

**ANCIENT POPULATION SETTLEMENT IN THE TERRITORY OF  
UZBEKISTAN, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL HISTORY****Hayotxon Asadovna Boymurzayeva,**

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20111391>**Annotation.**

This article examines the settlement of early humans and their socio-cultural history in the territory of Uzbekistan during ancient times.

**Keywords:** Stone Age, Tashkent, Fergana, North Zarafshan, Ustyurt region, Oloy, Turkestan Range, Ohangaran Valley, Selengur, Kobulok, U. Islamov, M. R. Qosimov, E. A. Bijanov

**Introduction.** This topic can be addressed by analysing the results of extensive archaeological research conducted in the historical-geographical regions of Uzbekistan, based on conclusions drawn from a theoretical and comparative analysis of historical data recorded in the literature under various names. Taking as a basis the results of archaeological excavations carried out at the dwellings left by our ancestors in the republic's provinces, the economic-cultural types were classified and presented according to the following historical periods.

Historical Period 1 – the Paleolithic;

2. Middle Stone Age;

3. Late Stone Age;

4. Mesolithic period;

5. Neolithic period;

6. Eneolithic period;

7. Bronze Age;

8. Late Bronze Age economic-cultural types.

The location of historical and economic regions determined the settlement of the population and the availability of natural resources. As the formation of our homeland's territory involved several complex processes during its geographical development, its relief is characterized by its own unique features, comprising both mountainous and flat terrain. The north-western region of our country, situated in the central part of the Turan Plain, has attracted significant interest due to its unique characteristics. In general, the plains, which serve the interests of humanity, make up 70%, while mountains constitute the remaining 30%. Taking these features into account, our ancestors settled and formed their economic and cultural types. The economic-cultural types, located in different geographical coordinates, displayed their commonalities and unique characteristics in an organic-geographical context.

1st historical period – the Paleolithic Age. The relief of Uzbekistan, shaped by subterranean tremors, features mountain ranges, elevations and plains. Humankind settled in specific natural-economic zones, giving rise to distinct economic-cultural types. The material culture of the primitive hunters of the Palaeolithic period, taking into account the technological processes that occurred, is divided into Acheulean periods.

For example: I. The Lower, Middle and Upper Acheulian periods;

1. In the Lower Acheulian stage, the settlement of primitive people, economic-cultural types: mountains, their ridges, hillock-spring springs. In the Makur historical period, human settlement comprised mountain ranges, natural cave systems, open settlements, and huts and cabins in open fields around springs on the plains.

**Main part.** According to the results of archaeological research, during the Lower Paleolithic, distinct economic-cultural types emerged in the territories of Tashkent, Fergana, North Zarafshan and the Ustyurt, forming widely dispersed geographical zones. The Fergana

Valley is considered to be the most vivid example of the geographical characteristics of Uzbekistan's historical-geographical provinces. The Fergana Valley, in terms of its geographical location, forms a north-easterly extension from the south-west, with the Oloy and Turkestan ranges to the south, the Fergana Susamir Range to the north, and the Qurama and Chotkol mountains to the north-west, and to the west the Khovmakent Gate connects to the Turon Plain via the [1]. In some literature it is referred to as the "cauldron" of Uzbekistan, and in others as the "pearl" of Uzbekistan. The geographical position of the Ustyurt region is characterized by:

- Open on all four sides;
- Free from river cuts;
- There are no sky-high mountains;
- Flora and fauna are scarce.

Khorezm Plain:

- A wide expanse open on all four sides;
- Mount Sultan Uvais, Qaratag, Yumurtag, Kuba Mountain;
- The Amu Darya is divided into right and left banks: the right bank is the Kyzylkum, the left bank the Karakum.

The Zarafshon Valley is divided into three parts in terms of its geographical landscape:

- Southern Qashqadarya;
- Central Samarkand oasis;
- Western Bukhara oasis.

Geographical landscape of the Surhon oasis:

- Mountainous;
- Plain;
- Mountainous, with streams.

The geographical environment of the Tashkent oasis:

- In terms of geographical landscape, there are 2 geo-economic regions:

A) The Ohangaron Valley is mountainous.

B) Chirchiq Valley plain.

