



Archeology and Randomity: To the History of the Archeological Research in Turkestan in the Second Half of the XIX Century

Feruz Shokirovna Shamukaramova

PhD on historical sciences, senior researcher at the Institute of history of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract:

In this article, on the basis of documents from the National Archives of Uzbekistan, materials from periodicals and scientific literature, the process of accumulation of "accidental" archaeological finds on the territory of Tashkent, its environs, Chimkent district and the city of Turkestan (now the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan), at that time included Syrdarya region of the Turkestan General Governorship of scientific interest. As a result, it is shown how these finds contributed to the intensification of archaeological research in the region, which contributed to the subsequent transformation of this field of science into a separate academic direction in Central Asia.

In addition, an attempt was also made to trace how "accidental finds", discovered mainly as a result of spontaneous and unprepared excavations of amateurs, tore the artifact out of the general context of the archaeological -archaeological site.

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Since the conquest of the Central Asian region by the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century, there has been a process of practical activation of the research interest of the metropolis in various aspects of the historical past of the peoples of the Turkestan Territory.

This was not least due to the need of the colonial administration for knowledge about the nature of the internal mechanisms and dynamics of the development of local society for the organization of effective management of the region, on the one hand, and the importance of maintaining a positive image of the conquerors, led by a "civilizing" mission, one of the criteria of which was the preservation and the study of the monuments of the past - on the other.

The study of archaeological monuments of the past in this regard, it seems, was out of the general dynamics of collecting knowledge about the conquered region, did not have a clear strategy and understanding initially, as well as competent specialists capable of organizing qualified and systemic archaeological research.

However, the results of the very first fragmentary investigations in this direction, carried out mainly by amateur local historians, as well as numerous recorded finds of antiquities by local residents and Russian settlers, have shown the promise of organizing systemic and centralized work in this direction as a solution the above tasks, and for the construction of a new historical image of the region.

In this article, based on documents from the National Archives of Uzbekistan, materials from periodicals and scientific literature, we will try to highlight the process of accumulation of "accidental" finds on the territory of Tashkent, its environs, Chimkent district and the city of Turkestan, which at that time were part of the Syrdarya region of Turkestan general governorship of scientific archaeological interest.

Thus, to show how accidental finds contributed to the intensification of archaeological research in the region and subsequent transformation into a separate academic direction, including the organization of complex expeditions and the creation, based on their results, of a significant number of solid academic publications.

We will also try to show how "chance finds", discovered mainly as a result of spontaneous and unprepared excavations of amateurs, pulled the artifact out of the general context of an archaeological site, distorting its holistic picture, and also often led to the irreversible destruction of more significant elements of a historical object.

To what extent did these "accidental" finds play a role in the barely emerging archeology of Central Asia at the end of the 19th century, if it is known that this branch of science in the metropolis itself was at the level of initial development?

The founder of the historiographic school in Uzbekistan B.V. Lunin in his famous monograph "From the history of Russian oriental studies and archeology in Turkestan. Turkestan circle of archeology amateurs (1895 - 1917) ", referring to this problem, cites the testimony of Academician S.A. Zhebeleva: "In the Imperial Archaeological Commission, Russian archeology did not enjoy special prestige, it was little known and little interested in it. ... St. Petersburg archaeologists were engaged in partly classical archeology, partly in numismatics, but more in archival research and the study of antiquities, albeit archaeological, but never buried in the ground. "

Meanwhile, developing his thoughts, B.V. Lunin wrote that the archaeological trend in Russian science began to gain momentum and "Russian scientists-archaeologists, in the method and methodology of their work, not only were not inferior to their Western European colleagues, but also surpassed them in the level of scientific research."

However, Russian scientists treated the past and present of the Turkestan region as a kind of "ethnographic object", including in the study of cultural monuments and antiquities. Therefore, the studies of that period were mostly descriptive, without deep research analysis. Proceeding from this, the accidental finds were treated with caution.

