

10

SOGDIANA*

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Part One

SUGHD AND ADJACENT REGIONS

(B. I. Marshak)

During the third to the eighth century Sughd (Sogdiana) included the basins of the rivers Zerafshan and Kashka Darya. The name 'Sughd' was frequently applied only to

* See [Map 5](#).

the area near Samarkand – Samarkandian Sughd – but sometimes it was extended to the whole area where the Sogdian language was predominant, which in the seventh century included regions to its north-east (Ustrushana, Chach – the modern Tashkent – and western Semirechye; see Part Two). From the third to the eighth century Sughd, which had originally lagged behind its neighbours to the south and west, became one of the most advanced countries and the leader of all Transoxania. It was neither a powerful state itself nor firmly subjected to any of the neighbouring empires. From the second or first century B.C. each district had developed independently, maintaining ancient community traditions. Private individuals such as merchants, missionaries and mercenary soldiers were extremely active and penetrated into distant lands. Thus political isolation did not entail cultural isolation.

Other peoples knew the Sogdians mainly as silk merchants, but the basis of the Sogdian economy was agriculture on artificially irrigated land. From the very beginning, the Silk Route was controlled by Sogdian merchants, but in the fifth century their domestic trade and monetary relations were still at the stage of ‘Barbarian imitations’.¹ Century after century each of the main areas of Sughd minted coins that can be traced back to the coinage of various Hellenistic rulers of the third to the second century B.C. Moreover, the coins of Samarkandian Sughd had become extremely debased by the fifth century; the image of an archer had been reduced to a mere outline and the weight of the coin was considerably reduced. Although Sughd was a neighbour of the Kushan Empire and was invaded by Iranian forces during the third century, it was not incorporated into these states with highly developed administrative systems. In the sixth century the minting of coins with the image of an archer, which had continued for many centuries, ceased; this marked the end of the stage of ‘Barbarian imitations’ and the beginning of a new stage in the development of trading and monetary relations.²

In ancient times large numbers of nomadic or semi-nomadic herdsmen lived around Sogdiana. Some of their burial places have been excavated near the borders of oases; the ceramics found in the graves are of Sogdian workmanship, showing the crosscultural influence. At some time between the third and the fifth century (the exact date has not yet been established) these burial places fell into disuse, settlements were destroyed and sometimes even deserted, and the craft traditions, as revealed by the forms of the wheel-turned pottery, changed. In the fifth-century strata in the Kashka Darya valley there are large quantities of handmade ceramic articles, together with turned pottery. People with a tradition of handmade pottery, characteristic only of settled peoples and found to this day among the Tajik

¹ Zeimal, 1983, pp. 69–76, 269–76.

² Zeimal, 1983, p. 234.

hillsmen, migrated from the backward outskirts to the partially abandoned fertile land. Around the fourth century what is called the second wall, enclosing an area of 66 ha, was built inside the ancient wall of the capital city, Samarkand – there were clearly not enough people to defend the old wall, which was almost 6 km long.

Between the third and the seventh century there were no prolonged periods of decline. New settlements appeared in both the third and the fourth centuries, and during the fifth century whole towns were built, including Panjikent, 60 km east of Samarkand (Fig. 1). The evidence of local crises in the third and (especially) the fourth century can be explained by the migration of new groups of nomads who appeared on the borders of Iran in the middle of the fourth century, and in the following century began a long struggle with Iran for Tokharistan. It was probably the arrival of the Sasanians that drove the local semi-nomadic herdsmen away from the land on which they had settled.

Four generations before the beginning of relations between the Wei dynasty and foreigners from the West, i.e. in the second half of the fourth century, the Huns killed the ruler of Sogdiana and seized possession of his lands.³ The Sogdians called this people *xwn*. Were these the same Huns who overran northern China in the fourth century or were they Chionites, whom the Indians called Hunas? There was a difference in the physical appearance of the two peoples, although some of the Huns were probably included among the Chionites.⁴ The Huns who appeared in Sogdiana were probably not the same people as the Chionites,



FIG. 1. Panjikent. Excavations of the palace on the citadel. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

³ Enoki, 1955.

⁴ Czeglédy, 1980, pp. 213–17.

but even if they were, no Chionite Empire encompassing Sughd and Tokharistan existed in the fifth century. It is believed that the Chionites (the sources mention Türks) attacked Iran from the direction of Sughd.⁵ This was probably not, however, a real historical event from the fifth century but an anachronistic episode from the *Romance of Bahram Gur* inspired by the later victory of the Sasanian general Bahram Chobin over the Türks. It is not impossible that in the fifth century Sughd was ruled by a dynasty of nomadic origin, although there is no evidence of the activities of nomads in the country. The increased strength of the nomads in Tokharistan in the fourth and fifth centuries may have been connected with their departure from Sughd.

Sughd came under the rule of the Hephthalites in c. 509, from which time Hephthalite ‘embassies’ from Samarkand (consisting essentially of trading caravans) to China were known.⁶ The Hephthalites seem to have come to Sughd from the south after victory over Sasanian Iran. For the first time since the Seleucids, Sughd came under the power of an organized state with an army rather than the Sogdian rulers’ retinues, and this army was considerably stronger than the local militia.

In Tokharistan, where tribes of Hephthalites lived, Chinese travellers report seeing nomads with archaic customs, but Byzantine authors describe the Hephthalites as an urban population with a highly organized state. Menander’s information about the urban Hephthalites goes back to the conversation of Sogdian envoys of the Türk *kaghan* with the Byzantine emperor and hence refers to the Hephthalites in Sughd. The town of Panjikent grew during the Hephthalite period, its fortifications were strengthened and temples were rebuilt, although the arrival of the Hephthalites is thought to have been accompanied by ravages (Fig. 2).

At the end of the Hephthalite period or the beginning of the Turkic period (during the sixth century), a ruler by the name of Abrui held sway over the oasis of Bukhara. This tyrant drove the nobles and the rich to emigrate to Semirechye.⁷ Contrary to Tolstov’s opinion, there is no mention in the sources of the people’s struggle against the aristocracy; on the contrary, the poor who remained under Abrui’s rule begged the emigrants for help. Abrui was finally defeated by Türk forces who came at the request of the people of Bukhara. (Abrui himself was not of Türk origin: although he and the Bukharans are described as coming ‘from Turkestan’, this refers to the earliest days of the settlement of the oasis of Bukhara.) Legend tells of a prince’s struggle against a community of citizens headed by nobles. Such a struggle might have been all the more bitter because of the rapid growth of

⁵ Marquart, 1901, pp. 50–1.

⁶ Enoki, 1959.

⁷ Marquart, 1901, p. 309; Tolstov, 1948, pp. 248 et seq.; Gafurov, 1972, pp. 223 et seq.

