The massive fortified royal seat of Akchakhan-kala has been under excavation by a team from the University of Sydney and members of the Karakalpak Academy of Sciences for twenty years. Akchakhan-kala is particularly remarkable for its wealth of well-preserved wall paintings and clay sculpture. A recently cleaned painting has revealed spectacular new image which is linked, for the first time, to explicit Zoroastrian imagery. This is forcing a rethink of the early history of this important world religion.

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