

TEXTILE OBJECTS FROM THE CITADEL OF SANJAR-SHAH

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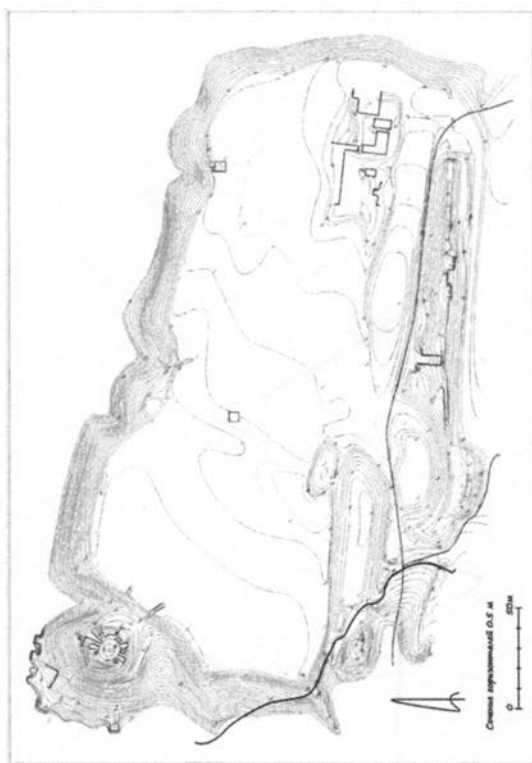
Information about site. The site of Sanjar-Shah is located at the edge of the village Sujinah in the Zarafshon valley, 12 km from present Panjikent, north-western Tajikistan. To the south of the village, at the right bank of the river Magian Darya, stands a 15 m high, rectangular citadel of approx. 5 hectares in size. Its surrounding walls of sun-dried bricks are well preserved and stand ca. 6-7 m above the ground. At the corners, fortification towers are visible, and, in the SE the entrance gates. Inside the citadel, remaining walls indicate living quarters and possibly a Zoroastrian temple. Based on surface material found and building techniques, the site may be tentatively dated to the 7th to 8th centuries AD. The site of Sanjar-Shah is contemporaneous with the famous nearby

site of Panjikent and might have belonged to one of the local Five Cities (*panj kanth*) of Sogdian times before the Arab conquest.

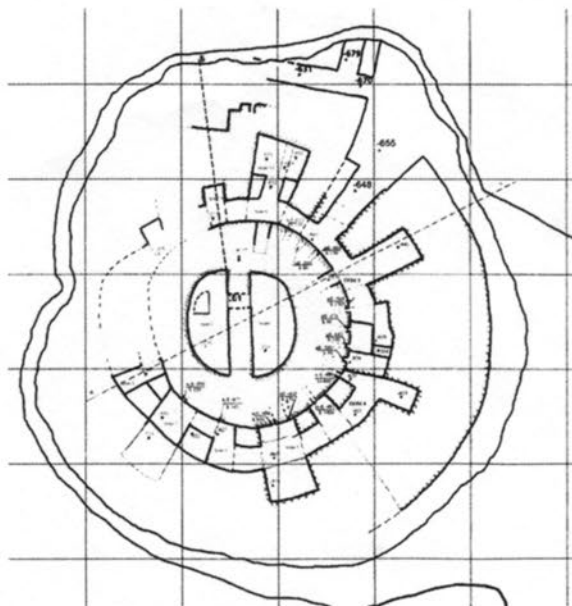
Natural plateau on which the site is located rests on the second terrace above the flood-meadows of Magianodarya, on its right bank and before its confluence with the river Zarafshon. The plateau is occupied by a rectangular citadel with towers in each corner of the walled perimeter, strengthened by another wall and a moat on the southern side.

The total length of the southern wall of the main fortification is 90 m, of the eastern wall 100 m; the southern wall of the site is 190 m long, the eastern 140 m, and the second row of the walls is 280 m in length. The height of the man-made part of citadel is 7-8 m, the maximum height of the preserved inside walls is 3-4 m.

