

Modular residence block in Panjakent in comparative context

Pavel Lurje

State Hermitage Museum

St.-Petersburg RU

Abstract

Since 2014 the Panjakent archaeological expedition is excavating area XI-East, located between the temple area and northern fringe of the terrace of the city. On the south, it reaches as street separating it from the Temple II; on the north the city wall was discovered; the eastern part of the area is occupied by another, minor temple or sanctuary. The central and western part, however, is covered by at least three uniform structures located one after another. Each of these structures comprises of two vaulted rooms, antechamber with oven, winding staircase to the upper floor and entrance area towards the street; the buildings are dated to the first half of 8th century, do not have decorations, and, although varying in size, have very similar planning. Such series of identical habitations haven't been attested in Panjakent during more than 70 years of excavations, but were documented in some other sites in Sogdiana and in neighbouring areas. In this paper I am going to collect information on these living modules of pre-Islamic Central Asia in order to understand their social function.