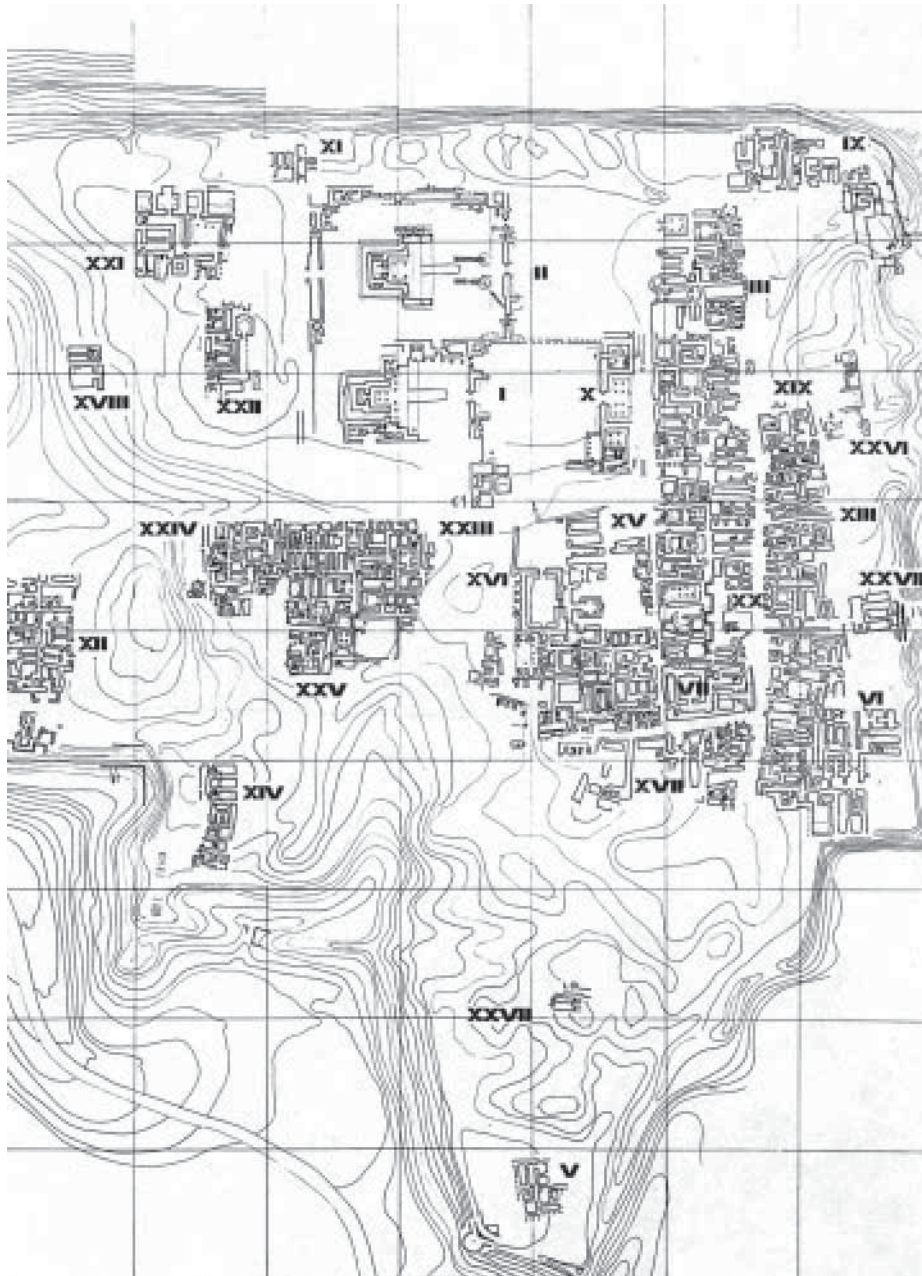


FIG. 2. Panjikent. Plan of the city (without the citadel). (Drawing by B. I. Marshak.)

the towns in the fifth to the seventh century, as revealed by the archaeological evidence. Paikent, the residence of Abrui, became a free ‘merchant city’ in the seventh to the eighth century.

Typically, in the legend of Abrui, justice is re-established due to the arrival of the Türks. When the inheritance of the Hephthalites was divided up between the Türks and the Sasanians (who had defeated the Hephthalites in the 560s), Sughd fell to the Türks, although

their forces probably left the country after the victory. They came again in the 580s, when the war with Iran began.⁸ After establishing the *kaghanate* over a vast territory stretching from the Black Sea to the Chinese border, the nomadic Türk *kaghans* recruited Sogdian civil servants to run it. The Sogdian colonization of Semirechye and the Sogdian caravan trade were of benefit not only to the Sogdians but also to the Türks. The Türk state aspired to make the roads safe and gave its backing to the Sogdian diplomats' trade negotiations. The Sogdian language, which had become the *lingua franca* of the Silk Route long before the sixth century, became the official language of the *kaghans*' administration in the second half of the sixth century.⁹ During the first third of the seventh century, after the division into Eastern and Western *Kaghanates*, Türk influence increased, but the *kaghan* and the king of Samarkand were now more like equal allies than sovereign and subject. The *kaghan*'s daughter married the king of Samarkand.

In the middle of the seventh century, after the fall of the Western *Kaghanate*, the Sogdian states gained *de facto* independence, although formally recognizing the sovereignty of the T'ang dynasty. In the eighth century, this sovereignty proved to be purely nominal, because China gave no real support against the Arab invaders. The alliance with the Türk states was unstable, with the Turkic nobles frequently looting or seizing Sogdian territories; as early as the end of the seventh century the principality of Panjikent had a Türk ruler, Chikin Chur Bilge.

In the second half of the seventh century, after conquering Iran, the Arabs advanced on Sughd. During the first few decades of the eighth century Arab garrisons were established in Bukhara and Samarkand and the local rulers submitted. The suppression of local uprisings in 720–730 led to mass emigration. In 739 the Arabs concluded a treaty with the Sogdians, many of whom returned home and, as the excavations in Panjikent show, tried to re-establish their former way of life. Mass conversions to Islam began in the 750s, but the process of Islamization and the gradual waning of the power of local rulers took several more decades.

Economic, cultural and social life

The seventh century and the first half of the eighth were the economic and cultural heyday of pre-Islamic Sughd. However, evidence from the documents of Dunhuang reveals the existence of large colonies of Sogdian merchants in Chinese towns¹⁰ as early as the beginning of the fourth century (if not the end of the second) and, judging by the Karakorum

⁸ Gafurov, 1972, pp. 217–21.

⁹ Klyashtorny and Livshits, 1971; 1972.

¹⁰ Henning, 1948; Harmatta, 1971.

rock inscriptions, Sogdian merchants predominated at that time on the southern routes from Central Asia to the Indus valley.¹¹ The general upsurge in the domestic economy allowed the profits from foreign trade to enrich not only the emigrant merchants but the population of Sughd itself. Silk weaving began in the country in the late sixth and early seventh centuries and by the following century Sogdian silks were already playing a major role on the Silk Route.¹² From the sixth to the seventh century the ‘Fur Route’ to north-west Europe was also in the hands of Sogdian and Khwarizmian merchants – as revealed in the Sogdian and Khwarizmian owners’ inscriptions on Byzantine and Iranian silver vessels found in the north, where they were imported in exchange for furs.¹³ In Sughd itself the comparatively primitive bowls of the sixth century had, by the seventh century, given way to magnificent artistic vessels and sculptures fashioned in silver.¹⁴

The changes in life-style were reflected even in such a ‘democratic’ craft as ceramics. The second half of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth saw a complete change in the design of table crockery, whose shapes and ornamentation began to copy those of the nobles’ silver vessels.

The new stage in the development of trading and monetary relations was associated with the wide circulation in Sogdiana of a cast bronze coin with a square hole in the middle (Fig. 3).¹⁵ The coins of Samarkand, Panjikent, Paikent and certain other centres are well known. Silver drachms were minted in imitation of the Iranian drachms of Bahram V



FIG. 3. Bronze coins from Panjikent. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

¹¹ Humbach, 1980.

¹² Yerusolimskaya, 1972.

¹³ Livshits and Lukonin, 1964.

¹⁴ Marshak, 1971.

¹⁵ Smirnova, 1981.

(420–438). Their inscription normally included the title of the ruler of Bukhara, although in the eighth century they were issued in other centres as well.¹⁶

Art and architecture

There was architectural progress in towns and settlements such as Samarkand (the site of Afrasiab) (Fig. 4), Panjikent and Varakhsha (near Bukhara) (Figs. 5 and 6). In the seventh century Samarkand again covered the whole plateau of Afrasiab, an area of 219 ha. Other Sogdian towns were much smaller. The area of Bukhara (without the citadel) was 34 ha, and that of Panjikent (also without the citadel) 13.5 ha. The buildings within the city walls have been best studied in Panjikent.¹⁷ In the fifth century the residential quarters were



FIG. 4. Afrasiab. View from the old city towards Samarkand. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

¹⁶ Davidovich, 1979, pp. 105–6.

¹⁷ Belenitskiy et al., 1981.



FIG. 5. Varakhsha. General view. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 6. Varakhsha. Corridor. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

composed of detached houses, but over the sixth, seventh and early eighth centuries the whole town was built up with uninterrupted terraces in each quarter. The houses were of compressed clay (loess) and mud-brick and roofed with mud-brick vaults or wooden structures, which were then plastered with clay. In the sixth century upper storeys began to

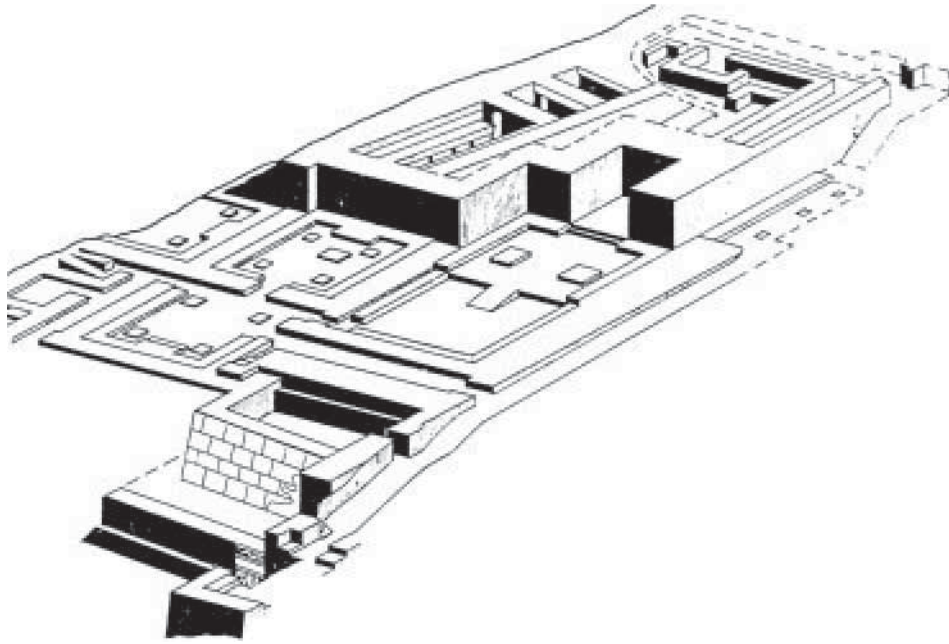


FIG. 7. Panjikent. Palace of Divashtich. Drawing by A. Gurevich. © B. I. Marshak.

appear, and by the eighth century some buildings even had three storeys. The houses of the late seventh century and the first half of the eighth were more spacious, taller and in every way superior to the earlier dwellings.

