



## KARATEPA TOWN

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### Abstract

This article is dedicated to the artifacts found during excavations at Karatepe in Old Termez. These discoveries contributed to the concretization of the role and place of Termez in the further spread of Buddhism to the western and eastern territories of China.

**Keywords:** Old Termez, Karatepa, archaeological excavations, spread of Buddhism, Bactria, India, China, material and spiritual culture, arts and crafts, Gorud-Garutmat, Saina-myrga, Semurg, Shiena, Veda, Rigveda, Shahnama.

### Introduction

The Karatepa monument, located in the south of Uzbekistan, is not only one of the outstanding archaeological monuments of Ancient Termez, but also the largest Buddhist temple in Central Asia. A special place among them is occupied by Karatepa, where at present ten cave-ground complexes and a monumental building of the monastery have been excavated. The material, spiritual and artistic artifacts found here are of great importance not only for the history of Buddhism in Termez, Bactria and Central Asia, but also are a significant contribution to the obshemian Buddhist culture. They made it possible to concretize the time of the penetration of Buddhism into the south of Central Asia, to reveal the peculiarities of its development on local soil, to trace the cultural contacts of Bactria with the Buddhist art centers of neighboring regions and, first of all, the Gandhara school. These discoveries contributed to the concretization of the role and place of Termez in the further spread of Buddhism to the western and eastern territories of China.

### Materials and Methods

Karatepa is located seven kilometers on the north-western side of modern Termez, its area is 8 hectares. The monument consists of three parts and is divided into a northern, western and southern complex. The analysis of the architectural and planning structure of the cave-ground complexes, investigated on the southern and northern Karatepa hill, shows that the adaptation of the local architectural tradition to the ideological needs of Buddhist religious architecture took place gradually. Their general planning structure is similar to classical monasteries, where the existence of





cells for monks, premises for ritual rituals and a meeting hall was assumed. Archaeological research carried out by the Institute of Art Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan in 2015 has some kind of scientific results. Most of the excavations were carried out at the northern complex. When clearing the passage in the north-south direction, the width of the passage was 4.85 m, the length was 27 m, the depth from the bench to the floor was 3.60 meters. A sufa 60 cm high and 80 cm wide was found along the southern wall of the corridor; a fragment of the leg of a Horuda statuette was found at the corner of the northern side of the sufa, and a head was found on the western side. The Karatepa monument is considered a monument of Buddha, bodhisattva and deities statues, but it is considered a monument that many rare wall paintings and objects of artistic and applied art have been found. One of the finds is important. These are fragments of the mythical statuette "Goruda".

## Results and Discussions

The peoples of Central Asia since ancient times have had a strong worldview and religious views. In the sacred book of Zoroastrianism "Avesta" important information is given on the illuminated drinks of som and haoma. These sacred drinks are made from plants, without fruits or leaves, they are described as sacred drinks. These plants grow on the top of Mount Ripey, corresponding to the mountains of the Urals. In the book, the Avesta recalls that in this region there are 6 months of winter, 3 months of summer, 6 months of darkness (1). Ripey, that is, at the top of the Urals, an existing mythical bird, is described in the hymns of the Rigveda "Shyena", in the book of the Avesta "Saenamirga", in the Shahnama "Semurg". The people of Iran and Turan revered this mythical bird as a sacred totem. The hymns of the Rigveda Shien Soma describe the theft of this drink. In the Vedas of subsequent hymns, she was called Shyena-Goruda. The most ancient and modern studies of the Rig Veda depicted Shyena in the form of an eagle and a falcon. In the ancient Indian epic, many legends are written about Gorud. The description of the drink of eternal life Soma-amrita was stolen from "the king of birds, with a golden body, with a human head, with a bird's beak."

In the legends Goruda is a slayer of snakes, he lived in a great mountain, on a sacred tree. In the Rig Veda, Goruda-Garutmat is described as an early ancestor of birds, and in the shahnam, Firdavsiy is described as the Semurg bird. Semurg, in the descriptions, brought trouble in some places, and sometimes like a mighty bird (2). The orientalist K.V. Trever describes Semurg as a bird-dog iconographic image of Semurg on a silver jug in the samples of applied art of the Iranian-Sassanid period (3). When attacked, the Semurg bird breaks the branches of cedar trees, and a snow





storm begins (4). In mentioning Shahnameh, Semurg associates grateful features with the image of the sage Zola. The birth of the son of Zola of the Iranian hero Rustam is described by the blessing of the bird Semurg (5). During the excavation of the Karatepa monument, an image of Goruda was found, a linked bird with a poisonous suffocating snake. In ancient Indian epics, the god Vishna and the goddess Lakshmi are depicted with the sacred bird Goruda during the flight (6).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that the peoples of Ancient India and Central Asia represent not only culture, customs and traditions, but also the same worldview. It was the culture of Buddhism that came to India that was developed from Bactria and gave wide development in the applied arts. In Bactria, Buddhism as a state religion turned into an imperialist spiritual worldview, and then began to spread throughout the Eastern countries.

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