In the N-W corner of the plateau stands a tower belonging to the *köshk* type building of sun-dried



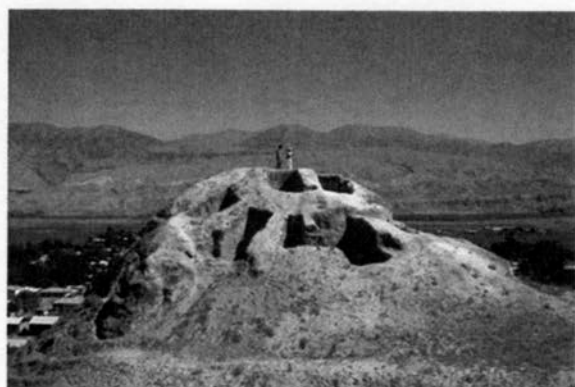
Plan of the site of Sanjar-Shah (Section of horizontal lines 0, 5 m)



Plan of Sanjar-Shah tower citadel.

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Sanjar-Shah tower citadel before the restoration started



Restored tower (October 2011)



Sanjar-shah tower citadel after excavations



Tower in 2012

brick on a solid platform with corrugated sides, similar to dungeon.

Strategically, the place for the fortress was excellently chosen given the steep slopes of the plateau and the fact that riverbank stripe below is too narrow to effectively deploy troops or to apply siege tools like ladders or battering-rams.

Child's shirt. For the first time Sanjar-shah was mentioned by O. I. Smirnova in 1947 (Smirnova, 1950). The site of Sanjar-Shah was noticed and briefly described in the resulting publication of archaeological surveys carried out in 1946-1947. The archaeological exploration of Sanjar-Shah started just in 2008. As a result of excavation there are a lot of finds (ceramic wares, coins and four fragment of Arabic manuscript on paper). One of the interesting find is the child's shirt found in 2009. Beyond the courtyard, further away from the central tower were discovered the remains of the corridor. In the western end of the corridor there is a passage 1 m wide and 2

m long leading southwards. The corridor also extends eastwards, where its southern wall stands up to 0.70 m from the floor while the northern wall is not preserved. The child's shirt was found on the floor of this corridor. It looked like rounded fragment of textile.

When analyzing Sogdian dress, the researchers usually base their study on the images from wall-painting of Panjakent, Afrasiab, Qalai Qahqaha I, etc., as well as on terra-cotta figurines from Afrasiab, Bukhara, Paykend, Yerkurghan (Yatsenko, 2006, 232), the flattened statuettes and en-relief images on ossuaries from various regions of Sogdiana, dated to the 7th-8th century. Noteworthy, the examples of garments were found to a seriously minor breadth, and presently only the finds from highland castle of Dewashtich at Mount Mugh (up to 722 CE) have been published (Bentovitch, 1958), as well as the finds from adjoining areas such as Tokharistan, Chorasmia and Ferghana which are often observed

in a broader context including Sogdiana. There is a series of clothes of low-class population of Old Termez (eve of the 5th-6th century, Kurghan burial) (Maitdinova, 1992, 72-85), single finds of fragments of clothes and footwear in the ruins of Chorasmian castles (Castles No. 11 and 36, Teshik-kala and Yakke-Parsan) (Yatsenko, 2006, 262), from the burials in Ferghana (Early mediaval textiles..., 2010) and the site of Hisorak in the Uper Matcha valley

One has to take into account that the bilateral rendering of clothes in the arts: wall-paintings and small statuary bear not only certain conventionality, but also the foot-print of "elite art", so, the depictions of formal dress (of aristocracy, warriors, priests, merchants, servants, musicians and dancers), while the garments excavated archaeologically can be more wide-ranging in its social position and function.

Fashion of the shirt-gown is compound. The shirt is throw-open: the wrap over is well visible on the collar and flaps on the breast. One flap crosses another on the waist. On the left side the tie (thin stripe of the same fabric) is sewn down, and on the extremity of the right flap, too, the traces of the tie remained; probably, child shirt had flaps wrapped over from right to left (figs. 1-3).

The shirt-gown is sewn of several pieces of fabric, and around the waist a backing is attached. The skirt is cut-off, the line of waist is emphasized: the breast and back tighten, and the skirt widens at the hem significantly. The skirt is tailored of two trapezoid sheets. It was repaired several times, and some patches overlay one another.

The sleeves are cut-off, the tighten slowly to

wrists. One sleeve probably survived in its complete length (and has strait cutting of the edge), it is not bordered or tucked. The collar is semi-circular, and bordered with strips of the same fabric as the other parts of the shirt. The flaps of the shirt from neck to waist are tucked but not bordered. The hem is not bordered, or alternatively it did not survive to the whole length, so the length of the skirt cannot be determined definitely; probably it reached mid-hips.

