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# The Patrimonial Project of Dzhankent

## *Constructing a National Symbol in the longue durée*

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### Abstract

The archaeological site of Dzhankent, in addition to its geographical position and the wealth of finds from there, occupies a special place for several other reasons, too. It was the first site in Central Asia to be excavated (1740-1741) and photographed (1858), and it has recently become one of the national symbols of independent Kazakhstan (since 1991). Over the period of more than 270 years during which it has been studied, Dzhankent has been approached by generations of explorers, excavators and researchers from different theoretical positions and with different aims which have corresponded more or less to political or geopolitical programmes. The aim of this contribution is, on the one hand, to show how the various actors who worked at this site related to one another and to the various types of power (local, Tsarist, Soviet), and on the other hand, to analyze the changes in the theoretical approaches of these actors. At the same time, it is important to trace the transformation of Dzhankent, in its pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial contexts, into a memorial supposedly linked to imperial or national identities which, in turn, had been forged around a constructed past.

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\* Leninsky Prospekt 32A, 119991, Moscow. The research on which this article is based is part of the research theme No. 01201370995 "Cross-cultural and Interdisciplinary Research" of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences.

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## Keywords

Central Asia – Dzhanakent – history of archaeology – Soviet archaeology – collective memory – heritage

### 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In February 1867, an anonymous correspondent from Orenburg wrote a piece which appeared in the *Sankt-Peterburgskii Vedomosti* under the catchy title “Vazhnoe otkrytie” [An Important Discovery]. It told the story of how “an underground town” had been discovered in Turkestan, on the bank of the Syr-Darya (fig. 1). This town, which the author compared to Pompeii, once had stood on the shore of the Aral Sea, but was later deserted, “buried under sand, silt and salt marsh, and overgrown with camelthorns.”<sup>2</sup> The town, as the author thought, could have been founded by Cyrus, or Alexander the Great, or Genghis Khan, or Timur.<sup>3</sup> The list of possible founders is far from accidental – dating the town back to one of these great conquerors allowed the author to both, see Dzhanakent as part of European history, and write the “ruins” onto the brightest pages of the history of Central Asia.

The sensational piece of news was republished by many newspapers – from Orenburg to Moscow, St. Petersburg,<sup>4</sup> and even to Berlin.<sup>5</sup> Many a fascinating detail was added to the story, until the following narrative of the “discovery” arose – a narrative appealing to the mesmerized public and well fitting the earlier stages of the Russian conquest of Turkestan.

A military engineer, *Stabs-kapitan* [Staff Captain] Bezborodny found that one of the outbuildings of the homestead in Syr-Darya Fort No. 1 (from 1867: the town of Kazalinsk), which belonged to a trader named Morozov, was built of exceedingly well-fired square bricks of a type which at that time was not

1 Part 2 of this paper is written by Svetlana Gorshenina; part 3 by Irina Arzhantseva.

2 Lerkh 1870, 335.

3 Barbazhan 1867; Anon. “Korrespondentsiya ‘Spb.Vedomosti’” 1867; Anon. “Korrespondent ‘Moskvy’ iz Orenburga” 1867.

4 The pieces on the “underground town” and the ensuing polemic appeared in the *Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti*, Nos. 50, 58, 60, 76, 258 [“Vazhnoe otkrytie” / “Otkrytie drevnego goroda v 21 verste ot forta No. 1 po techenii Syr-Dar’i: stat’ya ofitserov forta No. 1 ob otkrytii razvalin”]; *Glasnyi sud*, No. 145; *Moskva*, No. 46, 110; *Russkii Invalid*, 1867, No. 87. For a more detailed reconstruction, see Maksheev 1867b, 243; Lerkh 1870, 335.

5 The German newspaper *Das Ausland*, 1867, No. 13, published a note entitled “Entdeckung einer unterirdischen Stadt am Syr-Darja” on the discovery of Dzhanakent by Major Iyuniĭ after the on-site excavations conducted by I. Lerkh: Lykoshin 1896, 6.



FIGURE 1 Map of the Ural, Turgai, Akmola, Semipalatinsk districts and of the Turkestan Governorate General (detail after Maev 1870, 54).



made locally. Feeling intrigued, he started an investigation of his own which soon led him to the local Kyrgyz people (as Kazakhs were referred to in Russian sources before 1924) who had sold the bricks to Morozov. In turn, they themselves had obtained the bricks at the “former fortress of Dzhanakent.” Having arrived on the spot, Bezborodny discovered that a large team of Kazakhs were digging for bricks “in the *barkhan* dunes” and that they had already broken off “up to 300,000 square bricks 6 by 6 *vershoks* in size, and 1 *vershok* thick;<sup>6</sup> and also ten times as much brick rubble.”<sup>7</sup> When his report reached the governor of Fort No. 1, Major Iyuniĭ, he, “intending to use the bricks for erecting some government property in the fort, and considering the importance of the discovery for science,” immediately forbade the Kazakhs to “mindlessly destroy the ruins and appropriate the building materials both necessary and profitable for government use, pending further orders from the Chief of the Administration of the [Orenburg] Kraĭ.”<sup>8</sup>

Being already in Orenburg, the orientalist Peter I. Pashino who in 1866 had been sent by the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Turkestan for research work, immediately on receipt of this news – February 8, 1867 – wrote a letter to the Governor-General of the Steppe Region, Nikolai I. Kryzhanovskiy, that he is ready “to go on his own account to the place of discovery for the initial determination to what era the ruins discovered there may belong and how interesting they are in scientific terms.”<sup>9</sup> Another reaction to the sensational news reports was a letter dated March 1, 1867, from the chairman of the Imperial Archaeological Commission (IAK), Count Sergei G. Stroganov,<sup>10</sup> addressed to Kryzhanovskiy. Given the importance of the discovery of the “ruins of Dzhanakent” and the lack of any information about them, Stroganov wrote about the need to organize their speedy exploration, asking Kryzhanovskiy “to instruct a trustworthy person to compile a detailed description and plan, and at the same time ensure that an order is issued that appropriate measures be taken against the unconscionable violent destruction the town;” in the case of

6 1 *vershok* equals approx. 4.5 cm; thus, the dimensions of a brick were 27 × 27 × 4 cm.

7 Anon. “Korrespondentsiya ‘Spb.Vedomosti’” 1867, 241.

8 Anon. “Korrespondentsiya ‘Spb.Vedomosti’” 1867, 241.

9 Letter by I. Pashino of 8 February 1867, quoted from Chabrov 1957, 187–188. According to G.N. Chabrov, this letter was in a folder of documents entitled “On the opening of the remains of ruins of a town of unknown construction near the Fort No. 1 on the other side of the Syr-Darya river,” in the State Historical Archives of the Chkalovsk region (Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv Chkalovskoi oblasti, henceforth GIACHO), f. 6 (Orenburg Governor General), d. 8140. Perhaps it refers to the Tadzhik town of Buston which was called Chkalovsk until 2016.

10 S.G. Stroganov was Chairman of the IAK from 1859 to 1882.



the discovery of any ancient objects, Stroganov reminded Kryzhanovsky, these should be delivered to the *IAK*.<sup>11</sup>

A direct consequence of this appeal from the *IAK* was the dispatch of Major Iyuniï to Dzhankent with a search party of “several workmen and one *unter-offitser* of the sappers”<sup>12</sup> to prevent further destruction of Dzhankent by the Kazakhs. The party excavated what they believed was the site of the “palace of Janjar Khan.”<sup>13</sup> The dig at the hilltop was 1 *sazhen* (approx. 213 cm) wide and 4 *arshins* (approx. 285 cm) deep. Having recovered some “square glazed tiles”<sup>14</sup> and “a silver coin and a gold one,” the party suggested the site once featured tile factories and glassworks.<sup>15</sup> This sounded strange, as the local reports stated that “there are no glassworks in Central Asia today.”<sup>16</sup>

Based on the results of this brief survey, Kryzhanovsky, in his reply of 23 March to the *IAK*, confirmed that “really the former town was opened, and not the ruins of Kyrgyz graves,” and informed Stroganov that he had already signed an order authorizing the deployment of military pickets on the site to prevent the Kazakhs from removing bricks. On his part, he asked the *IAK* to “equip a special commission” to study Dzhankent, and to include in it a metropolitan “official familiar with the local language, the way of life and character of the Asian population,” as well as “one of the local officials.”<sup>17</sup> In his opinion, which was also expressed to Major Iyuniï, the most appropriate candidate for this would be the State Councillor Baron Fedor R. Osten-Saken (Reinhold Friedrich von der Osten-Sacken, 1832-1916), sent for research and military survey of the western Chinese border in the Turkestan region, along with Colonel Vladimir A. Poltoratsky (1830-1886), the future military governor of the Semipalatinsk region.<sup>18</sup>

It would seem that this story fits well into the standard model of an archaeological discovery in a colonial situation – *i.e.* when “more civilized Europeans” had to protect “ancient ruins” which were being dismantled by “barbaric natives.”<sup>19</sup> This model was not undermined by either the sensationalism of

11 Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 187-188.

12 Anon. “Korrespondentsiya ‘*Spb.Vedomosti*’” 1867, 241.

13 Probably the name “Janjar Khan” refers to Jandar or Zhindar, *i.e.* one of the khans of the Zhindars who were a tribe within the Konyrats of the Middle Zhuz. We are grateful to Ashurbek Muminov for this information.

14 Lerkh 1870, 327.

15 Anon. “Korrespondent ‘*Moskvy*’ iz Orenburga” 1867, 241.

16 Anon. “Korrespondent ‘*Moskvy*’ iz Orenburga” 1867, 241.

17 Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 188.

18 Chabrov 1957, 188.

19 Swenson 2013, 6-12.

the news, so typical of the popular press,<sup>20</sup> or the fact that none of the news mentioned earlier examinations of the freshly “discovered” Dzhanakent, from the accounts of Gladyshev and Muravin (1740) to later attempts at compilation by Pyotr I. Rychkov, Alexei I. Levshin, Alexei I. Maksheev and Ludwig L. Meier aiming to provide a historical interpretation of Dzhanakent in late 18th and early 19th century.<sup>21</sup> One may see a slight discrepancy between the original position of Russian colonial administrators who, after mentioning the site’s importance for “science,” started protecting it in order to collect fired bricks for expanding their own fort.

At the same time, this very detail highlights the complexity of transforming the “ruins” of Dzhanakent into a renowned “monument of cultural heritage.”<sup>22</sup> This transformation, having begun in the 18th century, continued well into the 20th century. Its various protagonists understood the history of Dzhanakent in many different ways, as well as its importance in the rise of collective memories and the imperial and/or national identity.

Being the earliest surveyed and described archaeological site in Central Asia (1740) and its most widely discussed site in 19th century mass media, Dzhanakent fell prey to the Russian colonial administration’s veto on further excavation. It thus went under the radar of professional archaeologists, and its study – even in Soviet and post-Soviet times – remained patchy. In 1946 the Khorezmian Archaeological and Ethnographic Expedition (KhAEE), led by Sergei P. Tolstov, undertook the first airborne survey and visual assessment of the site, and also collected surface material. No further study of Dzhanakent took place until 2005. This long silence made the ruins of Dzhanakent, now considered one of the most important sites for the early medieval history of what today is the Republic of Kazakhstan, and one of the largest (16 hectares) of the “swamp sites”<sup>23</sup> in the Syr-Darya delta, while less prominent than Otrar or Sauran. Still less known is the history of its discovery and study.

Although in every Central Asian state, including Kazakhstan, the dominant opinion is to see the “cultural heritage” as a mirror image of “national identity” and thus an “objective fact,” in this article we aim to show how the site of

20 Nil S. Lykoshin sees the case of Dzhanakent as “typical” of newspaper journalism with its habitual practice of “blowing up” any piece of news on archaeological discoveries: Lykoshin 1896, 3.

21 Lerkh 1870, 335, 337.

22 Today Dzhanakent has the status of a protected federal monument of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

23 The term “swamp towns” was suggested by the members Tolstov’s expedition; see Tolstov 1947; 1962, 276. The largest of that type is the settlement site of Kesken-Kuyuk-kala which is, however, not much bigger than Dzhanakent.

Dzhankent was first transformed into a “monument” and then elevated to the status of “cultural heritage,”<sup>24</sup> and who were the authors of this patrimonial project.

## 2 Studying Dzhankent in the Pre-colonial and Imperial Periods (18th and 19th Centuries)

### 2.1 *Earliest Mentions of the Site: Works by Arab and Persian Geographers, Members of Russian Political and Diplomatic Missions, and the Polymaths of Orenburg*

Located in the Syr-Darya delta, 37 km southwest of the town of Kazaly (Kazalinsk), Dzhankent, or more frequently, *Yanykent*, was mentioned in several Arab-Persian compilations on geography, featuring a mix of book knowledge, commonly held ideas and myths, as well as *in situ* observations.<sup>25</sup> Some of these sources link *Yanykent* to the history of the Oghuz. Since the 18th century, these sources have been known to European and Russian scholars. By that time, although the area was inaccessible to “non-Oriental” travellers, accounts of its contemporary condition were also appearing.

In 1739, immediately after accepting Russian overlordship, Abul Khair, Khan of the Minor Kazakh Horde, sent a letter to the government of the Tsar asking for help in rebuilding the town of Yankent near the mouth of the Syr-Darya. Rebuilding the ruins into a new set of fortifications would have strengthened his hold on the region. With little hesitation, the Foreign Affairs Collegium agreed, as this request did not contradict the plans of sending trade, military and diplomatic missions to Turkestan, which by decree of Peter the Great would have become the starting point for further routes to India and China. However, the request was granted upon one condition: any rebuilding was to be preceded by a detailed survey of the area, since this was the time when mapping and describing caravan routes, towns and settlements in the borderlands was seen as a very high priority for the Russian Empire.

It was for this purpose of preliminary surveying that a party was sent from Orsk to Khiva via the lower Syr-Darya in 1740. Its members were Dmitry Gladyshev, *Poruchik* (First Lieutenant) with the Orenburg Dragoons, who could speak Tatar, land surveyor Muravin, engineering inspector Nazimov,

24 On the mechanism of this transformation in the Russian Imperial context, see Gorshenina 2016, 8-15; and for the years of independence, see Gorshenina 2017.

25 Bartol'd 1965c, 56. On other names for the town in the works of Arabic and Persian authors, see Bartol'd 1965a, 492-493; 1965b, 230; Tolstov 1947; Agadzhanov 1969.



interpreter Usman Araslanov (or Araslan Bekmееv) and several Cossacks.<sup>26</sup> Although the Khan's plans failed to materialize,<sup>27</sup> the surveying party did visit the area on its 8-month journey (September 1740 to April 1741)<sup>28</sup> and left, among other things, a succinct account of Dzhankent written by Muravin and Gladyshev. According to Gladyshev, Dzhankent by that time had already been in ruins, among which stood "an enclosed stone tower where the Kara-kalpak khan lived."<sup>29</sup> As Muravin put it:

where Abdul Khair khan demanded the town be erected, they came and saw what they had been told, viz. that there had been a town here, built of clay long ago by Nogai Tatars and named Yangikent. Decrepit remains of its walls can still be found on an island about 100 *versta* long and 45 wide.<sup>30</sup>

Like a lot of other materials collected in similar expeditions, the accounts of Muravin and Gladyshev did not immediately become widely known. Instead, they were buried in the military archives at Orenburg, the capital of the Steppe Kraï which became Russia's outpost on the Middle Asian frontier. More than a decade later, in 1754, a crude map of their journey was published by Jonas Hanway.<sup>31</sup> Another eight years passed, and in 1762 historian Pyotr I. Rychkov who had access to the archives of the Orenburg Military District included short excerpts from Muravin's and Gladyshev's reports in his book *Topografiya Orenburgskoi Gubernii* [The Topography of the Orenburg Governorate].<sup>32</sup> The full text of both accounts, with appendices and the full map of their journey in smaller scale,<sup>33</sup> remained unpublished until 1830. Yakov V. Khanykov, their first editor, omitted from his publication the legend of how serpents destroyed the

26 Khanykov 1851, 77a; Maksheev 1867b, 243.

27 In 1752, the Khan once again wrote to the Collegium asking for the town to be rebuilt so that commerce would "spread further into Asian parts." Maksheev 1867b, 243.

28 Khanykov 1851, 62a.

29 Levshin 1832, 212 (also in Maksheev 1867b, 243).

30 Khanykov 1851, 79a. Reprinted in Maksheev 1867b, 243.

31 Hanway 1754. Cited from Khanykov 1851, 3.

32 Rychkov 1762, 226. In 1772, the book was translated into German (Lerkh 1870, 334).

33 A full-scale copy of the Muravin map was preserved in the archive of the Staff Office, Independent Orenburg Corps. It was used by N. Khanykov (1851, 62b) as the basis for his depiction of the eastern shore of the Aral Sea in his 1845 map of "the lands of the Inner and the Small Hordes of the Kyrgyz."

town. Although he believed it to be of little importance, it gained wide traction subsequently and was republished many times.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the inaccessibility of the site which was 5 km away from the nearest caravan route,<sup>35</sup> the fragmentary evidence reported by the Russian surveyors was enough to put Dzhankent on the pages of Central Asian history.

