

THE MEDIEVAL FAMILY HAMMAM FOUND AT THE TUNKAT MONUMENT

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Annotation:

This article provides information about the remains of a family bathhouse found at the Tunkat monument. Tunkat was an economic and industrial center in the Ohangaron Valley during ancient and medieval times. The article highlights the structure of the bathhouse uncovered during excavations, the ceramic artifacts found, and the sanitary and cultural significance of the bath. The discovery of this family bathhouse from the Karakhanid period indicates that the residents of Tunkat paid great attention to cleanliness and sanitary practices. This article contributes to expanding scientific and historical knowledge about the bathhouses of that era.

Keywords: Tunkat, family bathhouse, Karakhanids, Ohangaron, archaeology, ceramic pot, jar, Turan, Samanids, Islam.

Tunkat was an economic and industrial center in the Ohangaron Valley during ancient and medieval times, where mining and metallurgical industries were highly developed. The region was especially known for its mining industry, particularly the production of raw materials for black and non-ferrous metals. Y.F. Buryakov emphasized that the monument's area is 180 hectares.¹ The ruins of this city are

¹ Буряков Ю.Ф. Генезис и этапы развития городской культуры Ташкентского оазиса. – Ташкент: Фан, 1982.. – С. 35

divided into southern and northern parts by the road connecting the cities of Almalyk and Angren. Unfortunately, only about 45 hectares of the northern part has been preserved. Since the monument's site corresponds to the areas of the Obiz and Sarjayloq villages, it can be observed that some damage has been inflicted on it by the local population. Additionally, some areas have been taken over by farming activities. The northwestern part of the monument, identified as the ark (ruler's residence) by scholars like M.E. Masson and Y.F. Buryakov, has also been completely destroyed today.²

The lands of Tunkat located south of the Angren and Almalyk highway have been completely leveled by farming enterprises and converted into crop fields. In this area, the "Yashil Makon" was established by the Ohangaron district administration, where numerous poplar trees were planted. To the south of these trees, a large irrigation canal was constructed. As water was diverted from the canal to the western crop fields, it seeped into underground cavities, causing significant subsidence in the area. The local population immediately informed members of the Ohangaron archaeological team, who were conducting archaeological research at the monument. Upon inspecting the subsidence, the team discovered that in one of the depressions, a part of a structure's wall built with fired bricks had become visible. An excavation of 4x5 meters was carried out at the center of the structure. First, the upper part of the site was cleared of grass and thorns. At a depth of 40 cm from the ground surface, the upper part of the brick structure began to be uncovered. During the process of clearing the interior of the structure from soil, 2 ceramic pots, 1 lamp, and the bottom part of 1 ceramic vessel were found. The fired bricks used in the construction of this structure measure 26x13x4 cm. The lower part of the bricks is flat, while the surface bears distinctive marks from fingerprints.

The brick structure, built with fired bricks, was found to be square-shaped with dimensions of 1.10x1.10 meters. The bricks measure 26x13x4 cm. Fragments of fired bricks were also scattered around the area. Based on its construction, dimensions, and functional purpose, the structure is identified as a small home bath,

² Буряков Ю.Ф. Археологические материалы по истории Тункета и Абрлига. В кн. "Материалы по истории Узбекистана" Ташкент, 1966, – С. 76-80.



which served one or several families. S. Khmelnitsky referred to such structures as personal baths or home hammams.³

The preserved height of the structure is 50 cm. It appears that 28 well-fired bricks were used to construct the floor and 140 whole and broken bricks were used to build up the walls. A clay mixture was used to set the bricks. At the base of the western wall, a hole measuring 13x10 cm was left to allow water to drain. On the southern side of the bath, there is a large depression. This depression was formed due to water seeping in when irrigating the crop fields, and it was not lined with bricks. The soil in the depression contains ash-like mixtures.

The bricks laid on the floor of the bath slope slightly towards the drainage hole, allowing water to flow out. The bricks used on the floor have fingerprint marks etched into them to prevent slipping.

