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**TURKESTAN IS THE CAPITAL OF THE KAZAKH KHANATE**

**Abstract**

In this article characterize the history of Turkestan. On the basis of historical sources the authors analyze how the city of Yassy became Turkestan. In the XVI and before the XIX centuries Turkestan city was the political, administrative, religious and economic center of the Kazakh Khanate.

**Key words:** Yassy, Turkestan, sources, Kazakh Khanate, capital.

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**ТҮРКІСТАН – ҚАЗАҚ ХАНДЫҒЫНЫҢ АСТАНАСЫ**

**Аңдатпа**

Мақалада Түркістан қаласының тарихы қарастырылады. Авторлар тарихи деректерге сүйеніп Йассы қаласы қалай Түркістан қаласына айналғанын талдайды. XVI ғ. – ХІХ ғ. басында Түркістан Қазақ хандығының саяси, әкімшілік, діни және экономикалық орталығы болды.

**Кілт сөздер**: Йассы, Түркістан, деректер, Қазақ хандығы, астана.

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**ТУРКЕСТАН – СТОЛИЦА КАЗАХСКОГО ХАНСТВА**

**Аннотация**

В статье рассматривается история города Туркестана. На основе исторических источников авторы проанализируют как город Яссы стал Туркестаном. В XVI-начала ХIХ вв. город Туркестан был

политическим, административным, религиозным и экономическим центром Казахского ханства.

**Ключевые слова**: Яссы, Туркестан, источники, Казахское ханство, столица.

Kazakh people and cities. Before the abolition of the Khan’s power in 1816, cities were an integral part of the Kazakh history and culture. Many Persian-Turkic works and especially Russian sources contain valuable information about the late medieval urban centers of South Kazakhstan. The cities in Kazakh Khanates are also recorded by Chinese chronicles. Telling about the Kazakh Senior Zhuz (according to Chinese sources “Western Kazakh Horde”), the Ching source notes: “This Horde resembles the Eastern Horde in the lifestyle, but it has cities” [1]. In the chapter on the Middle Zhuz people in the Ching epoch: “At present the Khan’s ulus is called Otrayuyz (Otyrar), the residence of Eshim khan. He lives in the city of Kashtyn” [2]. As the Kazakh Khanate strengthened and its territories expanded during the stability periods the number of cities subordinate to the steppe rulers grew, and sometimes their power extended to the large urban centers 211-212 of Central Asia, but in troubled times of civil strife and defeat Kazakh people lost most of the main commercial аnd urban infrastructure of their state in Southern Kazakhstan. The largest trade and craft centers of the Kazakh Khanates were Turkestan, Tashkent, Sairam, Sozak, Syganak, Sauran and Otyrar. They performed administrative, economic, cultural functions in the state. All the cities and towns had fortifications. Sauran was one of the best fortresses of Turkestan. Bukhara khan Abdullah called siege-stone-making machines for the siege of the city [3]. Most of the cities of Kazakh Khanate in the sources had centuries-old history, but some towns and fortresses of the khanate were built by the direct order of the Kazakh rulers. We present a summary of the fortifications, erected by Kazakh khans and other steppe rulers in the XVI- XVIII centuries. In his work “Badai al-wakai” Vasifi mentioned the fortress Jatan, built by the Kazakh khan Takhir in

the first half of the XVI century “to repel the Kalmak troops” [4]. Tole bi (bi- judge who resolve controversial issues) of the Senior Zhuz built a fortified headquarters on the bank of the Chirchik river: “from Tashkent with a short distance at noon I built a town on the canal from the Tsyrtsyut River to Tashkent and populated various residents here ... living in that town, they plow and sow bread for him, Tyule-bi”. Moreover, the fortress occupied such an important strategic position that “if he wants, the current channel immediately can be dammed and put in another direction, Tashkent people would to die because of water scarcity for arable land” [5]. Abylai Khan (1711 -1780) “built the walled house for his son Adil sultan at the request of the Kirgiz-Kazakhs of the Great Horde at the Talash river and founded the village of Karakalpak people near him, accustomed to arable farming” [6]. Judging by major-general N.G.Ogarev’s report, the khan restored the city Zhetikent. “His children Adil, Urustyam and Tok sultans remained on this side of Turkestan city, rebuilt by Abylai, not far from the town of Itneente” [7]. There is a message about the construction of fortification on the

river Syrdarya by Kara-Bulat, a rich Kazakh man from the Junior Zhuz at the end of the XVIII century [8].