Pyotr I. Rychkov, after the accounts of Muravin and Gladyshev, wrote, “By its features and ruins, Dzhankent must have been a big town near the mouth of the Syr-Darya where it flows into the Aral Sea;” however, it was unknown to him who built the town or who lived there. Rychkov only refers to a “Kyrgyz-Kaisak” (Kazakh) legend that a multitude of serpents were sent to the town to drive the inhabitants out for their misdemeanours.<sup>36</sup>

Egor (Georges) K. Meyendorff, who on his way to Khiva in 1820 did not visit Dzhankent, but probably saw some of the written sources mentioning the Oghuz capital, also put it on his list of Turkestan’s “significant ruins:”

They say that there are great many ruins in the eastern part of the land of the Kyrgyz [...]. Of these, best preserved and known are those of Dzhankent, which many believe to have been the capital of the Oghuz. Dzhankent, which is situated about 40 *versta* from the mouth of the Syr, between this river and the Kuvan, was built of flamed brick. Its ruins are surrounded with irrigation canals and fields which have grown smaller than they originally were [...].<sup>37</sup>

Another compilation is found in Alexei I. Levshin’s *Opisanie kirgiz-kazach’ikh ili kirgiz-kaisatskikh ord i stepei* [A Description of the Kyrgyz-Kazak or Kyrgyz-Kaisak Hordes and Steppes] (1832). Levshin sounds quite confident when describing the ruins in the Syr-Darya area, “the best known of which are the remains of the town of Janykent, several *versta* wide and one hour away from the left bank of the Syr, and a day’s journey away from the mouth of the said river.”<sup>38</sup> Levshin had nothing new to say about the unknown builders of *Janykent* or *Yany-kent* (“New Fortress”), but was the first to specify that Arabic

34 His report was initially published in the *Geographicheskies Izvestia*, and in 1851 reprinted as a separate pamphlet. Cited from: Maksheev 1856, 134; 1867b, 243.

35 As Charles-Eugène de Ujfalvy wrote in 1876, after leaving Kazalinsk, the caravan route for 35 km followed the meandering Syr-Darya. To reach the site of the town, they had to cross the river and travel off-road for another 5 km. See Ujfalvy 1879, 43.

36 Maksheev 1867b, 243.

37 Meyendorff 1876, 61-62, 162 (citation: 62).

38 Levshin 1832, 334.

geographer Abulfeda referred to it in the 14th century as *Yangikent*,<sup>39</sup> and that in the 18th century the town belonged to the Karakalpaks.<sup>40</sup>

## 2.2 *The “Second Discovery” of Dzhankent by Officers and Topographers of the Russian General Staff*

The rediscovery of Dzhankent happened during the actual military invasion of Central Asia, an assault accompanied by the construction of forts and the fortified Orenburg defence line. Its immediate heroes were Russian battlefield officers, “men on the spot.”

In 1856, as a summary of his long visits to the area in 1848, 1851 and 1853, Lieutenant Colonel Alexei I. Maksheev, later a professor at the Nicholas Military Academy, compiled a detailed *Opisanie nizov'ev Syr-Dar'i* [A Description of the Lower Reaches of the Syr-Darya].<sup>41</sup> Maksheev's account of Dzhankent was based on the surveyor's plan of the site at a scale of “5 *versta* in 1 in.” The plan was made in 1851 as part of extensive surveying of the area between the Aral Sea and the Syr-Darya and Kuvan rivers, up to the settlement of Mailibash. The surveys began after Fort Raim (or the Aral fortification) had been founded in 1847; the surveyor, Ensign Rybin from the Topography Corps, put all “ruins” of the area on his map.<sup>42</sup>

Rybin, who most likely was Maksheev's subordinate, reported to him some oral lore, including a story he had heard from a Kazakh that Dzhankent had been earlier inhabited by the “*kyzylbashi*” whose lecherous khan was punished by God with a serpent invasion.<sup>43</sup>

Maksheev wrote that the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya had many surviving “old tombs, artificial mounds and the remains of the old towns or fortifications,” however none of these had been studied by his time. He mentions a lot of finds on the “ruins,”<sup>44</sup> such as:

small copper coins, unfortunately so rusty that no sign of mintage could be seen, harness buckles, pieces of fired bricks, broken roof tiles, crockery, china and shards of glass of various sizes and colors. The bricks are of excellent quality, which is worth mentioning since at present the

39 Bartol'd also noted this first mention of Dzhankent in connection with Abulfeda's work (Bartol'd 1965b, 228).

40 Lerkh 1870, 334.

41 Maksheev 1856. The article was later reprinted as a separate pamphlet.

42 Maksheev 1867a, 247; 1867b, 245.

43 Maksheev 1867b, 245.

44 Maksheev 1856, 196.



inhabitants of the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya cannot fire good bricks from local clay.<sup>45</sup>

Summing up his observations, Maksheev wrote with assurance that “Zhanĭkent (in Tatar, Yanĭ Kent, ‘the new town’), is the chiefest among the old towns ... [in the area].”<sup>46</sup> In his account of the fortress and the adjacent cemetery to the west, Maksheev mentioned that there were no buildings around save for a small surviving section of the rampart and a rectangular elevation 600 *sazhen*’ in perimeter, with many tombs on it.<sup>47</sup> Chronology was quite important for Maksheev as he wrote that:

all remains of old buildings in the lower reaches of the Syr date back to the time of the Nogais, who, according to the Grand Map (*Kniga Bol’shogo Chertezha*), in the late 16th century still inhabited the western part of the contemporary Kyrgyz Steppe.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, Maksheev held that most of the ruins might go back to the time of the Karakalpaks or even earlier,<sup>49</sup> especially given that the Colonel allowed the town’s existence before the days of Ibn Hawqal who compiled his geography book in the 10th century CE.<sup>50</sup>

The anthropological aspect of Dzhanĭkent’s history was of equal importance for Maksheev. He sees Rybin’s “*kzyylbashi*” as a reference to Persians or Tadzhiks<sup>51</sup> and cites the opinion of a respected scholar of the Orient, Vasily V. Grigor’ev, published in the *Moskva* newspaper. Grigor’ev wrote that Dzhanĭkent “owed its existence to sedentary indigenous people related to the Persians, who are now known as Sarts or Tadzhiks.”<sup>52</sup>

The argument that the inhabitants of old Dzhanĭkent were not nomads was drawn from the presence of high-quality fired bricks on the site, which, as it was typical for the time, were seen as indicating the town’s high position on the “civilizational scale:”

45 Maksheev 1856, 183.

46 Maksheev 1856, 196.

47 Maksheev 1856, 198; 1867b, 245.

48 Maksheev 1856, 183-184.

49 Maksheev 1856, 200. Maksheev probably did not distinguish between “Karakalpak” and “Nogai” and used them as interchangeable designations of the same people.

50 Maksheev 1867b, 243-244.

51 Maksheev 1856, 183.

52 Maksheev 1867a, 247.

[Dzhankent was] founded by the indigenous people of the Turan, sedentary Tadzhiks, – wrote Maksheev, – and lost due to the arrival of the Mongol-Tatar hordes, rather than in a natural disaster.<sup>53</sup>

This interpretation of his, with its combination of ethnographic models and moral judgment, indicates that Maksheev was an adept of the Aryan theories, widespread in Russia of the time, especially among those interested in the archaeology of Central Asia. In these theories, Central Asia was seen as the original homeland of mankind, and Iranians-Persians-Sarts-Tadzhiks were seen as direct descendants of the ancient Aryans who lived in the region before the (Biblical) Flood and were the ancestors of European peoples, including Russians.<sup>54</sup> This scheme was purely speculative which is, among other things, shown by the fact that fired bricks did not appear at Dzhankent in sizeable quantities before the arrival of the Mongols in the 13th century.<sup>55</sup>

In line with his theory, Maksheev suggested that Dzhankent was more ancient than Grigor'ev believed. The Colonel disputed the scholar's opinion that the square fortification mentioned by Meier was just a contemporary Khivan fortress.<sup>56</sup> On this point, contemporary archaeologists tend to agree with Maksheev: most likely, this is either the site of Dzhankent, or more specifically its citadel.

Almost at the same time as Maksheev, Colonel Ludwig L. Meier (Meyer) also gave his account of Dzhankent.<sup>57</sup> In an attempt to give structure to what he saw on the lower Syr-Darya, he categorized all ruins found on the Kazakh steppes into three "classes" or "epochs." The oldest were the ones that featured square-shaped fired bricks (including *Dzhan-Kent*, as he called it).<sup>58</sup> Meier's idea of antiquity was different from the ideas of Levshin and Maksheev. He questioned Levshin's citation from Abulfeda (14th century) and, knowing very little of archaeology, he opined that:

we cannot accept that the remains we saw there are so ancient. [...] The currently existing remains of the town and its fortifications are much

53 Maksheev 1867a, 247.

54 Laruelle 2005; 2009.

55 A small number of fired bricks have now been found in the upper layer of the citadel dating to the pre-Mongol period; see Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, 56-58, figs. 63-68.

56 Maksheev 1867a, 247.

57 Meier 1865, 284-288.

58 Meier 1865, 285-286.

more recent, as it is impossible that the walls of fired clay would stand almost intact for so many centuries.<sup>59</sup>

Professor F.K. Brun from Novorossia University at Odessa totally disagreed with Meier on the “antiquity” of Dzhankent. In his piece which appeared in the *Odessaer Zeitung* (No. 28, 10 March 1867), he summed up his studies of medieval cartography and 13th century travel history and concluded that the town of *Yangi-Kent*, well-known to Ibn Hawqal (and to John of Plano Carpini who referred to it as *Janckint*), could not be identified with the town mentioned at the start of Babur’s notes as *Yangi* (now Taraz), as d’Avezac did it in his commentary on the travels of Innocent IV’s legate. Brun’s opinion that *Yangi-Kent/Dzhankent* is present in the Catalan Atlas of 1375 and referred to by William of Rubruck as *Kenchat* immediately drew fire from Pyotr I. Lerkh.<sup>60</sup>

However, the routine process of accumulating knowledge from observations made by land surveyors, General Staff officers, administrators and explorers of frontier Governorates was overturned after officers at Fort No. 1 had made their abovementioned sensational discoveries of an “underground Pompeii” on the banks of the Syr-Darya.

### 2.3 *The First Archaeological Survey under the Mandate of the Imperial Archaeological Committee and by Order of the Governor General of Turkestan, Konstantin P. von Kaufmann*

#### 2.3.1 Who Should Study the Monuments?

The flood of sensational publications on the “underground Pompeii” near the Syr-Darya met a response from one of the few specialists on the ancient history of Central Asia, Orientalist Vasily V. Grigor’ev, the then President of the Department of Oriental Archaeology at the Imperial Archaeological Society in St. Petersburg. Together with Aleksei I. Maksheev, professor at the Nicholas Military Academy, of whose travels in Central Asia in 1848-1851 and 1853 we already know,<sup>61</sup> he reminded the public that this “discovery” of Dzhankent was nothing more than shedding light on a little-known “old find.” By then, the site had twice been charted by eyewitnesses, in 1740 by Gladyshev and Muravin and in 1851 by Rybin.<sup>62</sup>

59 Lerkh 1870, 334-335. As Lerkh put it, Colonel Meier’s doubts about dating of the ruins of Abulfeda’s Dzhankent and Yangikent (Meier 1865, 285), were later confuted in his works: Lerkh 1869, 309.

60 Lerkh 1870, 336, 342.

61 Maksheev 1867a, 247; 1867b, 243-246.

62 Maksheev 1867a, 246.



In their polemical responses which were not without sarcasm, Grigor'ev and Maksheev argued that the site of Dzhankent could not be an underground "Pompeii" several hectares in area. Given that the town lies almost at the level of the river, any finds are possible only under the "mounds" which rise above the plain.<sup>63</sup> It is still uncertain whether the "mounds" referred to by them were the burrows of Myn Tobe or the adobe ruins of Dzhankent.

Grigor'ev and Maksheev also suggested that all the surviving old buildings along the Syr-Darya should be re-surveyed as soon as possible, and maps and drawings made of all of them.<sup>64</sup> It is worth recalling at this point that as far back as 1861 N.M. Zaichikov (Deev), a merchant from Orenburg, had at Grigor'ev's recommendation established a prize fund of 500 rubles for the authorship of a book to be entitled *O drevnostyakh Sÿr-Dar'inskogo kraya* [On the antiquities of the Syr-Darya province]. The prize was unclaimed as no prospective authors turned up.<sup>65</sup>

The response to these publications was a sharp response by the literary critic and publicist Vladimir V. Stasov who, in an article entitled "The Uneducated and the Know-alls" and published under the pseudonym I. Kaverin,<sup>66</sup> fell on Grigor'ev and Maksheev, accusing them of snobbery. Summarizing the events of recent months, Stasov wrote:

The Kyrgyz who dragged the bricks out of these ruins were pointed out by an engineer officer of the fort; a commission was set up to inspect the opened antiquities, and the commission, having visited the site, hastened to declare that the ruins of the town they had seen, stretching for about five *versta*, are of much importance, first for science because here, perhaps, there will be significant discoveries, and also for their forts

63 Grigor'ev 1867; Maksheev 1867a; 1867b.

64 Maksheev 1867a, 247.

65 Deev 1863; Veselovskii 1900, 184; Lunin 1958, 24. The book was required to provide a description of "all important remains of the buildings of the past, [...], whichever still exist along the banks of the Syr and Yana Darya and in the area between these two rivers." Another requirement was to make maps of all these constructions and put together the whole body of information on the "topography and history of said lands, from the ancient times to the present," and – most importantly – to provide an expert opinion on "the reasons why these lands, once so fertile and densely populated, had turned into desert."

66 Kaverin 1867. Also Stasov 1894, 197–202. It is possible that in the study by Chabrov 1957, 192, note 2, out of considerations of political correctness in relation to Russian academic Orientalism, the name of the leading authority of Oriental studies, V.V. Grigor'ev, was replaced by "Terent'ev" which in all likelihood referred to Mikhail A. Terent'ev, the author of a collection of documents entitled *The history of the conquest of Central Asia* in three volumes (St. Petersburg, 1903–1906), who could be safely criticised.

because from the ruins one can get several million fine bricks of a special square shape. The commandant of [...] Fort No. 1 issued the order that neither the Kyrgyz nor any others should continue the thievery before it is decided how to deal with the newly discovered ruins. At the same time, news was sent to St. Petersburg about the discovery, and the newspapers carried it across the whole of Russia.<sup>67</sup>

“What is wrong with all this, what is reprehensible”? Stasov asked rhetorically and answered “nothing” himself, because:

Military men who do not care about antiquities because they are engaged in the immediate duties of their service, now suddenly become interested in ruins, think about their importance for science, detach sentries to guard them, try to save them from the Kyrgyz or in general from any harm, report the newspapers.<sup>68</sup>

It is obvious that for Stasov such an interest in antiquities on the part of soldiers was a positive precedent: “[...] does not deserve [this] the fullest gratitude from us, from the whole of society?”<sup>69</sup> And therefore he threw himself with such heat on Grigor’ev and Maksheev, calling their published reaction an example of “scholasticism, indifference to matters of life, and the deification of bookishness.”

