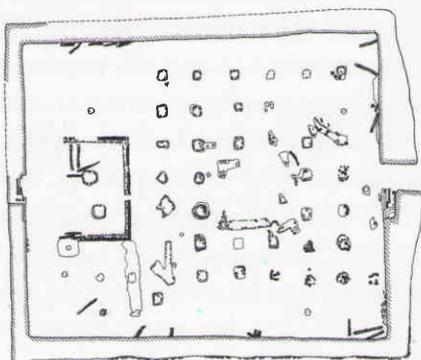


KAZAKHSTAN

The Silk Road on the territory of Kazakhstan is divided into several main roads. These roads are noted for monuments of history and culture and differ one from another. These include Semirechensk-Zhetysu, Syr Darya and Ural-Mangyshlak segments.

Antonovka. The site Antonovka is located on the eastern outskirts of the village Koylyk (Antonovka", on the bank of river Ashi-Bulak, 190 km to the north-east from the town Taldykorgan. Outwalls are swollen bank, 11-13 m wide, 2-3,5 high; a quadrangular section, 1290 m long. There is an evident moat behind the wall, from the north to the south (10-17 m wide; 1-2 m deep). Entries to the town were located in the north-western, north-eastern and south-eastern sides. The internal part of the site is covered with numerous mounds and hollows – traces of previous building. In the centre of the quadrangle there is a central part, dimensions 241x225 m, towards the four corners of the earth.

The town is known from sources of the 11-earlier 13 centuries as a capital of Karluk jabgu



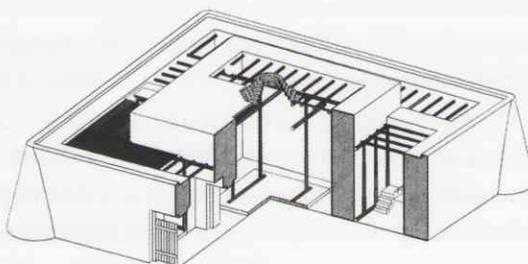
Medieval Kayalyk.

Juma Mosque of 12-13 cc. AD

– independent possession of Turks-Karluks within the kaganate of Karakhanides. In mid- 13 century, the town was visited by Guillaume Rubrouck, an envoy of the French king Louis IX on his way to Mongolian khan Munke. He described the town as a large commercial centre. In Rubrouck's words, there were temples of idolaters along with a church in a neighboring Christian village.

Following the dissolution of the USSR, archaeological excavation on the site resumed in 1998. Archaeologists discovered an object identified by experts as "Buddhist temple". They also explored a residential house on the citadel of the site. In 1999-2000, explorations were carried out at "a mansion of the rich man" in the south-eastern part of the site. In 2001, there was unearthed a bath-house of "hammam" type made of baked brick; and explored a mausoleum erected on the territory of the site during its desolation. In 2002-2009, experts were engaged in studying stratigraphy; creating a digital three-dimensional topographic foundation of the monument; taking conservation measures and monitoring.

Note that since 2004 the prospecting work has been conducted under "Cultural Heritage of Kazakhstan" program. Archaeologists unearthed a cathedral mosque, khanaka, Moslem mausoleums of the 13 century. The site is dated to the 8-14 centuries. A part of unearthed objects on the site Antonovka has been conserved for museumification. Beyond any doubts, the town was a major centre of



Medieval Kayalyk.

Buddhist temple of 12-13 cc. AD

the Silk Road as evidenced by finds of import Chinese and Iranian ceramics, bronze and glassware from the Central Asia and Iran. The geography of trade relations becomes apparent from coins minted in China and the Central Asia. Note that a mint-place was active Kayalyk in the second half of the 13 century (Baipakov, Voyagin, 2007).

Talgar. The site Talgar is located 25 km to the east of Almaty, at the foot of Zailian Alatau, outskirts of the town Talgar. The central part of the site is a rectangular section encircled by fortress walls with tower remains. Walls are a swollen bank, 3-5 m high, with hilly towers in the corners and a perimeter. A central part is enclosed by an ancient erection, best intact in the south. The site is dated to the 8-14 centuries. Talgar is consistent was the town Talhir that was mentioned in an anonymous Persian geographical work of the 10 century "Hudu al-Alem". A medieval geographer noted that "its residents are warlike, brave and valorous". Greatly contributing to the development of the town was the Silk Road.