Nevertheless, chance finds occupy a very important place in the history of archeology of Central Asia. Suffice it to note two episodes of such finds as an example: the first is the Amu Darya treasure, found by a simple farmer of Kabadian; the second is the altar of the Temple of Zeus, found in the region of

Pergamum in Asia Minor. These random finds occupy a huge place not only in the history of culture for certain regions, but also in world history. Currently, the Amu Darya treasure is in the British Museum.

Modern archaeological research allows us to put forward a version that this treasure is part of the treasures of the temple of the god Oxus at the Takhtisangin settlement, excavated by B.A. Litvinsky and I.R. Pichikyan. The reliefs that adorn the Pergamon altar are collected in a specially created Pergamon in the Berlin Museum. Both exhibitions are constantly showing increased interest not only from researchers, but also from the general public.

It happened that such finds laid an empirical basis for further research in this direction, but they often contributed to the distortion of the true history of the archaeological site. Often, valuable and potentially important from an academic point of view, finds, thanks to the activities of "black" diggers, fell into the hands of collectors or persons speculating in artifacts for the purpose of personal enrichment and subsequently remained not introduced into scientific circulation.

In such cases, experts could only by intuition draw very rough conclusions about their belonging to a particular culture. There are many such precedents in the history of archaeological research in Central Asia.

Targeted archaeological research in the Tashkent oasis and Chimkent district began in the second half of the 19th century by Russian orientalists, local historians, amateur archaeologists, officials and collectors after the conquest of Central Asia by the Russian Empire and the formation of the Turkestan governorship general in 1867.

At the first stages, the study of the history of these territories was of an episodic nature, since, in particular, even in written sources, the history of these territories, according to V.V. Bartold, unlike Merv, Bukhara or Samarkand, was not sufficiently reflected. Information was accumulated literally bit by bit: accidental finds during any excavation work, fragmentary references in written sources, fleeting observations of researchers, etc.

Therefore, on June 23, 1874, the district head of the city of Turkestan in the Syrdarya region submitted a report No. 1979 to the Military Governor of the Syrdarya region that on June 5, several local residents - kyrgyz Bektemis Urasaev, Kolau Isetov and sart (Uzbek - F.Sh.) Chukur Zakurbaev, in the process of repair work, dug the earth and accidentally found an earthen jug with 612 silver coins "from the time of Sultan Sanjar Mirza (before the Tamerlane period)".

Apparently, the report served as a cover letter when sending the found coins to Tashkent, since the following question is asked: "... From what amounts will I have to satisfy those who found the coins if this find is left in favor of the treasury?" ...

In 1886, in the newspaper of "Turkestanskiye vedomosti" a message by a senior official on special assignments under the Military Governor of the Syrdarya Region, an amateur local historian E.T. Smirnov was published that near Tashkent, at the post station Niyazbash, while leveling one of the numerous mounds, earthen vessels filled with human bones were accidentally found, which were originally "thrown out by a peasant, the owner of the land."

After examining the find, E.T. Smirnov came to the conclusion that "these are undoubtedly burial urns belonging to the people who lived here in the pre-Muslim period, which gives the find great

archaeological interest."

The author of the message, describing in detail the urn and its contents, after conducting a survey of the local population, came to the assumption that such a method of burial "was not practiced either by the ancient Persians who professed the religion of Zoroaster or otherwise - fire worship, or by the Mongols and Turks who professed Buddhism.

The found grave is more reminiscent of a Greek funeral. He linked all these finds with the presence of the Greco-Macedonians here. By order of the governor-general, all found items were then transferred to the Tashkent public museum.

Another accidental find in the same year was found on the so-called "Nikiforov lands" (now Mirzo Ulugbek district of Tashkent, Buyuk Ipak yuli street - F.Sh.). These were clay fragments with the image of two fantastic figures, which the Imperial Archaeological Commission, where they were sent, recognized as extremely interesting and asked for a complete survey of the area.