Let the Kyrgyz or anyone else take the remains of the two ancient cities brick by brick, let the Orenburg officers, without saying a word, build from the ancient bricks the fortress, barracks, barns or anything else, let them record on the spot protests rotting in the chancellery or archive, but if only they had been silent and did not call “discovery” what had long been known to be such-and-such to these learned collectors. *Pereat mundus, fiat justitia!* Disappear, untouched Dzhanakent, as long as scholarly formalism is intact!<sup>70</sup>

Building his article on the principle of bittersweet, Stasov sharply attacked Grigoriev for his statement about the need to organize “studies by real scientists, and not by any officials or officers turned archaeologists for this occasion:”

67 Stasov 1894, 199.

68 Stasov 1894, 199.

69 Stasov 1894, 199.

70 Stasov 1894, 200-201.

It is as if someone was really going to disturb the scientists [at work] in the town, as if a few words spoken by good-natured Orenburgers in the joy of discovery [...] have a claim to be an investigation, to have smell of learning.<sup>71</sup>

His criticism of an infelicitous, ambiguous phrase of Maksheev was even more forceful:

He [Maksheev] declares that the results of the excavations will be undoubtedly useful only “for the maintenance of forts” (bricks), and [only] “perhaps” for science. Is not it amazing? The French, the English, the Germans are digging in Africa, Phoenicia, Syria, Persia, India, where after all they have never ever come up with the idea that the excavation of ancient monuments will first of all benefit the maintenance of their forts, and only then can it be science, when it is about such insignificant, empty things such as the remains of weapons, utensils, buildings of ancient peoples. They often make mistakes in their search, spend many years on unsuccessful excavations, but do not for a moment abandon the idea that these will certainly be important and useful for science, that these cannot be given up [in order to] spare them the expenditure. As a result, their museums were enriched by such unexpected finds that restore entire epochs of antiquity not told of in any books, in any texts.<sup>72</sup>

Comparison with European archaeological practices led to polemics on a completely different level, such as Stasov’s concluding observation that Dzhan kent was important primarily for studying Russian history proper:

[Dzhan kent], buried here under the silt, sand and thorn-grass, was apparently one of the cities of the ancient native population, namely the Khwarazmians and Sogdians, peoples whose study for our most ancient history is of the same importance as the study of the Scythians. Digging their cities, burial mounds, extracting the remnants of their weapons, utensils – and there can be no doubt about the presence of all these in the soil of the Syr-Darya sites – we are digging up missing materials for the original history of our fatherland [...] Who dared to call “Pompeii” the dark, unknown ruins of Dzhan kent, exclaimed furious know-all scientists. But why is the old city of Dzhan kent not to be our Pompeii, we

71 Stasov 1894, 1.

72 Stasov 1894, 201.



ask. Is it really important that there be Roman or Greek frescoes and tripods? No, we do not know how to appreciate what we have, we are still too little interested in its original fate, we are still too enthralled by foreign high-profile names and titles.<sup>73</sup>

In polemical style, Stasov called for postponing the dispute “on words and scholarly parochialism” and to take up “the case before this matter is dealt with by Kyrgyz and other unlearned practitioners.”<sup>74</sup> From his point of view, it does not matter who will carry out the research – scientists, officers or officials – for “book knowledge and the ability to excavate are two entirely different things:”

Of course, useful, often necessary is the eye of a true good scientist in the excavations of antiquities: such a person will advise a lot, direct much. But the main things still are appraisal, dexterity, diligence, skill: all this is not yet an indispensable accessory of every scientist.<sup>75</sup>

The arguments of Stasov, who linked Dzhanakent with the sources for the history of the Russian people and unfavorably compared Russian attitudes to “antiquities” with Western ones, accelerated Nikolai I. Kryzhanovsky’s decision-making process. In the same year of 1867, he used the Governorate’s funds to set up an expedition party authorized to reconnoiter the not yet fully “pacified” region. Archaeological survey would be held in the areas where the Cossacks still routinely clashed with “the Kazakh hordes.”<sup>76</sup>

### 2.3.2 Pyotr I. Lerkh

This very first archaeological expedition in the region was set up specifically to study Dzhanakent. It was responsible to the Imperial Archaeological Committee and acted upon instructions received from Grigor’ev. The expedition’s director was Pyotr I. Lerkh, Titular Councillor at the Library of St. Petersburg University, Fellow of the Geographical Society and Full Member of both Moscow and St. Petersburg Archaeological Societies (since 1860). Lerkh had some experience of studying the “antiquities” of Central Asia. In 1858, he had been a member of a political-diplomatic mission to Bukhara and Khiva, led by Nikolai P. Ignatiev. In 1865, he had led an expedition to the northeast of Russia in search of “antiquities.” It is telling that in his short summary of previous work

73 Stasov 1894, 202.

74 Stasov 1894, 202.

75 Stasov 1894, 202.

76 Vereshchagin 1868, 225a-225b.

in Dzhankent, Tolstov mentioned Lerkh alone as his predecessor.<sup>77</sup> For expenses during the expedition, the *IAK* allocated Lerkh 2000 rubles, as Stroganov informed Kryzhanovsky in his letter of 4 May 1867, asking the Governor to order that Lerkh be accompanied on his trip by an “experienced local topographer and draughtsman who could be engaged in drawing up the necessary plans and drawings.”<sup>78</sup>

In response to this request and by order of Kryzhanovsky, Lerkh was to be accompanied by his own aide-de-camp, *Rotmistr* (cavalry captain) Mikhail K. Priorov, who was entrusted with topographic surveying and drawing sketches of the area, as well as taking photos of the “antiquities.”<sup>79</sup> Large-scale survey was to be performed with the help of Maksheev, another “lover of antiquities.”<sup>80</sup> There were three reasons for designating as the expedition’s target area a vast swathe of territory from Fort No. 1 as far as Tashkent: (1) work at Dzhankent proper could have failed in this earliest and bloodiest period of the Russian advance into Central Asia; (2) the site could have proven “unworthy” of further in-depth study; and (3) the expedition was to collect as much information as possible on this region which was still quite inaccessible to Russians.

Lerkh’s expedition lasted five months in all, six weeks of which were spent at Dzhankent (during the excavations starting 22 June, Lerkh and Priorov camped on the citadel itself), and the rest of the time was spent reconnoitering the defence lines of the Russian army up to Tashkent.<sup>81</sup> During these months, Lerkh wrote his account of the excavations at Sauran; however, this town site was not explored in detail as Lerkh failed to find any prospective workmen to assist in the dig.<sup>82</sup> He also copied inscriptions on most of the tombstones at the Khoja Ahmad Yassavi mosque in the city of Turkestan,<sup>83</sup> made a plaster copy of an epigraphic inscription at Auliye-Ata, and explored the antiquities of Khujand, Ura-Tyube (Istaravshan), Zaamin and Jizzakh.

At Dzhankent, Lerkh oversaw a number of digs in various areas inside the fortress, especially adjacent to the eastern side of the rampart on a hill

77 Tolstov 1947, 57.

78 Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 188.

79 Lerkh 1870, 321-372; Sonntag 2012, 176.

80 Lerkh 1870, 345.

81 Lerkh 1870. A later version of the text, corrected (mostly misprints of Arabic place-names) and augmented by the author in January 1870 in Russian and French, is preserved at the Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg, f. 36, op. 1, d. 3.

82 Lerkh 1870, 330.

83 Lerkh’s field diary with his sketchy plan of the site of Saura (Sauran) settlement and tracings of tombstone inscriptions is found in the archives of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg (f. 36, op. 1, d. 10).

identified as the “citadel.”<sup>84</sup> It was nearly the only site within Dzhankent as yet untouched by Kazakh digging as they were afraid to disturb the peace of the cemetery.<sup>85</sup> Another focus were four adjacent hills (or mounds), two in the centre of the town enclosure and the other two, rather severely destroyed, in its western part.<sup>86</sup> One of these hills was said to have been occupied by the same “palace of Janjar Khan” which appeared in the legend as the venue of the serpent attack. Honouring the memory of the legendary khan, Kazakhs did not search the palace site for bricks. However, the mound had been damaged in the dig organized by the Fort No. 1 commission when in spring 1867 a deep hole was dug into it from the top (see above).<sup>87</sup> As S.P. Tolstov<sup>88</sup> and contemporary archaeologists<sup>89</sup> observed later, Lerkh’s excavations in the town were limited to sites where the ruins looked best preserved.

On the basis of the excavation results, Lerkh concluded that the town’s area was 4 square *versta* and that most of the houses were built of fired bricks. He discovered the remains of pottery,<sup>90</sup> fragments of earthenware and mosaics, and human and sheep bones. The most important finds in terms of dating the site were two silver and fifty copper Jochid coins minted in the 15th century.<sup>91</sup> This demonstrated trade relations between Dzhankent and the Golden Horde, and maybe even that Dzhankent was part of it. Another significant find was an inscription on a tombstone dated 763 AH (1362 CE) which led to the suggestion that the town survived the Mongol invasion and was occupied until the 15th century.<sup>92</sup> Tolstov concluded that Lerkh failed to identify correctly the site’s stratigraphy and worked only with the late medieval materials of the 14th and 15th centuries.<sup>93</sup>

Lerkh thought it would have been folly to hope for more finds of better quality as 2000 Kazakhs had been ransacking the site since 1866 in search of old fired bricks.<sup>94</sup>

Although the finds were “scarce” (as Lerkh described them), he agreed with Levshin (see above) that the excavated site was *Yangikent* (New Town), the town which had served as a residence for the “king of the Ghuz” (Oghuz)

84 Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 189.

85 Lerkh 1870, 325.

86 Lerkh 1870, 326.

87 Lerkh 1870, 327.

88 Tolstov 1947, 57.

89 Arzhantseva & Ruzanova 2010, 405-406.

90 Lerkh 1870, 326.

91 Lerkh 1870, 328.

92 Lerkh 1870, 327; Bartol'd 1965b, 230; 1965c, 56.

93 Tolstov 1947, 57.

94 Lerkh 1870, 325.

and was captured by Genghiz Khan and his sons in 1219, during their campaign against the Khorazm Shahs (more specifically, during the Jochi campaign which allegedly destroyed all the cities on the lower Syr-Darya down to the Aral Sea). An account of *Yangikent* is found in the compilations of the Arab geographer Abulfeda who died in 1331.<sup>95</sup> A hypothesis that there existed another Yangikent on the Yany Darya, originally advanced by V.A. Kallaur, an official in the administration of Turkestan and an amateur archaeologist and scholar of the region, published in the *Protokol'y Turkestanskogo kruzha lyubitelei arkheologii* [PTKLA], was not borne out by the facts.<sup>96</sup> Lerkh, in his attempt to include Dzhanakent the history of Central Asia (as far as it was known to European scholars of the time), adds to his account a detailed survey of references to Dzhanakent in Arab and Persian sources (such as books by Abulfeda, Ibn Hawqal, al Mas'udi and al Idrisi).<sup>97</sup> These showed that Dzhanakent was an inhabited town between the first half of the 10th and the 14th centuries.<sup>98</sup> He also mentioned the visit of Plano Carpini in 1245 (previously made public by F.K. Brun; see above), 25 years after the town was pillaged by Jochi.<sup>99</sup> This linked Dzhanakent to the history of Europe. In his reconstruction of the town's history, Lerkh followed Maksheev in suggesting that Dzhanakent was never destroyed, but gradually abandoned by its inhabitants due to climate change.<sup>100</sup>

Under Kryzhanovsky's orders (see above), Lerkh was accompanied by Mikhail K. Priorov, a topographer and photographer at the General Staff of the Governor General of the Orenburg Krai.<sup>101</sup> His important contribution was the first detailed survey of the site (a detailed topographic plan of the fortification of the site at a scale of 2500 *sazhens* per inch).<sup>102</sup>

Priorov addressed to Kryzhanovsky a quite detailed report on the progress of the excavation, the existence of which Lerkh did not mention in his publications. According to the description of Priorov, at the time of the excavations of Lerkh, Dzhanakent looked as follows:

95 Lerkh 1869, 309; 1870, 329.

96 Bartol'd 1965b, 228.

97 Lerkh 1870, 337-341.

98 Lerkh 1870, 338-339.

99 Lerkh 1870, 341.

100 Lykoshin mentions this as an important idea for understanding the genesis of the towns on the lower Syr-Darya: Lykoshin 1896, 4. While there are no traces of a wholesale destruction of the site, some traces of fire have recently been identified by geophysics in the citadel and on the top of its ramparts; Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, 136, fig. 46.

101 Even though Governor Kryzhanovsky had signed an order withdrawing Priorov to Orenburg (quoted from Chabrov 1957, 189), Priorov participated in the expedition as far as Tashkent.

102 Lerkh 1870, 337.

The southern side of the fortress wall is pretty well preserved, there are still towers, located very close to each other, and even one wide arrow-slit remained. Three other walls of the citadel now represent only a continuous rampart, in the outline of which, however, it is easy to see the gate openings in the eastern and western facades, as well as those forward structures that flanked the entrances to the gates. Mounds of various forms are located inside the citadel and, looking from the crest of the rampart, it is easy to distinguish the directions of streets and lanes that separate buildings from one another. At the foot of the citadel, the remains of gardens are visible and the *aryks*, their irrigation ditches, all overgrown with reeds and the roots of old, now dead large trees, are clearly visible. And then follow the mounds, covering the ancient buildings. Many mounds are barbarously consumed by the Kyrgyz, but there are really a lot of bricks. Under the open surface of most of the dug mounds, walls are visible that are virtually denuded of bricks, specimens of which are located in Orenburg with Colonel Schleifer.<sup>103</sup> The walls surround dilapidated rooms. Visible in some places are glaze and coloured arabesques, similar to Turkestan, and plaster is well preserved, made of a thick layer of clay covered with alabaster. Completely preserved are such small arches, where at one or the other lie the long curved bricks that made up the very arch. Probably, with further excavations, the walls will be revealed to their foundations because the Kyrgyz fortunately did not reach the bedrock anywhere.<sup>104</sup>

In addition to his topographic work, Priorov, judging by his report, had to do colour drawings of “building walls, arches, arabesques and all attractions,” but his work remains unknown to this day.<sup>105</sup>

In 1866-1867 he also created a second<sup>106</sup> large album of photographs entitled *Iz Srednei Azii* [From Central Asia] and presented it at the 1867 Ethnographic Exhibition in Moscow.

Using contemporary terminology, we may say that the “media impact” of Priorov’s album was very high even though his name is hardly ever mentioned in this context. In the same year of 1867, P.I. Lerkh whose relations with his

103 Subsequently, after the discovery in 1868 by the Orenburg section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Schleifer donated him samples of bricks and tiles from Dzhankent from his own collection: *Notes of the Orenburg Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, No. 1, Kazan, 1870, 63. Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 189, 192, note 8.

104 Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 189.

105 Chabrov 1957, 189, 192, note 9.

106 The author of the first album (1858) was Anton Murenko. See Deev 1863.



expedition fellow were rather strained, presented his photos, together with the account of the expedition, at the general session of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. However, he barely mentioned the name of the photographer. Lerkh's detailed report was sent to the Imperial Archaeological Committee accompanied by the same photos. A year later, traveller and orientalist scholar Pyotr I. Pashino, again without mentioning Priorov, published several of the latter's photographs in his own account of travels to Central Asia entitled *Turkestanskii Krai v 1886 godu* [Turkestan Krai in the year 1886].<sup>107</sup> In 1869, some of the images of archaeological finds (again anonymously) were exhibited at the Ministry of the Royal Household. The exhibition was organized by Vasily V. Vereshchagin and the Governor General of Turkestan, Konstantin P. von Kaufmann.<sup>108</sup> Still later, part of Priorov's album was included in the famous *Turkestan Album* made in 1872 by Alexander L. Kuhn under von Kaufmann's commission.<sup>109</sup>

### 2.3.3 Vasily V. Vereshchagin

The next archaeological examination of Dzhankent happened in autumn 1867, again thanks to the support by the colonial administration. On his way to accept a job with the Turkestan administration, 25-year-old painter Vasily V. Vereshchagin, with permission from von Kaufmann, did a small excavation at Dzhankent.<sup>110</sup> Vereshchagin knew almost nothing of Lerkh and his work, except the very fact of their existence – despite the fact that Lerkh went out of his way to inform the scholarly community of his finds (see above).<sup>111</sup> At the beginning of the excavation, Vereshchagin worried whether Lerkh had made any photos of his work; otherwise, without visual aids, it would be impossible to understand the nature and location of surviving buildings, he thought:

Mr. Lerkh found many interesting things here, I have been told, but I would like to know if he had taken photos of the buildings as he discovered them, *i.e.* with the whole décor and all inscriptions. If he had not, it is quite lamentable since the ragged and mutilated remains of the walls

107 To illustrate his account of the lower Syr-Darya, Pashino reprinted Priorov's photos of Sauran fortress, its tower (p. 72), and the Hazret Yassavi mosque in the city of Turkestan (p. 63); Pashino 1868. Lerkh also mentions this: Lerkh 1870, 344.

108 Gorshenina 2009, 137-147; Sonntag 2011, 164-175; 2012, 14-15.

109 Gorshenina 2007, 321-337; Sonntag 2011, 196-312.

110 Lerkh 1870, 336; Vereshchagin 1868, 255; 1874a; 1874b. On Vereshchagin's first visit to Turkestan, see Bulgakov 1896, 26-30; Lebedev 1972, 54-89.

111 Lerkh 1870, 321-372; 1867b, XXIII-XXXI; 1868, 307-310.

as they appear now do not help to understand either the general nature of the buildings nor the location of their specific parts.<sup>112</sup>

In marked contrast to the previous accounts, Vereshchagin provides a highly romanticized description of the site and his stay there. In addition to a multitude of ethnographic details and sketches of everyday life (e.g. of the Kazakh family who were his hosts), he mentions the possible presence of “shops,” “money-exchange houses,” “wide gateways,” “remains of town fortifications,” “large urban buildings” and “an acropolis.”<sup>113</sup>

After a series of small-scale digs on the site and three adjacent mounds, Vereshchagin was quite pleased with their outcomes. According to him, the finds were so numerous that he could not preserve everything and had to select the most significant ones, namely, fragments of stucco ornament of fired clay which featured an “original and most regular pattern,” found in the barrow “north of the walled elevation;” “a large piece [...] of sculptured inscription of a general Muslim character [...] with several letters partially broken off;” and square fired “blue-glazed” bricks. Other finds “of little interest,” such as fragments of a wall made of fired bricks, ceramic vessels of various shapes, pieces of earthenware pipes, bones of various animals (notably of camels) and charcoal, were left in place, but not before the party had sketched them (figs. 2 and 3),<sup>114</sup> took photos<sup>115</sup> and/or made precise descriptions. The earthenware described by Vereshchagin is easily recognizable: these are exactly the vessel types found by present-day archaeologists at the site of Dzhanakent.<sup>116</sup>

Summing up the achievements of Lerkh's and Vereshchagin's expeditions, French anthropologist Charles-Eugène Ujfalvy wrote that the significant finds included human and animal bones, fragments of old bricks, earthenware and coins.<sup>117</sup>

Although Vereshchagin's work was quite superficial, on a par with the general level of archaeology of the time, the painter attacked Lerkh for his practice of digging “trenches running down in various directions from an elevated place”<sup>118</sup> (this, in fact, was the accepted practice of the time, used widely

112 Vereshchagin 1868, 255a-225b.

113 Vereshchagin 1868, 255c.

114 Only seven years after this journey, at the time of the reissue of his travel notes, 14 plates were engraved on the basis of Vereshchagin's drawings, giving an idea of the finds at Dzhanakent: Vereshchagin 1874b.

