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## EVERLASTING PASSION FOR “KAMPYRTEPA”

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### ABSTRACT

The exploration has always been part of the human experience since ancient times. From the early stages of our journey into unknown territories to modern-day expeditions to the depths of the ocean or outer space, the desire to explore and discover has shaped our history and propelled us forward. Exploration is not a matter of just discovering new lands or uncovering hidden and mysterious treasures; it is about pushing the boundaries of our knowledge and understanding of the world we live in. In this article, we will delve into Edvard Vasilyevich Rtveladze's important contribution to the scientific community was his study of the ancient monument of Uzbekistan — the town of Kampyrtepa during his expedition to the ancient area of Tokhariston.

### KEYWORDS

tremendous contribution, expedition camp, scientific research, ancient caravan route, medieval history, traces of Alexander the Great's army, numismatics, epigraphy, archaeological expeditions, qualified personnel, settlement.

### INTRODUCTION

Academician Edward Rtveladze spent his scientific career researching huge layers of the history and culture of the Central Asian region, and the ancient caravan route, which followed the Great Silk Road - from East to West, or from West to east along the

tracks of Alexander The Great's Army. He devoted his life to the study of the history of ancient and medieval Central Asia, archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy, art, culture. Edvard Vasilevich Rtveladze, with his students and colleagues, was able to open many archaeological

monuments and carried out scientific research on the history of finds.

It is known that Edward Rtveladze did not stop for a moment in scientific research by working arduously until today and during his scientific career, he was interested in almost all periods of the historical past of Central Asia and the Caucasus – from the Neolithic Age to the late Middle Ages. The scientist is considered to be a participant in more than 80 scientific archaeological expeditions conducted in Central Asia, the Caucasus, Cyprus, Japan and France. He has opened and examined many archaeological sites.

One of the similar expeditions promoted under the direction of Edvard Vasiliyevich Rtveladze is the excavation and exploration carried out at the Kampirtepa settlement, located in the Muzrabat District of Surkhandarya region.

Kampirtepa is one of the oldest archaeological monuments on the territory of Uzbekistan. It is the ruins of a port city on the Amudarya(Ochs) River, founded at the end of the IVth century BC and existing until the beginning of the 1st century BC. The ruins of this ancient city are located on the right bank of the Amudarya, 30 km west of present-day Termez and 1.5 km from Shorab village. Based on long years of collected data, the leader of the expedition was academician E.V.Rtveladze found the relation between the wading trail named “Jayhun” (Amudarya, name of

medieval period), and the greek name of “Pandaxeyon”, recorded in the works of Iranian historian Khofiz-I Abru who lived in the 15th-century. The final studies of the scientist correlated the ruins of Kampyrtepa with the Alexandrian of Ochs, finding its connection with the period of Alexander The Great's march to the East.

Thus, In the 1972 scientist Edvard Vasiliyevich sets out for the Tokharistan archaeological expedition in the oasis of Ochs (Amudarya) spending precious and valuable 30 years of his life to the exploring the Kampyrtepa city ruins.

Institute of art studies derektori Sh.R.Pidayev boshchiliga organises the Kampirtepa monument in 1977. In December 1979, E.V.Rtveladze and S.A.Savchuk from the science squad of Uzbek Arts named after Khamza carried out excavations in the walls of the fortress in the northern west of the Kampirtepa monument.

In the 1980s, a comprehensive study of the defensive walls of Campirtepa was launched. Later, under the direction of the divisional chief of the Surhandaryo provincial Guard Service, Major Sh.U. Ustayev and the ethnography group of Kampyrtepa joined Tokahrison archeological expedition (hereby TAE). And in 1982, the excavations began in Kampyrtrepa, and in February E.V.Rtveladze together with other 5 participants made the way to Termez as one group of explorers. They

were welcomed by S. Bolelov , M.Ishakov and the driver. They headed straight to Gagarin village and settled down there. Rtveladze got acquainted with the representative of rural framing J. Khimatov and asked for his assistance in exploring the Kampyrtepa. So, the excavation work was carried out at Kampyrtepa and Shoropqurgan facilities .

The first topographic planning and architectural works at Kampyrtepa was carried out by I.Lunkova from 1982 which was consecutively continued by the following scientists such as Y.Yemelyano, D.V.Rysanov, Z.A.Arshavskaya, I.A.Azimov, Y.A. Kurkina, M.S.Bolganovas in different years. During the years 1982 to 1991, a stationary excavation is carried out in Kampyrtepa every year. Also, in 1982, 1984, 1990, Shorobqurgan was explored.

