Marcin Wagner. “The fire temple at Topaz Gala depe in southern Turkmenistan”

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- 1 With this short paper, Marcin Wagner presents recent findings of the Polish archaeological excavations at the site of Topaz Gala in modern southern Turkmenistan. The main structure unearthed at Topaz Gala is described by the author as a "fire temple". According to radiocarbon dating, and ceramic findings belonging to the Yaz II Central Asia material culture, the building is dated between the second half of the 10th century and the first half of the 8th century BC. Labeling the structure as a fire temple was based on the interpretation of some of its features. One was discovered in the structure's main pillared space: a square, mud-brick feature containing a circular clay element reddened by prolonged exposure to fire and associated with a "podium" of mud bricks built close to it. Another was a storage vessel found in a corner of the same room that was sunk into the floor and contained ashes. Two more such vessels were found upside-down inside the building. The monument has a rectangular shape and is encircled by a corridor (only in a first stage of construction?) that separates it from a fortified external wall strengthened by towers; this form is compared by the author to the Iron Age structures of Tillya-tepe, which were described by V.I. Sarianidi in a 1989 publication.

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