115 Vereshchagin 1868, 255d.

116 Arzhantseva & Ruzanova 2010, 406-407.

117 Ujfalvy 1879, 44.

118 Vereshchagin 1868, 255c.

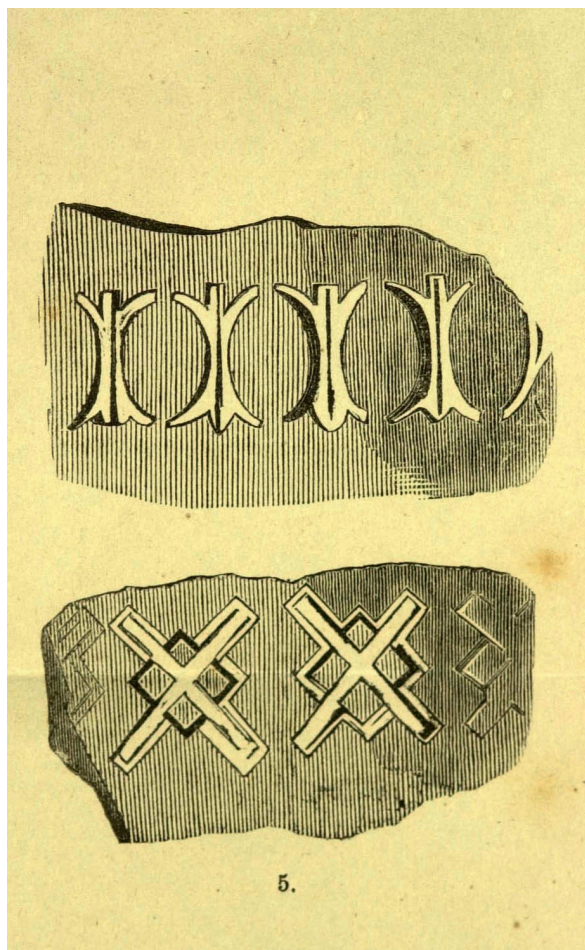


FIGURE 2  
Ornament on the pottery  
from Dzhanakent (after  
Vereshchagin 1874b, 453e).

elsewhere, e.g. at Kerch, Crimea).<sup>119</sup> Lerkh snapped back saying that Vereshchagin's excavations produced nothing new except picturesque descriptions. His entire work, said Lerkh, focused on kitchens and thus produced nothing except the earthenware which can be found in possession of contemporary sedentary peoples of Central Asia.<sup>120</sup>

#### 2.3.4 "Indigenous Peoples"

In addition to all the above-mentioned protagonists, local Kazakhs (or Kyrgyz people, as they were referred to in the literature of that period) also took part

<sup>119</sup> Frolov 1999, 134-135.

<sup>120</sup> Lerkh 1870, 336.

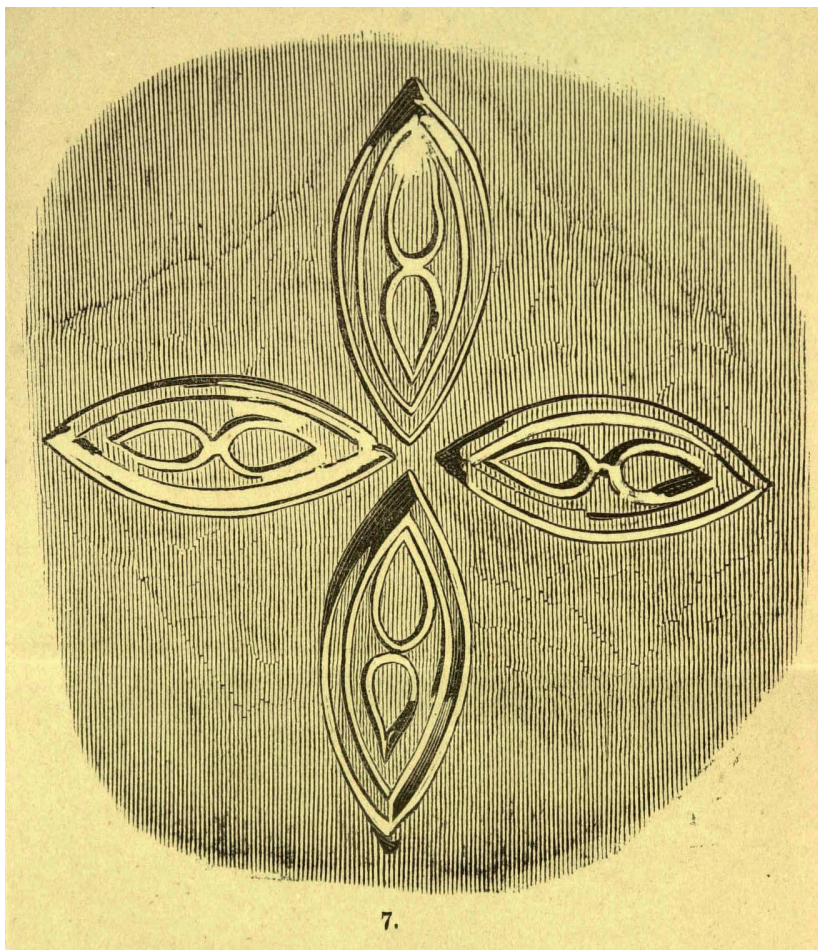


FIGURE 3 Ornament on the pottery from Dzhanakent (after Vereshchagin 1874b, 453g).

in the early excavations. However, in the eyes of the public they remained an anonymous mass.

In its accounts of the sensational discovery in 1867, the Russian press portrayed Kazakhs as disrespectful of their own archaeological sites. In 1866-1868, these accounts told the story of how 2000 Kazakhs in their “robber-like” digs methodically extracted old bricks by “using their hoes to break the walls hidden under the sand and litter” throughout the whole area of the site.<sup>121</sup> By way of contrast, the administration in Fort No. 1 (now the town of Kazaly/Kazalinsk)

<sup>121</sup> Lerkh 1869, 309; 1870, 325. Vereshchagin also adds that the Kazakhs sold bricks to the inhabitants of Fort No. 1: Vereshchagin 1868, 255c.



appeared in the press as the “protector” of old monuments. According to the published reports, Fort Governor Major Iyunii forbade the Kazakhs to carry out unauthorized digs in search of old bricks, as well as to remove them from the site or sell the bricks.<sup>122</sup> To enforce the prohibition, he ordered that pickets should be deployed around Dzhankent.<sup>123</sup>

However, the observations of those who took part in the digs – the Orientalist Lerkh, the painter Vereshchagin and the officer Maksheev – go far beyond the simplistic binary view in the Russian press, revealing how actually complex the positions of both parties were: the “colonizers” who “protected the monuments,” and the “colonized” who “destroyed antiquities.”

The accounts of how the local Kazakhs and the Russian officers viewed the monuments of archaeology are, in fact, quite contradictory. On the one hand, the increase in archaeological and commercial interest in archaeological finds, both among the Kazakhs and in the Caucasus some years before, was directly linked to the arrival of Russian troops in the area. The construction of Fort No. 1, intended as a replacement of Fort Raim which had been built in 1847 a little further northeast and later renamed the Aral Fortification, demanded a lot of building material (fig. 4). According to Vereshchagin, a year before his journey (*i.e.* 1866) nobody could even expect that the site had such a lot of bricks. Moreover, Kazakhs avoided Dzhankent whose inhabitants in the days of old were cursed for their dishonour and wiped out by serpents sent as a punishment from God (or, according to other sources, by a powerful sorcerer). Therefore, they expected the site to be infested with snakes. However, Vereshchagin noted that he failed to see a single snake at Dzhankent.<sup>124</sup> At the same time, Lerkh mentioned that the Kazakhs showed genuine respect for the monuments: they never set foot on the mound supposedly hiding the remains of “the palace of Janjar Khan.” Demand spurred on supply: the first shipment of fired bricks arrived at the household of a certain Morozov, a trader in Kazalinsk (see above). The Fort’s administration, eager to improve it, soon learnt about the bricks and immediately sent out a reconnaissance party to find the source of such valuable supplies. The reconnaissance proved that the sheer number and quality of the bricks allowed them drastically to speed up the construction time and improve the quality of the Fort’s buildings – but the “ancient ruins” were affected. Hence the ambiguous policy of the

122 Vereshchagin 1868, 255c.

123 Vereshchagin mentions such a picket at the crossing of the Syr-Darya: Vereshchagin 1868, 255b.

124 Vereshchagin 1868, 225c. The same legend can be found in: Vereshchagin 1874, 177. When excavations resumed in 2005, the site indeed teemed with snakes, but their number gradually decreased.



FIGURE 4 Buildings at the fortification of Fort No. 1, Kazalinsk (after Terent'ev 1871/1872, part 4, plate 11).

Governor who authorized the deployment of military pickets to protect the site from being pillaged by the Kazakhs in their “robber-like digs” and asked his superiors in Orenburg to send “competent professionals” to make a full examination of Dzhanakent. However, as Vereshchagin recalled, Major Iyuniï at the same time tried to work out a plan to remove all the bricks at once from the site and, making use of the Syr-Darya flotilla, to take them to the Fort and rebuild it.<sup>125</sup> It was probably this radical plan that led to the dismissal of Major Iyuniï in 1867. His name, and the role the Fort’s Governor played in this story, fell into oblivion.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Vereshchagin 1868, 255c; Maksheev 1867a, 249; Lerkh 1870, 325. Bartol'd mentions that the Aral flotilla in 1847-1882 shuttled between the mouth of the Syr-Darya and Kazalinsk which was “their main base.” See Bartol'd 1965a, 493.

<sup>126</sup> The German newspaper *Das Ausland*, 1867, No. 13, calls him ex-Governor of Fort No. 1: Lykoshin 1896, 6.



Colonel Maksheev's position, as seen from his notes, was also quite contradictory. As an army officer, Maksheev thought that "the excavation of the hills will undeniably [...] be beneficial for Fort No. 1, and maybe for scholars as well."<sup>127</sup> This statement which we would find contradictory and which was the reason for the sharp criticism by V.V. Stasov (see above), reveals the following logic. Maksheev thought that since the town had died out in an assault of the nomads, the victors immediately removed everything of value and destroyed the rest. Hence, any further dig will uncover nothing of value – except the bricks which Fort No. 1 was in such a dire need of. In this context of "nomadism's victory over sedentism," there was little hope of any valuable finds (except the items preserved by sheer luck).<sup>128</sup> This was in line with the then mainstream views of archaeology as a search for colourful artefacts while bricks as a mass material were of little interest. At the same time, wrote Maksheev, Kazakhs led a nomadic rather than sedentary life, and the bricks are

of no use to them, so if they have taken them [from the site] lately, it was exclusively to satisfy the needs of Fort No. 1. Looting of the bricks by the inhabitants of the Fort could be easily stopped by a single order, and it is much more convenient to enforce this order inside the fortification than to send out pickets into the steppe.<sup>129</sup>

On the other hand, the practice of reusing old bricks was not started by the Russian colonial administration. By the early 19th century, it had already taken root both in Central Asia (where, for instance, Kazakhs used bricks from Dzhanakent to erect tombstones in the Kuvan-Darya area (fig. 5),<sup>130</sup> or *mazarka* tombs,<sup>131</sup> or for building foundations and flooring<sup>132</sup>) and in other regions of mainland Russia.<sup>133</sup> The *waqf* system then in use in Turkestan required good preservation of public buildings, including by the re-use of bricks without aiming to keep the authentic building intact.<sup>134</sup> However, the new urban projects in the context of the Russian military advance on the Central Asian khanates increased the scale of this practice and provided a more commercial interpretation.

<sup>127</sup> Maksheev 1867a, 247.

<sup>128</sup> Maksheev 1867a, 249.

<sup>129</sup> Maksheev 1867a, 249.

<sup>130</sup> Lerkh 1869, 309; 1870, 325.

<sup>131</sup> Vereshchagin 1874b, 177.

<sup>132</sup> Quoted from Chabrov 1957, 191.

<sup>133</sup> Bartol'd 1894, 341.

<sup>134</sup> Gorshenina 2016, 26–30.

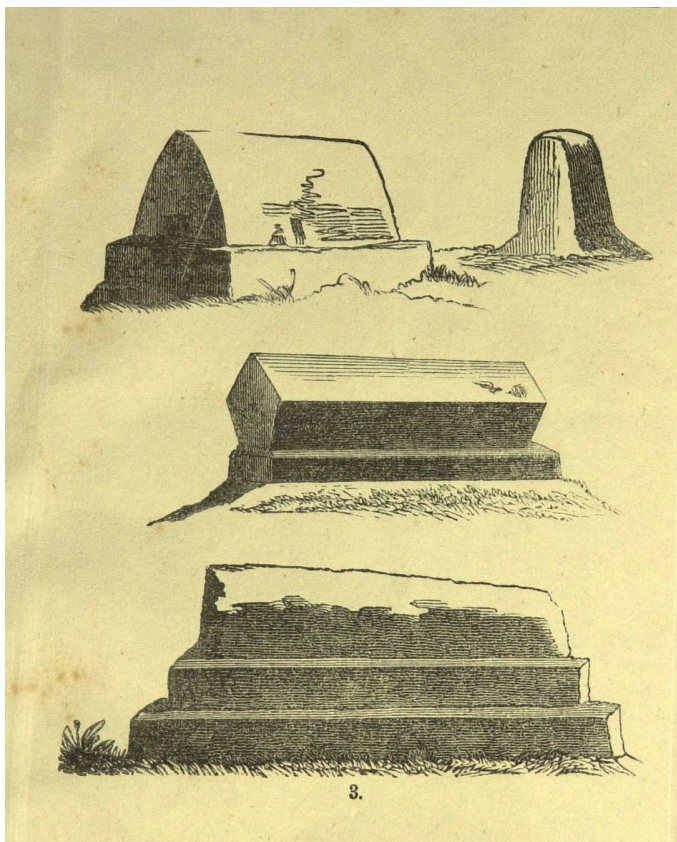


FIGURE 5 Kyrgyz tombs (after Vereshchagin 1874b, 453c.).

On top of it all, the first archaeological excavations might have changed the Kazakhs' own attitude to archaeological sites. The locals who had been employed as workmen with the excavation parties quickly "learnt" the elementary excavation "techniques" and realized that the archaeological finds can have both scholarly and commercial value: they could be sold, like these bricks, at a higher price. We can imagine that Vereshchagin, while living in the home of his nomadic hosts, generously shared with them some of the little archaeological knowledge he had obtained during his amateur excavations.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Vereshchagin mentions that the workmen used a peculiar kind of shovel which was very good for digging canals. He also writes of the workmen's slack and careless attitude, and their incessant requests for higher wages as the dig was getting deeper. See Vereshchagin 1868, 255d, 255f.

### 2.3.5 High Colonial Administration

When the affair of the “discovery” of Dzhankent, rich in old bricks, reached its climax, an important political reform occurred. In July 1867 the Turkestan Governorate General brought together Turkestan *oblast'*, Tashkent *raïon*, the lands beyond the Syr-Darya occupied in 1866 and a part of Semipalatinsk *oblast'*. The new entity now consisted of the Syr-Darya and Semirechensk *oblasts* (regions). Emperor Alexander II appointed Konstantin P. von Kaufmann to the post of Governor General.

