

Bazarbaev Sanjar Khamzayevich

Intern teacher of distance education in Socio-humanitarian subjects' department
Jizzakh State Pedagogical University

Abstract: *This article presents information about ancient and early medieval towns and villages of Ustrushona based on written and archaeological sources. In particular, valuable information is given about the oldest cities of Ustrushona, such as Bunjikent, Fagnon, Kharakana, Bushaghar.*

In the late 80s of the 20th century, the long-term international scientific research program on the theme "The Great Silk Road - the path of communication between nationalities" initiated by UNESCO, focused on the trade routes of Central Asia, including the Ustrushona region had a great impact on investigating this topic. The articles by A.Askarov and Yu.F. Buryakov, written during this period, were devoted to archaeological researches about the branches and caravan routes of the Great Silk Road, crossed by Uzbekistan, which is part of Central Asia, mainly the locations of cities and settlements along Ustrushona. At the same time, in this period, in the articles of several researchers, the branches directly passing through the Ustrushan region became the subject of special study. For example, A.A. Gritsina studied the trade networks that passed through the northern regions of Ustrushona, N.N.Negmatov and N.T.Rahimov investigated the Ustrushona-Khojand route sub-districts.¹

Bunjikent is the medieval capital of Ustrushona. Written sources provide information that the city of Bunjikent was the capital of Ustrushona. The data about the location of the city of Bunjikent has been the subject of a long-standing debate among researchers. As a result of these disputes, which began at the end of the 19th century, two different views emerged among researchers.² According to V.V.Bartold, I.Kramer, A.A.Semyonov, A.E.Madji, B.G. Gafurov, the location of the city of Bunzhikent is the ruins of Shahrison; while V. Tomashek, S.Bil, I.Kastane, S.Ainiy, V.Cheylytko, E.Horsfield, suggested that the location of the city of Bunzhikent is in the city of Mugtepa situated in Oratepa. N. Negmatov, who analyzed the opinions of the above researchers, agrees with the opinion of the second group of researchers. But later, based on the results of archaeological research conducted in the city of Kal'ai KahKaha, he supported the opinion of researchers who placed Bunjikent in Shahrison. O.G.Bolshakov, who conducted research on the study of the medieval cities of Central Asia, doubted the placement of Bunzhikent in the city of Kal'ai Kahkhaha and continues the opinion that it is located around Oratepa.

As a result of the archaeological research conducted in the Kal'ai Kahkaha complex since the 60s of the XXth century, the material culture of the monument - the architecture, craftsmanship, art and other directions of luxurious administrative, religious, defense structures - has been studied in detail by several researchers. However, large residential areas have not been identified yet. Whilst, the fact that Bunjikent is described in written sources as a city with a population of 20 thousand (or 10 thousand) men became an argumentative fact for researchers to make a concrete conclusion on this issue³.

¹ Pardayev M.H, To'ychiyoyev B.B "Ustrushona qadimda va ilk o'rta asrlarda" Toshkent: 2017, 100-bet

² Грицина А.А. Уструшанские были. Ташкент, 2000, с 46

³ Мальевкин А.Г. "Танские хроники о государствах Центральной Азии". - Новосибирск. Наука. 1988; Боровкова Л.А. Запад Центральной Азии во II в. до н.э.-IV в. н.э. (Историко- географический обзор по древнекитайским источникам). -М.:Наука.1989, с 86

We do not deny the opinion of placing Bunjikent in Kal'ai Kahkaha city complex and we believe that this issue is still actual in science and reliable evidence can be obtained as a result of conducting archaeological research on this monument on a larger scale in the future.

Fagnon town. Written sources states about the town of Fagnon bordering the desert where nomadic herders lived - the "land of the Oghiz" and its main city, Dizak. We can observe that all researchers have a single opinion on the location of this town, that it included the area around the present city of Jizzakh.

According to the results of the excavation research carried out in Kaliyatepa, the largest (50 ha) and relatively well-studied monument in the oasis, A.E. Berdimurodov dates the town to the IV-XV centuries and connects the location of the city of Dizak with this monument.

