

## **Abstract**

The Thesis presents a comprehensive set of archaeological data from the southern Uzbekistan (Baysun and Sherabad districts, Surkhandarya province), which served as the basis for reconstructing settlement patterns and strategies in different periods of the past. The studied area covers three altitudinal zones - lowland, piedmont, and mountain, which allows for tracing different trends in the use of cultural landscapes. Archaeological data used in the work came from all available sources and was supplemented by collection of new data in the field. Overall, based on the review of archaeological sources, 263 archaeological sites (SITES) were established, which are detailed in the Catalogue of the Sites, and are supplemented by 260 points with archaeological finds (SPOTs). Attention is given to evidence of human presence in the area from the earliest prehistory (Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic), through the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Hellenistic period, period of Kushan Empire, and subsequent late Kushan/Kushano-Sassanian period, up to the Middle Ages (Early, High, and Late), until the end of the 17th century. Alongside, the reliability of available archaeological data is evaluated, as it directly affects the possibilities of our interpretation. Trends in the use of cultural landscapes in different periods were monitored. The reconstruction of settlement patterns clearly indicates that, with the exception of the Stone Age, the lowland was always the most densely populated area in the past. Despite being the smallest of the three altitudinal zones, it consistently dominates in terms of site density per square kilometre. Additionally, the highest number of sites in all periods comes from the piedmont area. It is the largest one and the density of sites per square kilometre is naturally lower. In each period, archaeological sites are also present in the mountain area, and besides evidence of typical settlements sites, there is evidence of specific landscape use associated with mineral extraction, likely dated to the medieval period.

## **Keywords**

Landscape Archaeology, Survey, Central Asia, Settlement Patterns, Sapalli Culture, Yaz Culture, Hellenistic Period, Kushan Period, Middle Ages