The fortifications for protection were erected not only by the representatives of nobility, also by some Kazakh clans. So according to “Journal of sub-lieutenant and ataman Telyatnikov’s campaign in Tashkent (May 1796) “the wandering place of the Great Horde in Usunsk volost is along the Arys river. ... in many places small clay fortresses were built by the Kaisaks (Kazakhs) of that volost, and they locked up their wives and children in case of attack of any enemy” [9]. Besides the clay fortresses, there were stone fortifications. F.Nazarov pointed out that the Kazakh people “have stone fortifications to protect from robbery and black/stone/ Kyrgyz attack near which you can see the cultivated fields and moving yurts” [10]. In the Karatau mountains archaeologists identified two stone fortresses as Kyryk-Kyz and Bala-Kurgan of the ХV–ХVІІІ centuries. Nearby there is a burial ground. Judging by the tamgas, there are representatives of all three Kazakh zhuzes

among the buried [11]. In a number of sources there is information about the Kazakh people, living in the late medieval cities of South Kazakhstan. In the document relating to the end of the XVI century Arabs, Turks, Kazakhs and Karakalpaks were mentioned as the population of Syganak [12]. According to the report on Teush-Mergen’s trip to Turkestan city in 1693, “the Kazakh people that live in that city with Tevki (Tauke) Khan are about 1000 men and women” [13]. In the journal record of negotiations of 1740 the head of Argyn tribes Nyaz Batyr is noted as a resident of Turkestan city [14]. In addition to the aforementioned fortified town, Tole bi of the Senior Zhuz had a house in Tashkent, where his wife and two sons lived [15]. Except the representatives of Kazakh elite, there were also impoverished people in the cities. Saying about the towns between Tashkent and Turkestan in 1735, the merchant S.Arslanov noted that they were inhabited by the sarts, “the poor Kirgiz-Kaisaks live among them” [16]. In his story about the settlement geography of the people from the Senior Zhuz, A.I. Levshin notes that “some people live in Tashkent, Turkestan and neighboring villages” [17]. According to Y.P.Gaverdovsky, “many Kirgiz people of this horde (the Middle Zhuz - author) have already established permanent settlements near the Karatau mountains and in Tashkenya (Tashkent) [18]. According to Christopher Bardanes, in the second half of the XVIII century the part of Kazakh people of the Senior Zhuz “live in their houses in Tashkent and Turkestan, Tasanak and Susak, although they have their tents in the steppes, where they go in summer, those who are already accustomed to city life and close to some handicrafts also plow the land and sow wheat, spring rye, barley, millet and white wheat...” [19]. In the late feudal Bukhara there was a separate quarter of Kazakh people, consisting of 15 houses [20]. The process of transformation of the Kazakh nomads into settled population is evidenced, for example, by the statements of the inhabitants of Shymkent city at the beginning of the XX century that “they are descendants

of people from Otyrar and Turkestan, and not of pure sart type, but a mixture with Kyrgyz people”. According to eyewitnesses, the current inhabitants of Turkestan city differed little from the steppe inhabitants by their language and anthropological type [21]. In the ethnic composition of modern Kazakh people there are a number of clans, originating from urban residents [22]. In the first place, these are Sunak and Khoja groups [23, 24, 25]. Sunaks are the descendants of

people from Syganak. The names of some modern divisions of Khoja as Otyrar-Khoja, akkorgan are directly related to the urbonyms of late medieval cities of South Kazakhstan and indicate the place of their ancestors’ residence. Thus, during the Kazakh Khanate there was a transformation and infiltration of nomadic Kazakh

people into settled population. During the urban culture decline a part of settled settlements, adapting to the new situation, merged with the steppe inhabitants [22].