During the excavation and study of the bath, a ceramic pot, the base of a jar, and a lamp were discovered.

The mouth of **the ceramic pot** is oval-shaped with a diameter of 27 cm. Four serrated, saw-like patterned handles are attached to the outer rim, protruding 1.5 cm beyond the edge. The clay of the pot is red, with burn marks still visible on its surface. During its production, a mixture of fine stones and sand was used. The preserved height of the pot is 13.5 cm. The wall thickness of the pot varies between 0.3 and 0.7 cm, with the rim's wall being 1.3 cm thick. The bottom part of the pot is completely broken and missing. Typically, pots of this type have a round bottom. Numerous pots of this type have been found at the Suyurlitepa⁴, Tunkat⁵, and Fergana Valley monuments. They have been dated to the 11th–12th centuries by I. Akhrorov⁶, who studied the kitchenware of Fergana.

The base of the ceramic vessel is made of reddish clay. The preserved height is 16.5 cm. At this point, the diameter of its body measures 27 cm. The base is flat with a diameter of 12 cm, and the thickness of the base is 0.4 cm. The wall thickness of the body ranges from 0.5 to 1 cm. Based on its dimensions, it can be inferred that

³ Хмельницкий С. Между Саманидами и монголами. Архитектура Средней Азии XI–XIII вв. Часть II. Берлин – Рига, 1997.

⁴ Исабеков Б.И. Раскопки Храма на Суюрлитепа // Проблемы древней и средневековой истории Чача. Выпуск 2. (История. Археология. Нумизматика). Шамсиддин Камолиддин (ред.). Lambert Academic Publishing. – Saarbrücken, 2014. – С. 35-51.

⁵ Асқаров А., Исабеков Б., Жўрақулов Б., Мамиров О., Исмоилов У. Ўзбекистонда археологик татқиқотлар. 2023 йил. – Самарқанд. 2024. № 16. – Б. 76-83.

⁶ Ахроров И. Кухонная керамика Ферганы XI–XII века // ИМКУ. – Ташкент. 1969. – Вып. 8. – С. 147.



this vessel was likely a jar. It is possible that it was used to hold water in the bathing area.

The lamp is made of ceramic. Parts of the glossy silver-gray glaze are still preserved on the base. The lamp's height is 4.3 cm, and the diameter of the base is 4 cm. The diameter of the mouth is 3 cm, and it extends forward, although this part is broken. The handle on the back is also broken, but its traces remain. The diameter of the body is 7.3 cm, and the wall thickness is 0.5 cm. The neck of the lamp is decorated with patterns resembling this shape (<<<<< >>>>>). Below these decorations, on both sides of the lamp, there are 12 circular patterns, 6 on each side. Inside the circles, there are 6 points resembling flower petals. It is likely that this lamp was used in the bathing area during the night in its time.

It is well-known that in the Islamic world, great importance has been placed on the construction of hammams since ancient times, as this process is connected to everyday life, as well as religious, social, and personal aspects. The number and quality of hammams served as a measure of a city's prosperity and were always mentioned in the descriptions of medieval authors.⁷ Hammams in the East were built as early as the 5th century BCE in Syria, and it is believed that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saw such a hammam and recommended its construction as a public utility throughout the caliphate's territories.⁸ Unlike European baths, hammams in the Muslim East functioned as places for purification, relaxation, and spiritual renewal. Hammams became a measure of a city's well-being and, with the arrival of the Arabs in Central Asia in the 8th century, became an integral part of the region's culture and social life.

Similar family hammams were also studied by A. Gritsina⁹ in Khavos. However, in many excavations, public hammams are found more frequently than family hammams. The construction of public hammams in Central Asia became more active during the 9th–11th centuries. Before the Mongol invasion, every city and village had hammams, and they were the second most visited places after mosques. The walls of large hammams were usually decorated or adorned using various

⁷ Ахмедов Б.А. Историко-географическая литература Средней Азии XVI-XVII вв. Силси- лат ас-салатин. Ташкент: изд. «ФАН» АН РУз. 1985

⁸ Мамадиев Б. Б. Шахрисабзнинг қадимий ҳаммомлари // Ta'lim va innovatsion tadqiqotlar (2023 йил № 9). – Б. 28-32.

