



Gardening of Ustrushana in the Middle Ages (On Archaeological Materials)

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Abstract

The question of the development of medieval culture of gardening in Ustrushana remains open, and this question should be elucidated on the basis of bioarchaeological research. The article highlights archaeological research in this area and materials reflected in material culture.

Keywords: *Gardening; Ustrushana; Agriculture; Archaeobotanical Research; Garden Knife; Village; Archaeological Site; Tandoor; Grapes; Apples; Sea Buckthorn; Nut*

Introduction

The land of Ustrushona is part of the natural geographical area of Central Asia. It is rich in natural conditions necessary for human life since ancient times, and has a favorable climate. This country occupies a special place in the civilization of the peoples of Central Asia, both culturally, politically, and socio-economically. Archaeologists and historians have been conducting various scientific researches for a century to reveal the history of this country [1, p. 100-107].

In particular, during the next five-year period, seasonal excavation research works are continuing continuously at the Old Khovos monument. Khovos is the largest and most complex monument in the ancient Ustrushona region, it consists of an arch, an arch, and a rabad [2, p. 19-20]. In the course of research, a lot of information is being obtained about the fact that horticulture has been widely developed in the territory of this monument since ancient times.

Results and Discussion

When it comes to horticulture in Ustrushona, it is slowly becoming clear that Ustrushona, as a country with its own mountain and sub-mountain regions and steppe plains, has been widely developed since ancient times. Horticulture has been a long-established industry in the Ustrushona region, and it has a great contribution to the development of fruit trade and exchange on the Great Silk Road, who illuminated the country's medieval horticulture with the help of archaeobotanical studies of the Tashbulok

monument. F.A. Maksudov admits that Ustrushona is the center of fruit exchange on the Silk Road in Central Asia [3, p. 146]. In his research, fruits such as grapes, apples, olmuruts, apricots, melons, pistachios, peaches, namatak, stone trees, chakanda (chirganak or shirkanak), cherries, walnuts, kovul, and jiida are grown in Talghar, Begash, Antonovka in Eastern Kazakhstan, Akyrtaash, Khurig Toba in South Kazakhstan, Juvan-toba, Karaspan-toba [4, p. 126], Mugh Castle in Northern Tajikistan [5, p. 484-490], Bazar Gorge in the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan [6, p. 59-66] and compared with the archaeobotanical research conducted in the monuments of Marv in South Turkmenistan, very valuable scientific conclusions are given. As a result of F.A. Maqsudov's research, in the Middle Ages, many gardens were created around cities and villages on the plains, and the nuts and fruits grown there were transported to the mountainous regions. It is concluded that this exchange led to the widespread distribution of many agricultural products throughout Eurasia [3, p. 164]. As a proof of this, after meeting with Arab geographer and traveler al-Istakhri, who was impressed by what he said, Abul-Qasim Muhammad ibn Hawqal al-Nasabi gives the following information – “Another important city in Ustrushona is Marsman. It is a city on a mountain, it has no gardens and no vineyards at all, but there is running water. Strong cold and winds prevent vineyards and orchards from growing there. The river in it is big and freezes hard. But in the city there are beautiful flower gardens, meadows, places that are pleasant in terms of location and beauty” [7, p. 20-21]. Based on the information given above, it can be concluded that the place of the Tashbulok monument was the city of Marsmand and the seasonal markets that were held in it. At this point, another thoughtful thought arises, in many villages and towns in the mountainous regions of Ustrushona there were separate fruit storage buildings, and this industry has been preserved and developed to this day. Fruit products are sold mainly in dried form, and their distribution is carried out by means of their seeds.

It should be noted that the people of Ustrushona were advanced not only in the field of fruit exchange and trade, but also in the field of horticulture. An example of this is the fruit seeds found during the archaeological research at the Old Khovos monument, a gardening knife, tandoors for cooking grapes, and a wine-making device found at the Qingirtepa monument. During the cleaning of the western part of the 4th excavation carried out in the territory of the monument, a knife with a curved tip, called “gardener's knife” (planter's knife) in the local language, was discovered. The length of the blade is 6 cm, width 1 cm, three parts are slightly sharpened. The part that connects to the handle is slightly thickened. A gardener's knife similar to this knife was identified from the Panjikent monument [8, p. 74] their difference is in the place of attachment to the handle. While the Panjikent gardener's knife was specially fitted to the handle, the gardener's knife found at Khovos was attached to the handle by means of a strap. This knife was identified from the floor of a room belonging to the third construction period. Similar knives have been found in the area of the monument before, and they testify to the extensive development of horticulture in this area in ancient and medieval times [9, p. 8; 10, p. 31].

