

Abstract

The following thesis summarizes results of the archaeological research in the microregion of the Zarabag Oasis in the South Uzbekistan. The non-destructive research focused on the collection and evaluation of the archaeological data that allow to reconstruct the settlement dynamics in the oasis during the ages. Previously, there was not archaeological evidence available in the region. The fieldwork in the oasis and its closest surroundings was conducted by way of extensive surface survey (global coverage of the oasis focused on the detection of archaeological evidence), and intensive one (systematic surface survey on a closely defined area). The extensive survey proved to be more suitable for the studied environment in terms of the quality and quantity of the collected archaeological data. One part of the survey consisted in detection of the water sources (springs, surface canals and even remains of the karez systems). The basic units of extensive survey were represented by polygons (gardens, fields, cemeteries, tepas etc.), to which the finds collected during the research were attributed. Their dating in the combination with their spatial distribution allowed then to reconstruct the settlement processes and dynamics in the microregion of the oasis. One part of the research deals also with the petroglyphs in the surroundings of the oasis that are an inseparable part of the past landscape. The earliest evidence of the settlement in this area belongs to the Bronze Age; while the Iron Age the settlement was less intensive. There is a total absence of the traces of human activities during the period of Antiquity; they reappear again in the 3rd-4th century AD. The finds dated to the Middle Ages are detected plentifully in the microregion of Zarabag - the most intensive use of this area belongs to the 12th century. Afterwards the evidence of human activities decrease.