

## RESEARCH HISTORIOGRAPHY OF TILLABULAK SETTLEMENT OF OXUS CIVILIZATION IN SOUTHERN UZBEKISTAN

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### Annotation

This study deals with the historiography of the scientific researches of the Oxus civilization at the Tillabulak monument by German scientists. As a result of these studies, the rural archeology of the Sopolli culture was revealed.

**Keywords:** Tillabulak, rural archeology, Southern Uzbekistan, German scientists, Fire, ceramics.

The monument studied by German researchers in southern Uzbekistan is the Tillabuloq monument. The Tillabulak monument is located in the Pashkhurt lowland, near the western border of the Surkhandarya region. During 2007-2010, on the basis of a tripartite scientific agreement between the University of Munich, Termiz State University and the Institute of Art Studies of the Russian Federation, scientific research was carried out by the international archaeological team led by Professor Sh.Shaydullaev and Dr. (PhD) Kai Kaniut and several articles have been published. According to the chronological periodization of German archaeologists, Tillabuloq belongs to the Late Bronze I period.

From 2007 to 2010, Tillabulak, one of the last Bronze Age settlements in the Poshkhurt region, was fully excavated by Uzbek and German archaeologists. Geomorphological studies have shown that the settlement was built in a very favorable ecological location. Taking into account nature, the presence of a natural water source - a spring, as well as the requirements of construction work, a very conscious choice was made in the placement of architectural structures. Due to the fact that the settlement is located in a natural drainage gap, permanent dry land is provided. At the same time, the population of the settlement controlled a series of cultivated fields in the eastern part and was easily irrigated by small canals fed by a perennial spring at the foot of the settlement.



In Tillabulak, as in other large settlements of the Bactrian-Margiana archaeological complex, not much energy was spent on defense architecture. Walls of varying thickness at Tillabulak indicate that they were probably used for terrace leveling rather than defensive measures. The wide round-cornered castle inside the settlement seems to have been built for the convenience of the natural location of the building in relation to military threats. At the entrance to the settlement from the north-western side, an artificial ditch with a width of 3 m was made. Between the trenches and the wall of the house there was a 6 m wide corridor without any fortifications.

The walls of the monument were plastered with straw clay, sometimes with plaster, this information is supported by plasters sticking to the walls. The floors were made of artificial compacted soil and clay. No architectural decorations indicating population hierarchy were observed in the rooms or households, but all the "prestigious" finds were found in rooms located in the upper parts of the village. As we mentioned above, the first settlement was destroyed by a fire that occurred for an unknown reason at the end of the 19th century BC. This first phase has been documented by researchers in some parts of the settlement and provides valuable information about Bronze Age life, as many materials are well preserved in place under the ruins.

The architecture of the second phase is often built on top of the previous walls, but the residential buildings are not as dense as the first phase. In the second phase, several households were built in open areas, some areas were abandoned, filled with rubble and waste. The objects found in the rooms of the first stage consist of fine dishes, pots, grinding stones and hummocks (some with a volume of up to 175 l). Palaeobotanical findings show that the inhabitants of Tillabulak were engaged in mixed agriculture. Cereals are dominated by barley and durum wheat, each accounting for approximately 30% of the macroresidues recovered during the flotation process. The rest is made up of rye, oats, millet, peas and beans. The question of whether a grape is wild or domesticated is still open, but it is a commonly found fruit.

Animal bones were found in cultural layers. As expected, bones from sheep and goats predominate, but cattle also contributed significantly to the diet, although the proportion of pigs was small. Since the bones of deer, birds and even a few bears brought by hunting were found, it can be assumed that the hunting economy was



also developed. According to the statistically equal distribution of millstones across the rooms, food processing was considered a household task.

About 60,000 pieces of pottery were found in the monument, which is the main part of pottery finds. In terms of production technology and forms, they do not differ from the complex of ceramics obtained from the first construction levels of Sapallitepa and Jarkutan. Pottery clay is made from 90% well-worked clay soil, with very few visible additions, i.e. gypsum, and fired at 800-850°C. The percentage of pieces with a gray surface is about 1% by number. Given the high quality of these ceramics in the area of the Sopolli culture, and the absence of kilns in Tillabulak, it can be called an example of local production.

Radiocarbon analyzes of 40 pottery sherds from Tillabulak show that almost all vessels are made of the same clay, confirming that the pottery was based on local production. Typologically, some forms of Tillabulak are not observed in other Sapalli culture sites, including bowls with bases (5-6%) or goblets (about 1%) belong to this vessel category. The Tillabulak monument sheds light on the relationship between Late Bronze I period ceramics in graves and residential settlements. Handcrafted hard shell pottery, which is not found in graves at all, is more abundant (up to 25%) at Tillabulak than kitchen pottery reported elsewhere.

A number of implements were also found in this monument, including terracotta and stone tools, flint and bone chisels, bone axes, and stone grinding tools. And the meeting of the looms gives information about the local weaving system. A small amount of jewelry was recovered from the village, including several beads of lapis lazuli, turquoise, and agate, a series of copper shirt buttons, and a limestone eagle necklace. This coral is characterized by its widespread distribution in the south of Central Asia, south-western Iran and western Syria (Ebla). There are several holes on the back of the eagle-shaped pendant, the roots of which are the same as BMAK "talismans". Similar objects in the Afghan art market and in Margiyana are mostly made of colored stones. M. Teufer points to the widespread distribution of images and interprets it as part of an interregional communication system.

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