Panjikent reached the height of its prosperity during the first quarter of the eighth century, when its ruler Divashtich claimed power over all (Fig. 7). Private houses with murals had started to be built in Panjikent as early as the sixth century; in the early eighth century, one house in three had murals. In their ornate architecture and decoration, the rich town houses resemble the royal palaces discovered in Panjikent, Varakhsha¹⁸ and, perhaps, Samarkand.¹⁹ Although the palaces contain several large state apartments, they are basically very similar to the houses of wealthy townfolk. This is because of the particular Sogdian social structure, in which an important role was played by urban communities with their own officials and revenues. During the seventh and eighth centuries, the rulers (who enjoyed no absolute or despotic powers over the city-states) were frequently elected by the notables.

The shopkeepers and craftsmen lived in two-storey houses with several rooms, but mainly did business and worked in rented shops and workshops located in wealthier areas. Coins have often been discovered in these shops.

¹⁸ Shishkin, 1963.

¹⁹ Al'baum, 1975.

Fortified homes belonging to the country aristocracy had existed in Sughd since Hellenistic times, becoming particularly numerous in the Early Middle Ages. In the seventh and eighth centuries the chambers in castles were very similar to those in the town houses of the wealthy, whereas the peasants' homes were unlike those in towns and resembled nineteenth-century Tajik peasant houses.

Sogdian temples are known from the site of Er-kurgan in south (fourth–sixth century) and from two temples discovered in Panjikent. Of similar design and built at the same time in the fifth century, the Panjikent temples were rebuilt several times and continued in use until after 720; although they have been subjected to more detailed study than the temple at Er-kurgan, it is hard to know to which religion they belonged as the main images worshipped there have not survived. The architectural plan of both temples was based on a road leading east to west and passing through two rectangular courtyards with colonnaded entrance porticoes; from here a narrow ramp led up to the platform of the main building, which also had a portico. A four-columned hall without an east wall opened on to it. A door in the west wall of the hall led to a rectangular cell. A gallery ran round the hall and the cell on three sides. During the late fifth and early sixth centuries one of the temples had a special chamber for the sacred fire, but no such chambers of earlier or later date have been found. The temples were similar (but not identical) in plan to Kushan and even Graeco-Bactrian examples.

The murals in Sogdian towns – not so much those in the temples but, rather, in seventh- and eighth-century private houses – depict daily life. In the ceremonial hall of a house, opposite the entrance, there was usually a large image of a god (or a more elaborate composition on a sacred theme) and small figures of Sogdians before a fire altar (Fig. 8). Every house owner had his own divine patron (or patrons). Sometimes other gods were also depicted, but on less important parts of the walls. To the sides of the religious scene ran smaller friezes depicting a banquet (Figs. 9 and 10), a hunt (Fig. 11), a ceremonial rite or – quite frequently – episodes from an epic. At the bottom of the wall ran an ornamental border or a frieze of small pictures: animals in motion or a series of small rectangular panels illustrating tales, parables, anecdotes, and so on (Fig. 12). The elaborate pictorial scheme was complemented by carved wooden statues and reliefs (Figs. 13 and 14), with figures of gods, hunting scenes, and so on, adorning the elaborate wooden ceiling.²⁰

This hierarchy of subjects was typical of the main halls of Panjikent, but was not so rigidly followed in Varakhsha (Fig. 15) and in Afrasiab (nor, indeed, in some houses in Panjikent itself or its temples). Palace murals include subjects from Sogdian history, the reception of ambassadors (Afrasiab) (Figs. 16 and 17), a coronation and the Arab siege of

²⁰ Azarpay, 1981.



FIG. 8. Panjikent. Ceremonial hall in a private house. Drawing by B. I. Marshak.

the town (Panjikent). Particularly expressive are murals with figures picked out in ochre on an ultramarine blue background. A similar colour scheme is found in the murals of Iran and Tokharistan, which share certain other details, attitudes of figures and types of composition. There are many Indian traits in the depiction of gods. There are also pictures of Chinese people, drawn with a knowledge of Chinese iconography. Motifs of foreign origin (Byzantine, Iranian, Türk and Chinese) can also be traced in the metalwork (Figs. 18–20). These varied influences are explained by Sughd's role as intermediary. Sogdian artists were familiar with the achievements of other schools of art, but developed their own original style, distinguished by its narrative content, dynamism and love of contrast. Sogdian art had a strong influence on that of many countries, in particular on the toretics of the steppe peoples (Türks, Khazars, nomadic Magyars) and of T'ang China.

Archaeological discoveries show that Sogdian artists had been faithful in their depictions of architecture, weapons and costume. Fifth-century Sogdian costume was similar to that in the Kushan Empire; during the sixth century the influence of Hephthalite Tokharistan (and through it that of Sasanian fashions) was noticeable. In the seventh and eighth



FIG. 9. Panjikent. Mural painting. Clay on plaster. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

centuries similarities with Turkic costume appeared. Belts decorated with gold plaques were the mark of noble rank. Military clothing and equipment (Fig. 21) and, to some degree, vessels used in banquets also showed Turkic influence. Sogdian armour, which was elaborate and heavy and protected the warrior's whole body, showed advanced craftsmanship.

The mural paintings are a valuable source of information about feast-day customs and rituals, banquets, wrestling, dances and ritual bathing (Fig. 22). In connection with the harvest festival, an artist in Panjikent painted grain being conveyed from the threshing floor and a tutelary spirit of agriculture.

Religious life

Our knowledge of religions in Sogdiana comes from works of art, funerary monuments and writings – mainly Buddhist, Manichaean and Christian (Nestorian) discovered in East Turkestan.²¹ A Christian text and Buddhist inscriptions on pottery have also been found in Panjikent. Buddhism, which came to Sughd from the south at an early period, flourished according to the *Sui shu* and the *T'ang shu*.²² By the seventh century, however, it had almost disappeared from Sogdiana. In the eighth century T'ang Buddhism spread among

²¹ Livshits, 1981, pp. 350–62.

²² Litvinsky, 1968.



FIG. 10. Panjikent. Mural painting. Clay on plaster. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 11. Panjikent. Mural painting in location VI. Clay on plaster. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 12. Panjikent. Mural painting in location VI. Clay on plaster. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 13. Panjikent. Statue of a dancer. Wood. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 14. Panjikent. Carved wood. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 15. Varakhsha. General view of a painted panel. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

Sogdian emigrants, as a result of which most Sogdian Buddhist works are translations from Chinese. An inscription in the Afrasiab murals shows that in the seventh century a Sogdian king received assurances from foreign envoys that they were acquainted with the local religion of Samarkand.²³ This is clearly linked to aspirations to cultural self-determination during the heyday of Sughd.

No correctly painted Buddhist images exist in Sogdian painting, but images of Hindu gods (of secondary importance from the Buddhist point of view) helped the Sogdians to create their own religious iconography in the sixth to the eighth century. As in

²³ Al'baum, 1975, pp. 52–6, translation and comments by V. A. Livshits.



FIG. 16. Afrasiab. Mural painting. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 17. Afrasiab. Mural painting. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

Sogdian Buddhist and Manichaean texts,²⁴ Zurvan is depicted in the form of Brahma, Adbag (Ohrmazd) in that of Indra (Sakra) and Veshparkar (Vayu) in that of Shiva (Mahadeva). A four-armed Nana mounted on a lion (Fig. 23), a divine couple with symbols in the form of a camel and a mountain ram and other images of divinities are also known. The absence of highly developed forms of state organization explains the important role played by the worship of the divine patrons of individual families and communities.

²⁴ Humbach, 1975.



FIG. 18. Sughd. Silver jug (end of seventh century). (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 19. Sughd. Silver dish (second half of eighth century). (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

Although there were non-Zoroastrian divinities among these gods, the influence of Zoroastrianism was indubitable.²⁵ The Sogdians probably regarded themselves as Zoroastrians, as indeed they were considered by al-Biruni and other authors writing in Arabic. Those Sogdian customs that seem contrary to Zoroastrian doctrine (Hindu-style iconography, the mourning of the dead) also existed in Khwarizm, whose Zoroastrianism is not open to doubt and where the Avestan *gāhanbārs* (phases of creation) were celebrated as religious feasts. There is evidence from the fifth century onwards in Sughd of the custom of cleaning the flesh from bones and burying them in ossuaries, as in Khwarizm (Fig. 24).

Scripts, epics and literary sources

Sogdians used different types of script according to the religion to which they belonged. The Buddhists used a national script of Aramaic origin, with heterograms. This script is also known from secular writings and from what is probably the only Zoroastrian text in it.²⁶ The Manichaeans had their own alphabet and the Christians used Syriac script, but both sometimes wrote in the national Sogdian script. There was also what could be

²⁵ Henning, 1965, p. 250.

²⁶ Sims-Williams, 1976, pp. 46–8; Gershevich, 1976; Livshits, 1981, p. 354.