The cities of Sydarya and Karatau became the main political, economic and cultural centers of the Kazakh Khanate [26]. However, this process was preceded by the struggle between the Kazakh rulers and Timurids (Medieval Central Asian Turkic-Mongolian dynasty), Shaybanids (ruling dynasty in the Bukhara Khanate) and other rivals for the cities of Middle Syrdarya. After the death of Abulkhair, the ruler of the state of nomadic Uzbeks, Kazakh khans began to fight for the cities. According to written sources, one of the first major cities under the Kazakh power was Suzak on the northern slopes of Karatau and stretched out to the steppe. Archaeologists have identified a number of small settlements of the XVI-XVIII centuries in Suzak district, in particular, Kultobe and Ran [27]. Zhanibek’s eldest son Mahmud-Sultan became the ruler of Suzak. The founders of Kazakh Khanate sought to return Turkestan city that belonged to their great-grandfather and father (Oryskhan and Barak). In the last three decades of the XV century Timurids, Shaibanids and Kazakh Khans fought for the Syrdarya cities. According to “Tavarikh-i guzida-yi Nusrat-name”, in 1470 “Kilai Khan came to Turkestan as an enemy” [28]. Zhanibek’s son Irenji sultan became the owner of Sauran. In 1472 Muhammad Shaibani again tried to establish himself in the cities of Turkestan. Suzak became the main base of the Kazakh people during the struggle with Shaibanids for the Syrdarya cities. According to “Shaibani-name”, the Kazakh rulers “collected infantrymen and cavalry from the people of Suzak and environs

of Kara-Kurun, united [them into one] to a large army” [29]. In the fight with the Kazakh people Shaibani was defeated and had to go to Khorezm. In the early 90s of the XV century Shaibani captured Otyrar, Sauran and Yassy with the support of Mogul Khan. At the end of the XV century the struggle between Kazakh Khans and Muhammad Shaibani ended with a temporary peace. The northern part of Turkestan with Syganak, Sauran and Karatau area with Suzak and other settlements remained under the rule of Kazakh Khans [30]. In the XVI century the war for Turkestan city continued. In Alam-ara-yi Shah Ismail Safavi’s manuscript,

recently discovered in Iran, there is information about the region of “thousands of cities and villages”, the governors of which are appointed by Kasym Khan. Moreover, this area was in the south “to the plain of the Tashkent mountains and Barkent” [31] i.e. the present south Kazakhstan, bordering with Tashkent and known as a city and district Sairam in the Middle Ages. Thus, most cities of the Middle Syrdarya became the part of Kasym’s Khanate [32]. At the same time the Kazakh Khans captured Saraichyk in the west of Deshti-Kipchak and according to Mirza Muhammad Khaydar, at that time Buryndyk Khan was in Saraichyk [36]. Kasym’s death and the troubled period of this city in the ХVІ century made the Kazakh rulers leave Saraichyk and soon it again became the central city of Nogai Horde. During the Kazakh Khanate consolidation the power of the steppe khans extended to a number of cities in Central Asia, and Kazakh people lost some of the cities of Turkestan region in those troubled times. Only by the end of the XVI century Kazakh people got all the cities of historical region of Turkestan and Tashkent city.

**HOW THE CITY OF YASSY BECAME TURKESTAN**

In the sources of the XV-XVII centuries middle course of the Syrdarya is named by its geographical name Turkestan. The historical region of Turkestan included the narrow strip, extending along the left bank of the Syrdarya, and the wider one along the right bank. It was bounded by the Karatau mountain range in the northeast and the watershed of Chirchik and Badam valleys, by Sairam in the south [33]. On the background of decay of the Central Syrdarya cities in the XV century the importance of Yassy increased as a political, administrative and economic center of the historical region of Turkestan. At the beginning of the XVI century Ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani noted the new role of Yassy: “Yassy city is the tomb of His Ho liness Hadji, an extensive and fruitful possession and the capital of Turkestan region” [34]. Ottoman historian Mahmud al-Kafavi (died in 1582) wrote about “Yassy, as the seat of Turkistan king” [35]. In the late medieval sources Yassy was called either “Yassy fortress” or “Turkestan fortress” due to the events of 70-80s in the XVI century [36]. The change of the name Yassy is explicable only in the context of political and economic history of the Syrdarya region in the XIV-XV centuries. In the ХІІ-ХІV centuries Yassy was a small town. In the second half of the ХІV century Middle Syrdarya basin belonged to Ak Orda. According to “Chingiz-name” by Utemis-haji, the ruler of Ak Orda (ancestor of the Kazakh Khans; 1361-1375) Urus Khan “became a great sovereign and ruler of the vilayets of all Turkestan region” [37]. The residences of Ak Orda rulers were usually in Syganak, less often in Sauran. In the XIV century Yassy was a small town. The spread of Islam in Deshti-Kipchak and the acceptance of Islam by the Chingizids

