

its bazaars recite the feats of Iskander (Alexander), Genghis Khan, and Timur; and from the foliage of Samarkand, once capital of that last world-conqueror, still rise glittering faience domes and towers, the earthquake-shattered ruins of his colleges and tombs.

AFROSIAB.

Just to the east of this old city of Timur and on a loess plateau about 70 feet above the big Obu Siob, bounding it north and east, lie the ruins of Afrosiab, still more ancient Samarkand. Tradition tells us this was founded by a Persian, Prince Afrosiab, while some believe it to have been the Maracanda of Alexander. Its great areas of ruins have crumbled to a barren surface of low mounds with several depressions connected by canals and moats, the remnants of a water-system. Water entered from the south and split into secondary canals, two of which ran just outside the inner walls, those south of its citadel, to supply various neighboring basins. The surplus of these two emptied into the Obu Siob on the north, at a level about 15 feet higher than the Obu Siob water of to-day, as though the canal had deepened 15 feet since these tributaries were abandoned. It was hoped

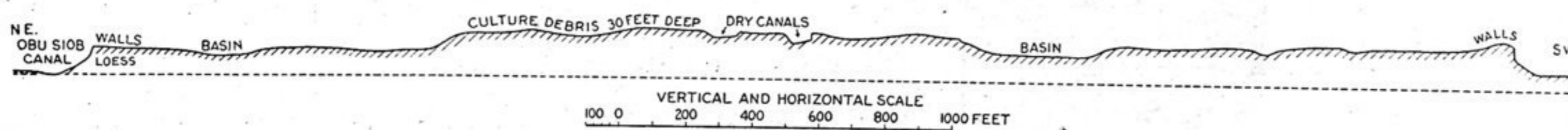


Fig. 473.—Profile of Afrosiab.

that some light on the antiquity, and especially on the introduction, of glazed ware might come from a study of gully sections through its culture remains. This work proved difficult, if not impossible, without excavation. In the gullies two habits have conspired against reliable sections; first, creeping down of muddy debris during wet weather; and second, refilling of narrow parts choked up in various ways, after which reexcavation leaves sections of washed-down debris in which all horizons of the culture-strata are mixed together. Some gullies, 30 feet in depth, are so narrow from top to bottom that when a wall caves in, refilling takes place behind. The large gully running to the Obu Siob canal opposite the mill widens and deepens downwards with several terraces, and has been artificially dammed across at regular intervals, thus refilling to form cross-terraces that are cultivated. Reexcavation of this valley would leave sections of most unreliable data. But though unreliable in general, there are a few gully sections in Afrosiab that give clean exposures of undisturbed strata. In two or three, through its central plateau of debris there appears to be a total depth of 30 to 35 feet of culture-strata resting on the original loess foundation. Through its northern wall along the Obu Siob cliff a tunneling gully shows the culture debris thinning out to but a few feet in thickness.

HIGH-VALLEY (TYPE III) OASES OF THE UPPER ZERAFSHAN.

So often conquered and swept by migrating hordes, the lowland oases of the Zerafshan now present a mixture of races, though according to the ethnologist there is still a predominance of Tadjik, excepting perhaps in Bokhara. And this mixture continues some way up into the mountain valley, where for about 16