FIG. 20. Sughd. Silver dish (second half of seventh century). (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 21. Mount Mug. Shield with a warrior horseman (end of seventh century). Painted wood. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 22. Panjikent. Mural painting showing ritual bathing. Location VI. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

described as scientific literature in Sogdian, in particular a book about minerals, documents on medicine and on the calendar, and glossaries.

A fragment of the epic of Rustam, probably translated from Middle Persian, has been found near Dunhuang.²⁷ Among the Manichaean writings, tales and fables, including some from the Indian *Panchatantra* and the Greek fables of Aesop, have been discovered. There are also non-Manichaean fairy-tales. The paintings of Panjikent show a similar but wider

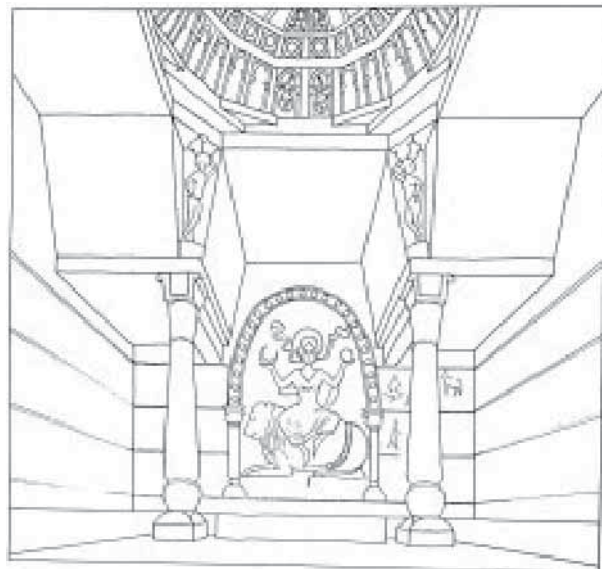


FIG. 23. Panjikent. Four-armed Nana mounted on a lion (seventh century). Drawing by B. I. Marshak.

²⁷ Gershevich, 1969, p. 227.



FIG. 24. Sughd. Ossuary (seventh century). (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

repertoire of subjects from both translated and local literature: among the epic narratives, in addition to the story of Zohak, the tales of Rustam²⁸ and perhaps the *Mahābhārata*,

²⁸ Belenitskiy, 1980, pp. 103–5, 199–202, Abb. 25–33.

there are also illustrations of several episodes of a previously unknown Sogdian epic. In one of the halls the pictures are accompanied by fragments of text.²⁹ The murals illustrate tales about the man who promised his daughter to a seaspirit; a prince, a bear, a wolf and a jackal; a wise judge (Fig. 25) and a woman's wiles; fables about a dog barking at an elephant, and about a blacksmith and a monkey; Aesop's fables about the goose that laid the golden eggs, and about the father and his sons; parables from the *Panchatantra* about the jackal, the lion and the bull; the lion and the hare; the learned men who resuscitated a tiger; and the foresight of the king of the monkeys. In Iran – the home of the Parthian and Middle Persian authors of the Manichaean works translated by the Sogdians – literary and folkloric parables and tales similar to those known in Sughd and recorded by the artists of Panjikent were popular. Similar subjects can be found in many countries.

Direct and remarkably vivid evidence of the past is provided by the 'Ancient Sogdian Letters' from Dunhuang (probably written at the beginning of the fourth century) and the documents from Mount Mug on the upper reaches of the Zerafshan (Figs. 26 and 27). The 'Ancient Letters' describe the life of Sogdian settlers in China, while the Mug papers show Sughd at the time of the Arab conquest. These letters were found with legal and economic documents in a castle that served as the last refuge of Divashtich, the ruler of Panjikent, who was captured by the Arabs in 722.³⁰ Syriac, Bactrian, Indian (Brāhmī) and



FIG. 25. Panjikent. Wall painting showing a judgment scene. Location VI. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

²⁹ Belenitskiy, 1980, pp. 116–18; Azarpay, 1981, Fig. 60.

³⁰ *Sogdiyskie dokumenty s gory Mug*, 1962–63.

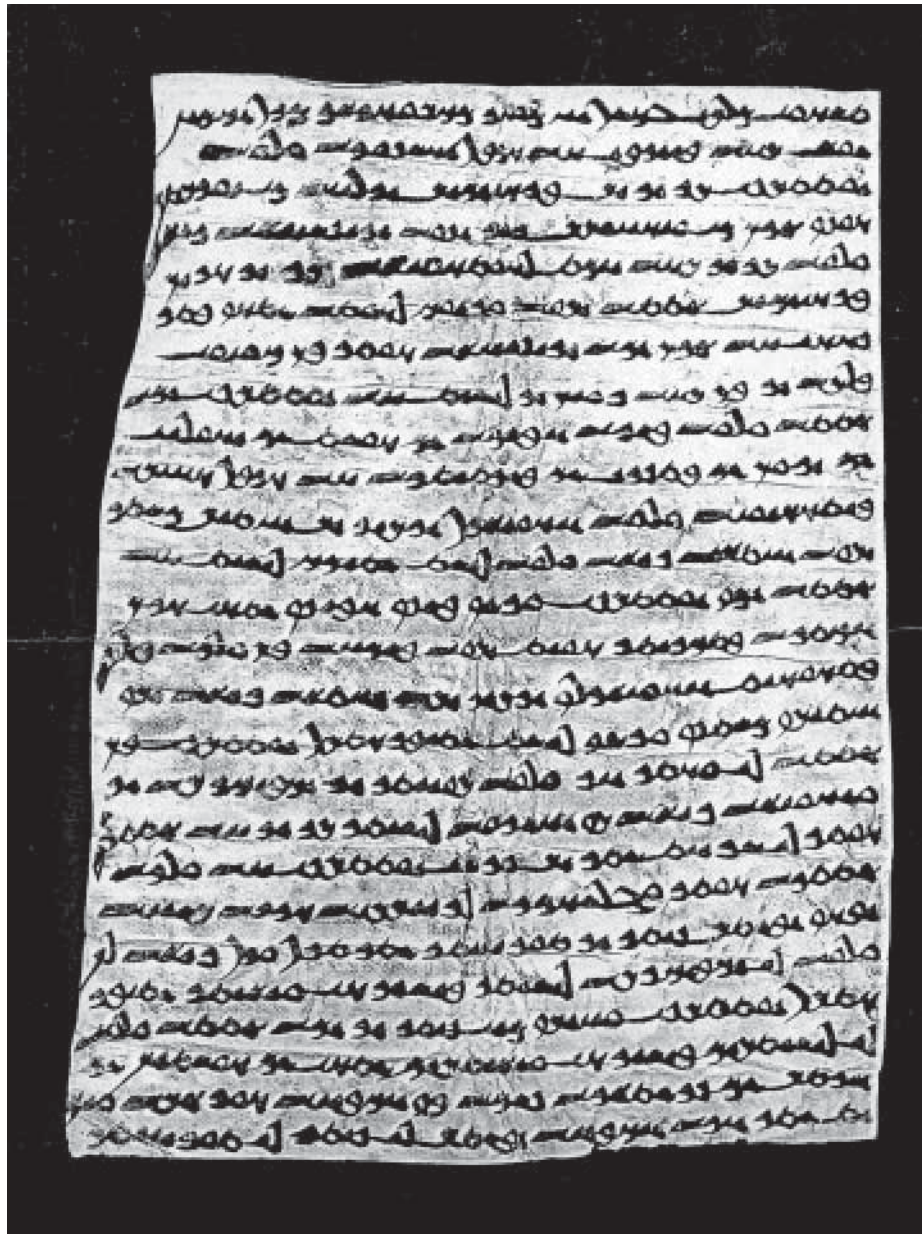


FIG. 26. Mount Mug. Sogdian document. Marriage contract. Leather. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 27. Mount Mug. Inscription affirming receipt of helmets and armour. Wood. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

Arabic texts have been discovered in Sughd; and in Panjikent there is a Middle Persian wall inscription whose writer obviously came from Iran. The first evidence of the penetration into Sughd of the New Persian (Tajik) language, which supplanted Sogdian between the ninth and the eleventh century, dates to the eighth century.

Part Two

USTRUSHANA, FERGHANA, CHACH AND ILAK

(N. N. Negmatov)

Ustrushana

Ustrushana was closely linked to Sughd (Sogdiana) by its historical destiny and ethnic, linguistic and cultural history. It originally formed part of the territory of Sughd, but then developed its own historical and cultural identity as the area became more urbanized. Its rich agricultural and mineral resources, and its situation on the main trans-Asian route from the Near and Middle East to the heart of Central Asia, played a considerable role in this process.