⁹ Алексей Г, Рахимов К. Средневековая семейная баня на горадище кухна Хавас // ИМКУ. Вып. 41. Ташкент. 1992 – С. 198-206.



methods.¹⁰ For example, in Shokhjuvor, hammams were decorated with glazed terracotta panels.¹¹ The hammam in Afrosiab was also adorned with glazed patterns.¹² According to Bolshakov, there were around 60 to 80 hammams in the city of Samarkand.¹³ The first period hammam (late 10th to early 11th century) was excavated southwest of Afrosiab.¹⁴ Hammams from the pre-Mongol era have been uncovered and studied in various regions of Central Asia: the Taraz fortress¹⁵ (13th century), Shokhjuvor¹⁶, Akhsikent¹⁷ (late 10th to early 11th century), Margilan¹⁸, Tashkent¹⁹, and many other locations.

Conclusion

This hammam is the first family bath found at the Tunkat monument, although its heating systems, additional rooms, and water channels were not identified. Nevertheless, the discovery of family hammams from the Karakhanid period indicates that the residents of Tunkat paid significant attention to sanitary practices. In the land of Turan, cleanliness, bathing facilities, and hammams have always been highly regarded by the population. The material evidence found in various parts of Uzbekistan, the heart of Turan, supports this claim. The fact that these hammams were built with fired bricks and that numerous ceramic pipes and deep pits have been found in the monument areas shows that our ancestors paid special attention to environmental cleanliness and sewage systems since ancient times. These material

¹⁰ Алексей Г, Рахимов К. Средневековая семейная баня на городище кухна Хавас. // ИМКУ. Вып. 41. Ташкент. 1992 – С. 198-206.

¹¹ Тихонин М. Р. Некоторые моменты из истории материальной культуры средневекового Шахджу_вара // ИМКУ. Вып. 14. Ташкент, 1990. -С. 201-202

¹² Гулямов Я. Г., Буяков Ю. Ф. Об археологических исследованиях на городище Афрасиаб в 1967 1968 гг. // Афрасиаб. Вып. I. Ташкент, 1969. - Б. 274

¹³ Беленицкий А. М., Бентович И. Б., Большаков О. Г. Средневековый город Средней Азии. Л., 1973. ———-Б. 309

¹⁴ Шишкина Г. В. Городской квартал VIII-XI вв. на северо-западе Афрасиаба // Афрасиаб. Вып. II. Ташкент, 1973. Б. 124-130

¹⁵ Бернштам А. Н. Историко-археологические очерки Центрального Тянь-Шаня и Памиро-Алая // МИА. № 26. М.-Л., 1952.

¹⁶ Тихонин М. Р. Некоторые моменты из истории материальной культуры средневекового Шахджу_вара // ИМКУ. Вып. 14. Ташкент, 1990. Б. 200-204., Хмельницкий С. Между Саманидами и монголами. Архитектура Средней Азии XI–XIII вв. Часть II. Берлин – Рига, 1997. -Б. 196-200

¹⁷ Анарбаев А. А., Ахраров И. А. Баня средневекового Ахсикента // ИМКУ. Вып. 25. Ташкент, 1991. -Б. 173-182

¹⁸ Анарбаев А. А., Максудов Ф. А. Древний Маргелан. (Из истории земледельческой и городской культуры Ферганы). Ташкент, 2007. -Б. 127-128

¹⁹ Филанович М. И., Алимов У. К обнаружению средневековой бани в Ташкенте // ИМКУ. Вып. 22. Ташкент, 1988. -Б. 176-190

sources provide valuable insights into the bathing culture of Tunkat residents from a thousand years ago.