Medieval Talgar. Topographical map

Numerous excavations made it possible to study topography and Talgar development, its fortification, explore urban quarters in the central part and outside, identify objects of urban infrastructure. Archaeologists collected coins, ceramics, iron, copper and glassware. Particularly impressive are iron forged pieces, arms, harnesses, farm implements, construction materials, etc.

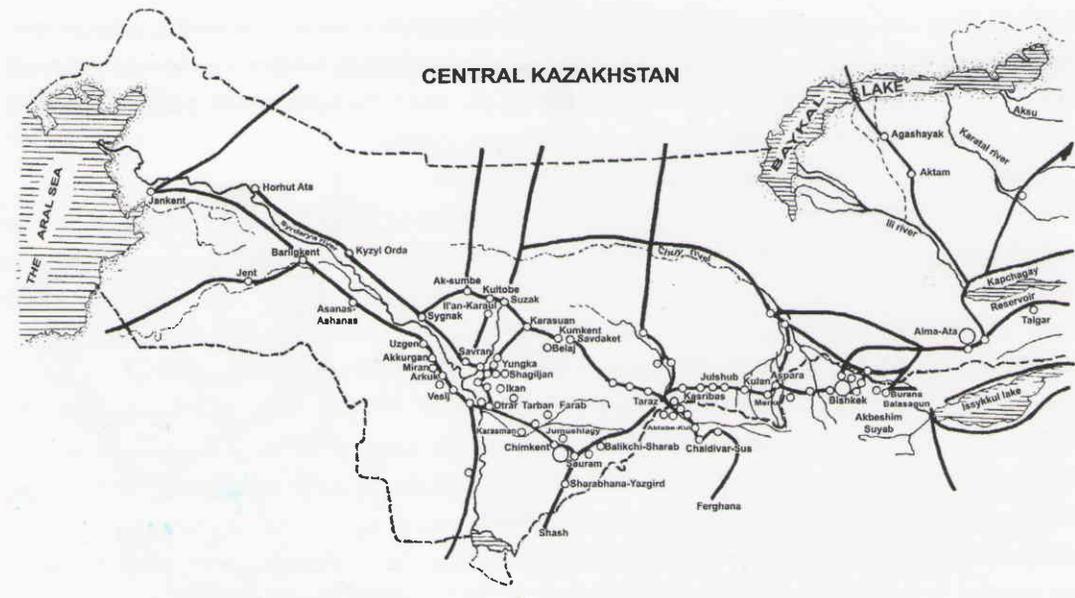
A mint-place is supposed to have operated in Talgar, 11-13 centuries. Also, there is a collection of import ceramics, bronze, copper and glassware. Of interest are inscriptions on ceramics, stone, metal fabric in ancient Turkic (Orkhon alphabet) in Chinese and Kidan, Arabic inscriptions.

Handmade articles of cult nature are indicative that representatives of different confessions resides in the town [Baipakov in co-authorship, 2005, p.19-24].

Karamergen. The site Karamergen is located 200 km to the north-east from the settlement Banakas, 3 km to the north from inflow of the dry course of the river Ortasu in Shetbakanas. The site is a rectangle; dimensions 115x120 m; 3 m high walls. Its remains have continued to our days. There are protruding towers, 4,5 m high in the four corners. Entries to the site are clearly retraced in the middle of the north-western and south-eastern walls. Their structure is complex. They are flanked with Г-shaped segments of the wall with two circular towers in the corners, while a south-eastern entry was reinforced by a projecting bank, 1,5 m high.

Stratigraphic excavations revealed a single-layer nature of the site with cultural bedding, 0,5-08 m thick. Cleaning of the western tower outside and excavations inside showed that it had a cone-shaped form tapered upwards, an infantry ground enclosed with a brick breastwork. Mud-brick was used to erect the tower. A segment of the wall that encircled an area of Karamergen was also cleaned. It turned out that a wall, 4,5 m thick, was laid of mud-brick and pieces of natural clay.

A main canal that gets out of a duct of the presently waterless river Ortasu, is located at 0,8-1 km from the site's south-eastern part. The second canal is located 2 km away to the west



Routes of the Great Silk Road in Kazakhstan

of Karamergen; its bed is stretched from the south-west to the north-east, to the bank of the lake Balkhash. An extant length of the canal is 10 km width of the bed is – 8-10 m.