Textile. Locally called *karbās*, a cotton canvas fabric of rather rude production, tabby weave¹. The threads of warp and weft are of similar characteristics; they are relatively thin, but of different breadth, they are twisted Z, not coloured. The density of fabric is slightly different on warp and weft, in general it is around 18/14 threads in 1 cm². The patches are made of similar textile. The patch on the skirt is made of even more coarse cotton canvas. The thread is thicker, and not of equal breadth, twisted Z. The density of the fabric is 9 threads warp, 17 threads weft. In view of this extra density of weft threads they are almost invisible on the surface and form a relief.

Sewing patterns. All constructive seams are double lapped. Collar and folds of the shirt as well as patches are tucked and sewn with running stitch.

The fashion of this child's throw-open garment is in good accord with the type of male throw-open shoulder-dress well known from the paintings, the caftan². I. B. Bentovich and N. P. Lobacheva, having analyzed images of such dresses, concluded the fashion of this caftan as tunic-shaped, without cutting textile in shoulders, sometimes widening at the low-

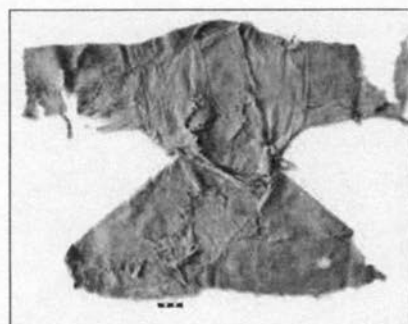


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

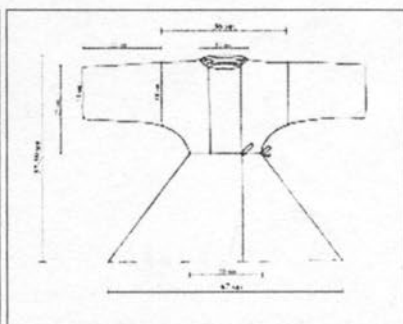


Fig. 3

er end with gores (Lobacheva, 1979, 198, 211).

The examples of child's dress of this type, few as they are (sometimes throw-open, sometimes not) in general support the idea of domination of the named tunic shape. They include two children's shirts from the Kurgan burial (Old Termez, Tokharistan late 5th-6th century), down to the mid-hip length with wedges in hems (fig. 4) (Maitdinova, 1992, 67, tab. 40), the shirt from Munchak-tepe (Fergana, late 6th-early 7th century), up to the mid-hip or somewhat longer, which is girdled with silk band (fig. 5) (Fang Wan, 2009, 5-11, fig. 18; Maitdinova, 1992, 67, tab. 53, 1). In general, the features of early mediaeval dress were represented also later, the robe from child burial of 15th century at Shahi Zinda in Samarkand, has tunic fashion with side strips and narrowing sleeves. It does not have collar, but loops near the neck witness the once presence of binding there, flaps are strait (Traditional clothes..., 1989, 18; Nemtseva, 1972, 246, fig. 2).

Let us note the length of the children dress, to the mid-hip or slightly longer as in our caftan. However, the length of male throw-open and non-throw-open dress could vary significantly (Yatsenko, 2003; Idem, 2006, 235; Research on clothing, 2012): from very short ones (down to upper or lower hip), which is, however, rarely (Yatsenko, 2006, fig. 180, No 21, 57; Meshkeris, 1989, fig. 160; Belenitski, 1973, tab. 5), to very long ones, down to ankle (in the later period) (Yatsenko, 2006, fig. 181, No 38; Pugachenkova, 1994, fig. 4b; Marshak, 1990, fig. 23, 29). The

most common length is down to knees (Yatsenko, 2006, fig. 180, No 19, 23-24, fig. 181, No. 35, 39, 41-42, 51, Meshkeris, 1989, fig. 116, 149, 171, Belenitski, 1973, 16, 25, tab. 33; Sculpture and painting..., 1959, tab. IV; Marshak, 1990, fig. 22) or sometimes longer (Yatsenko, 2006, fig. 181, No 37).

The researchers of costume in this region note the tendency to prolongation of outer garments¹, and see here influence of the Turkic adstrate¹ G. Maytdinova dates the beginning of expansion of Turkic types of dress to the end of 6th century (Maitdinova, 1992, 62-63). Yatsenko postpones it to the early 7th century. He notes that the shape of the collar is different and mirrors different traditions and influences. Sometimes the fabric, according to the ancient traditions, was sloped at the collar. The caftan with one lapel, usually right one, once, the left, was typical for the young males in the 7th-8th century. But the collar with two lapels is also attested in this period. It was more usual among the mature men (Yatsenko, 2006, 235).