The staff of the Termiz National museum excavated the residential areas of the eastern part of Kampyrtepa in 1987-1991. Their excavation work lasted until 2000. Also, in 1988-91, under the direction of V.P.Nikonorova the excavations carried out at Kampyrtepa while in 1988-90 D. Abdullaev headed the excavations at the medieval Shorobqurgan settlement.

In 1992, the excavations at Kampyrtepa site were suspended before it was about to start. In 1999, the study of the site was resumed for the purpose of opening the entire area, studying the layers of the earth and determining the chronological time of the

dwelling areas. It is worth mentioning that the practices planted at the ancient site of Kampyrtepa indicate that much more extensive work was carried out in this field.

Researches led by the academicians of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, archaeologist Edward Rtveladze revealed a large area of the city during the excavations. The studies were not futile, during the studies of the Seleucids, and Greco-Bactrian coins, ceramics and a number of objects have been identified indicating the presence of the lower cultural layers of the Hellenistic period at Kampyrtepa.

Thanks to the effort of the scientist, the fortress ruin “Burdaguy” which is believed to have been founded by Alexander the Great, dating back to the 3rd century BC, was uncovered. The total area of the Greco-Macedonian fortress, built on the site of the old Achaemenid fortress, exceeds over 5 hectares. The structure of this complex includes residential areas, a central bastion, a treasury with treasures, a synagogue.

Outside the castle, on the banks of the river, a harbor was built where ships came and left. Also, the remains of a lighthouse, a tall structure that served as a mooring for ships, have also been identified. The gates leading into the fortress are huge and majestic, resembling the gates of the fortress and fortifications once built in cities along the Mediterranean Sea.

The scholar believes that Burdaguy was inhabited by artisans, in particular ship and boat makers, who provided services to passers-by from the "royal wading trail" of the river Ochs. Life in this place was very flourishing. Kushan period coins that were uncovered from this area indicate that the town of Kampirtepa was once one of the important financial centers of this state.

As a result of excavations and through topographic drawings, it was determined what the city of Kampyrtepa looked like, and according to it, the composition of Kampyrtepa includes a "lower city" consisting of a deep ditch and a fortress. The "Lower City" is protected by a thick wall with rectangular towers. Inside the "lower city" are various rooms, united into four large blocks and separated by corridors. The fortified part of the city is mainly occupied by cemeteries. Also, the remains of a Buddhist temple, examples of folk art, architectural and design solutions of various historical periods can be seen in the area.

Scientists estimate that life in Campirtepa lasted at least 500 years. According to research, the history of the formation of Kampyrtepa was determined to be divided into three periods:

1. The initial stage is the arrival of Alexander the Great in the town of Kampyrtepa (IV - II centuries BC). At that time, Kampyrtepa was a one-sided fortress, it is also

noted that there was only a military garrison there. It is also claimed that much of it was washed away by Amudarya. And there are also views that there is a mountain road from the Ox River to the capital of Bactria.

2. The Kushan-Yuezhi period is the most stable and peaceful period which lasted between the period of 2-1 centuries BC. It is said that at that time, construction began on the castle of the square and the process of people's grazing began.

3. The Kushan period is the period of the highest flowering of Kampyrtepa (I-II centuries AD). By this time, the one-story castle had slowly become a three-story living area. (the main residential areas, inside the fortress that were fortified by wall towers with a wide area).

The purpose of the expedition was not only to conduct research in Kampyrtepa, but also to conduct an in-depth study of the south western sections of archaeological monuments located in the Kugitang mountain area in the mountainous region of Surkhandarya. The first year of Kampyrtepa was the excavation of the North and west residential complexes. In addition to it, a scientific research system, topography, artistic culture of the monument was also developed. It was intended to create a collection of annual reports, publications, and scientific articles.



One of the most important roles in the success of the expedition was played by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the reason for which, thanks to the financial support of this organization, the excavations of Kampyrtepa were continued, and a 3-volume book of the first collection about the part of the excavations was published under the name of “materials of TAE”. The cooperation agreement of this international organization and the Institute of art studies includes the implementation of archaeological researches of the northern part of Kampirtepa, the study of the ancient norm of Buddhism. And it is not surprising that this, in its turn, contributed to the large-scale development of tourism in the area.

Coming to 2002, the mutual cooperation ultimately led to holding an exhibition entitled “Kampyrtepa-the Bactrian town in the Ochs” in the hall Academy of Fine Arts of Uzbekistan, together with the JICA organization. It was no exaggeration to say that this is the first as well as the most crucial step improvement made in this area.

Currently, Kampyrtepa is a vivid example of the development of culture, trade, urban planning in the antiquity and late antiquity of the history of Central Asia. Kampyrtepa is one of the attractions of Surkhandarya oasis, which is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Of course, this is due to the efforts of academic scholar Edvard Vasiliyevich Rtveladze.

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