It should be noted that ceramics unearthed in the course of excavations on Bakanas sites, as well as on the surface of the monuments above, is dated to the 9-13 centuries. These include cauldrons, table and water jugs, jars, noggins, pitchers for water grain and flour – hums.

Some vessels are decorated with stamped ornament; however, its elements are stereotyped: ordinarily, these are ring-shaped embedment combined with triangles. This type of stamping is widely spread on ceramics of Semirechensk sites. Note that the jugs above are spread in the layers of the 11-13 centuries in the towns of Zhetisu.

The slip glaze in the materials of Bakanas sites is found in small fragments of bowls – piala and kese types. Several fragments of glassware of white and brown colors, with great quantity of air bubbles may be attributed to the 11-13 centuries. It may be supposed that a developed land-owning culture was existent in the lower reaches of the river Ili in the 9-13 centuries. This culture was related to settlements and towns on a fragment of the Silk Road from the Ili valley to the Central Kazakhstan. Caravans moved to the northern bank of Balkhash in the mouth of the river Tokrau across a frozen lake via a narrow strait, 8 km wide, and, possibly, waded in the years of lake's regressions.

Note that researchers are prone to identify the site Karamergen with the Oghuz town Gorguz [Baipakov in co-authorship, 2005, p.31-32].

Steppe Aktobe. The site Aktobe is situated on both banks of the river Aksu, not far from its inflow in the river Chu in the steppe zone of Zhetisu. Central ruins that gave a name to the monument are on the left bank of the river. The citadel is a right-angled hill, 15 m high. Mound dimensions at the foundation are 120 x 100 m. Adjacent to the citadel is a shahristan of sub-rectangular contours, dimensions 240x210 m. The citadel and shahristan are enclosed with walls and several swollen banks. Bordering upon the central ruins is a territory of handicraft and agricultural areas fenced with two rows of banks. A length of the area down the stream

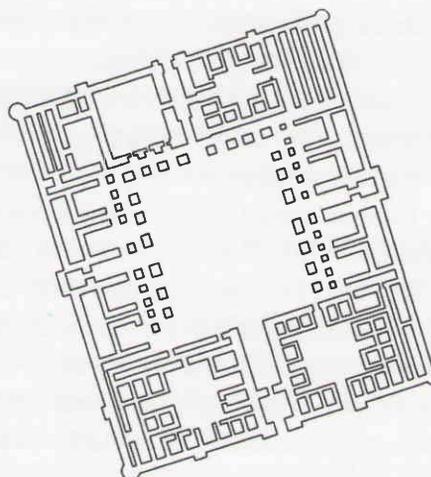
from the south-east to the north-west is 9,5-10 km by the outer ring of the walls, and 5,5 km by the inner ring of the walls.

The excavations unearthed residential units, separate estates; fortifications were studied, ceramics and glassware collected; metal and jewelry, bronze vessels and a great quantity of coins detected. The monument is dated to the 6-earlier 13 century.

It has to be kept in mind that the site was situated on an important segment of the Silk Road, as evidenced by archaeological materials. These include coins: Chinese of the Tan dynasty; Torgesh; Tukhus; Samanide and Karakhanide ones. Bronze vessels were discovered to include jugs from Iran and Central Asia; Central Asia ceramics [Shalekenov, 2009].

Akyrtas is located 40 km to the east from present-day Taraz; 6 km to the south from a railway station Akchulak at the foot of Kyrgyz Alatau. At present, these are dry foothills cut by beds of dried brooks originating in springs of mountain gorges.

The complex is comprised of several archaeological and archaeological-architectural monuments, including a palace; a suspended quadrangular structure made of solid block stones of red sandstone, 1 to 1,5 m high. Dimensions are 169x145 m. A plan of the structure is discernible: a main street was intended to link the northern and the southern entrances. Another street that rests on deep ayvans perpendicularly to the main street from the east to the west. The streets above divide the structure into four parts, three of which are comprised of premises around courtyards; and one (north-western) is free of the building. The centre of the structure is made of a courtyard with stone bases of columns by perimeter, dimensions 5x5 m. The southern part of the courtyard is notable for ditches of two water reservoirs (havuz). The palace building is dated to the mid- 8 century. A garden-park area is next to the palace. The plot of sub-rectangular form has dimensions 250x250 m.