In our case, the relative shortness of the shirt can be explained as either specific of children's dress, or as preservation of elements of dress of earlier periods.

The variation of examples of collars in Sogdian male caftan, which demonstrates various traditions and influences, provides us with analogies to our children's dress. The flap direction from right to left is widely attested in the dresses of the whole Eurasia, from the western Chinese borders to the Northern Caucasus (Yatsenko, 2009). The shallow wrap-over

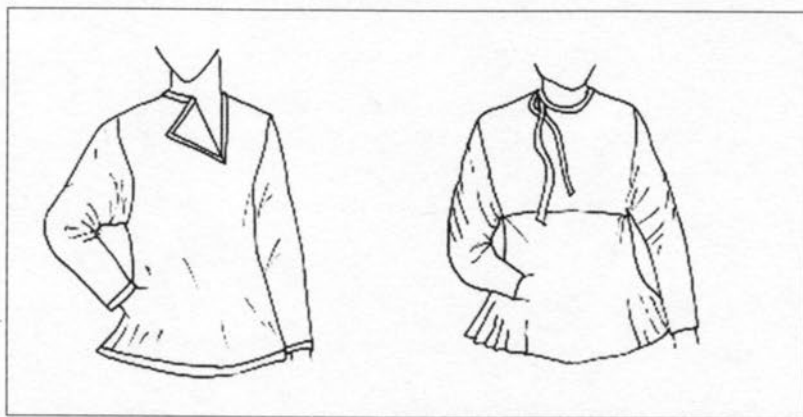


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

to the left is characteristic for early nomads and agrees with the well-known information of the chronicle of Zhoushu. The decoration of the edge of collar with left-side wrap-over and two lapels is first attested on Khotan terra-cottas of the 2nd-4th century and later wide-spread among the Turks of Eurasia (Yatsenko, 2004). T. D. Ravdonikas mentioned the common manner of wearing dresses with the left-side wrap-over among the Iranian peoples of Caucasus and Middle Asia (Ravdonikas, 1989, 41-42). There are well known finds of dresses and textiles from the North Caucasus which can be related to Sogdiana. In particular, A. A. Ierusalimskaya considers the caftan-robe with only one lapel at the collar, high silk cuffs and silk band along the hem and traditional cuts by the end of hem as Sogdian one (Ierusalimskaya, 1978, 152-153) with analogies in wall-painting of Varakhsha and Tokharestan since 6th century

The similar collar is attested in the Alan child cloth assemblages of the 7th-11th century from the burial of Podorvannaja Balka, Northern Caucasus (finds of V. N. Kaminskiy, I. V. Kaminskaya). The collar of child dress is folded from right to left and decorated with the "Sogdian silk" (Dode, 2001, fig. 3).

The decoration of such collar, according to the depictions of wall-paintings, was usually done of patterned silk along the collar and flaps of the caftan-robe, in our case the "budget model" with lines of the same fabric, relatively narrow at the collar and wider inclusions on the breast (by the way, one cannot deny the possibility that it was repair of frizzle edges or additions for making the shirt larger in its size).

The slim-fashion and the cut along waist are a separate element of the shirt worth attraction. In the 6th-mid-7th century the Sogdian male dress was characteristic of not only tunic-shaped dress, but also close-fitting shirts with four-lobed hem or multi-level skirt. Unfortunately it is hard to judge whether the hem was cut on sides or not, because they are always depicted with belt on the waist (Bentovich, 1980; Lobacheva, 1979).

M. V. Gorelik in his article on the type of upper

shoulder garments made up from separate details and more or less fitting the figure notes that "this type of garments from the oldest times is typical for steppe and highland steppe cattle-breeding peoples, later the nomads. In antiquity the shirts with cut-off skirt are seldom attested on the images of Persians of 6th-4th century, more seldomly on the images of Parthians of the last centuries BCE and first centuries CE. In general, the ancient Eurasian upper shoulder garment with sleeves might have had skirt widening at the lower end for more comfortable walking and particularly for riding. In the most common case this shape was achieved with insertion of gores in side stitches. This type of upper shoulder garment with sleeves and cut-off skirt start to appear regularly—noticeably as material remains—on the territory of Eastern Turkestan and eastern part of Mongolia... Approximately since 3rd century CE the shirts and caftans with cut-off significantly dilative skirt become relatively frequent in the heart of Asia, the Eastern Turkestan. The skirt is often cutted out, but ruffled ones are not infrequent either. Since the middle of the 1st millennium CE the pleated elements of the dress virtually disappear, and remain since the end of 9th century only a detail of female dress of Chinese fashion" (Gorelik, 2010, 89) (fig. 6).

