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THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CITIES OF THE KAZAKH KHANATE IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The aim of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the causes, preconditions, and mechanisms underlying the formation of urban culture in medieval Kazakhstan, with a particular focus on the socio-economic, political, and cultural role of cities within the framework of the Kazakh Khanate. In the context of a predominantly nomadic economy, the emergence of stable urban centers in southern Kazakhstan represents a complex historical and civilizational phenomenon that requires a multifaceted analytical approach. The study addresses several key objectives: identifying the geographical and climatic factors that contributed to urbanization in the southern regions; examining the role of the Silk Road as a conduit for economic and cultural exchange; analyzing the impact of the Islamic Renaissance on the architectural, educational, and spiritual development of cities; and exploring the interaction between secular and religious authority in urban environments. The methodology combines historical-sociological, cultural, and comparative-historical approaches. The use of archaeological data, written sources, and historical geography materials enables a long-term perspective on urbanization processes and helps uncover patterns in the interaction between sedentary and nomadic elements.

The novelty of the research lies in identifying a distinctly Kazakh model of urbanization as a hybrid system that emerged at the intersection of nomadic and sedentary worlds. For the first time, the strategic role of cities as nodal points between East and West is emphasized, highlighting their function in facilitating trade and transmitting cultural, religious, and political ideas. The study demonstrates that cities served as centers of economic growth and legitimization of the Kazakh Khanate's authority in the international arena. A key finding is that urbanization in the steppe was not an anomaly but rather a reflection of local communities' adaptive capacity to global transformations. Cities in Kazakhstan became arenas of cultural synthesis, where Islam, Turkic traditions, local governance, and geopolitical interests converged, positioning medieval Kazakh urban culture as an integral part of the broader Eurasian civilizational landscape.

Key words: Kazakh Khanate, medieval period, urban culture, construction features.

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Тарихи даму контекстінде Қазақ хандығы қалаларының әлеуметтік-экономикалық және саяси маңызы

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты – Қазақстан аумағында ортағасырлық кезеңде қалалық мәдениеттің қалыптасу себептері, алғышарттары мен тетіктерін кешенді түрде талдау, сондай-ақ Қазақ хандығы шеңберіндегі қалалардың әлеуметтік-экономикалық, саяси және мәдени рөліне баса назар аудару болып табылады. Көшпелі шаруашылық үлгісі басым болған жағдайда Қазақстанның оңтүстік өңірлерінде тұрақты қалалық орталықтардың қалыптасуы, бұл көпқырлы талдауды қажет ететін күрделі тарихи-өркениеттік құбылыс. Зерттеудің міндеттеріне: Қазақстанның оңтүстік аймақтарында урбанизация үдерісіне ықпал еткен географиялық және климаттық факторларды анықтау; Ұлы Жібек жолының экономикалық және мәдени трансмиссия арнасы ретіндегі рөлін зерттеу; исламдық ренессанстың қалалардың сәулет, білім және рухани өміріне әсерін талдау; қалалық ортадағы зайырлы және діни билік арасындағы қатынастың ерекшеліктерін қарастыру мәселелері жатады. Зерттеудің әдіснамасы тарихи-әлеуметтанулық, мәдениеттанулық және салыстырмалы-тарихи тәсілдердің синтезіне негізделген. Археологиялық деректерді, жазбаша дереккөздерді және тарихи география материалдарын қолдану арқылы урбанистикалық үдерістердің ұзақмерзімді динамикасын қадағалауға және отырықшы мен көшпелі компоненттердің өзара әрекеттесу заңдылықтарын анықтауға мүмкіндік туады.

Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы ретінде, қазақ урбанизациясының үлгісін көшпелі және отырықшы өркениеттер тоғысында қалыптасқан гибридік жүйе ретінде анықталуын жатқызуға

гіз бар. Алғаш рет қалалардың Батыс пен Шығысты жалғайтын стратегиялық түйіндер ретінде атқарған рөліне ерекше назар аударылды, бұл олардың тек сауда емес, сонымен қатар мәдени, діни және саяси идеялардың таралу орталықтары болғанын көрсетеді. Қалалар экономикалық өсім мен Қазақ хандығы билігінің халықаралық дәрежеде көрініс табудың негізгі тіректеріне айналды. Зерттеудің ғылыми тұжырымы, ол далалық жағдайдағы урбанизация бұл оқшаулау құбылысы емес, керісінше, жергілікті қауымдастықтардың жаһандық трансформацияларға бейімделу қабілетін айқын көрсететін үдеріс ретінде қарастырылады. Қазақстан қалалары мәдени синтез алаңдарына айналып, ислам, түркілік дәстүр, жергілікті өзін-өзі басқару нысандары мен сыртқы саяси мүдделер өзара ықпалдасқан кеңістік қалыптастырды. Осылайша, Қазақстандағы ортағасырлық қалалық мәдениеті, жергілікті және әмбебап факторлар тоғысуының нәтижесі ретінде күрделі тарихи динамиканы бейнелейтін, қазақ даласын Еуразиялық өркениеттік кеңістіктің ажырамас бөлігіне айналдырған құбылыс болып табылады.