(Genghis Khan descendants) contributed to the growth of Yassy settlement, where there is a holy place, the grave of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. In the Timurid historiography the city Yassy is mentioned for the first time in connection with the war between Amir Temur and Tokhtamys Khan (1376-1395). Both sides waged a long war for the cities in the Middle Syrdarya. In the last quarter of the XIV century Temur established his control over the lands near Syrdarya and his governors were located in Otyrar. At the end of the XIV and beginning of the XV centuries the grand mausoleum-hanaka of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was built there. Temur’s governors were in the capital city of the region Otyrar. After Temur’s death his governor in Otyrar participated in civil strife and even tried to seize the power from Timurids, which led to the defeat of Otyrar in 1411. In 1455 Timurids had to suppress a new insurgency in Otyrar. After these pogroms Otyrar stopped playing the role of administrative center of the historical region of Turkestan and minting coins by the middle of the XV century. At the same time extraordinary

events occur in Yassy: the inner fortresses were erected and the mint began to function. According to “Fatah-name” by Molla Shadi and “Shaibani-name” by Kamal al-Din (Shir-) Ali Binai, the residence of Timurid governor Sultan Ahmed was here [38]. Later the city became the center of Shaibanid governors in

Turkestan region [39]. Three richly decorated carved columns of the old mosques in Turkestan date back to the XV century. Judging by the inscription on one of columns, they originate from a mosque, built in 875/1470-71 by the order of Emir Muhammad ibn Buka ibn Amir Dadkh; master carver was Isa [40]. The position of Yassy (capital) contributed to its transformation into the center of economic and commercial life of the region. According to Fazlallah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani: “goods and precious items are brought to Yassy and bargaining takes place there, it is the place where merchants unload goods and the place of departure for other countries” [41]. Now the claims to Yassy meant the claims to the whole Turkestan. Turkestan became associated with the name of the capital city of the region, which led to the parallel coexistence of the two city names, and then to the replacement of Yassy by Turkestan. Mahmud ibn Wali, a historian of the XVII century, wrote: “Today Turkestan is a city of Saksi and people call it Yassy” [39]. However, the urbonym Yassy is found also in the sources of the XVIII century. As P.I.Rychkov wrote in the middle of the XVIII century, Turkestan “has another name Yassy, which is older than Turkestan” [42]. Among the local population there was one more name of the city as Aziret. The origin of this urbonym is due to the tomb of Ahmed Yasawi, whose honorary names is Khaziret-i Turkestan, and Aziret is in an abbreviated version that became one of the names of Turkestan. Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi and its adjacent territory from the ХV century turn into the burial place of representatives of the ruling houses and elites of eastern Deshti-Kipchak. 60 meters from the main portal of the Khoja Ahmed Yasawi mausoleum, there is a beautiful mausoleum for Abulkhair Khan’s (1429-1468) wife Rabia Sultan Begim, who died in 1485 [43]. One of the founders of the Kazakh state (1465/66–1474) Zhanibek Khan’s daughter Aman Bike was buried in the jamaat-khana of the mausoleum. The following inscription is carved on the grave: “This is the tomb of the forgiven, pardoned (by God), pious, chaste Aman Bike Khanym, Zhanibek Khan’s daughter, and Barak Khan’s granddaughter. (Died) on the date of the month Rajab of 925/June-July 1519 [45; 46].

**THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE KAZAKH KHANS**

Turkestan was finally included into the Kazakh Khanate (1466-1847) at the end of the XVI century. This is evidenced by the Kazakh Khans charter about the appointment of attendants – mutawalli and shaykh al-Islam of the mausoleum of Ahmed Yasawi in Turkestan. Currently in A.L.Kun’s (an orientalist) personal archive (St. Petersburg) there are copies of Tavakkul (Tauekel) Khan’s letters dated to 1006/1597-1598 and 1014/1605-1606 [47]. According to Kadir-Ali-bi, Tavakkul-Khan’s brother and Shigai Khan’s son Ondan (1580-1582) was buried in the Turkestan pantheon “Ondan sultan’s deeds in different places … he was an

extremely great hero - shooter … During Shigai Khan (he) was the head of the army. His actions are known and obvious ... in his 30s he came to his end. His tomb under the shelter of Khoja Ahmed Yassawi ... [there] he was buried” [48].