Ustrushana occupied a large area of the valley and steppes on the left bank of the middle reaches of the Syr Darya (Jaxartes), the foothills and gorges of the western part of Turkestan's range, the headwaters of the Zerafshan river and its principal tributaries, the Matcha and Fan Darya. To the west and southwest it bordered on Sughd, to the east and north-east on Khujand and Ferghana and to the north on Ilak and Chach (present-day Tashkent). Ustrushana is mentioned in the *Wei shu* and the *Sui shu* and frequently appears in the history of the T'ang dynasty. In the *T'ang shu* the region is called Eastern Ch'ao (the ideogram for Cao without the sign for 'water'), and Su-du-li-she-na (in Hsüantsang, 629–630), and Cao (in Huei-ch'ao, 728). Early Arabic and Persian historical sources give this name variously as Ashrushana, Asrushana, Ustrushana, Ustrushna, Surushana and Sutrushana. The discovery and deciphering of the Sogdian documents from Mount Mug on the upper Zerafshan established that the correct form of the name is Ustrushana.³¹

By the Early Middle Ages, new towns and settlements with the characteristics of the rising feudal system had replaced those of the ancient period. The old capital Kurukada (Ura-tyube) was replaced by the city of Bunjikat (Fig. 28), 20 km to the south of the

³¹ *Sogdiyskie dokumenty s gory Mug*, 1962, pp. 77–87.

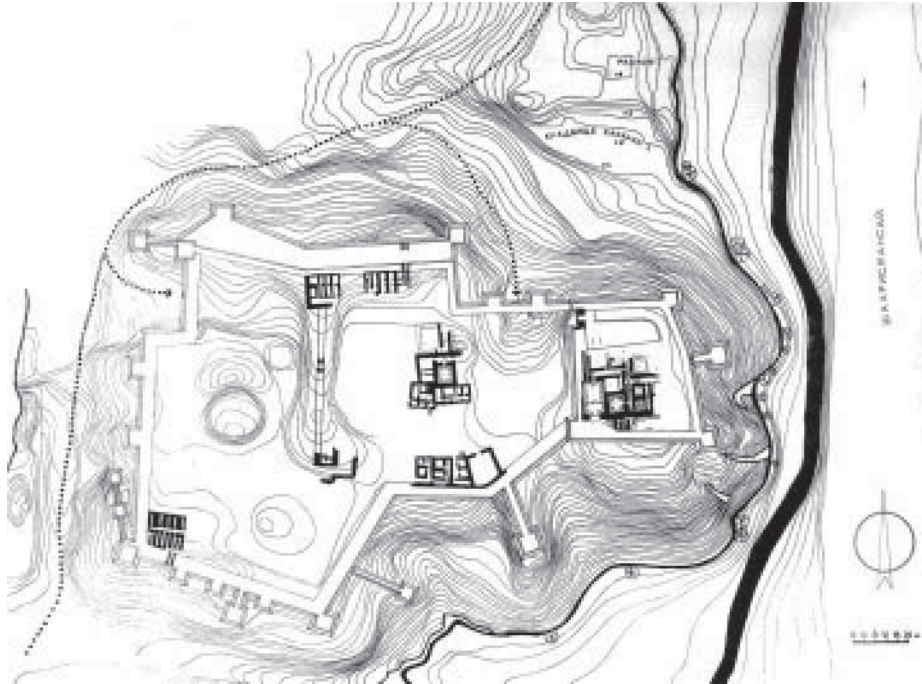


FIG. 28. Bunjikat. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Plan of the city with the reconstruction of the city-walls.

modern town of Shahrستان. According to archaeological evidence, the intensive growth of this city began in the seventh and eighth centuries.³² A new historical map of Ustrushana³³ came into being, divided into a number of *rustaks* (regions), both on the plains and in the mountains, with towns such as Vagkat, Mink (in the valley of Dahkat), Shaukat (Nau), Kurkat, Havast, Savat and Zaamin (all of which still exist) and country settlements centred on castles and estates (Ak-tepe, Dungcha-tepe, Tashtemir-tepe, etc.). In the suburbs around the capital Bunjikat there were noblemen's castles with strong fortifications and elaborate architectural layouts, such as Chilhujra and Urta-kurgan.³⁴

The sources give little information about the political history of Ustrushana during this period. The break-up of the great Central Asian states of late antiquity led to the secession of Ustrushana from the Sogdian federation, as recorded in the *Pei-shih*. From the late fifth to the seventh century, Ustrushana formed part of the Hephthalite and Western Türk states, although it probably preserved its internal autonomy and was ruled by its own kings, the *afshāns* of the Kavus dynasty, some of whose names are known from written sources and

³² Negmatov and Khmel'nitskiy, 1966.

³³ Negmatov, 1957, pp. 34–49.

³⁴ Negmatov et al., 1973; Pulatov, 1975.

coins. In the late seventh to the eighth century, Ustrushana was drawn into a long and dramatic struggle against the forces of the Arab cAbbasid caliphate.³⁵

CULTURE, AGRICULTURE AND TRADE

The population of Ustrushana consisted of tribes and clans, speaking a dialect of Sogdian, with an economy based on settled agriculture and urban crafts. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrims Hsüan-tsang and Huei-ch'ao note a certain community of culture – language, mores and customs – between the people of Ustrushana and the Sogdians of the Zerafshan valley, Ferghana, Chach and the adjacent regions. Hsüan-tsang calls the whole land between Suyab and Kish by the name 'Su-le', and its population 'Sogdians'.³⁶ Archaeological excavations show common traits in the artefacts of the region's culture.

Agriculture, stockbreeding and mining provided a reliable threefold economic basis for the development of craft production, trade and urban life in Ustrushana.³⁷ With considerable use of artificial irrigation, its people grew a wide range of agricultural produce (cereals, cotton, garden crops and grapes), and bred livestock and riding and draught animals on the rich upland pastures. Mining output was considerable, with iron ore in the region of Mink, gold, silver, ammonium chloride and vitriol in the upper Zerafshan valley, lead in the Ura-tyube region and a number of other minerals. There was an extensive craft production of metal articles (such as weapons, agricultural implements, tools and household utensils), cotton, wool, silk and leather goods. Pottery manufacture was widespread, producing unglazed cooking pots, tableware and storage jars (for liquids and foodstuffs). There were potters' quarters with kilns at Bunjikat, Vagkat and Gala-tepe (fifth–sixth century). Building, fortification and woodwork were well developed, as were wood-carving and mural painting. During the sixth and seventh centuries, Ustrushana's own bronze coinage was current in trade.

ARCHITECTURE AND ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION

The architecture of Ustrushana is remarkable for its variety. From the early medieval period (sixth–eighth century), we find structures of varied purpose and type, each with a well-developed, characteristic layout – royal palaces, castles of the urban and rural aristocracy, barracks and temples. The palace of Kala-i Kahkaha II is a three-storey building, with middle and upper levels set on a stepped, beaten earth platform. The first level includes an entrance vestibule, a stateroom, and an *aiwān* (hall) opening on to a courtyard. The second

³⁵ Smirnova, 1981, pp. 31–5, 324–35.

³⁶ Livshits and Khromov, 1981, pp. 347–9, 367.

³⁷ Negmatov, 1957, pp. 82–112; Bilalov, 1980.

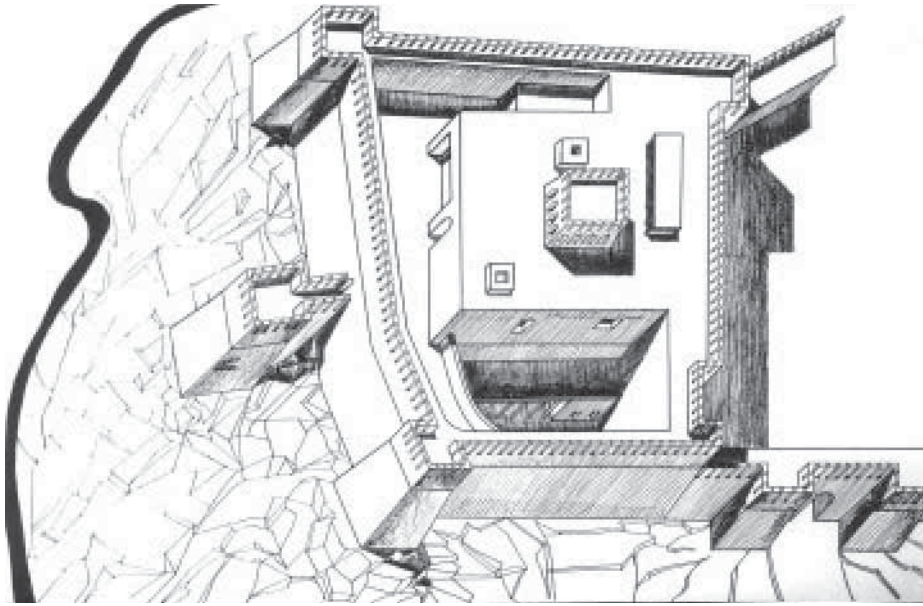


FIG. 29. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Reconstruction of the palace of the *afshīns*. Drawing by S. Mamajanova.