Researcher M. Pardayev, who conducted cleaning work in the stratigraphic sections of the city of Kaliyatepa in the 90s of the XXth century, confirms the opinion of A.E. Berdimurodov. The city of Qaliyatepa (up to the 9th century and with short interruptions of the 15th and 16th centuries), which the author is "claiming" to replace the city of Dizak, the adjacent Kyzlartepa monument (10th - 12th centuries) and the ruins of the city of Orda (12th - 19th centuries) emphasizes the need to expand research on monuments. Later, in the middle of 1990, M.Pardayev carried out stratigraphic excavations in the area near the eastern and southern gates of the city of Kaliyatepa. As a result of these excavations, it was determined that cultural layers of the 9th - 13th centuries do not exist in Kaliyatepa.

As a result, the researcher comes to the conclusion that Dizak, the capital of Fagnon village, moved to Orda, located 6 km north-west of Qaliyatepa, after the Arab invasion. Written sources inform that there were many fortresses of military defense importance in the village of Fagnon, located in an area of strategic importance. Research work has been carried out in some of the rabots identified by researchers (Yakubbobotepa, Pardakultepa, Komilbobotepa, etc.). Another one of such rabots, the Khudaisar rabot, described in the sources as "... one of the largest and most beautiful rabots of Movarounnahr", was built in the first quarter of the 9th century by Haydar, the son of Kovus of Ustrushona, who came from the city of Dizak. was located farsakh (6-8 km). M. Pardayev places the Khudaisar rabot instead of the Kok ravat monument on the bank of Oriklisoi, which is 7 km from the north side of Kaliyatepa⁴.

In conclusion, we can say that in recent years significant progress has been made in the direction of determining the location of Fagnon village, its capital Dizak and the gates located here. However, we believe that future research will contribute a great importance in solving many problems in this issue.

Kharakana village. The authors of the Middle Ages limit themselves to the information that the city of Kharakana, "one of the cities of Ustrushona", and its suburbs are "5 farsakhs (approx. 35 km) from Dizak and 9 farsakhs (approx. 63 km) from Zomin." N. Negmatov places the city of Kharakana around the railway stations of Gallaorol and Kuropatkino. In general, although the researcher indicated the approximate location of the rustok, this opinion was based on the information of written sources alone, without an archaeological study of the area.

Written sources provide information about the city of Nujkent, located 2 farsakhs (about 15 km) from the city of Kharakana. N. Negmatov leaves open the question of which village Nuzhkent belongs to, and places it in the south-east of Kharakana, south of Burnamad village, around the Mughal and Bakhmal villages. A. Berdimurodov Nuzhkent city 15-18 km from the Kurgantepa monument. Nushkent village is located further south. Although it is observed that the researchers' opinions on this matter coincide with each other, due to the lack of research work on the monument, the place and position of the city of Nuzhkent, which village it belongs to, and its location, remain an

⁴ Muhammadjonov.A.R "O'zbekiston tarixi" (Vasr – XVI asr boshi). – T.: O'qituvchi, 1994, 105-bet

unresolved issue. In our opinion, Nuzhkent was located in the place of Boztepa, a medieval monument located in the eastern part of the above-mentioned Nushkent village.

Burnamad village. As we mentioned above, N. Negmatov places the village of Burnamad in the north of the city of Nuzhkent. This is the mountain and sub-mountain area around the villages of Korpa, Kuduqcha and Ravot, which includes the current Ravotsoy tributaries. Yu.F. Buryakov, while studying the network of caravan routes that passed through western Ustrushona, places the village of Burnamad, which was active in the Middle Ages, instead of the city near the village of Ravot.⁵

A.A. Gritsina also admits that the Burnamad settlement was in the Ravotsoy basin. Despite the fact that the monuments in the area of this settlement, which are given very little information in the written sources, have been taken into account by a number of researchers, extensive archaeological excavations have not been carried out.

Zomin town. In almost all the written sources that provide information about medieval Ustrushona (Ibn Havqal, Maqsisi, Istahri, Yaqut, etc.), we can find detailed information about the city of Zamin (Sarsanda, Sabza) is mentioned in the process of describing the caravan routes from Sughd to Fergana and Shosh. The second name of Zamin is given by Ibn Havqal (10th century) as Sarsanda, and Yakut (13th century) stated it as Sabza.