After that N.P. Ostroumov, director of the Tashkent Teachers' Seminary, editor of the Turkestan native newspaper, which also published articles of a historical and archaeological nature, later chairman of the TKLA, with several seminary teachers, on behalf of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, conducted exploratory studies of the area. As a result, a cave was discovered, where human bones, earthen jugs, cups and earthen ossuaries were found.

In 1887, after conducting archaeological excavations and opening 20 barrows, N.P. Ostroumov came to the conclusion that there are continuous burial grounds on the "Nikiforov lands" that are not of great scientific importance. Meanwhile, their study could in the future could provide rich historical and anthropological material. However, such a goal is probably N.P. Ostroumov did not pursue.

In general, the researchers of the Tashkent oasis have repeatedly informed the Archaeological Commission that Tashkent and its environs are rich in ancient structures of various types and only thorough archaeological research can provide answers to many questions of interest. Accidental finds or purchases of antiques from the local population could not significantly affect the scientific conclusions. In addition, the local population did not always report them, especially when it came to precious stones, gold, silver or copper coins, jewelry.

In 1887, a small article was published in the newspaper of "Government Bulletin", where it was reported that when carrying out hydraulic works "in the so-called Chinazo-Jizzakh Hungry Steppe" on the restoration of the once operating Urumbai-Mirza-aryk, Bukhara-aryk or Shaar-aryk, unique finds and traces of a once-existing settlement were accidentally found.

In particular, they found a "bronze straight, double-edged sword of the Greek form", many shards of originally decorated pottery, which looked like shards from the ruins of Kunya-Urgench, as well as shards of glassware. The conversations and inquiries of local residents gave information about the existence of a legend that in this area, precisely in the Hungry Steppe, in ancient times there were rich settlements.

On May 8, 1893 the land surveyor of the Syrdarya regional government K.M. Baronin when measuring land in the village of Mamaevka of the Chimkent district found a treasure of coins in two clay jugs on the Karaul-Tepe mound in one of the boundary pits.

The first jug contained copper coins "from 3700 - 3800 coins, ... weighing about 19 pounds", in the second - "... 1860 silver, weighing 9 pounds." All found coins were with "Muslim" inscriptions in

Kufic script. Along with the coins, there were other items in the jugs, in particular, two silver bracelets, three toilet sinks, 16 toilet stones of different sizes, eighty-four pearls, one copper buckle, four gold shards, a fragment from a personalized ring with the owner's name inscribed.

Regarding this find, there was constant correspondence between the Imperial Archaeological Commission and the administrative bodies of Turkestan for several months on various aspects of this find. In particular, in his official letter dated May 24, 1893 from the villages. Tamerlanovka Land surveyor K.M. Baronin reported in detail about this find of his and continued his letter with a statement that such bulk mounds along the river. Arys (Arys) are common. Listing them, he described his second find, no less interesting.

He wrote: "Another time ... when pits were dug for setting a milestone, many clay fragments were discovered ... and at a depth of about 1 ½ arsh. a completely whole clay table was taken out, about ¼ arsh. high, in the form of a circle with a diameter of 1 arsh., on three clay legs, with embossed cross-shaped decorations from below; the table was painted with fawn paint, which had fallen behind when it was lifted from the ground. Under the table lay a layer of apparently completely decayed clothing; here, nearby, two millstones from a hand mill, similar to the Kyrgyz ones, were found ". The land surveyor assumed that there was once a fortress on this territory, which the Kyrgyz called "Tayak-saldy" (put a stick), of which there are many similar ones in the surrounding area.

At the end of his letter K.M. The Baronin mentions the need to pay him the appropriate remuneration: "Presenting to Your Highness the find I have made, in order to present it in the proper manner to the Imperial Archaeological Commission, I have a part to humbly ask you to petition me for a remuneration from the treasury due to the law."

There is another document with a similar petition. So, the peasant of the village of Mamaevka of the Chimkent district, Ignatiy Krylkov, submitted a petition to the Military Governor of the Syrdarya region, in which he wrote that he also participated in the "excavation work carried out by the land surveyor Mr. Baronin, during which a treasure of copper and silver coins was found" and thus asked to accept "as a share in the remuneration."

