

Milestones in the History of Urban Development and the Compositional Reception of the City of Samarkand

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Abstract: The article reveals the historical and urban planning features of the formation of the ancient city of Samarkand. The main points of the urban history of the creation of Samarkand in the XVII century are analyzed. Based on the data of written, archaeological and archival materials, the reconstruction of the plan of the central part of Samarkand of the XVII century was carried out. The stages of urban development of ancient Samarkand are traced.

Keywords: history, urban planning, stages, archaeology, planning structure.

One of the two famous cities of Uzbekistan, the amazing Samarkand is located in the picturesque valley of the Zarafshan River, surrounded by the Pamir-Alai Mountains in the south-east of Uzbekistan. [1]

The stages of the archaeological study are analyzed. Based on observations of earthworks on the territory of the former citadel of Timur and old Samarkand, it was possible to identify some urban planning features of the planning structure of ancient settlements. [2]

Samarkand, along with Bukhara, is one of the oldest cities in the world. Its history dates back several thousand years ago and is not inferior to such ancient cities as Athens, Babylon, Rome and Memphis. Whatever epithets philosophers and poets come up with for him — "Mirror of the World", "Garden of the Soul", "Pearl of the East", "Face of the Earth" — it is perhaps impossible to express all his beauty and wealth in words. You can only enjoy all its splendor and splendor with your own eyes. During its centuries-old history, this legendary city on the Great Silk Road has experienced times of rise and decline, was subjected to destructive raids by foreign conquerors, and was reborn anew, becoming even more beautiful. Trade routes to the West — to Persia, to the East — to China and to the South — to India intertwined here and formed the crossroads of the Silk Road. Figure 1. [3]



Figure 1. The Great Silk Road Samarkand-Bukhara

The purpose of this article is to study the main points of the urban history of Samarkand in the XVII century and identify the location of previously unknown architectural structures in the central part of Samarkand, mainly the citadel, Registan Square and around the Sheikh Zadinsky gate of the city. Unpublished recordings by V.L. Vyatkin, M.E. Masson and L.Y. Mankovskaya, stored in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Uzbekistan, were used in the study. In the period from 1987 to 2010 one of the authors of the article carried out observations of earthworks on the territory of the late medieval citadel and old Samarkand, which revealed some features of the topography of the administrative center of the city.

The city is the very embodiment of antiquity and the history of urban development of Samarkand. During its long history, the city has experienced multiple devastation and wars. Losing the culture and traditions of the Uzbek people. Thus, the culture of Samarkand was revived during the reign of Timur and Ulugbek.



Figure 2. Map of Samarkand

For the first time, scientific research to identify the historical topography of Samarkand was undertaken after the city was incorporated into the Russian Empire. V.V. Bartold, V.L. Vyatkin, M.E., and Masson conducted the study of Samarkand in the XVI-XVII centuries. In his research, Masson paid great attention to Timurid Samarkand and for the first time compiled a topographic map of the late medieval city. He owns a number of publications on the history of architectural monuments of Samarkand in the Janid era (Masson, 1929; 1950). However, a significant part of M.E. Masson's materials has been lost. According to M.E. Masson, who studied the sources and carried out observations of earthworks on the territory of the citadel of Samarkand, in the XVI century. It included a palace, administrative buildings, mosques (Masson, 1942, l. 125ab). During excavation work in the northern part of the citadel in 2010, ruins of a mosque, presumably of the XVII century, were discovered. Its walls and floor were made of square-burnt bricks. In total, six brick pillars of the mosque have been preserved, some of them were up to one and a half meters high.

In our opinion, it is necessary to expand archaeological research around these ruins, which may allow for the still unknown large structures of the 17th century. Since the 70s of the XIV century, Samarkand has been undergoing rapid, ever-increasing construction, which has defined its urban planning features and architectural appearance for centuries.

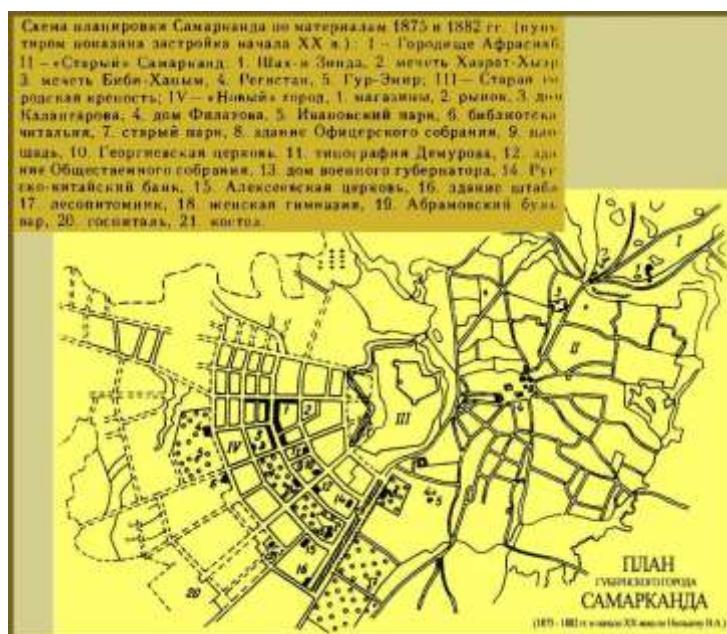


Figure 3. The plan of old Samarkand

In the XV-XVII centuries. Samarkand was divided into hisar - the walled urban core - and a suburban area (Pugachenkova, 1976, pp. 10-11). M.E. Masson clarified that in the XVI-XVII centuries. Samarkand was divided into an outer city (shahri birun) and an inner city (shahri darun), as well as suburbs - mavze (Masson, 1942, l. 125ab).