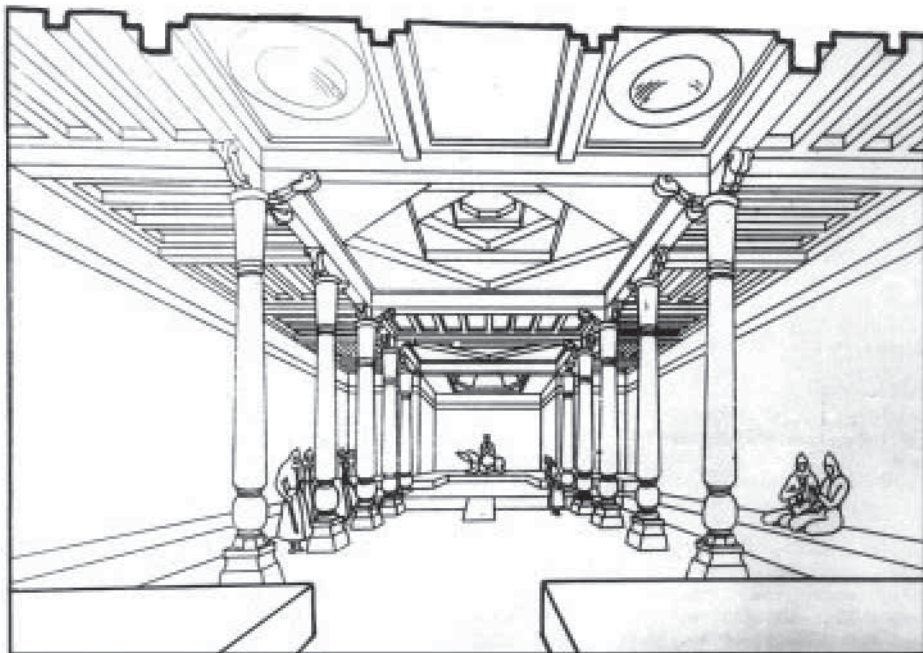


FIG. 30. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace of the *afshīns*. Throne hall. Drawing by V. L. Voronina.

level consists of a corridor, rooms for servants and kitchens. On the third level there is a suite of three staterooms, including a throne room with wide windows opening on to the courtyard, decorated with murals and carved woodwork.

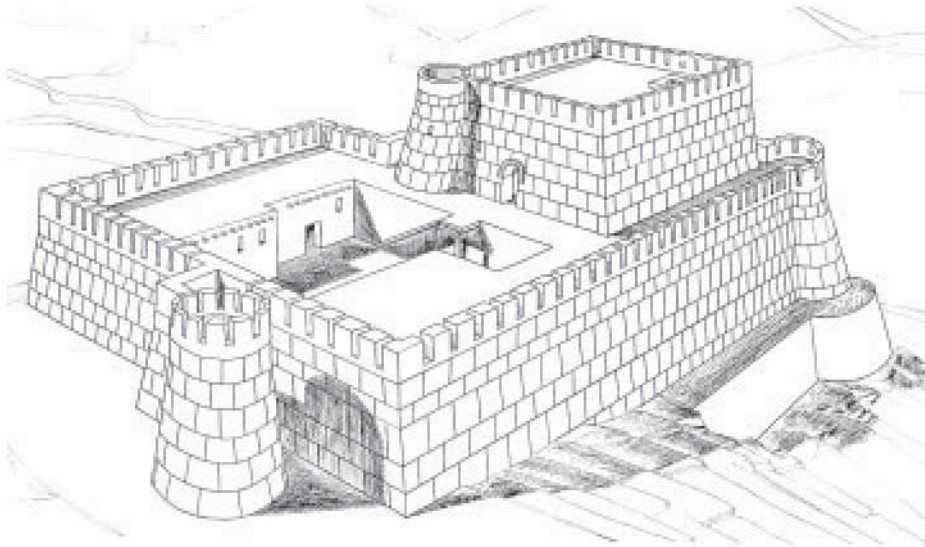


FIG. 31. Chilhujra. Castle. Drawing by S. Mamajanova.

The layout of the palace of Kala-i Kahkaha I is very complex, but clearly planned (Fig. 29).³⁸ It is also built on a high platform but has a small keep, or tower, in the middle of the building. Its entrance in the form of an *aiwān* looks out on the town's *rabad* (suburb). An axial corridor divides the palace into two unequal parts. To the west there is a two-level hall with a throne loggia (Fig. 30) opening out at its far end and an entrance area in front, a second parallel 'lesser' hall and the palace shrine. To the east are found a large living room, a small room for servants and a separate corridor with an 'arsenal' (a store of stones). To the north and south, the palace had walled courtyards with kitchen, bakery and domestic premises. The palace gates were in the west wall of the north courtyard.

There are two principal types of castle in the Shahrستان depression. One has an elaborate individualized layout with staterooms, living quarters, shrines and domestic offices, and an extremely rich decor of mural paintings and woodcarvings. The building is either positioned on a mountain crest (as in Chilhujra) (Fig. 31) or on a high man-made platform (as at Urta-kurgan) (Fig. 32). The other type has a simple, 'corridor-ridge' layout, without ornamentation, and is either placed on a mountain ridge (as at Tirmizak-tepe) or in an arable valley with fortified courtyard walls and chicanes (as at Tashtemir-tepe).

The dwellings of early medieval townspeople have long, wide interiors, usually divided by partition walls into a back room, middle room and front *aiwān* (the northern quarter of Kala-i Kahkaha I). At the south wall of Kala-i Kahkaha I there is a neighbourhood of small separate units, detached but built close to each other. Each has a common corridor

³⁸ Voronina and Negmatov, 1975, pp. 50–71.

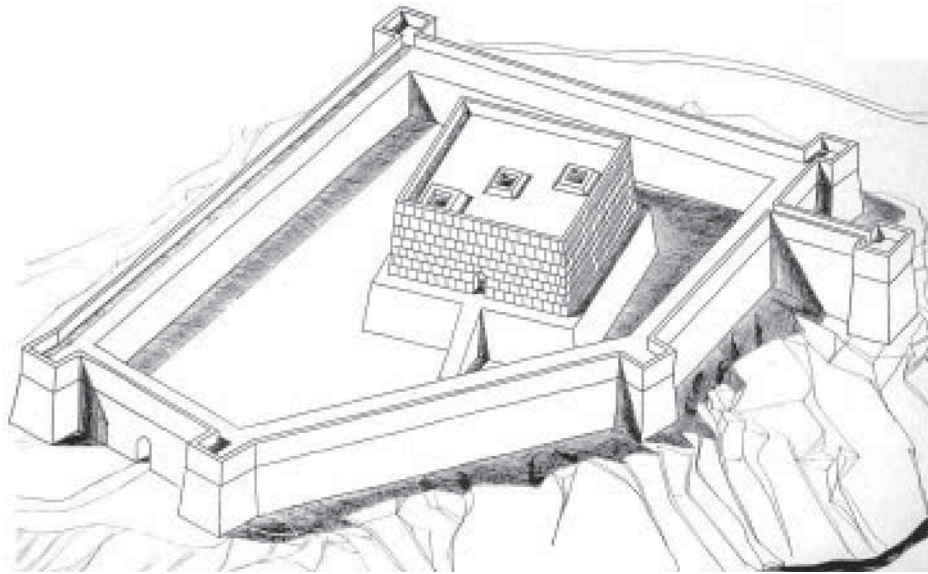


FIG. 32. Urta-kurgan. Castle. Drawing by S. Mamajanova.



FIG. 33. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Mural painting. A she-wolf feeding two youngsters.

leading to two or three rooms, and its own street entrance. The dwellings in the quarter near the city square of Kala-i Kahkaha I have a more individualized layout, which includes entrance *aiwāns*, reception rooms and rooms with rich interior decoration of benches, roofs supported on columns and mural paintings (Figs. 33 and 34).

The architectural ornamentation and monumental art of Ustrushana are rich and varied. Murals of high artistic quality with floral and geometric patterns and depictions of secular, epic-heroic, mythological and cultural scenes were an important feature of the interior decoration of palaces, castles and other buildings (Figs. 35–39). Many examples of wood-carving and clay-moulding have survived: columns, beams, cornices, friezes, thresholds, door posts and door frames, lintels, window grilles, entrance screens, artistic clay



FIG. 34. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Drawing of a fragment of mural painting showing musicians.

mouldings and patterned fired bricks (Figs. 40–45). The capital, Bunjikat, was the main centre for the development of architecture and the applied arts.

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LIFE

Ustrushana also had a rich variety of spiritual and cultural traditions, for the most part purely local. According to written sources, the Ustrushanians practised the so-called ‘white religion’, in which carved wooden idols were adorned with precious stones. Idols of this type were kept in the palaces of Haidar (the Ustrushanian ruler) in Samarra, in Ustrushana itself and in Buttam, and they were also brought to Ustrushana by refugees from Khuttal. Many toponyms in this region included the word *mug* (fire-worshipper). So far archaeologists have discovered the castle and palace shrines mentioned above and an urban idol temple. Other finds include wooden idols in Chilhujra (Fig. 46), a house of fire at Ak-tepe near Nau, a *dakhma* at Chorsokha-tepe near Shahrstan, rock burial vaults near Kurkat with human remains in *khums* (large jars) and ossuaries, and a number of other burials in *khums* and ossuaries in various regions of Ustrushana.