One of the Kazakh Khans with the power extended to Turkestan was Tursun-Muhammad Khan (1613-1627). In 1867 during his trip to Turkestan the orientalist P.Lerch saw fifteen letters (charters) sent to Turkestan saint from various owners, and also Tursun Khan’s letter dated 1035/1625-26 was among them [49]. The

copies of this Kazakh ruler’s letters are stored in St. Petersburg [47]. The official residence of Kazakh Khans at the end of XVII and the beginning of XIX centuries was Turkestan city. It is believed that Esim Khan (1598–1614; 1627-1628) was the first to place his stake in Turkestan. The famous historian Abilgazy wrote about his three-month stay at Esim Khan in Turkestan [50]. In the book of the Dutch burgomaster and merchant N.Witsen Turkestan was the residence of “Tevki Khan, the ruler of Kazak regions”. The description of the city is noteworthy: “It is surrounded by water; the earthworks are covered with sand with flat rotundas. The rotunda at Tevki (Tauke) Khan’s house was built of air-dried brick. There are six rotundas up to the city gates and they are made of raw bricks. The walls of the city

are strong enough compared to other cities. The length of the wall along the perimeter is more than one mile, and this is approximately one fifth of the German mile” [51]. In the Russian embassy archives the description of Turkestan at the end of the XVII century has been preserved: “And Turkestan city was built of air-dried

brick, and in other places of burnt brick. That city is in height of 3 sazhens (Russian measure of length, equivalent to 2,13 metres), in thickness of 2 arshins (0.711 m.) and a sazhen, in a circle of 500 sazhens and there are arrow slits on the walls. In this city the tower passes through a quarter of the gate. The Kazakh people, who live with Tevki Khan in that city, are about 1000 men and women” [52]. During Tauke Khan’s reign (no later than 1672 - 1715) the number of cities under the Kazakh authority in the Syrdarya reached 32 [53]. Referring to the information of the merchant from Tobol, N.Witsen says: “while thirty-two small towns can be identified in Kazakh territories as a whole”. The management of cities was carried out through governors, appointed by the khan and chosen from his relative-sultans. According to N.Witsen, during Tauke Khan, the ruler of Suzak was “Abla-sultan” (Abylai-sultan, future Abylai Khan’s grandfather), Sauran - Kaz-Sultan (Kazhi, Abulhair Khan’s father), Syrnak (apparently Syganak) - Ishim-

Sultan, Karnak - Haip-Sultan, Ikana - “Bulat-Sultan” (Abulmambet Khan’s father), Otrova (Otyrar) – Tursun Khan, Sairam - Karabas-sultan [54]. When the khans left the capital cities in Turkestan and Tashkent, they left their people devoted to khan.

In Tashkent during Zholbarys Khan (1720-1739) one of them was “Tulya Bi (Tole bi), the most distinguished Kaisak of the Great Horde, who is more honored than the khan in Tashkent” [55]. In Turkestan the person, trusted by the khan was “Nyaz-batyr, the most distinguished foreman of the Middle Horde”, who is known