M. V. Gorelik suggests that in the 6th century CE the cut of upper shoulder garment with sleeves and cut-off pleated hem was partially superseded in Asia and Eastern Europe with the Turkish one-piece caftan-robe and survived only in the children dress, the sphere where the archaic form is usually preserved (Gorelik, 2010, 80-81).

These archaic elements are once again prominent in the similarity to cut of the caftan discovered in the burial of "Western Merchant" of early 3rd century CE in the Eastern Xinjiang, near Lopnor lake, the Jinpan burial ground. The caftan is made of luxury woolen cloth with classical motifs in the design and monochrome cloth without decoration, is wrapped over from left to right (in China it is common to represent the dead in caftan, folded in the reverse order). The features common to this caftan and our piece we can list the shape of collar and flaps, the cut along

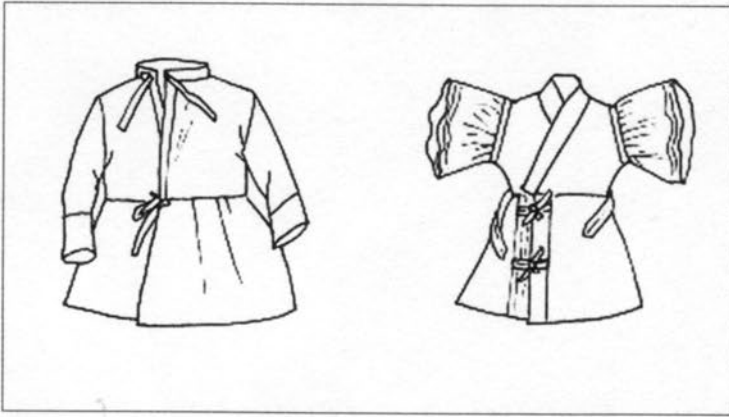


Fig. 6

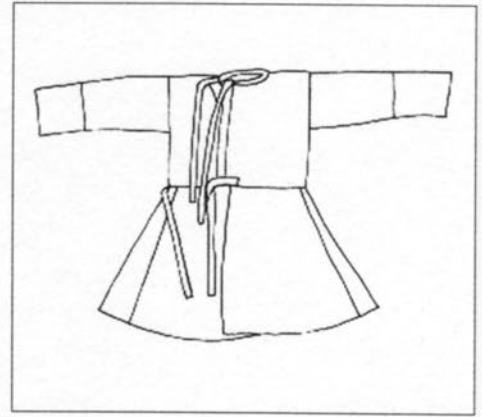


Fig. 7

waist, dilative skirt, the tie at the waist. The researchers suggest that this merchant might represent Iranian peoples who were active in the trade with China, such as Parthians, Kushans or Sogdians. Above that, S. A. Yatsenko thinks that the trader was came from Kushana Bactria, as it is visible from the shape of his hairdress, decoration of sole of his shoes, the way of wearing wide trousers, and generally the adherence to garments made of many-coloured textiles with broad designs (Yatsenko, 2006, 186-187, fig. 134) (Fig. 7).

But the cut of our caftan, indeed, finds its parallels in the Sogdian dress of late antique period (second half of the 2nd century BCE - 3rd century CE). Unfortunately, there are too scarce sources on early Sogdian dress, mostly there are terracotta icons with deities and epic heroes. Among the male folded dress of that period we know one specimen of very short buttoned up caftan with narrow pleated cut-off skirt (Yatsenko, 2006, 198-199, fig. 152, 12).

This shirt was not the single textile piece discovered there, but it comes from the complex of elements of dresses and textiles: three fragments of cotton fabric with remains of brown pigment or rust, some 10 specimens of textiles similar to that of the shirt, probably from garments with seams sometimes preserved, and separate threads and tiny fragments of clothes.

1. The child stocking on right foot (or small sack) (fig. 8).

It is cut from single rectangular piece of cloth, the corners near toes are slightly rounded. There is a slotted tuck at ball of foot.