Everyone knows that raisins are the main income-generating product of horticulture. This product is prepared by drying grapes and then brought to the market. In the course of research in 2016, in the 4th excavation area, a place for cooking “kish-mish” in the local language was identified. This tandoor was excavated from the ground in the form of a large furnace on the south-east side. The wall of the oven was reddened with a thickness of 3-5 cm. The diameter of its mouth is about 60-65 cm, the diameter of the inner part is about 1-1.20 m [11, p. 201]. The difference between this tandoor and other tandoors is that the tandoor is not made of clay, but dug out of the ground, and the side walls are very little burnt. Coal is rarely used because soot and alkali are used in cooking kish-mish. During the 2020-2021 research at the Old Khovos monument, melon, peach and grape seeds were found from the 11th excavation area. Archaeobotanical research is planned to be carried out on these findings today.

During the archeological excavations carried out in the Ortakaorgan monument, grape seeds were found in the soil, and this finding indicates the development of viticulture and horticulture in the territory

of Shakhristan. But the people of Shakhristani managed this field as an auxiliary farm, because the low average annual temperature affects the grape harvest [12, p. 101]. From the floor of rooms 1, 2, 3 of Tirmizaktepa monument, charred wheat, walnut husk, almond, melon and watermelon seed shells were found. [12, p. 133]. These data indicate that fruits and horticultural products were kept for exchange and trade in Ustrushona mountain villages, while these fruits were grown in its foothills and steppe regions.

Among the horticultural plants in Ustrushona, grapes are the fruit that should be remembered in the main place. As a proof of this, it is permissible to point out that the architectural ornaments decorated with the image of grapes were also identified in the excavations conducted at the Shakhristan monument [13, p. 143].

The village of Zomin, one of the mountain villages of Ustrushona, was particularly distinguished in the cultivation of horticultural products. More detailed information about the village and city of Zamin is provided by the author of the 10th century Ibn-Havqal and al-Mukaddasi. According to Abulqasim ibn Havqal's work "Surat ul-arz" (Image of the Earth), Zamin was the second largest city after the capital Bunjikat in terms of size. It is also called Zomin-Sarsanda, located on the side of the main road connecting Fergana with Sugd. Sarsan is a new city with an old city in ruins next to it. Markets, Jame Masjid and all the inhabitants of the city moved to Sarsanda. The surroundings of the new city were not surrounded by walls. Zomin is a gathering place for merchants and tourists traveling from Sughd to Ferghana. It has plenty of running water, gardens, vineyards and arable farmland. The back of the city faces the Ustrushona mountains, and the front faces the mountainless steppe, the land of geese. "The land was divided into two parts by the river, small bridges were built over the river" [14, p. 32-34].

In the course of studies, it was determined in the archaeobotanical sources what horticultural products were fed in medieval towns and villages, the distribution of cultivated plants of this stage in the past world and the aspects reflected in archaeological materials were collected.

At the same time, the fact that Ustrushona's mountain and sub-mountain regions are a favorable place for the world of various trees and plants is also reflected in its climate and nature. In the country, some types of fruit plants have formed large wild forests. In the mountainous areas of Ustrushona, there are natural walnut groves, pistachio groves, jiyda groves and shirnakakzor areas, while in the mountainous areas there are many groves of wild apples, plums, hawthorns, oleanders, and cherries. Walnut groves, pistachio groves, and shirnakakzor forests, which are naturally formed in the mountainous region of Ustrushona, have been crossbreeding and creating new varieties of several fruit species that are economically effective. It can be said here that the name of Chakand settlement, one of the mountainous villages of Ustrushona, is derived from the name of the place "shirkanakzor" as a clear proof of this.

In the book "Mojam al-buldan" (Collection of Cities) by Yokut Hamaviy, who lived in the 13th century, the other name of Zamin-Sarsanda is described as "Sabza", and it is a guest house for those who go from Sug to Fergana, Zamin has running water, a garden and a vineyard information about the location [15, p. 6].

F.A. Maksudov, who conducted archaeological research in Ustrushona region. Berdimuradov explores the location of a building measuring 10.1X2.8 m in the Qingirtepa monument, located in the village of Abuz, Gallaorol district. As a result of observations, it is determined that the building is a wine-making facility (workshop). In this two-part building, a 2.8 x 2.8 m square-shaped poly-gravel stone was laid and the surface was smoothed with sandpaper. Grapes were collected and crushed on this site. The liquid from the crushed grapes is collected on a round stone platform slightly sloping from the terrace, where it is poured into special vats through clay pipes. In the second room next to it, it was concluded that ready-made products could have been poured into containers and stored [16, p. 210-213].

Conclusion

As a conclusion, it can be said that in the Middle Ages, horticulture was a widely developed field for the people of Ustrushona in the mountain and steppe areas. Horticulture products are distributed not only on the national scale, but also to the destinations of the Great Silk Road. Many wild fruits have been domesticated based on many years of experience and concoction. Gardeners used unique methods and tools in the process of growing products.

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