as a great power during Shemyak Khan in Turkestan and the ruler of Turkestan after the khan’s death” [56]. The Kazakh Khans received foreign ambassadors in Turkestan. The reception of Russian ambassadors by Tauke Khan on July 22, 1694 is stored in Russian sources. It is noteworthy that during these negotiations the Kazakh Khan demanded equal relations, stating that both the Turkish Sultan and Persian Khan are not higher than he: “what way is Turkish Sultan or Kyzylbash Shakh higher than Tevki (Tauke) Khan? They are the same as he is” [57]. On the plan of Turkestan city, compiled in 1743 by the Russian envoy Major Karl Miller, the fenced under-triangular area with a tower inside the city is marked with the word “khan’s” [58]. Russian sources note that “Kaiyp Khan has the capital city Terkustan (Turkestan)” [59]. Turkestan was the residence of Abulkhair (1719–1748), senior Kazakh Khan in the period from 1719 to 1724 with short breaks. At the beginning of the XVIII century Turkestan and Sairam was captured by Dzungars. In 1724 Abulkhair freed Turkestan from Dzungars and for about a year kept the city and villages under his control, but in early 1725 he had to leave South Kazakhstan under the pressure of superior enemy [60]. Solemn ceremonies of the Kazakh Khans’ enthronement took place in Turkestan. In 1737-1738 Sultan Abulmambet “Pulat Khan’s son in Turkestan was the most distinguished among the nobles of Kirghiz-Kaisak (Kyrgyz-Kazakh) clans as Argyns, Aktai and Uvakgirey and others...” [61]. A remarkable message about the solemn election of Abylai as the senior Kazakh Khan: “... in 1771 ... all our notable and eminent people, the khans of the Kazakh yurt Uch-Alach, cities and steppe areas, as well as notable people of Turkestan yurt agreed to appoint me in charge of all the khans. According to our custom and according to the rules of previous khans in Turkestan, where our holy Haziret Khoja Ahmed Yasawi died, Fatiha (the first surah of the Kuran) was read at his grave and I was appointed khan ... ” [62]. Thus, in the late middle ages the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi served as the coronation site of the supreme Kazakh rulers. The sultans, biis, influential people of the three zhuzes and “noble people of Turkestan yurt”, city representatives took place in the ceremony of electing the senior khan. The arrival of Kazakh Khans in Turkestan was held solemnly. According to the source on June 24, 1744: “As Abulmamet Khan approached the city, there was such a meeting and not a single person left in the city ... And at the ceremony copper pipes, ... which are longer than a sazhen were playing... and beating in clay drums, like pots with leather tires. And besides, three cows were brought to be bowed to him in their manner, the khan made a circle three times as a sign of his welcome for reception ... Khan came to the city solemnly. And as he entered, firstly, he drove into their main mosque, to the place of saint ...” [63]. Meetings of the highest Kazakh nobility were held in Turkestan. The source recorded the arrival of the famous Kazakh bi in Turkestan Tole Alibek-uly in July, 1744: “... the most prominent Kaisak (Kazakh) Tulya bi came to Turkestan from the Great Horde ... to see Abulmamet Khan” [64]. In the 60s of the XVIII century there was a real threat of Chinese invasion of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. In 1762 Chinese ambassadors came to Abulmambet Khan (1748–1771) and Abylai sultan and reported the Bogdykhan’s intention to send troops to make sacrifice according to Chinese custom, at the tomb of Khoja Ahmed in Turkestan with the onset of spring. In 1763 due to the threat of war, a kurultai (congress) gathered in Turkestan, and according to some sources there were six thousand influential people of the Kazakh land. At the kurultai they decided to support the anti-Ching coalition of the Muslim peoples of Central Asia, led by the