Patrimonial policy was one of the earliest priorities of the new dignitary.<sup>136</sup> Quite soon, he took important steps concerning archaeology: in November 1868, he issued a circular demanding to be immediately informed in case of any archaeological finds. Local authorities had to take full control of the finds until further notice from the Governor General.<sup>137</sup> In 1869, von Kaufmann signed a decree prohibiting “predatory excavations.” It also required that all finds should be sent to the Imperial Archaeological Commission. After von Kaufmann's death, the order was promulgated twice, in 1882 and 1884.<sup>138</sup> In 1871 von Kaufmann reiterated his prohibition of any digs, even archaeological survey that he had not explicitly authorized.<sup>139</sup> The French scholar Ch.-E. Ujfalvy noted that in 1783 von Kaufmann issued a prohibition to excavate at Dzhankent. The Governor General believed that until the political situation was fully stabilized, no research should be conducted.<sup>140</sup>

Von Kaufmann fully stated his views on archaeological excavations in a letter of 1877 to Grigory E. Shchurovsky, President of the Imperial Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography at Moscow University. His position was that any small excavation could provoke unrest among the local population who might see the dig as an act of desecration of “ancestral graves.” Therefore, archaeology must never give rise to distrust of the colonial administration and should be practised in a most careful manner.<sup>141</sup> In accordance with this view, the right to authorize archaeological

<sup>136</sup> Gorshenina 2016.

<sup>137</sup> TsGA RUz, f. 1-1, op. 15, d. 54, l. 3, 3 ob; TsGA RUz, f. 1-17, op. 1, d. 2881, l. 1-10b.

<sup>138</sup> See Circular letters of the Ministry of Internal Affairs No. 229 of November 4, 1869; No. 6 of July 31, 1882; and No. 11 of May 31, 1884: TsGA RUz, f. 1-1, op. 11, d. 240, l. 167.

<sup>139</sup> TsGA RUz, f. 1-1, op. 15, d. 69, l. 128, 128ob. Kaufmann published *Pravila okhrany archeologicheskikh gorodishch* [The Rules of Guarding Archaeological Settlement Sites] in *Turkestanskii vedomosti* (No. 12, 1871): TsGA RUz, f. 1-1, op. 20, d. 8798, l. 4. See also Bartol'd 1977, 525.

<sup>140</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 44.

<sup>141</sup> TsGA RUz, f. 1-1, op. 19, d. 284, l. 3-4ob.

work remained the prerogative of the Governor General of Turkestan until 1889. Later, it was reassigned to the Imperial Archaeological Committee.<sup>142</sup>

### 2.3.6 Western Archaeologists

Taking advantage of von Kaufmann's predisposition towards France, Charles-Eugène Ujfalvy, a French anthropologist of Hungarian descent, obtained a permit to visit Turkestan. He became one of the first Western scholars to arrive in the lands newly acquired by Russia as head of an official expedition (in all, he led expeditions in 1876-1877, 1879 and 1881).<sup>143</sup> In 1876, he also got an exemption from the ban on excavations at Dzhankent.

By the time he arrived at the site, there had been a lot of information on Dzhankent in both Russian and Western scholarship. In addition to the overview article published by N.M. (Maev?) under the title of *Ot Samarj do Tashkenta* [From Samara to Tashkent] in 1872,<sup>144</sup> Vereshchagin's notes were reprinted three years later in issue 3 of the *Materialj dlya statistiki Turkestanskogo Kraja* [Statistical Data on the Turkestan Krai].<sup>145</sup> In the same year of 1875, Friedrich von Hellward in his *Centralasien: Landschaften und Völker* mentioned the site as an important archaeological site.<sup>146</sup> Dzhankent had its share of erroneous interpretations: thus, in 1876 Kiepert's map of Turkestan, published in Berlin but based on Russian data, presented *Ruinen von Djankala* instead of Dzhankent. Ujfalvy marked them on the right bank of the river, but concluded they are of no interest archaeologically<sup>147</sup> (he probably referred to Jan-Kale Jende).

Ujfalvy managed to do a small-scale excavation at Dzhankent and of the Khoja Ahmad Yassavi Mausoleum in the town of Turkestan, to examine the site of Aq Tepe near Margilan, and to collect small finds at the site of the town of Penzhikent. He also did an excavation at Afrasiab, the site of ancient Samarkand.<sup>148</sup> Ujfalvy described<sup>149</sup> the Dzhankent of the 1870s as a well-preserved site: from afar, one could see a fortress and an exceedingly well-preserved earthen rampart around it, which was similar to those around Yany-Kurgan, in Sauran and Koche-Mizguli.<sup>150</sup> Several hundred meters away

<sup>142</sup> Veselovskij 1900, 93.

<sup>143</sup> Gorshenina 1999.

<sup>144</sup> Maev (?) 1872, 177.

<sup>145</sup> Vereshchagin 1874b, 178.

<sup>146</sup> Hellward 1875.

<sup>147</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 43.

<sup>148</sup> Anon. 1878, 357. See also: Ujfalvy 1877.

<sup>149</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 44.

<sup>150</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 43-44.

from the fortress was the site of the actual town: several hills covered with remains of brick buildings in very good condition (Ujfalvy probably refers to Myn Tobe here, unless he applies the label of fortress to the town's citadel). On four of the five hills he excavated, Ujfalvy found "ancient" earthenware and majolica-glazed bricks. On the northeastern hill where, as the locals told him, once stood the dwelling of the khan, he discovered the best-preserved items including pieces of earthenware, glazed bricks and five coins right on the surface. However, these finds did not allow him to date the site. According to Ujfalvy, the fortress whose exact counterparts "could still be found throughout Turkestan"<sup>151</sup> must have been younger than the town whose antiquity is proven by his discoveries, such as the "beautiful" earthenware.<sup>152</sup> Ujfalvy thought that the bricks of Dzhanakent were of much higher quality than those in "Saourane" and "Koché-Mizguli," and even in the Hazret Yassavi Mausoleum in the town of Turkestan. Their closest counterparts can be found in "the mosques of Samarkand," writes Ujfalvy who collected samples of brick and other archaeological objects at every site he visited.

His analysis, while quite superficial, allowed Ujfalvy to conclude that the "civilization on this site was old,"<sup>153</sup> and its ruins "deserve" an in-depth examination as "important for sciences," including history, geography, anthropology and archaeology.<sup>154</sup> Citing both Lerkh and his own observations, the French author wrote that the Syr-Darya delta had preserved clear traces of an irrigation system. From this, he inferred that prior to the Arab period this oasis had been more fertile than Khiva, and the whole region between the Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya in these olden days was a network of interconnected oases with a highly developed agriculture and irrigation system.

### 2.3.7 The Last Survey of the Imperial Era

The last surge of interest in Dzhanakent during the Tsarist period consisted of two survey trips of members of the Turkestan Circle of Amateurs of Archaeology (*TKLA*), I.V. Anichkov and P. Spiridonov, the results of which were reflected in several articles published in the Minutes of the Circle in the third year of its existence.

<sup>151</sup> Present-day archaeologists agree with this position, adding that the closest counterpart of the Dzhanakent citadel can be found in the Ingeldy estate in Khwarazm, which was built much later.

<sup>152</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 45.

<sup>153</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 45.

<sup>154</sup> Ujfalvy 1879, 45.

Anichkov's report about several archaeologically interesting sites in Kazalinsk district,<sup>155</sup> including Dzhankent, was supplemented by extracts from an article by E. Aleksandrov, already published in the *Turkestan Gazette* (*Turkestanskije Vedomosti*)<sup>156</sup> reproducing the legend already known from previous publications related to Dzhankent;<sup>157</sup> he also reported on excavations carried out on the site of the fortress "near one of the elevated hills," during which a lot of fired bricks and a "block light green tiles" were discovered and scattered while trying to extract them from the ground. Another contribution was the anonymous publication of an "Article on Dzhankent" written by Nikolai P. Ostroumov, Vice-president of the *TKLA*, who limited himself to listing newspaper notes published at the time of the sensational discovery of the "Russian Pompeii" in 1867 and 1868, and retelling the work of Lerkh.<sup>158</sup>

This collection is supplemented by the note entitled "A trip to the ruins of Dzhankent" by P. Spiridonov, a teacher at the Kazalinsk three-class town school, who visited there on 31 August 1897 at the request of Ostroumov in order to take photographs of the ancient settlement. It was P. Spiridonov who, in his short report,<sup>159</sup> recorded the condition on the eve of the 20th century of the fortifications of Dzhankent and Djinkent, located at some distance from one another on an easily flooded plain where, in his opinion, artificial lakes with planted gardens had existed earlier, "as indicated by significant remains of stumps of large trees." Having negotiated the difficult road due to the many irrigation ditches, Spiridonov could not make an "accurate measurement of the ruins" because of lack of time and limited himself to "a superficial survey and an approximate (step) measurement." In his words:

The ruins of Djan-Kent are on the left side of the Syr[-Darya], (approximately) 25 *versta* from Kazalinsk, in the direction of South-South-West; they represent a regular rectangle, equal in area to 40,000 square *sazhen* [...] surrounded by a natural earthen wall 4 *sazhen* in height, on which were located the remains of walls from homogeneous clay with fill, reaching 2 *sazhen* in height.

On one of the mounds of the ancient settlement, opposite the northwest corner of the fortress and "one *versta* from it," was a large cemetery, "near one

155 Now Kazalinsk/Kazaly district of Kyzyl-Orda region of Kazakhstan.

156 Anichkov 1897-1898, 1. In: TsGA Ruz, f. 1-71, op. 1, d. 10, l. 1-2.

157 Aleksandrov 1898. G.N. Chabrov (1957, 190) mentions a note in *Trudj Orenburgskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi komissii*, t. 12, Orenburg, 1910, 222-225.

158 Anon. [N.P. Ostroumov?] 1897-1898, 62-68.

159 TsGA Ruz, f. 1-71, op. 1, d. 10, l. 3-6.



of the *mazar* [where] P.I. Lerkh found a gravestone inscription indicating the existence of *Djan-Kent* in the 14th century (the mausoleum which Lerch called a mosque).” The numerous mounds located inside the walls were, like the fortress itself (P. Spiridonov reckoned)

natural embankments, and not burial mounds as V. Vereshchagin called them [despite the fact that all these mounds were covered with ruins], buildings of fired brick, [in] ruins shaped like rectangles and squares in their foundations and located 30-100 *sazhen* from one another. There are a lot of such ruins, and together they are called Ming-Tyube (1000 mounds).

Having discovered a lot of “broken glazed vessels,” in addition to animal and human bones, during a one-day excavation in the fortress itself, P. Spiridonov suggested that he was dealing with “former pottery factories.” Another hypothesis was based on strategic considerations according to which the local residents were forced to keep a large supply of water within the fortress in the event of an attack by enemies. In addition, he noticed that there were no contemporary buildings to the south of the fortress, which he thought was explained by the fact that “the inhabitants of Ming-Tyube always expected enemies from this (the Khiva) side and that they maintained in Djin-Kent (which was on the [river] bank) a small garrison to protect the ditch supplying Ming-Tyube and the fortress of Djan-Kent with water.”

In addition to the description and approximate measurements by Spiridonov, three photographs were taken; however, one glass plate with a photograph of the general view of the settlement broke on the road, and two photographs taken from the middle of the eastern wall of the site were, through the mediation of the orientalist S.M. Gramenitsky, transferred to the *TKLA* at Tashkent.<sup>160</sup>

The common feature of all these publications was the already traditional reference to the uncontrolled destruction of the ancient settlement site with the extraction of fired bricks for the construction of foundations and floors in new buildings. According to Spiridonov,

The deterioration and final destruction of the remains of Ming-Tyube is attributed to the inhabitants of the city of Kazalinsk who 50 years ago used the material of the ruins of Ming-Tyube for the erection of their buildings in the town. Old locals say that the nomadic Kyrgyz people have long been digging in the ruins and, according to popular rumor, they found here many valuables: coins, gold and silver things, precious stones,

<sup>160</sup> TsGA RUz, f. 1-71, op. 1, d. 10, l. 3-4.

etc. I was shown one “biya” who owns a valuable gold find taken from Ming-Tyube.<sup>161</sup>

#### 2.4 *In Place of a Conclusion*

As shown above, in the imperial period the list of protagonists who in one way or another helped to turn Dzhankent into an “archaeological monument” included a number of different actors. In the 18th century, Kazakh elites invited Russian military officers and topographers to survey the area, and they put Dzhankent on European maps. In the early 19th century, Russian travelers, diplomats and military personnel inscribed the town site into the list of objects of “antiquity” which deserve attention. The Russian press, hungry for sensations, covered Dzhankent extensively. Russian officers on the frontier, the local Kazakh population, colonial officials and scholars from Russia’s main cities and from foreign countries led the effort to conduct the first excavations in the town, sketch its visual appearance and gather collections of a variety of objects. Finally, the high colonial administration laid down exact rules for the future study of the site. Relations between the protagonists often assumed a hostile character for each one considered himself best suited to study Dzhankent and to determine its future destiny.

As a result of these often discordant and contradictory efforts, there emerged iconographic, topographical and literary images of Dzhankent. Some of the protagonists tried to reconstruct the site’s history from Arabic and Persian sources and then put it in the context of the better-known European history (e.g. by looking for references to it in European travel books of the 13th century, or on 14th and 15th century maps made in Europe). It was, however, still unclear who founded the town, and when or why it was abandoned. More or less well-informed guesses and hypotheses often led to totally opposite conclusions:<sup>162</sup> Dzhankent’s founders were said to be either Persians-Tadzhiks-Sarts or Turks; the town was said to have served as the capital of the king of the Ghuz in 10th and 11th century, while others thought that the nomadic Ghuz never lived in towns at all. One reconstruction envisaged a quick decay of the town after it had been plundered by the Mongols, while another presumed that its population drifted away slowly, forced by climate change.

Despite all their shortcomings, these early studies strengthened the myth of powerful ancient civilizations in the Syr-Darya delta, with a well-developed irrigation system and high population density. In many publications

<sup>161</sup> TsGA RUz, f. 1-71, op. 1, d. 10, l. 5.

<sup>162</sup> Some of which were later examined by Tolstov (1947, 56).

of the time, this vision of a rich past of the region was illustrated with the proverbial saying that from Azret (now in Turkestan) to the Aral Sea “a nightingale could fly, leaping from one tree branch to another, and a cat could walk along the roofs of closely spaced houses.”<sup>163</sup> Proof of this was seen in the fact that the “ruins of the ancient towns along the banks of Central Asian rivers are far more spacious than their present settlements.”<sup>164</sup>

The whole of this region shows traces of ancient cultivation,” wrote Eugene Schuyler, American diplomat and journalist on his way from Dzhulek to Tashkent, “and it is evident that a very large population at one time existed here. In various parts there are mounds, now covered with growths of *saksaul* and other shrubs, which are evidently the ruins of former cities.”<sup>165</sup>

### 3 The Study of Dzhanakent in the Soviet Period and in the Era of Independence (20th and 21st Centuries)

In the Soviet period, interest in Dzhanakent and the monuments of this group of sites, known in the archeology of Central Asia as “swamp towns,”<sup>166</sup> revived again, but the basis for this interest was now quite different.

The term “swamp towns” (or “marsh towns”) was first introduced by S.P. Tolstov in 1946 for a group of monuments surveyed that year by a flying detachment of the Khorezmian Archaeological and Ethnographic Expedition (hereafter KhAEE) in the same year in the region of the old river bed of the Syr-Darya river, or more precisely, on the plain of a triangular peninsula bounded in the north by the Syr-Darya, in the west by the Aral Sea, and in the east by a strip of swamp and reed marshes (fig. 1). It was not by chance that Tolstov developed an interest in this group of monuments, including Dzhanakent, at that time. This was the period of the creation of new, “correct” histories of nations and peoples that were given “historical” status after the adoption in 1936 of a new Soviet constitution that approved the final list of republics and autonomous regions.<sup>167</sup> The new ethno-administrative units had to confirm their legitimacy by referring to the distant past.<sup>168</sup> To this end, the authorities involved

<sup>163</sup> Vereshchagin 1874b, 177.

<sup>164</sup> Anon. 1873, 28.

<sup>165</sup> Schuyler 1877, 67–68.

<sup>166</sup> Obviously, Tolstov’s term was inspired by previous descriptions of this area.

<sup>167</sup> Gorshenina 2012, 189–300, with bibliography, p. 189, n. 3.

<sup>168</sup> Shnirel’man 2006, 19.

numerous historians and archaeologists who would be able to create the indispensable basis for such “histories of peoples.” In his 1938 article on “Basic Problems of the Ancient History of Central Asia”<sup>169</sup> S.P. Tolstov, on the basis of N.A. Marr’s “Japhetic theory” developed an approach which presupposed a long process of mixing of local East Iranian-speaking aborigines with intrusive Turkic-speaking tribes, a process which he thought to have taken place in the second half of the 1st millennium BC and throughout the 1st millennium AD. This approach allowed the present-day Central Asian peoples – Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Tajiks – to include in the respective stories of their ethnogenesis the oldest tribes which once inhabited their modern territories:

The Marxist development of the questions of the ethnogony [origins] of the peoples of Central Asia is still entirely in the future. However, what we already know now is enough to reject once and for all the traditional gap between the history of the ancient peoples of Central Asia whose names continue from the historical arena to the beginning of the Middle Ages, and modern Central Asian peoples, supposedly late aliens in their homeland, alien to the allegedly ancient cultural traditions of the great Central Asian Mesopotamia. The history of the Sogdians, Bactrians, Chorasmians, Massagetae, Dai, Saka, Usun, Hepthalites, [and] Turks of ancient Central Asia is the history of the direct ancestors of the peoples of the blossoming republics of the Soviet East, peoples who showed in practice that in them the world has worthy descendants of the creators of the brilliant culture of Central Asian antiquity.<sup>170</sup>

In 1939, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR began extensive research designed to supply the various Soviet peoples with their own long pasts. In the 1940s to 1960s, many locally based scholars, including archaeologists, were engaged in this prestigious project in various parts of the USSR. Archaeologists at the time argued that the origins of peoples go back to the deepest past.<sup>171</sup>

Since, according to the new ideological doctrine, ethnogenesis was tied to a particular territory, the Soviet political and administrative structure was based on the ethno-territorial principle. Tolstov’s article “Towns of the Oghuz” was published in the journal *Soviet Ethnography* in 1947 (No. 3) in a section entitled “Questions of Ethnogenesis,” together with two related articles: one by A.N. Bernshtam “On the question of Usun / Kushan and the Tokharians (From

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<sup>169</sup> Tolstov 1938, 176–203.