As a result of geological processes, the Fergana Valley stands out with its distinctive characteristics. These characteristics are as follows:

- It is surrounded on all four sides by snow-capped mountains;
- Its isolation from the country's main arable agricultural oases by natural barriers;
- Its 'enclave' status in relation to other regions;
- Its natural environment, water supply, permanence, and the enduring nature of the mountains' glacial reserves;
- Abundance of natural resources, and the absence of a need to pursue a migration policy towards neighbouring territories;
- The opportunity to make innovations in all sectors of the economy, making effective use of nature's gifts.

These characteristics, which humanity acquired from the earliest stage of the Lower Paleolithic and whose successive stages of development in economic and cultural types have continued uninterrupted, share one common feature: they are linked to the Turon Plain via the Khujand Gate. According to archaeological literature, the study of Stone Age monuments in the Fergana Valley began in the late 1950s and 1960s. Between 1980 and 1988, the Archaeology Institute of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, under U. An archaeological team led by U. Islamov discovered the Selengur cave site, located 200 metres west of the city of Fergana. The cave measures 120 metres in length, 34 metres in width and 25 metres in height. In the western area of the site, five cultural layers between 20 and 40 cm thick were identified; from the fifth cultural layer, a hand axe made of red stone was recovered, its shape being spear-like. From the 4th cultural layer, heavy and blunt stone axes were recovered. From the 2nd cultural layer, a human skull, a fragment of a jawbone and four tooth remains were found. From the 3rd cultural layer,

10 tooth remains and a part of a shoulder bone were studied. The human remains at the site were dated to 1,200,000 years ago [2]. The Selengur cave site is classified as a "biiq", a designation with restricted characteristics, which may be linked to the increase in population and its inability to continuously serve humanity. The site is situated at an altitude of 2,000 metres above sea level. During the Lower Paleolithic, climatic conditions were favourable for human subsistence activities. From 500,000 years ago, the weather began to cool. During the Middle and Late Paleolithic periods, as the number of Selengur hunters increased, the Sux and Chashma sites served as new locations for their descendants, in line with the initiative to exploit the surrounding area [3]. Thus, a group of Selengur hunters left their adapted cave dwelling, settled in new locations, and established economic and cultural types. The migration of a group of hunters to the surrounding areas established ancestral connections, which in turn led to the establishment of kinship ties and the emergence of geographical breadth. This led to the emergence of the [4], which developed and became more robust through the various stages of the historical period. The Selengur cave-dwellers were compelled to leave their adapted habitat due to a growing population, a resulting lack of space, food shortages, the overexploitation of the surrounding environment, and a scarcity of tools. The same situation fell upon the Selengur hunters.

Selling: a spring on the right bank of the Jarsoy River. Between 1962 and 1990, M. R. Qosimov conducted excavations at the site, studying 49 cultural layers of one metre in thickness. Of these, layers 1 to 22 correspond to the Acheulian period. During the middle and late stages of the Acheulian period, the hunters of Ko'lbuluqlik also, in accordance with historical developments, pursued a policy of settlement around the banks of the Ohongaron River, resulting in Qizilolmasoy-2, localities such as G'ishtsoy, Qorabog'soy, and Jarsoy formed the economic-cultural types [5].

According to archaeological literature, hunters settled in the mountainous region of the Northern Zarafshon, forming their own socio-economic types. In the mountainous region of the Zarafshon Valley, the Ijond and Vaush sites served hunters who, having acquired stone tools at the Uchtut mine-workshop, had defined their daily occupations [6]. In the Zarafshon Valley, the lower reaches served as a base for the migration towards the lower regions where the first agro-cultural types emerged. According to historical data, in the Ustyurt Plateau region, primitive hunters also settled during the Lower Paleolithic, utilising natural resources and engaging in ethnic interactions.