Afghan Shah Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747–1773) [65]. The towns near the Syrdarya represented the main material-technical base and trade-urban infrastructure of the Kazakh Khanate. They played an important role in the trade of nomads with agricultural areas. Ruzbihan writes about the historical region of Turkestan: “Many goods, fat sheep, horses, camels and other valuable goods, such as fur coats of sable and squirrel, tight bows, white birch arrows, silk fabrics and other precious items come to this country from Deshti, Haji Tarkhan. Since Syganak is the well-maintained center in relation to the Deshti inhabitants, the merchants from Deshti-Kipchak to the Adil River ... made Syganak a place of their warehouses (and) bring goods here” [66]. Written and archaeological sources indicate that the people of the cities in South Kazakhstan grew cotton and weaved. N.Witsen notes that in Turkestan city “trading goes on with cotton fabrics, red and white, of the lowest quality that the Bukharians produce here in the Kazak regions” [67]. In Ikan there is information about the development of local fabrics production in Turkestan district: “there is abundant cotton paper from which they have woven things and they sell the excess” [68]. Firearms were bought at the market in Turkestan or in the cities of Central Asia. According to Teush-Mergen, “in the markets of Turkestan they sell good handguns [69]. The lead deposit was “a lot in the mountain called Suvundu near Turkestan, and everyone who needs take and pour bullets” [70]. The sources say about the Kazakh rulers’ interest in the economic prosperity of cities. N.Witsen writes about Turkestan: “There is a fair there. Tevki Khan himself rides a horse with a bow and quiver of arrows over his shoulder to open a trade” [71]. At the meeting with representatives of Russia the Khan’s governor in Turkestan Nyaz-Batyr raised the issue of trade and stated on behalf of the “best people” that “they strongly wish to continue trading to Turkestan ... and to Tashkent without difficulty”. Turkestan and other cities of the same historical area played an important role in the spiritual life of Kazakh people. There were mosques, khanaka - the centers of the Sufi orders, the tombs of Muslim saints. In 1691 in response to questions about the cities of the Kazak Horde, the envoys of Galdan Boshoktukhan reported that “in the cities there are great mosques, where they gather for the prayer” [73]. There were many holy sites in Turkestan, and the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was one of the most revered shrines of Central Asia. Another name of the city, Aziret, was distributed to the local population. Urbonym is recorded in the materials of D.Telyatnikov and A.Beznosikov’s trip in Tashkent in 1796-1797: “Turkestan, and Aziret in Kaisak (Kazakh)” [74]. Turkestan was also known as Aziret-Sultan: “The regional city Turkestan, otherwise called Aziret-Sultan, is revered as a sacred place by the Mohammedans, because there are many monuments and tombs with ashes of saints” [75]. The origin of these urbonyms is associated with the honorary name of Yasawi-Khaziret-i Turkestan or Aziret. It is another city name. One of the first descriptions of the famous mausoleum in European literature is given in Witsen’s book: “The grave of the holy man Aziret-khoja is in astana” “There is a building in this city, and it is called “astana” … the walls are painted in different colors, certain places with gilding, and two turrets above. Inside this astana there are more than hundred rooms. In one of the rooms there is a cauldron of human height ... The grave of the holy man Aziret-khoja is in this astana” [76]. Turkestan was one of the centers of confessional education and medieval science, since a number

of maktabs and madrasas functioned in the city and it is mentioned by the Turkestan author Abd al-Gafur Turkistani [77]. The children of the steppe elite studied here. Settling in the village Karnak under Turkestan, Sultan Kenessary indulged in “contemplative life under the guidance of ishan Rahman-Izler” [78].

In Turkestan, the manuscript “Kissa Dastan of Genghis Khan” was written by the order of Kazakh sultan Ali Akbar (Karabash Muhammad sultan’s son) in 1228/1813. It contains a number of unknown data on genealogy and the burial sites of Kazakh Khans and other rulers of Central Asia [79]. In the XVIII century the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was the burial place of the highest Kazakh nobility. In 1759 speaking with Chinese envoys, the sultan of the Middle Zhuz Abylai mentioned Turkestan city as “the burial place of older generation” [80]. The author of the first monographic study about the Kazakh people at the end of the XVIII century, I.G.Andreev noted the special status of Turkestan city, where “the

khans and sultans of their generations, who honoured Khazret-Sultan since ancient times for holiness, were buried there” [81]. M.-S.Bekchurin published a special article about the monument in 1866, where he pointed out that “inside the temple ... all Turkestan sheikh al-Islams, khojas, seids, all former hakims (administrators) of Turkestan and most honorable biis (outstanding people) of kongyrat were buried there ... and the graves of some Kyrgyz sultans of the Middle and Little Hordes, famous Abylai Khan and all the ancestors of Abulkhair, the rulers of Turkestan” were also there [82]. According to the manuscript “Kissa Dastan of Genghis Khan” Taukkal Muhammad Bahadur-Khan (Tauke Khan) (1672-1715), Shah Muhammad Bahadur-Khan (Semeke Khan) (1741-1745) were buried in Turkestan. According to this source, Esim Khan (1598–1614; 1627-1628) was buried in Tashkent in Shaikhantaur. Most likely, Esim (Eshim), Sameke Khan’s younger son and Tauke Khan’s grandson was buried in the small mausoleum in the khanaka of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. The khan ruled in the 50s of the XVIII century, 1798 [83]. In the memory of the old-timers of Turkestan of the XIX - XX centuries that reflected in the literature, the graves of famous Kazakh Khans of the XVIII century were most of all impressed and they were associated with the victories of the Kazakhs over the Dzungars. In the diary of A.K.Gaines, who lived in Turkestan on September