The administrative center of Samarkand, the citadel, built under Timur (1370s), was located to the west of the city's cathedral mosque - on the right side of the Novadon ditch (Bu-ryakova, 1990, p. 65). It covered a vast territory with a total area of 34 hectares and was surrounded by a wall of pahsa and mud bricks with a height of 8 m. There were two gates in the citadel: the eastern (Samarkand) ones at the mausoleum of Nur ad-din Basir and the southern (Bukhara) ones (Lebedeva, 2001). The first gate faced the Registan, and the second gate faced the modern

boulevard. Judging by the layers from the pits, the depth of which reached 4 m, the territory to the northwest of the citadel was not inhabited.

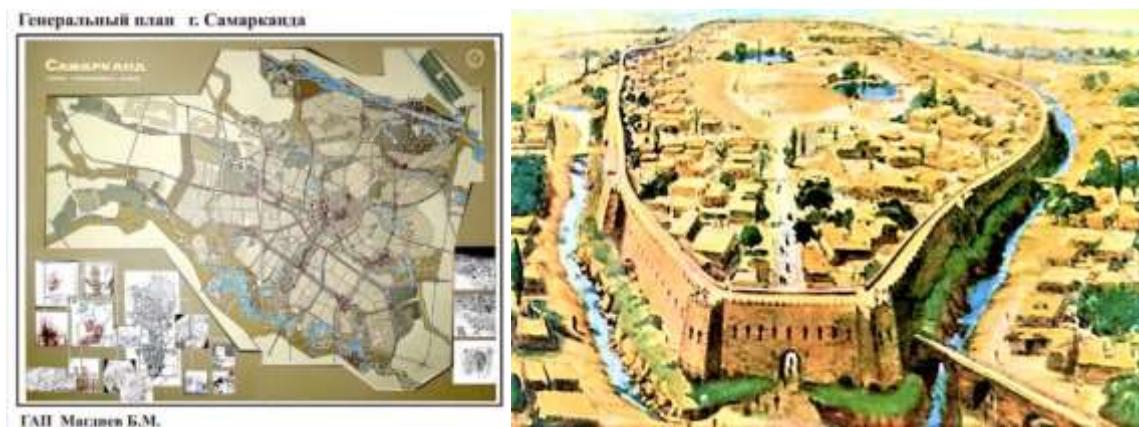


Figure 4. The citadel map of the 17th century. Samarkand

Among the conquerors who inscribed their name in the history of the city are Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and Amir Timur (Tamerlane), who made Samarkand the capital of his vast empire. During the reign of Ulugbek, Timur's grandson, Samarkand turned into a scientific and cultural center of the Middle East. Today Samarkand is a place where relics of antiquity are carefully preserved. The city is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to the abundance of material and spiritual values preserved here. The unique monuments of ancient architecture, the heritage of scientific and art schools, and the centers of national crafts located in the ancient city are famous all over the world today. [3]

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It is not for nothing that the city of Samarkand is called the City of Famous Shadows, a witness to the change of many historical periods. Although the debate over the true age of the city still persists. According to the holy book of Zoroastrians "Avesta", Samarkand is more than 2,750 years old. According to the Arab historian Abu al-Nesefi, Samarkand is 3,700 years old, and according to some other equally authoritative Arab historians, it is 4,700 years old. Uzbeks themselves say that Samarkand is as old as the Earth itself. Modern science has found out that ancient Marakanda, on the site of which Samarkand is now located, was founded around the 7th century BC, as the capital of the kingdom of Sogd. [4]

For centuries, the city suffered from the invasion of the troops of the Persian king Cyrus and the army of Alexander the Great, was part of the Seleucid state and the Kushan Empire, the Turkic Khaganate and the Arab Caliphate. In 1220, the city was plundered and almost completely destroyed by the Mongols of Genghis Khan. Genghis Khan will die in seven years, having shortly before divided his empire between his sons (Samarkand will pass to Chagatai, the second son of Genghis Khan). The empire will agonize for almost a century and a half until Amir Timur (Tamerlane) comes to power and creates his empire from east to west — from Kashmir to the Mediterranean Sea, and from north to south — from the Aral Sea to the Persian Gulf, establishing Samarkand as the imperial capital in 1370. [4]



Figure 4. The settlement of Afrasiab in Samarkand

In the 1960s and 1970s, excavations of the late medieval layers of the city were carried out by Yu.F. Buryakov, E.Y. Buryakova, later the research was continued by T.I. Lebedeva. Summing up the extensive archaeological research of Samarkand, the researchers noted that the layers of KHU1-Khush V. "have been studied less fully" (Buryakova, Buryakov, 1973, p. 221). Some researchers believed that the Ashtarkhanid era was characterized by internecine strife (Lebedeva, 2001, p. 204), and did not distinguish the features of the cultural strata of this period. D. Mirzaakhmedov (1990) analyzed the ceramic complex of this period.

Conclusion. The analysis of the main stages of urban planning in historical Samarkand is carried out, based on archival materials and information and bibliographic sources.

Tracing the stages of development of old Samarkand, it can be noted that the spatial and spatial planning structure of the city was built on geometric and structural-compositional patterns. During this period, the main construction was aimed at the construction of religious and educational buildings.

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