According to Ibn Havqal, there was an old city (pre-Islamic) abandoned by the inhabitants in the 9th-10th centuries near Zamin. Both parts of the city are connected by small bridges. There are markets in both parts of the city, and Juma Mosque is located on the right side of the road leading to Samarkand. The new city was not surrounded by a wall, and there were stopping places for passengers going from Sughd to Ferghana. The city has plenty of running water, gardens, vineyards and fields, its back faces the mountains from Ustrushona, and the front faces the desert, the land of geese. N. Negmatov, taking into account the written sources and the current name of the area, places the village of Zomin in the lower reaches of the Zominsuv, in the territory of the district of the same name, but leaves the question of the exact location of the city unsolved.⁶

Shaghar (Bushaghar) village. Written sources gives information that, mountain villages of Ustrushona, including Shaghar (Bushaghar, Beshaghar) and Mink villages, have no large cities and were difficult to cross, mountainous region with a cold climate. N. Negmatov places this village on the northern slopes of the Shaudar mountains, relying on the name of the village, which is currently called Pishagor.

However, on the map given by the author, the village of Shaghar is shown north of the Turkistan ridge, upstream of the Sangzor oasis, that is, far south of the village of Pishaghar.⁷

A.A.Gritsina, as a result of re-surveying the area in the 90s of the 20th century, places the village of Shaghar in the middle stream of Pishagarsoy, and its center in the place of Beshbuloktepa monument. Although the researcher's opinion that this tiny oasis protected by natural barriers and a single defense system is the site of Shaghar town is quite close to the truth, the lack of permanent excavation research in this area means that the solution to this problem has not yet been fully researched. And it can be provident that there is a reason to believe that it has not researched fully yet.

Sabbat village. The center of the village of Sabat, located in the lowlands of Northern Ustrushona, was the largest settlement after Zamin on the trade route from Sughd to Fergana and from there to China. The fact that historians and geographers of the Middle Ages gave extensive information about the village of Sabat indicates the important importance of this place on the trade

⁵ Бичурин.Н.Я. (Иякинф). “Собрание сведений о народах, обитавших в Средней Азии в древнке Времена. Т.Н. - М.-Л., Изд. АН СССР. 1950, с 88

⁶ Pardayev M.H, To'ychiboyev B.B “Ustrushona qadimda va ilk o'rta asrlarda” Toshkent: 2017, 108-bet

⁷ Гритсина А.А «К локализации рустака Бушагар», // ОНУ. – 1996, № 4-5, с 56

route. Some of the historians (Istahri, Ibn Havqal, Yaqut) listed Sabat among the cities, while the others (Muqaddasi, Qudom) called it a large village.

P.S. Skvarky first touched on the question of the location of Sabat in the Middle Ages in the 19th century (1896) and offered his theories on locating it in the place of Old Savat, situated 10 km north of the present village of Savat. Since then, this information, which has not been proven on the basis of material sources, has been repeated in a number of scientific literatures, including studies devoted to North-Western Ustrushona.

Fagkat village. Authors of written sources give very limited information about this village and only mention two cities located in its territory - Fagkat and Gazak. In the same time, P.S. Skvarky, V.V. Bartold connected the city of Fagkat with the location of the present village of Vagat, while V.V. Grigorev and V.V. Bartold located the city of Gazak with the name of the present village of Gazan-Darak.

Based on these data and the distances between them, N. Negmatov suggests placing the Fagkat village in the oasis of the lower reaches of the Basmandasay river, that is, in the area starting from the village of Itarchi and reaching the villages of Boyovut and Uyas. Later, in the scientific works of N. Negmatov and N. T. Rahimov, the ideas about connecting Vagkat (Fagkat) with Oratepa were also given.⁸

In conclusion, based on the opinions of the above researchers that the city of Vagkat is located in the place of Baga, the ancient city of Ustrushona, and taking into account the antiquity of the Mugtepa monument at the place of Oratepa, we can consider that Vagkat (Fagkat) is located in Oratepa (Mug).