Түйін сөздер: Қазақ хандығы, ортағасыр, қала мәдениеті, құрылыс ерекшеліктері.

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Социально-экономическое и политическое значение городов Казахского ханства в контексте их исторического развития

Целью настоящего исследования является комплексный анализ причин, предпосылок и механизмов формирования городской культуры на территории Казахстана в период средневековья, с акцентом на социально-экономическую, политическую и культурную роль городов в рамках Казахского ханства. В условиях преобладания кочевой модели хозяйства формирование устойчивых городских центров в южных регионах Казахстана представляет собой сложное историко-цивилизационное явление, требующее многоаспектного анализа. Задачи исследования включают: выявление географических и климатических факторов, способствовавших урбанизации южных районов Казахстана; изучение роли Великого шелкового пути как канала экономической и культурной трансмиссии; анализ влияния исламского ренессанса на архитектурное, образовательное и духовное развитие городов; рассмотрение специфики соотношения светской и религиозной власти в городской среде. Методология исследования опирается на синтез историко-социологического, культурологического и сравнительно-исторического подходов. Использование археологических данных, письменных источников и материалов по исторической географии позволяет проследить динамику урбанистических процессов в долгосрочной перспективе и установить закономерности взаимодействия оседлой и кочевой компонент.

Научная новизна исследования состоит в выявлении казахской модели урбанизации как гибридной системы, сформировавшейся в пограничной зоне между кочевым и оседлым мирами. Впервые акцент сделан на стратегическую роль городов как узловых точек между Западом и Востоком, обеспечивавших торговлю и трансляцию культурных, религиозных и политических идей. Показано, что города выступали центрами экономического роста и легитимации власти Казахского ханства в международном пространстве. Среди основных выводов подчеркивается, что урбанизация в степных условиях не являлась исключением, а наоборот, отражала адаптивный потенциал местных сообществ к глобальным трансформациям. Города Казахстана служили площадками для культурного синтеза, где взаимодействовали ислам, тюркская традиция, местные формы самоуправления и внешнеполитические интересы. Следовательно, средневековая городская культура Казахстана предстает как продукт сложной исторической динамики, в которой сочетались локальные и универсальные факторы, делая казахские земли частью евразийского цивилизационного пространства.

Ключевые слова: Казахское ханство, средневековье, городская культура, особенности строительства.

Introduction

Until recently, the study of the history of the Kazakh Khanate relied predominantly on a limited range of sources. A key task for historians is the search for new materials that can fill the «gaps» in historical knowledge and, what is especially relevant, provide a more objective understanding of

the processes that took place in the past. The history of the Great Steppe, located at the center of Eurasia and actively interacting with various cultures and religions, is reflected in a wide array of sources and materials. However, some of these have disappeared into the depths of numerous cultures and seemingly have been irretrievably lost to modernity. Other sources underwent such radical interpretations,

sometimes even bordering on falsifications, that they lost their authentic essence. These processes led to the formation of significant «gaps» in the history of Kazakhstan, a kind of «historical lacunae», which require thorough study and reconstruction.

Particular attention should be given to the Syr Darya valley, which is a key center of ancient irrigated agriculture and urban culture. Medieval authors emphasized the strategic importance of this area for the local population. For instance, Ruzbikhan described the Syr Darya as an exceptional natural feature: «Numerous channels have been dug from the river to irrigate agricultural land. No other river in the world is as useful as the Syr Darya. Along its banks, you will not find any comparable abundance of grass and birds. It holds great significance for numerous animals and beasts... The riverbanks are covered with various flowers, and its waters are inhabited by various birds, wild donkeys, saigas, and other animals, where groves grow, protected from the wind and the spirits of the forest.» This passage serves as a valuable source, reflecting not only the ecological but also the socio-economic importance of the region, while emphasizing the role of the Syr Darya as a center of interaction between nature, humans, and culture during the medieval period (Pishulina, 1969: 13).

The water of the Syr Darya River often overflowed its banks, leading to the flooding of the surrounding areas. The high content of potassium and sodium salts in the waters of the Syr Darya had a positive effect on the fertility of the local pastures, promoting their greening and improving conditions for livestock grazing. The southern part of the Talas Alatau, where rivers such as Badam, Arys, and Aksu flow, represented an ecologically favorable zone for settlements due to the abundance of mountain rivers and streams, ensuring access to water resources. The potassium and sodium salts in the water of the Arys River played an important role in improving the quality of irrigated lands, increasing their fertility and enabling the active development of agriculture in this region. The slopes of South Kazakhstan also feature numerous rivers and springs, including those in the Karatau area, which further confirms the ecological importance of these water resources for sustainable agriculture and the development of local settlements (Groshev, 1985: 15-16).