In general, such events - the issuance of monetary rewards by the Imperial Archaeological Commission - were widely practiced. This can be seen by reading the correspondence of government agencies regarding accidental finds of scientific interest. So, it was with the aforementioned find.

On December 31, 1893 (January 10), 1894, the head of the Kazalinsky district sent a report to the Military Governor of the Syrdarya region, which said: "In the Karakum desert, 200 versts from the city of Kazalinsk, on the surface of a sandy hillock, the Kirghiz of the Karatyubinsk volost Akdar Akpanov found an empty copper vessel, weighing about a pound, called in Kyrgyz "cape-kazan" ", which was sent to the Imperial Archaeological Commission.

A few months later, on June 8, 1894, the Military Governor of the Syrdarya Region received a letter from the Imperial Archaeological Commission, which said that a reward had been sent to the Head of the Kazaly district - twenty rubles to be handed over to Akdar Akpanov.

All of the above random archaeological finds were sent to the Tashkent Museum, and from there the most valuable or definite specimens of finds were sent to the Imperial Archaeological Commission, after the initial study of which, an order was given to conduct targeted archaeological excavations in certain territories.

The most valuable finds were shown by the Imperial Archaeological Commission to the Russian Emperor, who decided where to transfer the find - to the Imperial Hermitage or to other designated places or to a repository of ancient objects. In particular, in 1897, the aforementioned commission sent the researcher N. Veselovsky to the Turkestan territory for archaeological research. Along with scientific tasks, the main of which was excavations in Afrasiab, he was asked to "collect collections of ancient coins for the mints cabinet of the Imperial Hermitage."

Accidental finds of Chimkent land surveyors - a treasure of coins, an earthen table, hand millstones and other antiquities, contributed to the proposal by N.P. Ostroumov, who visited Mamaevka on behalf of the Archaeological Commission, to continue the work of the land surveyor K. Baronin in order to "map all the large mounds of that area, and mark the small ones with dots, and from large mounds it would be desirable to have plans with a brief designation of their sizes", in order compilation of an archaeological map of the Turkestan region.

Concerning the treasure of copper and silver coins of N.P. Ostroumov concluded that the coins were undoubtedly ancient, the inscriptions on them were minted in Kufic script. When asked how the jugs with coins ended up in this place, the researcher replied: "Obviously, either the owner of the treasure wanted to hide the money during some enemy raid, or, perhaps, the steppe ram robbed a peaceful merchant of ancient Otrar and then, returning to his nomad, he buried the stolen wealth in the steppe on a hill; after that he himself could be killed in some new battle by his enemies and the treasure remained on the hill. "

After the formation in 1895 in Tashkent of the Turkestan circle of amateurs of archeology, the process of accumulating materials on the history of the Turkestan region began to be more systematic. However, the activities of the Turkestan circle were limited only to the performance of exploration work, the collection of lifting material, and small excavations.

This was largely due to the absence of professional archaeologists in its composition. The excavations were carried out, basically, without any scientific methodology, which was not developed at that time. The reports, articles, messages and reports of the members of the Circle were also of a topographic, local history, geographical, ethnographic, and linguistic character. Primary research was carried out both in the Tashkent region and on the territory of present-day Kazakhstan.

Therefore, in the report of the member of the Circle E.T. Smirnov, an archaeological description of the territory of Tashkent and its environs is given, with a list of numerous hillocks (tepa), which he considered artificial and embankments, on the routes of small and large rivers.

In his report, which was published in the form of an essay, the author posed specific questions to the audience: "To what historical period does the time of the construction of these hillocks, hillocks and embankments belong? What kind of people were they built and for what purpose? There are no answers to these questions yet, but one thing is obvious, that they were built by a populous and strong people. "

Analyzing the ossuaries studied by him, which we mentioned earlier, E.T. Smirnov turned to the members of the Circle with questions: "What is this method of burial, at what time, what religion and what people does he belong to?" -was here in full measure up to the period of emergence of Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism? " ... This suggests that the author, before embarking on the research, studied all the sources available to him, since E.T. Smirnov returned several times.