Bunzhikent village. The medieval historians limit themselves to the information about the capital Bunjikent and do not give any information about the rustaq. As we noted above, the question of the location of this rustok was a subject of debate among many researchers in its time. As a result of the archeological research conducted in recent years, among the researchers, the tendency to place the village of Bunjikent in Shahrstan valley has increased. The Shahrstan valley in the Shahrstansoi basin is surrounded by mountain ranges (Turkestan ridge) and hills on all sides. It is connected to the Savat, Khovos and Oratepa plains through a narrow mountain gorge, and to Upper Zarafshan through a pass. Shahrstan Valley is the most populated and well-studied area from an archaeological point of view.⁹

As a result of the simulation of archaeological research and excavation research conducted in the Shahrstan Valley, we can express the following points as a conclusion of these researches:

These monuments, which were construction structures that performed various functions in their time, are geographically convenient mountain gorges, water tributaries, forming a single economic, political and administrative center of Kal'ai Kahkhaha city. The fact that it is densely located around it and functions as a unique cultural oasis proves that the village of Bunjikent is actually located here.

Architectural complexes, examples of material culture, visual art and spiritual life items recorded as a result of the excavations carried out in the "Kal'ai Kahqaha" monument were found here in the early and middle ages by the rulers of the country of Ustrushona - the capital of the Afshins - indicates the location of the capital Bunjikent.

Biskar (Biskun) village. This village, which is one of the mountain villages of Ustrushona, is always mentioned side by side with Asbanikat village in the sources. Therefore, in the 1950s, N.N. Negmatov placed this village near Asbanikat village, upstream of Basmandasoy and Dahkatsoy.

⁸ Бартольд В.В. "Туркестан в эпоху монгольского нешествия" // Соч. Т. II. – М.: Наука 1963, с 154

⁹ Грицина А.А. «Северная Уструшана в середине I тысячелетия до н.э. – начале XIII в н.э.» Самарканд, 1990, с 52

Dahkat gorge, located in the south of Gonchi district, was first studied archaeologically in 1957 by O.I.Smirnova, and a detailed description of the Kal'ai Kofar monument in the gorge was compiled. In 1983-1984, excavation research was carried out by the team under the leadership of O. P. Polatov in Kal'ai Kofar, a large monument in this area rich in archaeological monuments. O. P. Polatov places the Mink village in the Dahkat gorge based on the results of research, and we have already touched on this.

Thus, the issue of locating any of the above-mentioned villages in the Basmandasay Basin and Dakhkat Gorge remains one of the unresolved issues today. In recent years, A.A. Gritsina proposed to place Biskun village instead of Beshkubi village in Zomin district. Without denying any of the above points, we believe that it is necessary to study the history of natural resources and mining industry in this issue. Because in the Middle Ages, Mink Rustok took a leading place in the mining industry.

Mascha village. The authors of the Middle Ages reported that the villages of Mascha, Burgar and Buttam are located in the territory of Buttam region, a mountainous region of Ustrushona, located between the south of the Turkestan range and the Hisar range. Buttam region was analyzed in O.I.Smirnova's article on the historical topography of Upper Zarafshan.

Later, N.N. Negmatov tries to determine the geographical location of the above rustoks based on these studies and the analysis of written sources. A.E. Berdimuradov, who conducted research in the Achchisoy basin between Zomin and Jizzakh in the 1980s, suggests that the Bangam settlement may be located here. Researcher N. Negmatov places the village of Mascha in the area of a long and narrow oasis between Zarafshan in the south and Turkestan in the north.

Burgar town. The opinions expressed by V. L. Vyatkin, M. E. Masson, S. A. Volin and others regarding the name and location of the village of Burgar (Pargar, Falgar) were collected and compiled by O. I. Smirnova. N.N. Negmatov, based on collected data and written sources, placed this village in the west of Mascha village, in the Fan river valley, in the vicinity of Iskanderkol and in the Zarafshan valley from the village of Obburdon to the fortress on Mount Mugh. Current issues awaiting their solution regarding the location of Minsk, Biskar, Bangam villages and the city of Marsmanda remain the actuality of being studied.

To conclude, the ancient and early medieval towns and villages of Ustrushona and their present location were investigated through written and archeological sources. Scholars still have different regards about the current locations of some regions of Ustrushona.

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