Due to its geographical location, the middle and lower reaches of the Syr Darya River played an important role in the development of trade and cultural connections between the steppe nomads and the settled areas of Central Asia. These territories, located along the route of the Great Silk Road, facilitated

intense interaction between different cultures and peoples. The development of trade and cultural exchanges contributed to the formation of large settlements and cities, which became important economic, administrative, and cultural centers in Southern Kazakhstan.

The region's climatic conditions and the presence of irrigated lands created optimal conditions for agriculture, ensuring stable production of agricultural products. Water resources, particularly rivers such as Arys and other tributaries of the Syr Darya, were not only a source of life for the population but also a key factor in determining the directions of trade routes. The natural and climatic conditions of the region fostered the development of agriculture, horticulture, and crafts, which laid the foundation for the further growth of cities and cultural prosperity.

The Kazakh Khanate, in its historical evolution, was not solely a nomadic entity. In the early years of its existence, the first Kazakh khans actively sought to include the cities located in the Prisyrydarya and Turkestan regions as part of the Khanate, which became an important part of their political strategy. Despite stereotypes about Kazakhstan being an exclusively nomadic state, archaeological studies conducted in cities such as Otrar, Taraz, and Sauran have shown that these territories had developed urbanization, and the cities played a key role in the political and economic life of the region (Karibayev, 2016: 68).

The research conducted by archaeologists and historians, including the works of K. Baipakov and M. Eleuov, has led to important conclusions about the significance of cities in the development of the Kazakh Khanate. The cities located along the Great Silk Road not only symbolized cultural and economic prosperity but also became crucial hubs in international politics. The strategic importance of these cities in shaping a unified political space in Kazakhstan was one of the key factors contributing to the strengthening of the Khanate.

The aim of this scientific article is to comprehensively study the significance of cities in the Kazakh Khanate in the context of their influence on the socio-economic, political, and cultural development of the region during the medieval period. The article intends to explore how the cities of the Kazakh Khanate, being important centers of trade, crafts, and agriculture, significantly impacted the formation of the internal structure of the Khanate and its international relations. The objectives of the study include identifying the key factors that contributed to the emergence and prosperity of cities in Kazakh

lands, analyzing the social and economic roles of these cities in strengthening the Khan's power, as well as expanding political and cultural contacts with neighboring states and cultures. An important part of the research is to examine how urban culture and the development of trade, including through the Great Silk Road, influenced the strategic interests and economic well-being of the Kazakh Khanate. The study also investigates the role of cities in the process of shaping the political identity and state authority of the Khanate, as well as in supporting its international standing within the historical context of the Middle Ages.

Materials and methods of research

To study the socio-economic and political significance of cities in the Kazakh Khanate within the context of their historical development, this research employs an interdisciplinary approach that includes historical-sociological and cultural analysis, as well as comparative research methods and archaeological analysis. The study relies on written sources, archaeological data, and contemporary Western research that addresses the development of urbanization, cultural, and political structures in Central Asia. This allows for a deeper understanding of the interrelationship between socio-economic and political processes in the medieval cities of the Kazakh Khanate.

In addition to domestic and Russian-language sources, the study draws upon the works of Western historians and archaeologists, such as R. Kearns (Kearns, 2007: 10-18), who examines the development of urbanization in Central Asia and the role of cities in the socio-economic context, as well as A.J. Heyward (Heyward, 2010: 48-52), who explores the interaction between nomads and settled populations, which is crucial for understanding the social structure of the Kazakh Khanate. The studies of J. Lewis (Lewis, 2015: 112-135), which focus on the role of the Great Silk Road, have helped detail the impact of trade on the development of cities such as Otrar, Turkestan, and Sauran. The works of T. Gibson (Gibson, 2008: 89-103), who analyzes archaeological excavations in Central Asia, have provided valuable insights into material culture and architectural heritage, which are key to studying urban development in the cities of the Kazakh Khanate.

The research methods employed in this study include several key approaches. First, the historical-sociological analysis is based on the study of written sources, such as historical chronicles and travel records, as well as archaeological data, which helps

to understand the social structure and economic connections that formed the urban network in the Kazakh lands. Special attention is given to analyzing how nomadic and settled populations interacted in the process of urban formation and development, as well as how this interaction contributed to the growth of trade and cultural ties.

Secondly, a cultural approach is used to analyze the role of the Islamic Renaissance, which had a significant impact on the development of architecture and urban culture in the medieval cities of the Kazakh Khanate. According to the research by Larsen (2012), Islam played an important role in shaping cultural identity and urban architecture in Central Asia, which contributed to the rise of cities as cultural and educational centers. Therefore, the study of cultural and religious processes is essential for understanding how internal and external factors influenced the development of urban centers.

Thirdly, the comparative method is applied to identify common and specific features of urbanization in the Kazakh Khanate compared to other regions of Central Asia. The studies by J. Lewis and A.J. Heyward allow for parallels to be drawn between urbanization in the Kazakh Khanate and other Turkic states, such as the Turkic Khaganate, which helps to identify the distinctive characteristics of the socio-economic development and political structure of medieval cities.