<sup>170</sup> Tolstov 1938, 203.

<sup>171</sup> Shnirel'man 2006, 20.

the history of Central Asia)” which touched upon questions of ancient Iran and its connection with the languages of the modern peoples of the Pamir (with reference to N.Ya. Marr’s Japhetic studies);<sup>172</sup> and an article by A.Yu. Yakubovskii on “Questions of ethnogenesis of the Turkmen in the 8th-10th centuries” where various hypotheses of Turkmen origins (including L.V. Oshanin’s hypothesis about a Scythian-Sarmatian origin) and possible territories for their settlement in antiquity, right up to the borders with Iran, were discussed.<sup>173</sup> Dzhankent was mentioned in the articles by Yakubovskii and Tolstov, but it was no longer discussed within the framework of the “Aryan theory” (that the town was built by the indigenous inhabitants of Turan – Tajiks, etc.),<sup>174</sup> nor was it suggested that the town was built later by Karakalpaks or Nogai.<sup>175</sup> Now Dzhankent was considered to be a monument of, and undoubtedly associated with, the Ghuz (Oghuz), and the centre of Oghuz statehood in the 9th to 10th centuries. Nobody disputed the evidence of several highly regarded sources that the town of Yangikent located on the lower Syr-Darya was the residence of the “king of the Ghuz” in the 10th to 11th centuries.

Obviously, the history of the Turks in the region was on the agenda in those years because, in the final division of Central Asia into Soviet republics, the territories around the Aral Sea and the delta regions passed to Turkic-speaking peoples: Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Karakalpaks and Turkmen. According to the then prevailing theory of autochthonism, the ethnogenesis of the Turkic peoples had to be linked to the ancient autochthonous populations of this region. Hence the extensive reference of archaeologists and historians to written sources and to comparative linguistics, in the process looking for highly improbable similarities between ancient and modern languages even if these appeared hardly comparable. No matter how complex the analysis, no matter how casuistic the methods resorted to by researchers, the result had to be, in some way or another, a link between ancient and modern peoples living in the territory in question. And quite often it was good, conscientious research carried out at a high level. All the more surprising, from the modern point of view, were the discrepancies between the results of the research, and the conclusions that followed from this. Sergei Pavlovich Tolstov was a master in these complex manoeuvres between true scholarly research and “correct” conclusions, and most likely, he sincerely believed in the theory of stadial development and in autochthonism. He did not know how to pretend at all.

<sup>172</sup> Bernshtam 1947, 47.

<sup>173</sup> Yakubovskii 1947, 48-54.

<sup>174</sup> Maksheev 1867a, 247.

<sup>175</sup> Maksheev 1856, 183-184.

Tolstov's work with written sources containing information about the Ghuz was facilitated by the publication in 1938 to 1939 of the *Materials on the History of Turkmen and Turkmenia* (MITT), edited by S.L. Volin, A.A. Romaskevich and A.Yu. Yakubovskii; the first volume of translations of, and comments on, excerpts from the works of Persian and Arab authors of the 7th to 15th centuries included information on the history of the peoples of Central Asia.<sup>176</sup> Tolstov also relied on the analysis by V.V. Bartol'd. But Tolstov vigorously challenged Bartol'd's conclusions, in particular that Yangikent (Dzhankent) and other towns on the Lower Syr-Darya "were founded by cultural aliens; and their existence does not indicate the spread of urban life among the Oghuz themselves."<sup>177</sup> Not limiting himself to (early) medieval Arabic sources, Tolstov used also older written sources (Ptolemy, Strabo, Stephanus of Byzantium) to link directly the ethnonym Augala-Augassia (the name of one of the Massagetae tribes) to the origin of the name of the Oghuz:

Thus, the ethnic name Oghuz which subsequently received wide distribution and collective significance derives originally from the name of the Massagetae tribe which was settled in the local region of the Lower Syr-Darya – on the eastern shore of the Aral Sea.<sup>178</sup>

And further, the "revolutionary" conclusion is drawn that

it is here (on the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya), and not in distant Mongolia, that one has to look for the initial localization of this name (and therefore of the nationality) which was brought eastward at the beginning of 6th century by the expansion of the Hephtalites, an essential element of whom were the Syr-Darya Proto-Oghuz tribes.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>176</sup> The editors emphasized: "While we are collecting evidence, we are paying a lot of attention to the Oghuz-Turkmen on the Syr-Darya, about whom information is available mainly in the sources of the 10th and 11th centuries. News about these Turkmen is especially important on the following issues: 1) the borders of the Turkmen settlements in the Early Middle Ages, 2) the ethnogenesis of the Turkmen people" (*Materialy po istorii turkmen i Turkmenii* 1939, 4).

<sup>177</sup> Bartol'd, 1929, 15.

<sup>178</sup> Tolstov 1950, 50. As early as 1935, S.P. Tolstov put forward the suggestion that "the name of the Oghuz under which the Turkmen appear in early medieval sources is a natural variant of the ancient name Amu-Darya-Oks which in the form Okuz was still used in the 16th century, and perhaps even later" (Tolstov 1935, 16).

<sup>179</sup> Tolstov 1947, 82; 1950, 50.



Drawing analogies to the traditional division of the Oghuz and modern Turkmen (who, according to Tolstov's opinion, inherited this "genealogical tradition" directly from the Oghuz), to the 24 tribes within the military-administrative structure of the Hun union and the battle formation of the Huns, Tolstov built an unbroken chain: from the Aral Huns (4th century AD), to Kidarite-Hephthalites, to their descendants, the Oghuz tribes (10th-11th centuries AD), and to the Turkmen (19th-early 20th centuries) among whom this scheme of military-administrative division was preserved "in spite of all the ethnographic shifts which took place over all this time."<sup>180</sup> Using his amazing linguistic abilities, his phenomenal memory, extensive knowledge and erudition, Tolstov conducted skillful language studies to prove the close relationship of the Oghuz tribes with the oldest (Neolithic and Bronze Age) populations of fishermen and farmers in the delta regions of the Syr-Darya and Amu-Darya. A direct quotation may demonstrate the consummate skill with which his really wide knowledge in ethnography, linguistics and archaeology was interwoven with the dominant theory of autochthonism:

Let us now understand in historical terms the above-stated linguistic facts.

1) The close interconnection in a number of languages of different systems [families] between the concepts we are interested in – "water," "swamp," "lake" and "town," suggests the connection of the ancient settlements of the Neolithic and Bronze Age with fishing, primarily in a swamp-lake practice. This is confirmed entirely by all the archaeological material at our disposal, as well as by ethnographic parallels. The continuation of this tradition in the Iron Age is reflected in the description by Strabo and Hekataios of the Massagetae of the marshes and islands.

2) On this basis, the relatively recent alternation of Turkic balyk – town and balyk – fish proves that during the period of the formation of the Turkic languages, probably around the middle of the 1st millennium AD, this relationship between fishing and habitation in the conditions of a lake-swamp landscape continued to exist, which is also confirmed by the archaeological material published here, as well as by ethnographic survivals (Karakalpaks, Yakuts).<sup>181</sup>

This line of argument explains his motivation to call these ancient settlement sites "swamp towns," in order to emphasize the close and long-standing link of

<sup>180</sup> Tolstov 1947, 80.

<sup>181</sup> Tolstov 1947, 75.

the population of these sites with a settled population that had lived here since ancient times. Analyzing the reports of Procopius of Caesarea and Menander the Protector about the Hephtalite Huns in the 6th century, Tolstov decided, “there is every reason to see the oldest Hephtalite cities in our “swamp sites,” and not in the cities of Maverannahr where the Hephtalites were an alien element.”<sup>182</sup> Tolstov’s final version of this hypothesis is found in his book *On the Tracks of the Ancient Chorasmian Civilization*:

Thus, we have every reason to believe that the ‘swamp fortifications’ of the Aral Sea are monuments of the Hephtalite culture, showing us the history of its formation from local Massaget-Alanic and alien Hunnic elements, and allowing us to reconstruct the main features of the economic and social mode of the ‘White Huns’.<sup>183</sup>

Ethnically, the Oghuz of the 10th century were the result of the further development of crossing the indigenous Aral tribes of Massaget-Alanic origin with elements penetrating from the east. If the Hephtalites are a product of the crossing of Massagetae-Alans with the Huns, then we can see in the Syr-Darya Oghuz the ethnic re-appearance of these Hephtalites mixed with Turkic elements proper which were introduced here from the Semirech’e in the 6th-8th centuries. It is impossible to identify any break in the cultural history of the Syr-Darya towns between the Hephtalite and Oghuz periods of their history. The Oghuz culture of the 10th century was the direct evolution of the Hephtalite culture of the 5th-6th centuries.<sup>184</sup>

Let us turn to the archaeological evidence. Tolstov himself drew attention to the archaeological material as the last argument with an undisputed advantage over all other sources. Among the earlier excavators at Dzhanakent,<sup>185</sup> Tolstov mentioned only Lerkh, commenting critically that he had dug in the wrong place (not within the fortress itself). Tolstov suggested that Lerkh excavated mainly some better preserved ruins outside the town where he found only late medieval material (14th-15th centuries).<sup>186</sup> With all due respect to Lerkh, it has to be said that Tolstov was right: the object of Lerkh’s excavations was probably the remains of tombs and buildings of the Golden Horde period located several hundred meters northwest of Dzhanakent (fig. 6, 1). This is confirmed by

182 Tolstov 1947, 78.

183 Tolstov 1948, 213.

184 Tolstov 1948, 245.

185 See Part 2 of this paper.

186 Tolstov 1947, 57.

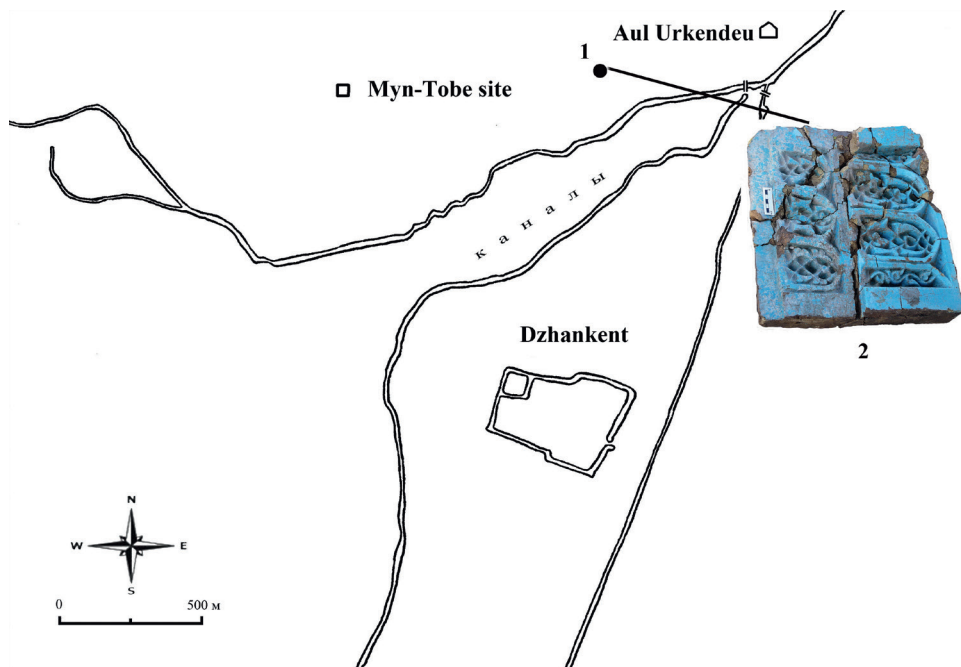


FIGURE 6 Map with location of Dzhankent and Myn-Tobe. 1: Ruins of mausoleum (14th century); 2: incised glazed tile (after Arzhantseva & Ruzanova 2010, fig. 7, no. 13).

the fact that “blue tiles and parts of patterned window screens covered with blue glaze” similar to those described by Lerkh were discovered in 2005 by our own expedition (Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, and Institute of Archaeology, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan) during excavations of an accidentally discovered mausoleum of the Golden Horde period near the village of Urkendeu, located 2 kilometers from Dzhankent (fig. 6, 2). Lerkh’s object was probably the site of Myn-Tobe (Mun-Tobe) where life may have moved to after Dzhankent itself had been destroyed or abandoned for whatever reasons). Many earlier investigators of Dzhankent, judging by their descriptions, had seen Dzhankent and Myn-tobe as a single site. It is likely there had been more structures (tombs, gravestones, parts of walls, etc.) preserved on the surface in the area that now divides these two sites.

So, with an understanding of the importance of archaeological arguments in the debate about Dzhankent, the route of the flying detachment of the KhAEE was planned in 1946 so as to examine the sites of the “Yangikent group,” or “swamp towns:” Dzhankent, Kesken-Kuyuk-kala and Bolshaya Kuyuk-kala. In the course of this expedition, aerial photography of the sites was carried

out, preliminary descriptions were made, visual plans were drawn, and surface finds were collected.<sup>187</sup> The evidence obtained was included in the main publications by Tolstov.<sup>188</sup> True to his inclination (which coincided with that of the mainstream) to date sites as early as possible, Tolstov suggested on the basis of surface finds (basically pottery and a few metal objects) that the “swamp towns” existed continuously from antiquity (the beginning of our era) to the 10th to 11th centuries.<sup>189</sup> He thereby started a discussion about the origins and chronology of the “swamp towns” (and primarily Dzhanakent) which continues to this day. The surface finds allowed Tolstov to establish a preliminary date and make important suggestions on the cultural and historical contexts of these sites.<sup>190</sup> It is amazing how, on the basis of surface finds alone, Tolstov was able to make an incisive, highly professional analysis of the pottery available to him, identifying several ceramic groups that he associated with different ethnic groups and periods (fig. 7). Tolstov identified the following pottery groups:

1. Pottery of Chorasmian origin, which provided an approximate chronological framework for the site.
  - 1.1. Numerous fragments of red-coated pottery which he considered to be Classical and which he dated to the first centuries of our era or perhaps somewhat earlier (fig. 8, 1-4). Some of this pottery Tolstov believed to be closer to the Dzhetÿ-Asar tradition (also Classical, according to Tolstov's definition) than to Chorasmia, which testified to the influence that came from the east along the Kuvan-Darya (fig. 8, 5-6).
  - 1.2. Also quite numerous fragments of various vessels, especially smaller *khums* (storage vessels), typical Middle Afrighid forms (5th-7th centuries AD), with characteristic wavy-pattern decoration; such forms are especially well represented in Chorasmia at the site of Toprak-kala and in the lower layer of Teshik-kala (fig. 8, 7-10).
  - 1.3. Fragments of unglazed vessels (handles, rims of *khum*) of early medieval Khwarazmian types dating from the 9th to 11th centuries, especially numerous at Dzhanakent where they were associated with sherds of iridescent bowls having a white underglaze engobe with reddish-brown paint typical for the 10th to 11th centuries (fig. 9, 1-5). At Dzhanakent, there were later finds, but not many; at the other sites, there were none at all.

187 Arzhantseva & Ruzanova 2010, 390-406.

188 Tolstov 1947, 57-62; 1948, 211-213, 246-248; 1962, 198-200.

189 Tolstov 1947, 66, 68.

190 Tolstov 1947, 66.



FIGURE 7 Pottery of the “swamp towns” (Illustration compiled by L.M. Levina for Tolstov 1962. Archive of Khorezmian Archaeological and Ethnographical Expedition).





FIGURE 8 Various pottery types. 1-3, 9: Kesken-Kuyuk-kala (after Tolstov 1947, fig. 12); 7: Teshik-kala (after Tolstov 1948, fig. 70,8); 4-6, 8, 10: Dzhankent (after Amirgalina 2014, figs. 3, 12, 20 and 48).