Size: Max. length 23.3 cm, length of the surviving longitudinal seam 20.7 cm, width at the low end 8.3 cm, in the upper part 7.6 cm, the overall length of transverse seam 10 cm.

Preservation: decayed at some spots, holes in the fabric, including a large hole on the place of the big toe, 4 x 3 cm.

Textile: Cotton

Weave: tabby

Thread: both are uncoloured; weft is thin thread, but thicker threads also appear, the threads easily dissolve into fibre, without apparent twist (occasionally slight Z). Warp is thicker than weft, more enduring, with Z-twist.

Density of fabric: 17 (18) in warp, 41/42 in weft.

Types of seams:

Main seam linking seam

Tuck: linking seam. At the end, the thread turns around and goes back for another pair of tacks for strengthening the seam.

Threads used in stitches:

1 Cord. Twisted S from several threads (5 - 7), thick. Each thread has slight Z-twist. Cotton

2. Thread. Thick (thicker than ones in the fabric), with uniform dense S-twist. Cotton.

Analogies: Several finds of children's stockings were found from Kurghan in Old Termez; one of

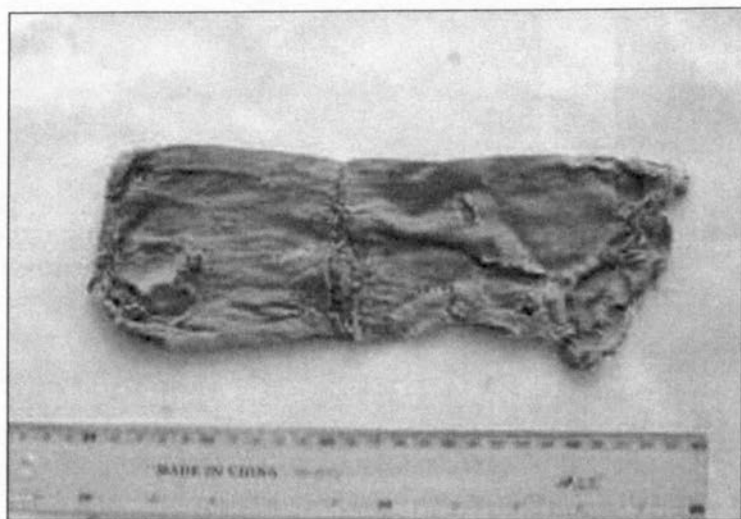


Fig. 8

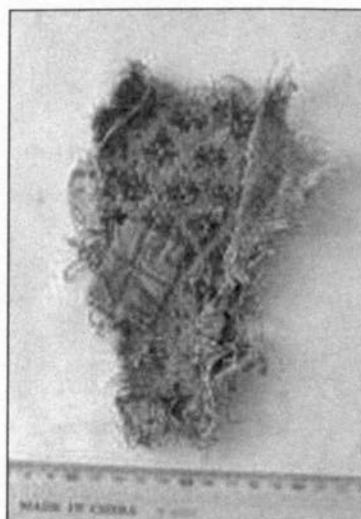


Fig. 9

them is preserved completely, it is made up from the single piece of white cotton fabric, the upper part is tucked and bordered. The tailoring is somewhat different from our specimen: it has broader upper part and slimer lower part, it is bound at ankle with tie made of thread (Maitdinova, 1992, tab. 42, 3). A fragment of cotton shoe or stocking on cotton wadding (it was not sewn but probably attached and removable) was discovered from the child's burial.

2. Fragment of garment sewn from several textiles (fig. 9): (a) textile with embroidery with dark-blue thread; (b) textile with dark-blue and red strips; (c) textile with patch sewn to the fabric A.

Overall dimensions: length of the textile 14.4 cm; max. length 15.5 cm, max. width 10.3 cm.

Fabric A. Length (warp) 14,4 cm; max. width (weft) 7,4 cm.

Tabby weave.

Embroidery: geometric pattern: diamonds in the chess-board order. Pattern darning (Archibald, 1912).

Threads: warp: thick, twisted St from two elementary threads. S-twist is uniform, dense. Elementary thread has Z-twisting, uniform, dense. Uncoloured; cotton.

Weft thread: thick, paired, non-twisted. Single elementary thread has Z twist, uniform, dense. Uncoloured; cotton.

Embroidery thread: paired, non-twisted. Single elementary thread has Z-twist, uniform, dense. The thickness varies slightly and is identical to that of the elementary threads of the base. The dyeing is indigo (?), the intensity is not uniform. Cotton.

