the growth of productive forces created favourable conditions for large families to acquire food and crafts. However, historical science has only archaeological data on the level of private property and commodity exchange in Central Asia of the Bronze Age. In our opinion, archaeological data are somewhat limited in terms of comprehensive study of socio-economic processes in southern Central Asia, including Surkhan oasis, in the Bronze Age. Therefore A. S. Sagdullaev can agree with Sagdullaev that ancient traditions of seed-growing, including the tradition of joint farming by members of a large family, land tenure and living in a common residence, have been preserved in the life of the peasant population. (in large communal houses) have been preserved [8].

Objects found in Bronze Age tombs may also be evidence of private ownership and social stratification. Bronze weapons and jewellery along with earthenware were found in some Sopollitep tombs, while in some tombs only earthenware was found. The quantity and quality of the items found in the tombs is one of the indicators of the social stratification of the population.

As a comparison with the monuments of Northern Afghanistan, Southern Turkmenistan it is worth noting that the inhabitants of Altyntepe of the Bronze Age in Southern Turkmenistan. According to V.M.Masson, farmers, artisans and nobles were divided into groups and lived in separate houses [7].

B. I. Sarianidi analyzed family and society, socio-economic relations in ancient Bactria through the study of

Bronze Age monuments chronologically contemporary with Sopol culture in Northern Afghanistan (Southern Bactria) [10]. Particular attention was paid to analysis of temple and palace architecture and archaeological complexes found at Dashtli 3 monument [9]. According to Sarianidi, about 150-200 people lived in the temple (quantitatively this figure is equal to the population of Sopolli). They were mainly engaged in agriculture and crafts [10].

A.A. Askarov stated that during the study of social system of Sopol culture the information about the system of ancient society described in the Avesta, and the mentioned in this source quadrangular fortress - "vara" are of great importance. [2]. "**Vara**" is mentioned in the book "*Videvdat*" of "*Avesta*" and it preserved its visions of unwritten times. A.A. Askarov compared such monuments as Sopolli, Dashtli-3 and Kuchuktepa with "vara". However, Sopolli and Kuchuktepa monuments chronologically and architecturally differed from each other. Kuchuktepa was a relatively small house-fortress, located separately. This is why it is debatable to compare it to the 'vara' in the Sopolli series. It is also possible that communities of Sopol culture developed at a higher level than those of Avesta, but this issue has not been discussed in the scholarly literature.

Analyzing the theme of family, private property and social structure in the Bronze Age, A.A. Askarov writes that in each *guzar* (region) of Sopollytepa lived representatives of individual clans and members of eight closely related clans [2]. In addition, the social structure of the Sopollite culture inhabitants was compared with the data of Avesta, and Sopollite settlement was compared with the Avesta concept of "*vis*" (seed) and its eight customs - "*nmana*" (family) [2]. In our opinion, it is necessary to clarify this conclusion, i.e. instead of "members of eight closely related clans" the conclusion that "in Sopollitepe lived members of eight large patriarchal clans and they formed representatives of one common clan - "vis" is appropriate here. The same conclusion was reached in the preliminary studies of A.A. Askarov [1].

## Conclusion

By analysis of the results of archaeological research we can conclude that the emergence of Sopollitpin culture in the Surkhan Oasis in the Bronze Age was associated with the acquisition of new lands by ancient tribes, the discovery of water sources and deposits of raw materials. Representatives of one common clan, which consisted of members of eight large patriarchal families, built settlements and houses with complex defence system on new lands, and were engaged mainly in agriculture and crafts. In our opinion, the inhabitants of Sopolli formed a communal association and jointly owned land.

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6	ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC" under Volume: 3 Issue: 12 in Dec-2022 <a href="https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR">https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR</a>
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