FIGURE 9 Various pottery types. 1-3: Dzhankent (after Tolstov 1947, fig. 15); 6-8: Kesken-Kuyuk-kala (after Tolstov 1947, fig. 13); 9-11: Kesken-Kuyuk-kala, Bronze Age pottery according to S.P. Tolstov (after Tolstov 1962, fig. 116,1); 4, 5, 12-17: Dzhankent (after Amirgalina 2014, figs. 1, 6,2, 54 and 64).

This material suggested links between the “swamp towns” and Chorasmia, and implied the possible presence in these sites of a number of people of Chorasmian origin. Despite the obvious predominance of finds dating to the 9th to 11th centuries AD, Tolstov confidently stated that the material available to archaeologists makes it possible to assert “that these ancient sites existed from the time of antiquity, at least from the beginning of our era, to the 10th-11th centuries.”<sup>191</sup> Thus, in his opinion, the origins of Dzhankent (like that of the other ‘swamp sites’) date to Classical antiquity, but around the 10th century Dzhankent was re-designed on a medieval Khwarazmian pattern “by the Khwarazmian engineers and, judging by the ceramics, a fairly numerous Khwarazmian colony.”<sup>192</sup>

2. Local (or “native,” as Tolstov called it) pottery. Most of the pottery found at all three sites had nothing in common with Khwarazmian pottery, and had no direct parallels in the pottery from the surrounding areas known at the time. This is a very rough, hand-made, quite thick-walled, unevenly fired pottery of reddish-brown, yellowish and dark colour, with a rich relief ornament covering the surface. Tolstov identified two sub-groups within this style.
  - 2.1. Various sizes of vessels covered with angular, mostly open-triangle decorations. Among these fragments were the rims of vessels with an outward curving rim, thickened lip, open-triangle decoration, oval or linear stamped impressions arranged vertically, and horizontal appliques of twisted bands. Some vessels from this sub-group had a red gloss, like Ancient Chorasmian hand-made pottery. Tolstov noted that some vessels of this group “impress with the archaic nature of their type both from the aspect of technology and from the aspect of decoration, and in many respects they are reminiscent of the pottery of the Late Bronze Age.”<sup>193</sup> (fig. 9, 7-13, 16).
  - 2.2. The second sub-group consisted mostly of very rough and poorly fired vessels (pots and bowls), in clay, profile and technique similar to sub-group 2.1, also richly decorated, but in a completely different style. They had a curvilinear, spiral-floral ornament, among which spirals and leaf-shaped patterns with blossoms predominate (fig. 9, 6, 14, 15, 17). Tolstov pointed out a remote resemblance to the curvilinear decoration of the Minussinsk Basin pottery from the Tatar to the Kyrgyz periods. But the closest analogies, in his opinion, could

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191 Tolstov 1947, 68.

192 Tolstov 1947, 68.

193 Tolstov 1947, 69.

be found in other materials: in the stone carvings of Turkic sarcophagi of the 8th century AD, in medieval Late Turkic ornaments, and in the modern folk art of Central Asia (especially among the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs), including appliqué, embroidery, bone and metal objects.<sup>194</sup>

He found it difficult to give an exact date for the two sub-groups of “native” pottery, but believed that this entire group dated back to the beginning of the first millennium AD or even earlier (group 2.1 to the Andronovo Culture). On the basis of this well-informed and knowledgeable analysis of the pottery, Tolstov made far-reaching generalizations: in the culture of the “swamp towns” of the eastern Aral Sea region, three “ethnographic streams” (in Tolstov’s own words) were reflected:

- 1) the local culture based on ancient, deeply archaic traditions dating back to the Bronze Age (pottery sub-group 2.1);
- 2) the powerful influence on this local culture by the art style of the steppe Turkic (or maybe the Proto-Turkic) tribes of Mongolia and the Altai region which had a dramatic effect in the second half of the 1st millennium AD (pottery sub-group 2.2);
- 3) a persistent influence of Central Asian civilization, primarily Chorasnia/Khwarazm, to a lesser extent the Dzhetü-Asar Culture of the Middle Syr-Darya (pottery group 1).

His final conclusion was in the spirit of the time (quoted here almost verbatim):<sup>195</sup>

- 1) the towns of the lower Syr-Darya, at least the Yangikent region, were not “founded by cultural aliens,” but created by the local population; one may at best suggest some influence of, mainly, Chorasnia, and partly the Dzhetü-Asar Culture;<sup>196</sup>
- 2) the 10th century Oghuz of the Yangikent region were the direct descendants of the most ancient local population whose cultural roots go back to the local Bronze Age traditions; at the same time, it is indisputable that some strong element in their ethnogenesis came from the east, apparently around the middle of the first millennium AD;

<sup>194</sup> Tolstov 1947, 70.

<sup>195</sup> Tolstov 1947, 70.

<sup>196</sup> Contrary to the opinions of Bartol’d 1929 and Yakubovskii 1954, Tolstov believed that the Oghuz of the 10th – early 11th centuries constituted the predominant part of the urban population on the Syr-Darya. The inhabitants of Yangikent, Dzhenid and other urban centres were, in his view, not of ‘Muslim’ origin, but basically the local Oghuz population (Tolstov 1948, 246–248).

- 3) the Proto-Oghuz and Oghuz peoples of the Lower Syr-Darya were not really nomadic.<sup>197</sup> They were at least semi-sedentary, if not just sedentary (see the nature of their settlements), but at the same time practised pastoralism (see the abundance of animal bones) and, undoubtedly, fishing (see the location of their settlements in a swampy delta).

Having thus dealt with the “swamp towns” and having suggested an answer to the question of the ethnogenesis of the Turks in the spirit of autochthonism, Tolstov never reconsidered this subject: at the time he was much more interested in the excavations of Toprak-kala and then Koï-Krýlgan-kala. He published his reflections on the subject in the article “Towns of the Oghuz” (1947), in the article “Oghuz, Pechenegs, the Daukara Sea (Notes on the Historical Ethnonymics of the Eastern Aral Sea Region)” (1950) and in the book *On the Tracks of the Ancient Khorezmian Civilization* (1948). He repeated his earlier conclusions (without changes) in his last book *In the Ancient Deltas of Oxus and Jaxartes* (1962), with an extended bibliography including everything that had been published in the meantime.

After the 1946 survey, surface finds were collected in 1958 at Kesken-Kuyuk-kala;<sup>198</sup> small-scale archaeological work was carried out there by the KhAEE members B.I. Vainberg and N.N. Vakturskaya in 1963 when the southern wall was excavated and explored.<sup>199</sup> Tolstov, however, did not take the newly obtained data and finds into account in his studies, especially since 1963 was the last year of fieldwork in which Tolstov personally took part (at the Tagisken cemetery). In 1964, Tolstov suffered a second stroke, he no longer went into the field, and by and large did not write anything. The results of the 1963 fieldwork were processed and published by L.M. Levina in her monograph *Pottery of the Lower and Middle Syr-Darya*.<sup>200</sup> Using Tolstov's preliminary scheme for dividing the pottery into three groups, and analysing a large range of pottery from various sites on the lower and middle Syr-Darya, Levina linked these

197 Tolstov, following the unilinear evolutionary theory of the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (1877), believed that nomadic societies stood at a lower level of social development than sedentary societies. The Oghuz had to be called ‘civilized’ (in Morgan's terminology) as they had been capable of creating a state. And in any case, he could not accept the explanation that the arrival of a Muslim population had led to the emergence of towns on the lower Syr-Darya at that time.

198 The collection of surface finds was carried out by the Moscow biologist V.M. Smirin.

199 Judging by the diary of T.A. Zhdanko for 1963 (diary no. 13 for 1963; Archive of the KhAEE), A.M. Khazanov also excavated at Kesken-Kuyuk-kala that year; this excavation produced the fragment of a firedog (*khoshkar*) with a ram's head which is well-known in the archaeological literature. This fragment was later published by Levina (1996, fig. 164, no. 10).

200 Levina 1971.

pottery groups to particular cultures and territories. In the “swamp towns” of the Syr-Darya delta, she traced three associated and contemporaneous pottery assemblages: pure Dzhetĭ-Asar, assimilated Dzhetĭ-Asar from the Semirech’e, and Afrighid with direct links to Chorasmia (though to a much lesser degree than in the delta of the Amu-Darya).<sup>201</sup> And although she identified a fairly strong Dzhetĭ-Asar “stream” in the formation of the pottery assemblage of the “swamp towns,” the questions of origin and chronology of these iconic sites remained. The ideological rhetoric that characterized the archaeological publications at the end of the 1940s had disappeared, and her conclusions were not as categorical as earlier ones had been, and were focused on the analysis of the pottery evidence.

In 1969 a monograph entitled “Essays on the History of Oghuz and Turkmen of Central Asia of the 9th-13th centuries” was published by S.G. Agadzhanov, a remarkable Orientalist, specialist on the history of the Oghuz and Seljuks who spoke many oriental languages. Even today, this book remains the only major Russian-language history of the Oghuz nomad state and the early phase of the ethnic history of the Turkmen.

In his “Essays,” Agadzhanov unravelled the most mysterious stage of Oghuz history: the period of the Oghuz tribal alliance after the dissolution of the Western Turkic Kaganate, and the history of their state on the Syr-Darya. He outlined a 500-year history of settlement, economy, social and political structures of the Oghuz based on a huge collection of medieval chronicles and other written sources.<sup>202</sup> In this monograph, Dzhankent (Yangikent) was paid special attention as being the headquarters of the Oghuz *yabgu* and the capital of New Guzia, something which was also emphasized by Bartol’d.<sup>203</sup> Agadzhanov was interested only in the Oghuz period of Dzhankent, he did not particularly delve into the problem by whom and when this town (or settlement) had originally been founded. Nevertheless, he made one very important observation:

The town of New Guzia was called Yangikent, located on the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya river. The adoption of this name is most likely a result of the Oghuz achieving political hegemony on the steppes along the Syr-Darya in the 9th-10th centuries. In this respect, it is significant that in the Arab-Persian sources of the 10th century the capital of the Oghuz *yabgu* is called New Village. Yangikent, as shown by the archaeological survey, existed in the period of [Classical] antiquity. However,

201 Levina 1971, 77.

202 Trepavlov 2009, 310.

203 Bartol’d 1963, 563, 565; Agadzhanov 1969, 40.

in the 10th century, the town was rebuilt and reinforced with the help of Khwarazmian engineers. Evidently, the population of Yangikent consisted mostly of colonists, mainly from Khwarazm. Here also lived groups of Oghuz in the process of settling down, as is shown by the pottery found on the site of the ancient settlement.<sup>204</sup>

In principle, Agadzhanov used the model suggested by Tolstov, but at the same time gave a detailed justification for the presence on the lower Syr-Darya of a certain group of Oghuz, and for their main role in the creation of the town of Dzhankent (Yangikent) which is named in the written sources and the ruins of which have survived to the present day. Unlike Tolstov, Agadzhanov believed that the majority of the town's population was not Oghuz, but Khwarazmian colonists. With regard to the early dating of Dzhankent, it is obvious that Agadzhanov followed Tolstov, trusting him as an archaeologist and believing that relevant work had been done on the site. However, one may recall that in 1946 only survey work had been carried out and surface finds had been collected, while actual excavations at Dzhankent were not conducted until 2005. In the classic book on *Medieval Towns of Central Asia*,<sup>205</sup> O.G. Bol'shakov wrote about Dzhankent rather briefly, but quite clearly. In a polemic against S.P. Tolstov who had believed that "the large residential quarters that are found at Dzhankent testify to the preservation of archaic communal-clan traditions here",<sup>206</sup> Bol'shakov, being a specialist on the medieval towns of the East, quite categorically stated that "the clear planning of Yangikent, not distorted by repeated rebuilding, attests to the simultaneity of its construction and the comparative youth of the town, and the large residential areas are ordinary quarters consisting of several houses."<sup>207</sup> Bol'shakov, without specifying who, in his opinion, had built Dzhankent, quoted from Tolstov's very first publication about the site that it had been the headquarters of the Oghuz *yabgu*.<sup>208</sup> It is also not clear whether Bol'shakov believed that Dzhankent existed even earlier, from classical antiquity according to Tolstov's suggestion. Bol'shakov was probably not interested in this issue, he had completely different research priorities.

The question of the origin of the "swamp towns," the date of their foundation and the composition of their population was addressed by B.I. Vainberg

204 Agadzhanov 1969, 133-134.

205 Belenitskii *et alii* 1973.

206 Tolstov 1947, 171.

207 Belenitskii *et alii* 1973, 193.

208 Belenitskii *et alii* 1973, 192.



on the basis of archaeological data (mainly the pottery). Together with N.N. Vakturskaya, she carried out small excavations at Kesken-Kuyuk-kala in 1963 for the Khorezmian Archaeological and Ethnographic Expedition. The materials of these excavations were never published by her, but in her book on *The Ethnogeography of Turan in Antiquity*<sup>209</sup> she provided a detailed comparative analysis of the pottery assemblages of the late stage of the Dzhetĭ-Asar Culture, the Kerder region on the lower Amu-Darya, and the “swamp towns,” showing their similarities as well as the characteristic differences between them. She suggested that the pottery of the “swamp towns” showed not just Dzhetĭ-Asar components, but also connections to the Kerder region.<sup>210</sup> E.E. Nerazik came to the same conclusions while studying the lapis lazuli rhombic pendants from Kesken-Kuyuk-kala and Tok-kala (a site in Kerder). Nerazik explained the presence of these characteristic ornaments at Tok-kala with an “ethnic kinship of the population with the inhabitants of Kesken-Kuyuk-kala.”<sup>211</sup> Väinberg also thought that the date span of the existence of the “swamp towns” was limited to the 7th-9th centuries AD, judging by the finds from Kesken-Kuyuk-kala, but Dzhanĭkent, in her opinion, continued up to the Mongol period.<sup>212</sup>

There have been no more recent statements concerning the origin, dating and ethnic composition of the “swamp towns,” and certainly no further original hypotheses. A.M. Khazanov, in one of the most recent articles on steppe urbanism, supported the hypothesis of Agadzhanov, and partly Tolstov himself, that Dzhanĭkent had been built by Khwarazmians and served as winter quarters for the Oghuz *yabgu*.<sup>213</sup> Khazanov did not comment on when and by whom the town (or settlement) had been founded since he considered the question of Dzhanĭkent in the context of models of the relationship of nomads with cities in contact areas, and he, like Agadzhanov, was interested only in the Oghuz phase of Dzhanĭkent. K.M. Baĭpakov who researched the history and archaeology of ancient and medieval towns of Kazakhstan, mentioned Dzhanĭkent primarily in connection with the Oghuz on the lower Syr-Darya, as the residence of the *yabgu* and the capital of the Oghuz.<sup>214</sup> In his popular book on *Ancient Towns of Kazakhstan*, he still made use of Tolstov’s hypothesis that the town had existed since the beginning of our era.<sup>215</sup> Subsequently, though, Baĭpakov was more cautious about the earliest phases of Dzhanĭkent

209 Väinberg 1999.

210 Väinberg 1999, 56, 57, 171-173, 188.

211 Nerazik 1979, 105.

212 Väinberg 1999, 189.

213 Khazanov 2005, 165.

214 Baĭpakov 1986, 100, 192, 194.

215 Baĭpakov & Erzakovich 1971, 162.

and other “swamp sites:” he wrote in 2007 that the ““Oghuz towns’ emerged and developed long before the Oghuz and Turkmen themselves came here, and we can only talk about the Oghuz period of their existence.”<sup>216</sup> When describing the pottery from Kesken-Kuyuk-Kala, obtained already with modern excavations, K.M. Baïpakov came to the same conclusion as Levina: the culture of the “swamp towns” was based on the Dzhetý-Asar Culture (influenced, in turn, by the cultures of the Semirech’e), the Middle Syr-Darya and Khwarazm.<sup>217</sup> He did not deal, however, with the dates of the origin of the “swamp towns” nor with the composition of their populations.

In recent years, interest in these sites has been renewed, and the study of the “swamp towns” has become one of the priorities in medieval archaeology in Kazakhstan precisely because of the context of the Oghuz question and in connection with the search for “glorious heroic ancestors” which is characteristic of post-Soviet societies and the newly independent states. In current research, the medieval Oghuz have come to the fore, having been part of the formation of the Kazakh ethnos and because of their appeal as “heroic ancestors.”<sup>218</sup> Here, Dzhanakent is of special interest in the history of Kazakhstan because, according to legend, it is the native town of Korkyt Ata, legendary Turkic philosopher, musician and composer of the 9th century.<sup>219</sup>

Archaeological work on the site of Dzhanakent continues to this day, but although a lot of new evidence has been obtained, the questions of the origin and chronology of Dzhanakent are still open. The dating of the site suggested by Tolstov remained unchanged for a long time, and was only corrected by Levina who identified in the material from Kesken-Kuyuk-kala items belonging to the 6th to 8th centuries, with clear parallels in the material of the Dzhetý-Asar Culture (periods II and III).<sup>220</sup> While no further attempts have been made to trace the Oghuz back to the Bronze Age, some researchers have from time to time resurrected Tolstov’s exotic hypothesis about the origin of the Oghuz from Ptolemy’s *Augasi*.<sup>221</sup> The presence of a significant component of the non-Turkic Dzhetý-Asar population in the ‘swamp towns’ is accepted nowadays, but the aforementioned questions concerning the nature of Dzhanakent are still far from solved. There are, thus, still the questions about when the town

<sup>216</sup> Baïpakov 2007, 39, 61.