Middle Stone Age: the settlement of hunters in the natural-economic regions of Uzbekistan and the economic-cultural types. (100–40 thousand years ago). In the Ustyurt region, based on research, there are no observations or reflections on the fact that the descendants of the hunters from the late stage of the Acheulian period carried out the same economic activities in the Middle Stone Age. In our view, owing to the availability of natural resource reserves, they established themselves in economic and cultural types and conducted ethnic relations. Such an agro-cultural way of life can be observed in the daily practical activities of the inhabitants of the Sox and Chashma settlements in the Fergana Valley, as well as in the Lower Amu Darya region. According to archaeological research, the territories of the Middle Zarafshon and Surxondaryo were settled by early humans. In the Tashkent valley, the Kobolak hunters pursued a policy of migration to neighbouring territories, giving rise to new economic and cultural types. For example, the Middle Zarafshan region was settled by early humans during the Middle Stone Age. For example, under the leadership of D.N. Lev, the archaeological team from Samarkand State University recorded the Omonkoton and Takalaksoy cave sites during archaeological fieldwork in the area of the village of Omonkoton on the Urgut mountain pass. The entrance of the Omonkoton cave-shelter faces north-west. Its width is 1.5 metres, its height 0.9 metres, and its interior is 25 metres. It is divided into two parts in the middle. Traces of hearths and bonfires have been preserved at the site. Artefacts recovered include flint and quartzite tools, and animal bones.

Takalisoy – the artefacts from the cultural layer of the cave site date to the Middle Stone Age. One such cave-site [7], is situated on a height in the north-eastern part of the Zarafshon mountain range. The artefacts recovered from it date to the Middle Stone Age. As a result of archaeological surveys in the Middle Zarafshan, the Kotirbulak and Zirabulak sites were recorded and excavated. For example, the Kotirbulak site is located by a spring in the valley of the Zirabulak mountain, 100 km south-west of the city of Samarkand. The site consisted of five cultural layers. From it, tools such as choppers, scrapers, burins, spear points, and animal bones from animals such as horse, bull, and donkey were recovered [8].

Over 100 stone tools belonging to the primitive hunter-gatherer culture, dating to the Middle Stone Age, were recovered around the Zirabulak spring, along with Kotirbulak. Archaeological research has been conducted at Late Stone Age sites in the Middle Zarafshan. For example, more than 8,000 stone tools were recovered from the cultural layers of the Samarkand site during excavations carried out there between 1958 and 1973. It had an area of 100 square meters and was rectangular in shape. The Samarkand site had wooden posts at ground level. Thus, the settlement was the only site to serve the interests of a settled population, forming socio-cultural types [9]. In addition, material artefacts were recovered from the [10], following archaeological excavations at the Late Stone Age settlement along the Suyob River. Excavations were carried out at the Suyob and Khujamazgil sites, the latter of which is located on the western foothills of the Turkestan mountain range. Artefacts from the cultural layer included, similar to the stone tools from the Samarkand site. EA Bijanov's research on Middle Stone Age sites in the Ustyurt region, including those in the south-eastern area, does not provide any information on the history of the new generation of hunters who occupied these sites. In any case, it can be concluded that the hunters in the south-eastern region continued their daily practical activities.

### Conclusion.

Thus, from the above considerations, the following practical conclusions can be drawn:

- Between 25,000 and 500,000 years ago, the territory of Uzbekistan was a plain;
- From 1 million to 100 thousand years ago, populations in the Ustyurt, North Zarafshan, Tashkent and Fergana regions developed their own economic-cultural types (Qoraquduq, Churuk; Uchtut, Ijand, Vaush, Kolbulak, Selengur).
- Between 100,000 and 40,000 years ago, new territories were settled by our ancestors, and new economic-cultural types emerged (Obirahmat, Khujakent, Omonkoton, Kotirbulak, Takalisoy, Zirabulak, Tordara, Teshiktash);
- In the 40th–12th millennia, a new economic and cultural type formed in the Khorezm oasis (Burli-3). Ethnic processes continued in other economic and cultural types;
- The first half of the 6th–4th millennia (Oktoylyk, Aydabol on the Ustyurt; Jonbos-4,5, the Tolstov site 11,12,18 in the Lower Amu Darya; Uchashi-131 in the Lower Zarafshan, Darvozaqir-1,2, Lavlyakan in the inner Qizilqum, Sazag'on-1 in the Middle Zarafshan, Madiyor and Zambar in the Fergana Valley;
- Second half of the 4th millennium BC – first half of the 3rd millennium BC. The settlement of the population in the Kokcha cultural-economic types continued;
- Second half of the 3rd millennium BC – late 2nd millennium BC. The economic-cultural types formed in the adapted zone by the population continued (Anqa-5 in the Lower Amu Darya area, Layer-3,7, Jonbos-6, 30, 34), Zamonbobo in the Lower Zarafshan, Chust in the Fergana Valley, and Sopolli in the Surkhon oasis, their development continuing.

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