Density of the textile: 10 threads to 1 cm² in warp, 7 in weft (paired)

Fabric B: The size of the piece as sewn is 6,6x3,1 cm; the size as flattened: 5,4 cm by weft, 4,2 cm by warp.

Weave is tabby, but because of difference of thickness of threads of weft and warp the latter is almost invisible on both inner and outer side; they form a relief surface. In the red strip there are errors in weaving, the thread of weft sometimes "jumps" above several threads of warp.

Thread of warp: cotton, uncoloured. S-twist, dense, uniform. The thread is thicker than elementary threads of the fabric A.

Weft thread in dark blue: indigo (?) dyeing, not uniform in colour (as in the case of embroidery) Only the upper surface is dyed, the nucleus if untwisting the thread is not coloured. Z-twist; cotton.

Weft thread in red: madder (?) dyeing, uniform, Thread is thinner than blue threads. Z-twist; cotton.

Density of fabric: Blue strip: 7 by warp, 19/20 by weft. Red strip: 7 by warp, 23/24 by weft.

Fabric C. The size is 4x3 cm, slightly worn out,

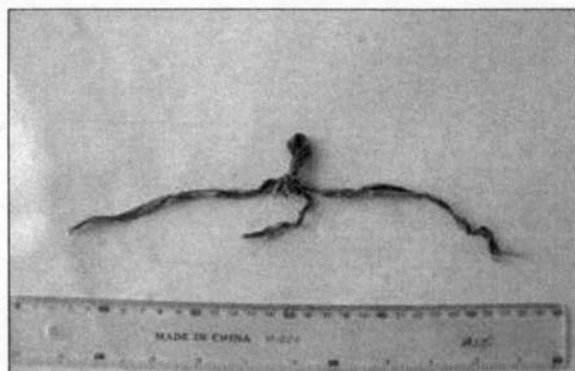


Fig. 10

but in the places of better preservation it is thin, much thinner than two other pieces.

Weave is plain but the outer look is similar to that of fabric B: the threads of warp are almost invisible on the surface.

The threads of warp and weft are similar, thin (much thinner than in the case of fabrics A and B), uncoloured, the twisting is hardly visible, probably Z-twist; cotton.

Density of the fabric: 14/15 by warp, 28 by weft.

Seams: the sew joining textile with embroidery with the stripped one is made with slanting stitch.

Cord is thick, from 2 threads, S-twist. The elementary thread is uncoloured; Z-twist; cotton.

The seam for attaching the patch is identical; the cord is thinner than in the former one. S-twist from two thin threads (?); cotton.

3. Silk cord, twisted from a narrow strip of fabric (Fig. 10). The piece is preserved in two fragments bound with knot. The fabric is flimsy and loose, some of the weft threads are pulled off, it is dyed in dark blue colour (indigo?), faded at some places. The surface is tight, glittering; it is worn out in some places and threads are often broken.

Dimensions: the overall length is 27 cm, width of cord c 0.5 cm, breadth of fabric 2 cm.

Material: silk

Weave: damask (?), but the weak preservation prevents from a more definite judgment. There are remains of twill and plain weave. No design visible.

The quality of dyeing, threads and weave the silk allows to suggest that it could be locally produced

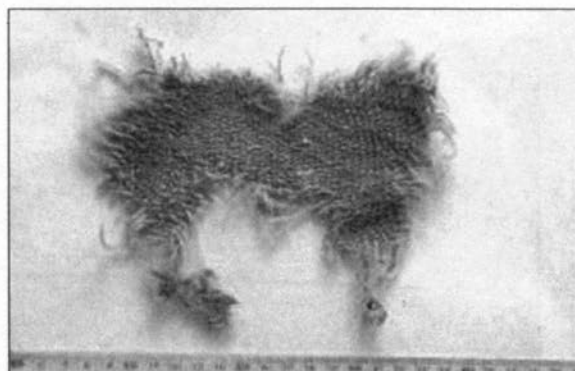


Fig. 11

and not imported from China.

Threads: warp (lengthwise thread): untwisted, desintegrating into fibre; weft is thin (thinner than warp), also untwisted, desintegrating into fibre.

Density (counted on a spot with dense weave 1 x 0.7 cm): 36 by warp; ca. 64 by weft.

4. Fragment of a raw woolen fabric (bagging) (fig. 11)

Dimensions: lengthwise thread (warp?) is 14 cm, transverse is 8.5.