The most ancient cities of the Tashkent region owed their discovery to accidental finds. In particular,

“... in the spring of 1898, the cultural community of the Turkestan territory was agitated by reports that the mighty Syr Darya was breaking the banks, washing away some ancient residential buildings, which were full of newspapers. Chests with scrolls of ancient manuscripts and giant vessels float along the river.

Furthermore, along the coast there are deep wells, mouths of vaults and systems of underground communications. The green coins and brightly glazed vessels are thrown ashore. Members of the Turkestan circle of archeology lovers who urgently left for this area saw that on the elevated bend of the Syr Darya, near the confluence of the river. Akhangaran stretches the ruins of a grandiose ancient city, popularly known as Sharqiya (Shakhrukhiya - F.Sh.).

"Prior to this incident, the exact location of the city was not known, although E.T. Smirnov mentioned him. At the TCLA meetings, various hypotheses were put forward regarding the location of Shah Rukhia. Some researchers, based on the data of written sources, identified the settlement with Khojand.

In 1900, at the 4th meeting of the Turkestan circle, E.T. Smirnov made a report on the results of exploration work on the ruins of the ancient settlement of Kanka with a detailed description of the topographic location of the area with references to written sources, water supply routes for the ancient city (located on the territory of the Ak-Kurgan district of the Tashkent region, archaeological expeditions on which continue to this day under the leadership of Academician Yu. F. Buryakov).

E.T. Smirnov presented to the members of the meeting samples of the collected lifting material: fragments of glass and earthenware. He stated that "shards of glass are found in large numbers in all ancient burial mounds of the Angren valley", and assumed that "glassware was not brought here from anywhere, but was made by local residents." At the same time, he noted: "Sources indicate that in very ancient times the Chinese borrowed the secret of its manufacture from Central Asia."

The classification of the found clay shards helped to identify E.T. Smirnov, what utensils were used by the population of that time, what pipes were laid for the water supply of the city.

In this link of the first archaeological research, the first excavations at Shashtepa should be noted (Erkin village, Zangiota district, Tashkent region). In 1896 N.P. Ostroumov dug a trench on the citadel of the settlement, ignoring the laying of the walls, and uncovered three galleries and a pointed arch. The remains of the structure were identified as a guard post with an underground building. In addition, fragments of ceramics, pieces of iron, glass, animal bones and other objects were found. But, unfortunately, no dating was given to either the objects found or to the settlement itself.

At that time, the archeology of Central Asia was in its infancy and could not answer all the questions posed. However, at the meetings of the Turkestan circle of archeology amateurs, discussions were often held on topical issues related to certain finds. Various points of view were expressed, which later became the subject of scientific discussion. In particular, the topic of ossuaries has remained controversial for many years.

It is possible that many judgments of researchers at that time were erroneous or controversial, but it was these initial conclusions based on chance finds, primary exploration, small amateur excavations, which were reflected in the press and in archival documents, that gave impetus to future long-term studies of the region.

Based on the results of a brief review, it is difficult to talk about the ambiguous role of chance finds in archeology, which had both positive and negative aspects. A positive point can be considered the fact that random finds provoked both philistine and scientific interest in antiquities, which later served as a reason for research activities.

The objects found by chance were often unique works of art, such as artifacts from the Amu Darya treasure. Scientific research of randomly found objects made it possible to identify elements of the synthesis of cultural traditions that existed at the time of creation of these objects. The negative aspect of chance finds is that they were taken out of an archaeological (and thus historical) context. A chance find provides the researcher with factual material, but does not answer a number of questions - when, why, how this or that particular find ended up here.

Thus, one should not ignore random finds, but one should perceive them as a historical artifact that carries certain information that can be interpreted from the standpoint of source studies.

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