26 to September 1 in 1866, the graves of two Kazakh Khans Abylai and Zholbarys were described: “we were shown Ablyai Khan’s grave, made of marble ... And another historical figure Zholbarys (Yolbars) Khan of the Great Horde is buried not far from Abylai. The grave of Zholbarys is covered with a carved wooden lattice. On the clay pedestal near it there is a whole bunch of ovis argali heads with huge horns. Mullahs say it is a gift of the Kyrgyz people, who come to pray at the tomb of Yolbars” [84]. According to the story of Askar-Koja, the influential descendant of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, whom A.K.Gaines visited on August 27, 1866: “Yolbars was the Great Horde Khan and with his subjects he wandered on the Syr-Chu and the Karatau mountains, the places now occupied by the Great Horde, belonged to the Kalmyks before their destruction by Manjurs” [85]. The corridor in the plan of the mausoleum in 1884, the khan’s tomb is marked as “Yolbars Khan” [86]. Judging by the publication of N.S.Lykoshina, who visited the khanaka of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi with the Kazakh pilgrims, the tomb of Abylai turned into a holy place: “When we entered the right side of the mosque and went to Abylai Khan’s tomb, my companion began to pour the floor for his Kyrgyz acquaintance’s soul and for his own … Muslims firmly believe that to be buried near the saint is a sure way to free themselves from the wrath of God on the day of judgment, because the saint intercede for all those, who were buried at a

certain distance from his grave ... and with such faith the Kyrgyz people arrange their hills near Abylai Khan’s grave” [87]. Therefore, Abylai Khan’s burial place was well known both to the residents of Turkestan and steppe people (the information is given in the monographs by O. Ismagulov, M. Kozha, A. Ismagulova [88]). I.G. Andreev writes about the burial of Abulfeiz sultan (? -1783) in Turkestan: “He died in 1783 and in 1784 his body was taken to Turkestan by his son” [81]. And more than 120 years after this Kazakh ruler’s death Kurbangali Khalidi tells about the place of his grave in the holy place for the Kazakh people [89]. The ruler of Middle Zhuz people, Bokei Khan (no later than 1735–1819) was also buried here [90]. Kasym’s grandson writes about the burial of his father in the khanaka of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi [78]. According to N.N.Balkashin Kenesary’s elder sister Bopai is also in Khoja Ahmed Yasawi mosque [91]. According to the legends at the end of the ХІХ-ХХ centuries, Kazybek Keldibekuly (1667-1763), the great bi of the ХVІІІ century and one of the authors of the steppe code of laws “Jeti Zhargy” (Seven Charters), Shakshak Zhanibek and Shon bi found eternal peace in the khanaka of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. Legends say that famous steppe knight-batyr Kanzhygali Bogembay was also buried there. Unfortunately, in the Soviet period of history the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was considered

only as a monument of medieval architecture, not as a pantheon, the burial place of many prominent representatives of the Kazakh people. In the course of restoration work some ancient burials were destroyed and most of the gravestones were moved without proper fixation and research. Some tombstones were used for the

foundation of mausoleum and lost to science [92]. With the independence of Kazakhstan the work to clarify the historical people, buried in the mausoleum is being carried out. A list of prominent steppe elite representatives of the medieval and modern era, buried in Turkestan, has been made on the basis of surviving epitaphs, data of written sources and folk legends. In the XVI and before the XIX centuries Turkestan city was the political, administrative, religious and economic center of the Kazakh Khanate. The khans received foreign ambassadors, elected supreme rulers and conducted kurultais that decided the historical fate of the Kazakh people. The representatives of the three zhuzes and historical Turkestan region proclaimed Abylai as the khan of all Kazakh zhuzes. Many prominent figures of the steppe elite: khans, biis, batyrs are buried here and therefore, the study of the history of Turkestan in the Kazakh Khanate period is one of the urgent tasks of historical science of our state. Without studying the history of Turkestan, it is impossible to reconstruct the past and understand the present independent Kazakhstan.

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