Material: wool.

Weave: tabby; the thickness of thread in warp and weft is uneven, it changes the pattern of the textile, and the twill diagonal lines appear, although the weave is all plain.

Threads: the threads of weft and warp are identical, uncoloured, of straw-yellow colour with Z-twist.

Density: 5 by warp, 4 by weft.

5. A narrow strip of raw homespun uncoloured fabric of light yellow (possibly whitish) colour (fig. 12).

Dimensions: 16,5 cm by length.

Material: cotton

Weave: tabby

Thread: identical by warp and weft, of uneven thickness, with Z-twist. Sometimes the paired threads with S-twist appear.

Density: 7 in one orientation (lengthwise), 10 in another.

The find of the group of textiles in the excavations of Sandzhar-shah is of utmost interest, because the scholars possess extremely limited number of textile

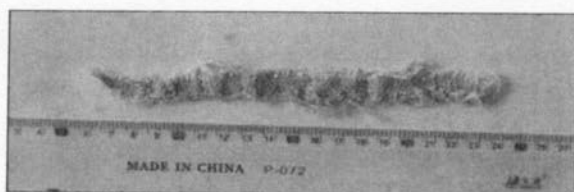


Fig. 12

examples of Sogdian dress.

The best preserved among this complex is child's caftan, which is similar to that of adult males in the depictions of wall-paintings. However, some of the details of its cutting out do not find analogies in the depictions: the cut along waist, seriously widening skirt, tailored from two trapezoid pieces, band at-

tached to the side. One can posit several explanations to these phenomena: the depictions of dress are often conventional and not detailed enough for judging about tailoring, or the children dress was distinct from that of adults, and probably was more enduring in preservation of archaic features. In any case, the find of real specimens provides some new data in the question of development of Central Asian dress of the Middle Ages. The find of a fragment low-quality silk at Sandzhar-shah can become an argument in the discussion about Sogdian silk production. We hope that these finds will be analyzed in greater detail in future.

Notes

- 1) "I ordered to bring the canvas (*karbās*) and to sew sacks and bags" (Zain ad-din Vasifi, 1961, Mukminova, 1979, 71) As Pavel B. Lurje informed the authors, *karbās* (Tajik *karbos*) is borrowed from Sanskrit *karpāsa*, which comes in its turn from substrate languages of the Indian Subcontinent (Mayerhofer, 1956, 174-175). In Sogdian, this type of textile was probably called *wšwynk*, *šwynny*, which realized I Yaghnobi *šiwina*, dialectal Tajik *uawuna* (Sim-Williams, Hamilton, 1990, 56-57; Yoshida, 2012, 51, Andreev, Petschereva, 1957, 327). It is interesting that this name was also probably a loan-word, in this case from Old Egyptian via Greek *βύσσος* (Sims-Williams, loc. cit).
- 2) We should underline that it is a shoulder over-cloth with various parameters (the variation touches the length of skirt, width of sleeves, the form, construction and attachment of collar, the manner of wearing it, decorative pattern and probably cutting out). S. A. Yatsenko notes that the earliest Turkic term for this type of shirt is not documented, but later the Persian term *chaftan* was used for throw-open, cut-off, and widening at the lower end, often with fur collar (Yatsenko, 2009).
- 3) We should mention also child's garments from burial of Moscheyeva Balka (North Caucasus, 8th-9th centuries) (Iyerusalimskaya, 2012, 73).
- 4) N. P. Lobacheva speaks about the unity in sphere of his long male dress in Sogdiana, Tokharestan, as well as in the Eastern Turkestan, wherein, according to this author, the expansion from Sogdiana and Tokharistan was addressed. This relation explains the similarity of Kucha dress with elements of costume from Babalyq-tepe, Tokharistan, and that of Khotan painting with Panjakent ones. The dress of similar type was also widespread in Iran (Lobacheva, 1979, 33-34).
- 5) The political domination of Turks in Sogdiana starts around 560ies, see (Marshak, 2002, 234; Yatsenko, 2004).
- 6) "This wrap over was important feature in the antiquity. In China and on the whole of the Far East (and later, among Mongols) the dress was folded from left to right, and this was the feature which was considered a shibboleth separating this world from the barbarians: "... If not Guan Zhong, we would wear our hair tress and our robes folded to the left" (so, we would have been conquered by barbarians A. I.)" according to the Lun Yü" (Iyerusalimskaya, 1992, 14)

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