<sup>217</sup> Baïpakov 2007, 57; Levina 1971, 76-89.

<sup>218</sup> These issues of the search for “glorious ancestors” and the attempt to demonstrate the status of “indigenous people” in the post-Soviet period of the Central Asian republics has been discussed in detail by V.A. Shnirel'man (here particularly Shnirel'man 2009).

<sup>219</sup> *Kniga moego deda Korkuta* 1962.

<sup>220</sup> Levina 1971, 76-85; Rapoport *et alii* 2000, 191.

<sup>221</sup> See e.g. Pala 2017, 60; Gundogdyev 2012.

was founded, who inhabited it, and how long it had existed before the Oghuz took control of it in the 9th-10th centuries. Since the possibilities of the written sources have been exhausted, new evidence can only be obtained through archaeological work.

Starting out from this premise, and in the context of the growing interest in the early medieval history of the Oghuz towns, new joint fieldwork at Dzhanakent began in 2005 by Korkyt Ata State University of Kyzylorda (KSU), the N.N. Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IEA RAS), and the A.Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (IA MN RK).<sup>222</sup> The joint expeditions have been conceived as a continuation of the work of the Khorezmian Expedition in the 1940s and 1960s.

During the new systematic excavations at Dzhanakent, it was noted that polished red-slip pottery, somewhat similar to the Classical pottery of Chorasmia, occurs together with pottery which can be dated no earlier than the 7th to 10th centuries.<sup>223</sup> The evidence of the pottery assemblage in Room 2 (in Trench 2)<sup>224</sup> where complete crushed vessels were uncovered in one layer is highly significant. The vessels were 'pressed' into dense yellow clay, thereby marking a particular level.<sup>225</sup> The context and findings left no doubt that the vessels had been deposited together at the same time. Virtually all groups of Dzhanakent pottery were represented in this assemblage: Chorasmia, Dzhetý-Asar, and Oghuz with its characteristic incised 'luxuriating' decoration. The assemblage also included a vessel of unusual shape, perhaps the ceramic copy of an engraved metal jug or incense burner (?) (fig. 9, 14).<sup>226</sup> The simultaneous existence of, at least, three pottery groups which are thought to be ethnic markers has been found in all investigated parts of the site, suggesting that the population of Dzhanakent during the rule of the Oghuz on the lower Syr-Darya was mixed. Classical finds, however, have not yet been documented

222 The renewed archaeological cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan was made possible by the state programme Cultural Heritage (Kazakhstan). This project comprised a number of activities, and in particular the conference dedicated to the Aral Sea Region (Kyzyl-Orda 2004) led to the creation of a joint expedition as part of a trilateral agreement on scholarly cooperation in archaeology, signed in 2004.

223 The tradition of covering pottery with a shiny slip, in red or other colours, existed in Chorasmia already in the Tazabag'yab Culture (15th-11th centuries BC) (Itina 1959, 29, 33, 42, 58 and 59). This method was widely spread in prehistory and Classical antiquity, not only in Chorasmia, but also in neighbouring regions.

224 Trench 2 (P2) is against the outside of the eastern wall of the citadel which separated it from the lower town.

225 Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, 19, figs. 42-45.

226 Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, fig. 51.

in reliably stratified layers of regular excavations. The numerous finds from the excavated large residential complex in Trench 1 (P<sub>1</sub>) at Dzhankent generally date to the 10th century which is supported by coin finds from the floors of the buildings (Samanid *fels* with a date of 954-961).<sup>227</sup> The dating of the occupation layers at Dzhankent was based on coin finds (9th-10th centuries), on the diagnostic types of pottery with “luxuriant” decoration (predominantly of 10th century date), and on parallels among finds from the late stage (6th-7th centuries) of the Dzhetÿ-Asar Culture. As part of the work, a small series of samples for radiocarbon dating was taken from stratigraphic sequences in various parts of the site, producing dates from the 6th to the 11th centuries.<sup>228</sup> While a series of nine dates is, of course, insufficiently representative for a site as large and complex as Dzhankent, it confirms for the time being the dating of the ‘swamp towns’ as suggested by B.I. Vainberg (7th-10th centuries AD).<sup>229</sup>

For the archaeologists, there were – in addition to dating and defining the composition of the pottery assemblage – the tasks of determining the general layout and internal structure of Dzhankent, the thickness of the cultural layer, the period of use of the fortifications, etc. A series of geophysical studies was done in parallel to other archaeological work in order to address these questions.<sup>230</sup> All these various approaches confirmed the hypothesis put forward by Tolstov and Agadzhanov, among others, that the town had been rebuilt in the 10th century, with fortifications and lay-out visible today having been superimposed on the earlier occupation layers. Three trenches (P<sub>2</sub>, P<sub>4</sub> and P<sub>5</sub>) at key points of the town’s wall circuit provided the archaeological evidence for this.<sup>231</sup> The electrotomography profile of the citadel showed that it had been built on a compact clay platform most of which underpinned the citadel walls, while the centre of the platform appeared as a “hole” in the tomographic image.<sup>232</sup> This confirms that the walls of the citadel had been erected

227 Arzhantseva *et alii* 2010, fig. 156, nos. 10-13.

228 Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, 289.

229 There are even earlier finds from Kesken-Kuyuk-kala: coins dating from the 5th century onwards, a carnelian gem with an inscription in Middle Persian with a probable date of 4th to 5th centuries AD (Baïpakov & Voyakin 2009, fig. 12). Unfortunately, the most interesting finds from the latest excavations of Kesken-Kuyuk-kala have been published by the excavators without reference to stratigraphy and specific features (see the report Baïpakov & Voyakin 2009). The find spot of the early gem is only given as “Kesken-Kuyuk-kala settlement.”

230 Modin & Erokhin 2014, 123 fig. 8.

231 Arzhantseva & Bilalov 2014, 30-33, figs. 1, 78, 79, 94, 157; Ruzanova & Tazhekeev 2014, 92, figs. 25, 27.

232 Modin & Erokhin 2014, 127, 128, fig. 23.

on top of earlier layers with physical characteristics that differ from those of the later, upper layers and the citadel construction.

The internal layout of Dzhanakent (not in all details, but in an overall sense) can be inferred from archaeological excavations, topographical surveys, tachymetry, geophysical prospection, and comparisons of aerial and satellite images (fig. 10, 1). A fairly reliable picture of the inner lay-out of the town could be obtained by comparing the plans of magnetic anomalies with the relief at various places inside Dzhanakent. There is a regular chequerboard pattern in the layout of the western sector around the citadel. Here, with the help of magnetic prospection, the positions of streets were revealed in three places, as well as the probable locations of fireplaces. The axes of the streets were between 25 and 28 m apart. All local anomalies are located inside the rectangular system of anomalies, which probably correspond to the planned layout in quarters; the average density of the fireplaces is one per 120-130 square meters.<sup>233</sup> The field-work supported the suggestion by S.P. Tolstov, supplemented by L.M. Levina and B.I. Väinberg, that there had been a strong influence from neighbouring Khwarazm, primarily in the general layout of the town and in the pottery assemblage. It is most likely that the later re-planning and related building works of the 10th century were carried out by Khwarazmians. Judging by the stable proportion of Khwarazmian pottery (somewhere between 15% and 20% of the total assemblage), a certain proportion of the resident population was probably made up by Khwarazmians.

Among the analogies in Khwarazm/Chorasmia, Toprak-kala is closely similar in its layout and the location of the citadel (fig. 10, 3).<sup>234</sup> Although Toprak-kala dates from an earlier period (1st-4th centuries AD), the comparison is quite legitimate because the spatial planning model used in the late re-planning of Dzhanakent had clearly been formed much earlier. As researchers noted in relation to Toprak-kala, "one of the patterns observed in Central Asian ancient fortification and urban planning is the desire of builders to give towns and especially fortresses a strictly geometric configuration and regular planning."<sup>235</sup> At both, Dzhanakent and Toprak-kala, the lower town adjacent to the citadel (in the western half of the wall circuit) had a rectangular street grid for eight blocks each measuring 100x30 m and lying on either side of a central street running from a single gate in the east to the centre (or rather, to the

<sup>233</sup> Modin & Erokhin 2014, 140, figs. 31, 33, 35.

<sup>234</sup> Nerazik & Rapoport 1981, 10.

<sup>235</sup> Nerazik & Rapoport 1981, 56.

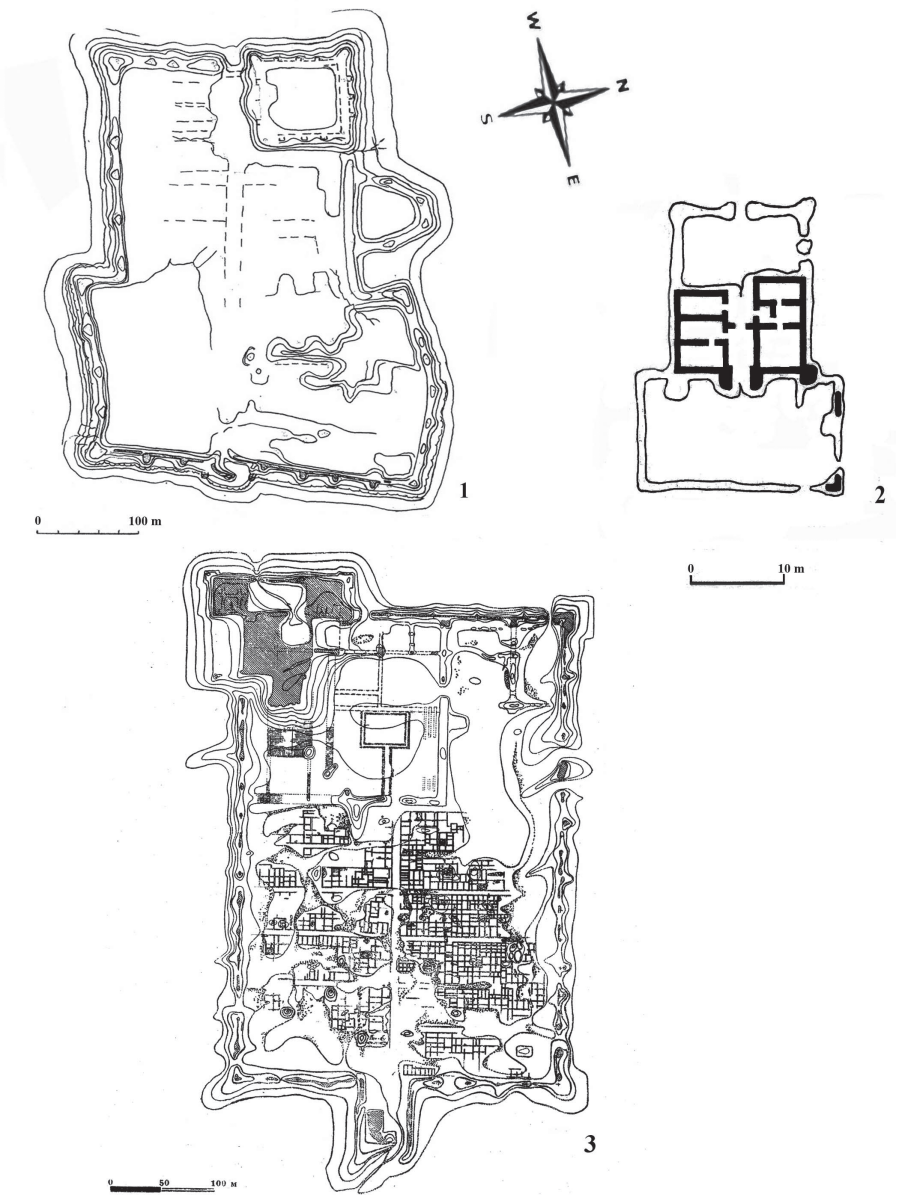


FIGURE 10 Plans of the sites. 1: Dzhanakent. Plan by B.V. Andrianov and N.I. Igonin, 1963 (after Arzhantseva & Ruzanova 2010); 2: Manor No. 136, Berkut-kala oasis, Chorasnia (after Nerazik 1966); 3: Toprak-kala, Chorasnia (after Tolstov 1948).



southeastern corner of the citadel).<sup>236</sup> Also at both sites, the citadel (or palace, in the case of Toprak-kala) was located in the northwestern corner of the town wall circuit. Corner citadels appeared in Chorasmian antiquity (for example at Bazar-kala, 4th century BC), and became the preferred citadel pattern in the early medieval period.<sup>237</sup> The corner location had a special meaning in towns built in a single process on a uniform plan, as was observed in relation to the citadel-palace of Toprak-kala:

The palace located in the north-west corner of the citadel [...] inserted a huge bastion into the system of the town's fortification and could thus participate both in its general defence against an external enemy, and if needed, resist internal enemies. Attached to the south facade of the palace, [...] a huge array of towers unambiguously 'looked' towards the town.<sup>238</sup>

So the citadel of Dzhankent, while not as monumental as the stronghold palace of Toprak-kala, probably fulfilled the same functions: on the one hand, it was part of the town's defences and the possible residence of the ruler, on the other hand it could serve as a refuge for the ruler in case of internal turmoil. The tachymetric survey around the Dzhankent citadel showed a ditch, well cut not only on the outside of the citadel, but also on the side of the town.<sup>239</sup> While the internal layout of the western half of the site, including the citadel, is close to Toprak-kala, the general outline of the site, with a T-shaped extension of the eastern half, is closely reminiscent of the Manor No. 136 in the Berkut-kala oasis in Chorasmia which is dated to the Afrighid period,<sup>240</sup> the only differences being that the manor was much smaller and did not have a donjon (fig. 10, 2). The eastern half of Dzhankent was characterized by an "estate"-type of development instead of regular planning, and by the presence of large public facilities, such as a reservoir.<sup>241</sup> The function of the semicircular attachment on the outside of the northern town wall is not entirely clear. Trial trenches, soil analyses and electromotography in its interior did not show the presence of a significant cultural layer, but pedological analysis showed a

<sup>236</sup> Compare Nerazik & Rapoport 1981, 11 fig. 2 and the plan of Dzhankent from 1946 in Arzhantseva & Tazhekeev 2014, 86, fig. 158, 1.

<sup>237</sup> Lavrov 1950, 40.

<sup>238</sup> Nerazik & Rapoport 1981, 56.

<sup>239</sup> Modin & Erokhin 2014, 129, fig. 19.

<sup>240</sup> Nerazik 1966, 24, fig. 8.

<sup>241</sup> The fact that this had been a pond, most likely artificial, was determined with the help of soil analyses, bio-indicators and electrotomography.

concentration of keratin-eating microfungi; the keratin must have come from hooves, nails or hair of living beings.<sup>242</sup> It therefore seems likely that this was a paddock for livestock intended for further sale.

Climate data obtained through pedological analyses suggest that living conditions in the Early Middle Ages were more favourable than today. The region had significantly larger water reserves during the existence of Dzhanakent. The main river channel of the Syr-Darya must have been closer than it is now because written sources mention a river port at Dzhanakent. According to Ibn Hawqal, vessels loaded with grain and bread went on the Syr-Darya to the "New Settlement."<sup>243</sup> Cuticular remains of cultivated cereals in the soil samples imply that the inhabitants of Dzhanakent were engaged in farming because, had the grain been imported, only the seeds would have been found in the cultural layer, but not the spelts of the cultivated cereals. This is an interesting contrast to Agadzhanov's observations when analysing the textual evidence:

In the sources of the 10th-13th centuries, there is no information on the sale or exchange of their [*i.e.* Oghuz] agricultural products. On the contrary, these sources report the import of grain and bread even to the centres of the sedentary and semi-sedentary Oghuz, for example, to the city of Yangikent.<sup>244</sup>

In the lower layers of the trial trenches, large quantities of fish bones and scales were found. This would seem to confirm Tolstov's hypothesis of the mixed type of economy of the Dzhanakent population. But it would be better to think in terms of a consistent change in the economic types: from fishermen to farmers and pastoralists.

#### 4 Conclusion

In line with expanding knowledge and a shift of emphasis towards data obtained through modern archaeological methodology, ideas about the origins and nature of Dzhanakent have come a long way since the 18th century, from an underground antique town to a Khwarazmian-built residence of a Turkic nomad ruler. Along with these conceptual changes, and interlinked

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<sup>242</sup> Ivanova *et alii* 2014, 151-152.

<sup>243</sup> Agadzhanov 1969, 99, 134.

<sup>244</sup> Agadzhanov 1969, 97.

with them, the rhetoric concerning the site and its interpretations in debates about heritage and identities has changed while new pasts were constructed depending on political (pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial) and ideological (Soviet, nationalist) contexts and agendas.

### Archive Materials

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