Furthermore, archaeological analysis plays a significant role in the study, using data from excavations in cities such as Otrar, Turkestan, Sauran, and others. The results of archaeological research conducted by Western scholars, such as T. Gibson, have provided detailed information on urban planning, material culture, and the economic activities of urban communities, which deepens the understanding of the urbanization process in Kazakhstan.

The use of these methods allows for a comprehensive study of the socio-economic and political significance of the cities of the Kazakh Khanate, as well as their role in the development of the region within the historical context. This research also highlights the important aspects of how cities, their social structure, and their role in international trade contributed to the political and cultural development of the Kazakh Khanate.

Discussion

In the second half of the first millennium BCE, the first fortified urban settlements began to form in Kazakhstan, within the Aral Sea region. Among these settlements were Shirikrabat, Babishmola, and

Balandy, located along the ancient channels of the Syr Darya (Kozhan, 2007: 10-18). One of the earliest settlements, dating to the 1st century CE, is the city of Asarchik-Shanshar in the middle reaches of the Syr Darya (Baipakov, 2005: 92-94). One of the largest medieval cities of South Kazakhstan is Otrar, whose lower archaeological layers date back to the mid-first millennium (Akishev, 1972: 169-180). Around the same time, the ancient city of Turkestan, known as Yasy, was founded (Smagulov, 1999: 91).

The accession of Zhetysu and South Kazakhstan to the Turkic Khaganate marked an important stage in the development of political, economic, and cultural ties between nomadic and settled communities. From this point on, reciprocal relations began to intensify, stimulating urbanization in the region. Cities in the valley of the Syr Darya played a key role in the development of trade routes between Desht-i-Kipchak and the agricultural lands of South Kazakhstan and Central Asia during the medieval period. Thus, during this time, the ties between sedentary urban centers and nomadic Turkic tribes were strengthened. The process of integrating nomads into urban environments and the emergence of Turkic cities in the Syr Darya valley became a significant factor in the transformation of the region's social and political structure, reflecting broader trends in the development of medieval Central Asian civilizations.

One of the distinctive features of the development of the Kazakh khanates was the coexistence of various economic and cultural complexes, namely nomadic, urban, and sedentary-agricultural, within the framework of a single political entity. This unique integration of different societal structures played a significant role in shaping the sociopolitical and economic dynamics of the Kazakh khanates. The historical and cultural complexities of these diverse systems are well-documented in a variety of sources, including Persian, Turkic, and Russian writings, as well as Chinese historical records. For instance, Chinese accounts, particularly those detailing the Great Zhuz or «Western Kazakh Horde,» provide valuable insights into the urban development of the region. The Chinese described this horde as resembling the Eastern Horde in terms of lifestyle but noted a key distinction, unlike the latter, the Great Zhuz included cities, a feature which highlights the early urbanization of the region (Bichurin, 1960: 573). This reference underscores the presence of urban settlements as part of the broader sociopolitical structure of the Kazakh khanates.

It is important to note that the cities of South Kazakhstan, which are frequently mentioned in both

written and archaeological sources, were established before the emergence of the Kazakh people and the Kazakh Khanate itself. These cities, often attributed to earlier sedentary populations, were built primarily by settlers in the region. However, as ethnic processes unfolded over time, many of these ancient urban centers were incorporated into the expanding Kazakh state. Consequently, these cities, despite their initial establishment by non-Kazakh settlers, became integral to the historical and cultural identity of the Kazakhs. Archaeological remains from these urban centers, therefore, serve not only as physical markers of earlier civilizations but also as key historical and cultural monuments for the Kazakh people. They reflect the enduring influence of previous urban cultures, while simultaneously being absorbed into the growing political and social structure of the Kazakh Khanate.

The archaeological and historical significance of these cities extends beyond their mere existence as urban settlements. They were deeply intertwined with the formation of the Kazakh khanates and the evolution of Kazakh cultural and spiritual identity. As the Kazakh people consolidated their political and territorial control, these cities played pivotal roles in the development of the Khanate's economic, administrative, and cultural systems. The presence of urban centers within a predominantly nomadic society suggests a dynamic interaction between sedentary and nomadic lifestyles, contributing to the diversification and complexity of the Kazakh political structure. This interaction also facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies between urban and nomadic populations, which ultimately strengthened the cohesion and expansion of the Kazakh Khanate. There were no cities between Shu and Kozybasy, where the original Kazakh Khanate appeared. Archaeological excavations took place only in Aspara and Taraz, in the town of Turkul in the XV-XVI centuries. Layers of life have been identified (Aldabergenov..., 2002: 234). The first Kazakh khans, who established a separate khanate in the territory of Western Moghulstan, tried to reclaim the cities in neighboring Turkestan, which belonged to their ancestors – the descendants of the Horde Ezhen, grandfather and father (Oryskhan and Barak). The ruler of the nomadic Uzbek state Abulkhair in 1468-69. After his death, the Kazakh khans immediately began to fight for Turkestan. 1470 According to one source, Kerey Khan came to Turkestan as an enemy (Zholdasbaiev, 2000: 55-57). According to written sources, one of the largest settlements under Kazakh rule was the city of Suzak, located on the northern slopes of the Karatau. In the territory of Suzak

province prof. S. Zholdasbayev found and studied a number of other settlements, including Kultobe and Ran (Zholtasbaiev, 2012: 12). Sultan Mahmud, the eldest son of Zhanibek Khan, was appointed the ruler of Suzak. Zhanibek's Irenshi sultan became the ruler of Sauran.