All these finds are evidence of a particular local form of Zoroastrianism that incorporated the worship of idols and various divinities and other religious practices, and is also



FIG. 35. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a mural painting representing the goddess Nana on a lion. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

reflected in the monumental art of Ustrushana. In particular, the paintings of the lesser hall of the palace of Kala-i Kahkaha I show a three-headed, four-armed divinity, which may be a specifically Ustrushanian interpretation of the Hindu Vishparkar. Also depicted is a four-armed goddess mounted on a lion, which has been interpreted as an image of the principal goddess of Ustrushana and the great warrior-mother, thus personifying the worship both



FIG. 36. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a mural painting representing the goddess Nana. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 37. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a mural painting representing a demon. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)

of the productive forces of nature and of fertility, and identified with the Kushano-Sogdian great goddess Nana (see above, [Fig. 35](#)).³⁹

The central figure of the huge composition painted on the west wall of the same lesser hall is of special interest. This is a large, richly dressed male seated on a zoomorphic

³⁹ Negmatov, 1984, pp. 146–64.



FIG. 38. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a mural painting representing demons. (Photo: © Vladimir Terebenin.)



FIG. 39. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Drawings of the fragments of mural paintings representing demons.

horse's-head throne. A warrior-king in a chariot, identified with this first image, is depicted three times on the north and east walls of the hall. These paintings are generally considered



FIG. 40. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a wooden panel ‘tympanum’ showing the legendary King Zohak (lower level).



FIG. 41. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a wooden panel ‘tympanum’.

to represent an ancestor of the ruling dynasty of Ustrushana. The male figure has no apparent divine attributes and his immediate entourage includes musicians, aristocrats seated under a canopy, and warriors in various situations. The worship of the ancestor of a family line and dynasty is known from written sources. It is also known that religious as well as secular power was concentrated in the hands of the *afshāns* of Ustrushana and that they were almost deified, as is clear from the formula by which they were addressed – ‘To the lord of lords from his slave so-and-so the son of so-and-so’.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Negmatov and Sokolovskiy, 1977, pp. 152–3.



FIG. 42. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Wooden panel 'tympanum'. Detail of the medallion.



FIG. 43. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a wooden frieze.

Other important features of the spiritual life of Ustrushana were extrareligious, epic-mythological traditions concerning Good and Evil, Light and Dark, the struggle between these principles and the victory of the forces of Good and Light. They were personified in the well-known oriental images of Kava, Faridun, Surush and Zohak; abandoned infants nurtured by animals (a she-wolf feeding two babies) (see above, [Fig. 33](#));⁴¹ a 'celestial musician', the harpist Zuhra (Venus); the bird-woman, Shirin; and a number of other images recorded in monumental painting, wood-carving and ceramics.

⁴¹ Negmatov, 1977; Negmatov and Sokolovskiy, 1975.



FIG. 44. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Fragment of a wooden frieze.



FIG. 45. Kala-i Kahkaha I. Palace. Drawings of wooden friezes with floral and geometrical designs.

Artefacts reveal the characteristics of Ustrushanian culture. First, it was very traditional, rich and complex. Second, it was in the forefront of Central Asian cultural traditions and those common to the entire Eastern world. Third, in its general features and content, it had a number of elements close to the related Sogdian culture seen in excavations at Panjikent and Samarkand. These fit in with the general ethnic and linguistic history of Sughd and Ustrushana, although Ustrushanian culture developed independently and had its own identity.



FIG. 46. Chilhujra. Head of an idol. Charred wood.

Ferghana

Whereas the third to the eighth century was a time of economic, national and cultural upsurge in Ustrushana, Ferghana (Pa-khan-na in Chinese sources) was in a different position. After the fall of the state of Dawan, the trend was towards territorial disintegration into a series of small regions and domains that experienced markedly uneven development. The sources reveal Ferghana's troubled political history. Although it had its own ruling dynasty with the title of *ikhshid*, their rule was sometimes interrupted. The name Alutar or At-Tar, a powerful king during the first quarter of the eighth century, is known. In 726 Ferghana had two kings, one ruling over the north and subject to the Türks, the other ruling over the south and subject to the Arabs. From 739 onwards, all Ferghana was ruled by the Türk, Arslan Tarkhan.

Ferghana occupied the whole basin, surrounded on all sides by mountains; it was rich and fertile and especially abundant in fruit, the famous Ferghana horses and other livestock. Cotton and many types of cereal were grown, and leather goods and cotton cloth were made. Horses, cereals, medicine, paints, glass and other goods were exported to neighbouring countries.

The capital of Ferghana was first the city of Kasan, then Akhsikat on the bank of the Syr Darya.⁴² The other towns included Urast, Kuba, Osh and Uzgend. During the seventh and eighth centuries, the total area of Uzgend was 20–30 ha and it consisted of a citadel (*kuhandiz*), the town itself (*shahristan*) and a commercial and craft quarter (*rabad*). It was particularly important as a trading post because of its proximity to the territories of the Türks. Osh, which consisted of a *shahristan* with a *kuhandiz* and a *rabad*, was regarded as a large and beautiful city. Rich and well supplied with water, it had markets at the foot of the hill. The towns of Bamkakhush and Tamakhush were situated in the valley of Isfara.

KHUIJAND

In the western part of Ferghana, on the bank of the Syr Darya, the city of Khujand was going through a period of change. From the second to the fifth century, it had remained within the same territorial limits as during ancient times, its central nucleus occupying an area of approximately 20 ha. During the sixth to the eighth century, however, Khujand experienced a period of rapid growth and radical changes were made to its basic layout and fortifications, the eastern half of the old city being transformed into a new citadel approximately 8 ha in area. This was done using the east wall and parts of the north walls of the old city as foundations for the walls of the new citadel. Only the west wall was entirely new, as can be seen from excavations 31 and 32, from samples taken from the outer surfaces of the wall and from the fragments of ancient pottery in the clay of the early medieval walls. Parts of the former city moat were left around the east and south walls of the new citadel, and at the foot of the west wall a new moat was dug. The ancient citadel was converted into the inner palace arc of the new citadel. This early medieval reconstruction transformed Khujand into a large city with three main areas – the citadel, the town itself, and the commercial and craft quarter equipped with a mighty system of fortifications.

Khujand is mentioned in written Arabic and Persian sources in the accounts of events in the second half of the seventh century and in the *T'ang shu*'s description of events of the second half of the eighth century (Chapter 221). According to the Arab encyclopaedist Yaqut, it was incorporated at an early date into the domains of the Haytal (the Hephthalites). During the 680s, it was first raided by a detachment of the forces of the caliphate (the invaders were routed near the town). Khujand was involved in the Sogdian campaign against the caliphate in 721–722, when military action took place at the gates of the commercial quarter, opposite whose strong walls the invaders' catapults were set up.

⁴² For a review of the sources and literature, see Gafurov, 1972, pp. 292–3; Litvinsky, 1976.

During the medieval period, the territory of Khujand had its own ruler, with the title of *malik* (king). The territory was not large: apart from the city of Khujand itself, it included Kand and the smaller town of Samghar. Kand, which is mentioned in the early eighth-century Sogdian documents from Mount Mug, subsequently came to be known as Kand-i Bodom (town of almonds) because of the large quantities of almonds it exported to various countries. According to al-Muqaddasi, a river or canal ran through the bazaars of Kand. Samghar was in the centre of a small agricultural oasis on the right bank of the Syr Darya and consisted of a citadel-castle, a town and outlying buildings. The territory of Khujand also included several small settlements in the cultivated areas along the Syr Darya and in the delta part of the Khujabakyrkan. Khujand was situated on the main trans-Asian trade route, Kand on its Ferghana branch and Samghar on its Chach branch. This fact, together with access to mineral and agricultural resources, promoted the growth of these cities' trade and economies and also their rise to political prominence.⁴³

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Archaeological research has been carried out on several dozen early medieval Ferghanian urban and rural settlements. Varied and significant material has been obtained: (a) from the ruined fortifications of Kasan (a fortified citadel with chicanes in front of the gates, angle towers on the irregular outline of the city walls, and a castle with a mighty curtain wall and six towers built on a rock platform); (b) on the architecture and Buddhist religion from Kuba (a temple with two halls, each with its own entrance, with colossal figures of horses and a bearded deity with a human skull depicted on his forehead at the entrance to the *aiwān*, and with painted clay statues representing the Buddhist pantheon in the halls); (c) on the construction of the castle from Kala-i Bolo in the valley of Isfara (a high platform with sloping sides and vertical fortress walls with loopholes, and dwellings and domestic offices with sloping roofs); (d) from a number of inaccessible mountain castles in the Asht and Isfara regions forming the defences of their river valleys; and (e) in the rural settlements (the estate of Kairagach in the valley of the River Khujabakyrkan, which has a large complex of buildings and a private chapel decorated with murals and pedestals bearing carved alabaster idols in the form of human figures with distinctive attributes, possibly used in the worship of family and clan ancestors).