Medieval Akyrtas. Palace, 8 c. AD

Note that country estates, or “residential settlements”, are situated to the north from “palace complex”. A stone quarry was discovered to the west from the complex; an observation tower (karats); caravanserais of the 10-12 and 13-14 centuries; a settlement of the 19 century – Sak burial mounds were also identified and explored next to the complex.

It'd be appropriate to point out that the complex has been studied for many years. The first information is dated to the second half of the 19 century. Since 2004, the research and conservation work has been carried out to comply with the program “The Cultural Heritage of Kazakhstan”. Note that the central palace is possible identified to Kasriasm Karlyk's headquarters. [Baipakov, p.149-152].

Ornek. The site Ornek is located 6 km to the south from a village on the river Altynsu in the gorge Solutor. It had first been explored in 1990-1993 by the expedition of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan and the Margulan Institute of Archaeology.

A central part of the site is a quadrangular ground oriented towards the four corners of the earth. Ground dimensions by the crest of the bank are 155x160 m. The bank has a height of

5 m, a width of the foundation – 11-15 m. Hillocky peeps out in place of towers by corners and a perimeter of the walls: there are 7 of them (corners included) on the north-eastern wall; 6 – on the north-western; 9 – on the south-eastern and the south-western walls. There are gates in the form of ruptures on the bank in each of the four sides. Entries were connected by roads that intersected in the centre. Circular foundation pits of three interconnected water reservoir-havuz are located in the centre of the site, closer to the north-western wall. Diameters of the two of them are 30 m and the one is 15 m. Adjacent to the central ruins is a territory enclosed by a bank with towers. The bank is 90 m away from the south-western wall; 40 m from the south-eastern; 90 m from the north-eastern and 100 m from the north-western walls.

Strips of rectangular, square and irregular forms are stretched around the fortification, largely behind an outer wall, to the south and the south-east along the gorge Solutor, fenced off by boulders. Dimensions of the strips range from 250-300 sq.m to 1000-2000 sq.m; inside, usually in the corner, there are mounds – remains of a building. Tracts of these strips are stretched 4 km upwards the Solutor banks, 1,2 km wide. Total area is approx. 500 he. No system is visually reviewed in the order of the strips but in some cases there are “roads” that impart regularity to this unsystematic building.

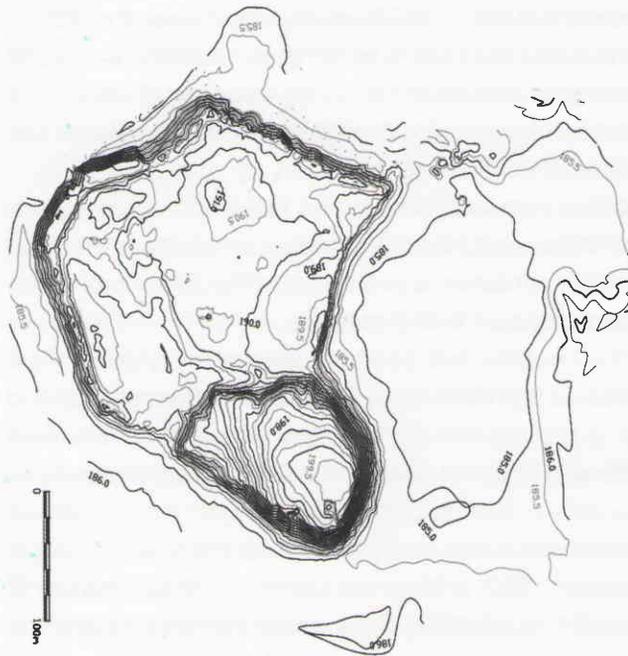
Excavations on the site made it possible to identify, partially though, a rectangular building, dimensions 40x20 m, evidently a mosque dating back to the 10-12 centuries.

It should be noted that the research into topography of the site Ornek (dated to the 8-12 centuries) together with the results of the excavations, provide an idea of the site as a centre of settled mode of life and handicrafts. At the same time, the fortification and the mosque above are indicative that the site is none other than remains of the former town that arose on the basis of headquarters of nomadic owners. Arab itineraries, including those compiled by *ibn*

Khordadbek and Kudama, are illustrative that towns Kasribas, Kushub and Julshub were located on an area between geographically identifiable Taraz, Lower Barskhan and Kulan. Most probably, Ornek is identical to Kulshub that, like Kasribas, was owned by Karlyks to operate as headquarters of an owner.