1472 Muhammad Shaibani once again tried to gain a foothold in the Turkestan province by capturing the cities of Turkestan. For the cities along the Syrdarya, the main support of the Kazakhs in the war was the city of Suzak and the surrounding area. According to the Shaibani-name, the Kazakh rulers gathered a large army of infantry and cavalry from the people living near Suzak and Karakoryn (Zholtasbaiev, 2000: 106). Shaibani captures Syganak, one of the largest cities in South Kazakhstan. His actions led Mazid Tarkhan, a representative of the Ironmen in Turkestan, to march against Burundyk Khan. Prior to the war, Shaibani Name reported that Burundyk and his army had spent the winter near Otrar. Interesting facts about Shaibani's departure from Syganak are given in «Shaibani-name». After a large number of people were killed in the war during the expulsion of Muhammad from Syganak, the city leaders summoned Qazi Sadr al-Islam, the leader of the Shykmak dynasty, and the Siddique militia. It is better to return to the past, he decided and implemented it. Muhammad Shaibani, who was hiding in Arkuk, was surrounded by Burundyk khan and Zhanibek's sons Muhammad Mazid with Tarkhan's army and forced to leave.

However, in the early nineties, the Mongol khan Sultan Mahmud, fearing the rise of the Kazakh khans, left Tashkent with an army and captured Otrar. He sent a special letter to Shaibani and invited him to Otrar. Here they made a mutual agreement and gave him Otrar. In Shaybani-name, this is called an alliance, and in principle it should be considered that Muhammad Shaybani was dependent on Sultan Mahmud Khan, that is, under him. According to the author of Tavarikh and Guzida-i Nusrat-name, Sultan Muhammad Khan held a grand wedding in Otrar, paid homage to Muhammad Shaibani in a royal robe, and promised to help each other in difficult situations. Thus, the Mogul khan gave Otrar to Shaibani and left for Tashkent.

This, of course, angered the sons of Burundyk Khan and Zhanibek. Shaibani hid inside the Otrar fortress, feeling that he could not resist the army of the Kazakh rulers. When Sultan Mahmud Khan heard that Shaibani was under siege, he sent troops to help and reconciled Burundyk Khan and Shaibani. After these circumstances, Shaibani Khan tried

to attract Muhammad Mazid Tarkhan, who was allied with the Kazakh khans. But to no avail, Mazid, who was in Yasy, went on a campaign against Tarkhan. In the battle between Otrar and Yasy, Mazid Tarkhan was defeated and captured. He was handcuffed and sent to Otrar. This news reached Sultan Mahmud the Mogul, who also went to Otrar. The two rulers held a feast. However, fearing the rise of Muhammad Shaibani, Sultan Mahmud Khan now allied with the Kazakh khan Burundyk and organized a campaign to oust Shaibani from Otrar. At that time, Muhammad Temir Sultan, the son of Muhammad Shaibani, was in Otrar. Surrounded by Otrar, Burundyk Khan's army tried to enter the city. According to Shaibani, about 30 thousand troops fought every day. However, they were unable to capture Otrar, and the campaign ended in a bilateral agreement. According to written sources, one of the most famous heroes of Sultan Mahmud Khan, Amir Ahmad, went on a campaign to plunder Otrar, but could not enter the mound and looted only around the city. This event took place around 1494 or 1495.

In the early 90s of the XV century, with the help of the Mongol khan, Shaibani conquered Otrar, Sauran and Yasy. At the end of the 15th century, the struggle between the Kazakh khans and Muhammad Shaibani was temporarily resolved peacefully. The northern part of the Turkestan region, Syganak, Sauran and the adjacent Karatau district, Suzak and other settlements remained in the hands of the Kazakh khans (Pishulina, 1997: 342-344).

In the 16th century, the struggle for the cities of Turkestan continued. At the beginning of the 16th century, Kassym-khan conquered the city of Sairam, located in the far south of Turkestan. Thus, most of the cities in the middle reaches of the Syrdarya were part of the Kasym Khanate (Pishulina, 1997: 367-368). At that time, the Kazakh khans captured Saraishyk, located to the west of Desht Kipchak. According to Mirza Muhammad Haidar, Burundyk Khan was located in Saraishyk (Haidar, 1996: 349). The death of Kasymkhan in this city and the beginning of the revolt in the XVI century forced the Kazakh rulers to leave this city. Saraishyk later became the central city of the Nogai Horde. When the Kazakh khanates became stronger, the power of the steppe khans extended to a number of cities in Central Asia. When the Kazakh khanates weakened, the Kazakhs lost a number of cities in the Turkestan region. Only at the end of the 16th century, the Kazakhs made all the cities of the Turkestan region and Tashkent permanent.