Interesting material has been obtained concerning the fortified settlement of Tudai-kalon, which is built on a high platform, with a reception room in the centre, side chambers and a flat roof supported on wooden columns. Among the finds is an ivory plaque depicting

⁴³ Negmatov, 1956, pp. 103–9.

flying goddesses of victory (Nike- Victoria), half-turned towards each other and each holding a wreath in her hand.⁴⁴ In all, over 600 small sites (*tepes*, or mounds, with platform; and separate *tepes*) representing Ferghanian settlements and castles have been recorded, most of them belonging to the period from the third to the eighth century.⁴⁵ During the fourth century the culture of Ferghana's settled agricultural population reached its finest flowering and the characteristic thin-walled, red slip ceramic ware of excellent quality spread throughout the region. After a short period of cultural decline, the sixth to the eighth century saw an upsurge in the material culture of towns and settlements on the basis of new socio-economic conditions.

ETHNIC HISTORY

The ethnic history of Ferghana is quite complicated. First the K'ang-chü and Sogdian, then Hephthalite elements were grafted on to the ancient local Saka stock, and all these elements combined to form the fairly cohesive population of Ferghana with its own East Iranian Ferghanian language. During the sixth and seventh centuries, when Ferghana became subject to the Türks, there was increasing infiltration by Türk elements from the east and north, as can be seen from a group of inscriptions in runic script from Ferghana. In palaeo-anthropological terms, the population now belonged to the mesocranial and brachycranial Europoid group, with only a small percentage of dolicranial Europoids very sparsely interspersed with Mongoloid admixtures.⁴⁶

Chach and Ilak

The lands of Chach and Ilak gradually emerged as historical and geographical entities over the first half of the first millennium, although they were often given the same name of Chach (Shash in Arabic sources and Shi-Luo in Chinese sources). They were situated on the right bank of the middle reaches of the Syr Darya in the basins of its important tributaries, the Parak (Chirchik) and Ahangaran (Angren), and the neighbouring mountains of the western part of the T'ien Shan range. The economies of Chach (based on arable farming in the valleys and stockbreeding in the mountains) and Ilak (based on mining and stockbreeding), together with the local urban crafts of both regions, gave them an important role in the overall history of Central Asia.

⁴⁴ Bernshtam, 1952, pp. 233–44; Bulatova-Levina, 1961, pp. 41–3; Davidovich, 1958; Brykina, 1971; Saltovskaya, 1971, pp. 12–14, 20.

⁴⁵ Gorbunova, 1977, pp. 107–20; Filanovich, 1985, pp. 311–16.

⁴⁶ Klyashtorny, 1964; Livshits, 1968; Litvinsky, 1960; 1976, pp. 49–65: these works give a complete bibliography of the question.

Written sources give little information about Chach and Ilak in the third to the eighth century. After the break-up of the K'ang-chü state which was centred on this region, it appears that lesser domains with their own ruling dynasties sprang up. During the fifth century they came under the supreme power of the Hephthalite state. In 606, after the ruler of Chach was killed and the region was incorporated into the Western Türk *Kaghanate*, a Türk *tegin* (ruler) was put on the throne of Chach. Under the Hephthalites and the Türks, however, the local autonomy of the regions continued – their rulers bore the titles of *tudun* of Chach and *dihqan* of Ilak. In the 560s, Chach was the arena of the ruinous wars of the Türk *kaghan* and the Sasanian king Khusrau I against the Hephthalite king Gatfar. One episode of this war ended in the capture of Chach, the Parak (Chirchik) region and the bank of the Syr Darya by the Türk *kaghan*. In the seventh century, part of the nomadic Türgesh people settled in Chach. During the first half of the eighth century, according to Arab sources and a Sogdian document from the castle on Mount Mug (see above, [Figs. 26 and 27](#)), Chach, Ferghana and Sughd repeatedly formed military alliances to defend their territories against the Arab incursions, especially during the invasions of the forces of Qutaiba b. Muslim in 711, 712, 713 and 714 and of Nasr b. Sayyar in 737–738. In 739 the Kharijites, led by Harith b. Suraij, found refuge in Chach when harried by the forces of the same Nasr b. Sayyar.

RELIGIOUS CULTURE AND TRADE

According to Hsüan-tsang, the territory of Chach was one-third smaller than that of Ustrushana, but the produce of both regions was the same and their peoples shared the same customs. The inhabitants of Chach are included in the 'List of Nations and Tribes' known to the Sogdians, which was found among Sogdian Manichaean texts of the eighth–ninth century. The people of Chach mainly followed Zoroastrian-Mazdean teachings and practised burials in ossuaries (*astodans*). Buddhist preachers came as far as the territories of Chach, where they erected Buddhist buildings. The epic genre was widespread in Chach; interestingly, Firdausi states that in the *Shāh-nāme* he used epic material collected for him by a *dihqan* from Chach. Chach, like Sughd, Ustrushana and Ferghana, was famed for its music. Dancing girls from Samarkand, Kumed, Kish, Maimurg and Chach were in high repute at the Chinese Imperial Court.

Chach and Ilak were situated on an important sector of the trans-Asian trade route: roads passed through them from the Near and Middle East via Samarkand, Jizak in Ustrushana and Khujand, and from Central Asia through Taraz and Isfijab. The region's economic prosperity owed much to the caravan trade, in which silver, lead, gold, iron and copper

ware from Ilak were important, and also to commercial exchanges in basic necessities with the nomads of the nearby steppes.⁴⁷

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Archaeological investigation of the sites of Kaunchi II (late second–early fourth century), Kaunchi III (second half of the fourth–eighth century) and Minguruk (second half of the sixth–eighth century) has shown them to be representative of the culture of their period. Kaunchi II and III are remarkable for their advanced fortifications, and also for the building of monumental houses, palaces and public and religious buildings, with characteristic methods of building domes, vaults and arched structures. At the Ming-uruk sites, citadels, castles and city walls were built on artificial mounds. Residential, public and religious buildings came to be decorated with large murals and carved clay reliefs. Burials in ossuaries began to be practised in addition to the previous custom of internment in tumuli. A wide variety of iron, non-ferrous and precious metalware and a variety of coinage have been found.

Many towns and large mining centres grew up in Chach and Ilak, with a sharp increase in the number of towns and their geographical spread during the Kaunchi II and III periods. These sites show two types of town layout: geometrical and amorphous. Towns of the first type were probably influenced by the ancient Central Asian urban cultures, while those of the second type reflect the semi-nomadic life-style of agricultural and stockbreeding economies. On the archaeological evidence, some 100 settlements belong to this period. The progress of town building was accompanied by a general development of the region's settled agricultural life: a change to irrigated farming can be observed, based on artificial irrigation and the building of protective dykes and small reservoirs. Overall, the period was characterized by the development of crafts and trade, the exploitation of ore and raw materials and the growth of commercial and monetary relations.

Thirty-two towns dating from the Ming-uruk period are known (two and a-half times more than in the previous period), although few of them were large. Greater attention was paid to fortification, and citadels were equipped with round and rectangular towers and with covered walkways. Groups of palace, religious, residential and workshop buildings have been studied. Most of the citadels combine the defensive, residential and administrative functions of a ruler's residence; some, however, were purely defensive. In the towns, groups of smelters', metal workers' and potters' workshops have been found. The towns were densely built up, with a network of streets and market places and a water supply system.

⁴⁷ Summary of information from *Istoriya Uzbekskoy SSR*, 1967; Gafurov, 1972.

During this period the towns of Tunkat (the capital of Ilak), Ulkai-toi-tepe, Ming-uruk, Kanka and many others expanded. There was a chain of fortresses in the Chirchik basin. It was also during the fourth to the seventh century that Chach grew up as a town, with a citadel, a ruler's palace and a *shahristan*. Two hundred and twenty-five archaeologically identified settlements throw light on the rural environment. In the Chirchik valley more than 30 large canals, with water-collecting installations supplying the various branches of the local economy, have been recorded.⁴⁸

ETHNIC HISTORY

The complex ethnic history of Chach and Ilak between the third and the eighth century is similar to that of Ferghana. The oldest local ethnic group consisted of Saka and K'ang-chü tribes from beyond the Syr Darya, who were joined by large numbers of Hephthalite and Sogdian settlers. By the early medieval period the basic Iranian-speaking population of Chach and Ilak had been established. They probably spoke Iranian (Saka or Sogdian) dialects, which have left considerable traces in local toponyms and early medieval onomastics, as recorded in medieval Arabic and Persian literature and in numismatic and other material. The incorporation of Chach and Ilak into the sphere of Türk states in the sixth and seventh centuries led to a marked intensification of the settling and migration of the Turkic-speaking population. The following centuries saw the formation in Chach and Ilak of a Tajik population (speaking the presentday archaic Brichmulla dialect of the Tajiks on the border of the Tashkent district and southern Kazakstan) and a local Turkic population, just as the same process led to the formation in Ferghana of the Ferghanian group of northern Tajik and Turkic dialects.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Classification and descriptions from Buryakov, 1975; 1982; see also Filanovich, 1983; 1985, pp. 297–303.

⁴⁹ Oranskiy, 1960, pp. 63–6, 147–8, 205–10; Livshits and Khromov, 1981, pp. 247–8; Klyashtorny, 1964.