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On the lands of the ancient Khorezm state (in the territory of the present Ellikkala district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan), ancient cities and historical monuments built during the Early Medieval and Medieval periods were constructed in a way that was highly suitable for defense.

Hundreds of ancient and powerful cities that existed and flourished for thousands of years on the right bank of the Amu Darya demonstrate that our ancestors sought to preserve their independence and possessed considerable military strength in defensive operations. Historians and scholars such as S.P. Tolstov, V.N. Yagodin, Ya. Gulyamov, and G. Khojaniyazov have noted this in their works and supported their views with evidence.

Ellikkala is a remarkable region containing numerous historical cities and architectural monuments. It can even be described as an “open-air museum.”

Archaeologist S.P. Tolstov, in his work *Ancient Khorezm*, in the chapter entitled “Kangju Horsemen,” suggests that the weapons and tactics of the cavalry may indicate a connection between the people of Khorezm and the Saka-Massagetae, and that they may have originated from a common source.

Later, the scholar demonstrated that the weapons of Khorezm from the end of the ancient period (Toprak-Kala) and the Early Medieval period were directly connected with the weapons of the Apasiac cavalry, as well as with the military equipment of ancient Sogdiana.

Almost all of the cities of Khorezm during the ancient period were constructed for the purpose of protecting the region from neighboring tribes. On the right bank of the Amu Darya, Qangqala, Janbasqala, Bazarqala, Qorgasynqala, Qyrqqyz, Ayazqala, Burkitqala, and Topraq qala were built close to one another and arranged in a line from east to west along the irrigation system.

The existence of a defensive system based on a unified plan, together with a well-developed irrigation system, demonstrates that Khorezm was a powerful and centralized state.

The large Guldursin fortress was well constructed in the form of an irregular quadrilateral (280–230 m), surrounded by double walls, and was built at the point where two large irrigation canals—the Qyrqqyz and Topraq qala canals—separated from one another.

The large irrigation canal excavated near the city passed through Narinjan city toward Topraq qala and ended in front of Qizil qala.

It is possible that the main section of these well-developed irrigation systems was also intended to protect the waterworks and that water distribution was centralized at Guldursinqala.

Qizil qala, Ayaz qala, and other cities protected the lower reaches of this canal and its branches.

Qizil qala was an important strategic point. It protected the Khorezmshah territory, including Topraq qala, from enemies approaching by the ancient road and from the direction of the Amu Darya.

Rising high in the middle of the vast steppe, Ayaz-I, like Qizil qala, is considered an important strategic monument located on the route leading toward Khorezm from the rear.

Topraq qala had three towers, each 25 meters high, constructed for protection against enemies. The city was surrounded by a two-kilometer-long wall with square towers placed every 30–40 meters.

According to S.P. Tolstov, the construction of Topraq qala and its palace was an event of significant political importance. This is because the emergence of this monument is highly regarded as an event that marked the beginning of the “Khorezm Era” in history.

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