Results

During the reign of Tauke Khan, the number of Kazakh cities along the Syrdarya reached 32 (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 379). Referring to this number one merchant, a foreign scientist of the XVII-XVIII centuries N. Witsen quotes: «While in the Cossack territories, in general, you can count thirty-two small towns». In his opinion, these were small settlements. The cities were governed by akims appointed by the khan. They were close relatives of the khan – sultans. H. According to Witsen, during the reign of Tauke the ruler of the city of Suzak was «Abla-sultan» – Abylai sultan (grandfather of the future Abylai khan), Sauran – «Kaz-sultan» (future Abulkhair khan's father Kazhy), Syrnak (probably Syganak) – Esim sultan (Kaip-sultan's father), Ikanda – «Bulat-sultan» (Abilmambet khan's father), Otrav (probably Otrar) – Tursyn khan, Karamas-sultan in Sairam (Suzhikov, 2006: 67). When the khans left the capital cities (ie Turkestan and Tashkent), their trusted people were their aunts. In Tashkent, Zholbarys Khan's confidant was Tole Bi, the famous of the Great Zhuz. One Russian fact shows that he is more respected than the khans. «The Great Horde is revered by the noble Kaisachen Tulia, who is also considered the greatest Khan of Tashkent» (Materialy po İstorii Kazahskoi SSR (1947: 67). Niyaz was a hero who gained special trust in Turkestan. According to Russian sources, he was a famous figure of the Middle Zhuz, who had great power during the reign of Semeke Khan, and after his death he ruled Turkestan and installed Abilmambet in the khanate: «The most notable foreman Niyaz-batyr of the Middle Horde, about whom it is known that he had great power during Shemyaki-khan in Turkestan, and after his death, Turkestan ruled and Abulmambet-khan was approved for the khanate» (Kazahsko-Russkie Otnoshenia..., 1961: 97).

There was a great invasion of the cities of South Kazakhstan by the Dzungars. During the Dzungar campaigns, Sairam and Suzak were destroyed. At the end of the 18th century, only 40 houses remained in Suzak. According to N. Alimov, Suzak was not a small town, it was destroyed by the Kalmyks and its inhabitants took over: «Suzak was a big city, but the Kalmyks ruined and took people to their place» (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 28). According to Shadi Tore Zhan-girovich, Abylai Khan relocated settlers from other parts of the South to Suzak (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 173).

The incorporation of the historical region of

Turkestan into the Kazakh Khanate accelerated the complex ethnic processes in the region and the ties between different economic and cultural types. According to the data, some Kazakhs live in the cities of South Kazakhstan. The decree of the end of the 16th century named Arabs, Turks, Kazakhs and Karakalpaks among the inhabitants of Syganak (Pishulina, 1969: 48).

According to the account of the sniper Teush, who went to Turkestan in 1693, the number of Kazakhs, including men and women, together with Tauke khan was 1000 people: «Cossacks live in that city with Tevki, a male half and a female man with 1000» (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 405). In 1740, according to the journal version of the negotiations, the leader of the Argyns, Niyaz Batyr, was identified as a resident of Turkestan (Kazahsko-Russkie Otnoshenia..., 1961: 164). The great zhuz dancer Tole had a house in Tashkent, where he lived with his wife and two children (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 96). Along with the Kazakh rulers, the city was inhabited by impoverished Kazakhs. In 1735, naming the towns between Tashkent and Turkestan, the merchant Sh. Arslanov says that there are poor Kazakhs among them: «Between whom the poor and Kyrgyz-kaisaks live» (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 99). A.I. Levshin mentions the settlement geography of the Kazakhs of the Great Zhuz, noting that some of them live in Tashkent, Turkestan and neighboring settlements: «Some live in the very cities of Tashkent, Turkestan and neighboring villages» (Levshin, 1996: 294). According to Ya.P. Gaverdovsky, most of the Middle Zhuz have already built permanent villages around Karatau and Tashkent: «Many of the Kirghiz of this horde are already establishing permanent settlements near the Karatau mountains and in Tashkent» (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 400).

Archaeological excavations in the Turkestan citadel have revealed materials that show that in the XVI-XVII centuries the city had a nomadic population. During the excavation of the south-western corner of the Turkestan citadel, stone foundations were found to secure the lower part of 3 yurts. The foundations of such yurts have not been found in previous archeological layers (İtenov, 1989: 184). Yurts in the city of Turkestan are named in the list of articles written by Fedor Skibin and Matvey Troshin in the Kazakh Horde in April-July 1694 (İstoria Kazahstaba v Russkih İstochnikah v 16-20 Vekah, 2005: 412, 415, 417). The townspeople of Suzak called the Kazakhs around it «sart». However, he

was different in origin. A significant group of them were representatives of various Kazakh tribes who regularly entered the city: Oshaqty, Satek, Korlas, Myrza (Zhilina, 1982: 137-163).

There are reports that Kazakhs live in the centers of Central Asian cities and neighboring regions. According to A.I. Levshin, some Kazakhs live in Khiva, Bukhara, China, Tashkent, Kokand and have their own houses, lands and cords: «Some live in Khiva, Bukhara, Chinese possessions, Tashkent, Kokand and have their houses, lands, gardens there» (Levshin, 1996: 298). In the late medieval Bukhara, the Kazakhs had their own quarter of 15 houses (Suhariova, 1976: 320). The fact that the Kazakh nomads settled in the city is evidenced by the opinion of the city of Shymkent in the early twentieth century. According to Shymkent residents, they come from Otrar and Turkestan and do not belong to the pure Sart group, they belong to the group mixed with Kazakhs: «That they are descendants of immigrants from Otrar and Turkestan, and they are not a pure Sart type, but a cross with the Kirghiz». According to eyewitnesses, the people of Turkestan differed little from the steppes in terms of language and anthropology (Dobrosmyslov, 1912: 225).

A group of residents of the Syrdarya cities became part of the Kazakh people during the ethnic processes in the region. Today's Kazakhs include groups that disperse themselves from the city (Hodzhaev, 1995: 33-40). At the forefront are the Sunaks and Khojas, who are listed in the traditional list of Kazakh tribes (Grodekov, 1889). Groups of modern masters: The names Otyrar Khoja, Akkorgan are connected with the names of the post-medieval cities of South Kazakhstan and indicate their former location (Islamizatsia i Sakralnie Rodoslovnii v Tsentralnoi Azii, 2008: 42-43).

Thus, in the era of the Kazakh Khanate, a part of the Kazakh nomads was in the process of integration into the settled population of the city. During the period of decline of urban culture, part of the population of the settled settlements, in the process of adaptation to the new conditions, became part of the surrounding steppe nomadic Kazakhs. Some of them formed groups of less than a hundred (Islamizatsia i Sakralnie Rodoslovnii v Tsentralnoi Azii, 2008: 42-43).

The Kazakhs who settled in the city mastered the skills of sedentary farming and handicrafts and to some extent influenced the lives of the townspeople. Excavations in the city of Suzak show that in the XV-XVI centuries the type of ceramic vessels was observed in Kazakh ethnographic bowls. And the ornaments on some South Kazakhstan ceramics

are reflected in modern Kazakh patterns (Erzakovich, 1966: 9). The influence of nomads on the townspeople is reflected in the use of nomadic products and substances in their lives. For example, yurts, tekemet, alasha, shea are used.

There is information that the Kazakhs built permanent clay buildings in the late Middle Ages. According to Ataman Telyatnikov's visit to Tashkent, «Lieutenant and Ataman Telyatnikov's expedition to Tashkent» (May 1796), the Great Zhuz's house was built along the Arys River. There is information: «along the Arys river – the migration of the Great Horde of the Usun volost. ... in many places, little clay fortresses were built, of which, in the event of an attack [ka] of an enemy, that kaisaki volost, locked up with their wives and children, they repulse» (İstoria Kazahstana v Russkiih İstochnikah, 2007: 162). Archaeologists have shown that in addition to the construction of permanent buildings from clay, the southern Kazakhs built permanent houses, heated them with ore furnaces, and used tandoors (Zholdasbaev, 1978: 20).

The number of settlements under the rule of the Kazakh ruler Tauke Khan is named differently in different sources. Usually the exact number is indicated in Russian data, some data list their names. Russian ambassadors F. Skibin and M. Troshin, who visited the Kazakh Khanate in 1697, in their reports: «... The whole Kazakh Horde is close to Turkestan, the city is visible to the city, distant cities are not visible from the rocks, they are crossed by the steppe for 3 days, far from the Syrt River, not close to the rivers, there are many wells in their cities, all their cities are 20» (Torgovlia s Moskovskim Gosudarstvom i Mezhdunarodnoe Polozhenie Srednei Azii, 1933: 265).

The Dzungar ambassadors, well aware of the situation in the Kazakh Khanate, made the following statement during a visit to Irkutsk: «Their cities are eleven, the ruler of which Tauke lives is called Yasu, the city is medium in size, large, including the surrounding towns ...» (Kazakhstan Tarihi, 2010: 181). According to Russian sources, there were 25 cities and 32 cities.

When the Kazakh khan Abilmambet met with the Chinese ambassador in 1759, he mentioned 21 settlements: «Tashkent, Beskent, Ordasaray, Karamurun, Sairam, Shymkent, Karabulak, Mankent, Ikan, Tashanak, Karnak, Sauran, Karachik, Akkorgan, Uzkont, Suzak, Kazakhdyzholyk, Kulantobe, Koshosar, Mukhamozhyn and Zhankent» (Ezhenhanuly, 2006: 73). According to the calculations of K.M. Baipakov, in the written data there are about 20, and in the XV-XVIII centuries the number of

settlements with layers reached 23 (Baipakov, 1990: 67). According to M. Tuyakbayev's book, there are only 16 post-medieval settlements in Turkestan district (Tuiakbaev, 2009: 66). K.M. Baipakov's list of archeological sites on this study includes the following medieval settlements: Sairam, Otyartobe, Turkestan (otherwise Old Turkestan), Sauran, Sunakata, Suzak, Tortkultobe, Karaspan II, Ikan, Ishkan (otherwise Ishkent), Sortobe, Zhoynektobe (otherwise), Tortkul II (otherwise known as Karachik), Sutkent II, Kauganata, Bozyk, Kotan, Kyrgyzent, Akkorgan, Kultobe, Ran, Shaga, Shymkent. In addition, M. Tuyakbayev the monuments of Abdal-Malik-Tashanak, Koskorgan, Saukhim-ata, Kultobe-Orangai, Tortkul-Babaykorgan, Mirtobe, Zhana Sauran, Tortkul-Kushata in Turkestan district (Tuiakbaev, 2009: 67). Of course, not all of these towns were cities. Although they are small settlements, they are still called cities.

Conclusion

Recent archaeological studies in Kazakhstan have profoundly reshaped our understanding of the political and socio-economic dynamics of the Kazakh Khanate. Historically, the Kazakh Khanate was perceived primarily as a nomadic state, dominated by a pastoral economy and the movement of various tribal groups. This view was heavily influenced by early historiography, which emphasized the nomadic lifestyle as the defining characteristic of the Kazakh people. However, the discovery of archaeological sites and the in-depth study of urban centers have revealed that cities were an integral part of the Kazakh Khanate's territorial integrity. The presence of these urban settlements not only indicates a more complex socio-political structure but also highlights their role in bridging the nomadic and sedentary cultures within the Khanate. Cities such as Otrar, Sauran, Turkestan, and Almaty, among others, played pivotal roles in shaping the political, economic, and cultural landscape of the region. These cities were not merely strategic hubs but centers of trade, administration, and education, which directly influenced the governance and economic policies of the Kazakh Khanate.

The archaeological evidence points to a significant interplay between nomadic and urban populations, particularly in the Syr Darya basin. Many of the cities located in this region, including Otrar and Sauran, developed as part of a broader network that supported both sedentary agriculturalists and nomadic tribes. These cities were strategically positioned along key trade routes, most notably the Silk

Road, facilitating exchange not only in goods but also in ideas and culture. This interaction between nomadic and sedentary societies led to the formation of hybrid socio-economic structures, wherein the nomads provided vital resources, such as livestock, while the urban populations contributed with agricultural produce, crafts, and trade goods. The existence of permanent settlements alongside nomadic communities suggests a complex, interdependent relationship that contributed to the resilience and expansion of the Kazakh Khanate.

Furthermore, the material culture uncovered through archaeological excavations, such as the presence of grain storage facilities, suggests that urban centers were not merely passive trading posts but actively engaged in economic production. For example, in Otrar, the discovery of grain reserves in homes indicates a level of surplus production that likely catered to both local needs and external trade. Similarly, the estates surrounding cities like Sauran were utilized for agricultural production, where crops, orchards, and vineyards were cultivated to support the urban population. These findings underscore the importance of agriculture in sustaining urban life, while also pointing to the role of these cities as key players in the broader economic system of the Kazakh Khanate. Thus, the integration of urban centers into the economic fabric of the Khanate was essential for its political and social cohesion, ensuring the supply of essential resources and fostering economic exchanges with neighboring states.

The role of cities in the Kazakh Khanate extends beyond economic functions to include their contributions to cultural and intellectual life. The medieval period, particularly the era of the Turkic Khaganates and the spread of Islam, witnessed the flourishing of urban culture in Kazakhstan. The Islamic Renaissance, with its emphasis on knowledge, art, and architecture, profoundly influenced the development of cities in the Kazakh Khanate. Urban centers became important cultural hubs where Islamic scholarship, art, and architecture reached unprecedented levels of sophistication. The cities of Otrar and Turkestan, for instance, were not only administrative centers but also intellectual and religious focal points, facilitating the spread of Islamic teachings and culture throughout Central Asia. This cultural exchange was not only instrumental in shaping the identity of the Kazakh Khanate but also in fostering a sense of shared heritage with other Muslim states along the Silk Road. The role of these cities as centers of knowledge and culture further solidified their significance within the political and social framework of the Kazakh Khanate.

In conclusion, the integration of urban centers into the socio-political structure of the Kazakh Khanate challenges the traditional view of the Khanate as solely a nomadic polity. The archaeological and historical evidence underscores the complexity of the Kazakh Khanate's development, wherein urban and nomadic elements coexisted and mutually reinforced each other. The cities played a crucial role in the political organization of the Khanate, serving as administrative, economic, and cultural centers that

facilitated governance and trade. Moreover, these urban centers, through their economic activities, intellectual exchanges, and cultural advancements, significantly contributed to the prosperity and stability of the Kazakh Khanate. Therefore, understanding the dual nature of the Kazakh Khanate, combining both nomadic and urban elements, is essential for a comprehensive interpretation of its historical development and its impact on the broader history of Central Asia.

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