Archaeological materials of Ornek suggest an idea that the headquarters arose in place of a settled colony, perhaps, on an area of spring-autumn pastures. In turn, the colony formed a basis around which a town later came into being. Beyond any doubts, the Silk Road international trade did much to foster the town's formation [Baipakov, p.110-114].

Lugovoye – Kulan. The site Lugovoye – town Kulan is referred to in written in written sources going back



*Medieval Vesidzh.
Otrar oasis. Topographical map*

to the 8-13 centuries. An itinerary by the Chinese pilgrim Suang Tsya and the history of the Tan dynasty mention it as "Tsuy-lan". Kulan was also mentioned by Arab authors of the 9-10 centuries who described towns en route of the Silk Road Ibn Khordadbeq and Kudama placed Kuban 14 farsahs westward Taraz. In particular, Kudama notes: "...there is sand between Taraz and Kulan from the northern side, and behind it there is a desert of sand and pebbles, and anteaters as well, up to the border of Kimaks". Arab geographer of the 10 century al-Makdisi characterizes Kulan as "fortified town with a cathedral mosque that has already become deserted on a large Taraz road". In the meanwhile, Yakut as author of the geographical dictionary of the 1220s pointed out: "Kulan is a pleasant town on the border with Turks from Maverannah". Well-known historical events are associated with Kulan: the last western Turkic Kagan Ashaina Syn was killed here in 740 by Turgesh prince Kurgul.

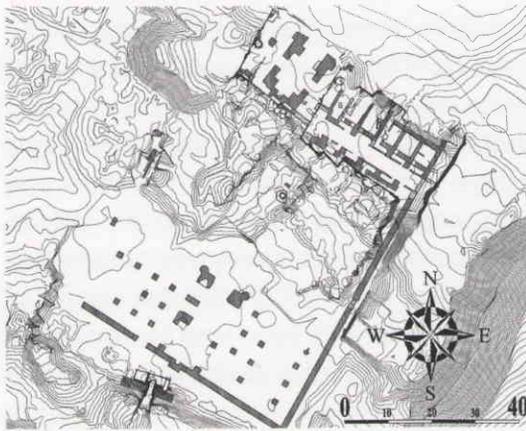
The search of remains of the town became easier due to the fact that, according to sources, it was situated between the two medieval towns, the location of which was well known. In the west, 14 farsahs away from Kulan, there was Taraz as localized in place of the site in the centre of present-day Taraz; in the east, 4 farsahs away, there was the town Mirki whose name has continued to this day. That's why Kulan's identification with ruins near the village Lugovoye, as suggested by V.V.Bartold, is indubitable.

Tens of hills with remains of castles and estates are scattered on the territory of the site enclosed by long walls. Archaeological excavations rendered possible to unearth a central structure characterized by "comb-shaped" of early medieval castles of the Central Asia and Kazakhstan. The castle consisted of seven rooms. Excavations of the castle Lugovoye – A made it possible to obtain data on castle's having been built in the 7-8 centuries; later on, its layout was slightly changed, so the castle was used up to the 10 century.

Note that the castle Lugovoye-Г had continued to the 7-12 centuries as evidenced by coins discovered in its rooms. It had an open courtyard in the centre with entries into rooms around. Numerous rooms, different finds of the 9-11 centuries, terracotta inside a decorated panel of fretted material are indicative that the remains of the Lugovoye-Г are a part of a country palace owned by town's ruler. Two construction periods of the 7-8 and 9-11 centuries are retraced in the palace [Baipakov, p.114-138].

Kostobe. The site Kostobe is identified with the town Jamakat. Arab geographer al-Makdisi refers to Jamukat as a town of Ispijab district as saying: "It's a large town. There is a wall around it, a cathedral mosque, and markets in rabad". According to another historian Narshahi (10 century), Jamukat was founded in the 6 century by natives of Bukhara and named after Jamuk, chief of Bukhara residents.

A central part of Kostobe is located on a quadrangular eminence, dimensions 420x450 m, encircled by a double wall. Height of outer bank is 3,5 m, inner bank – 5 m. Round towers are placed by corners and a perimeter. Four entries are apparent in the middle of every side. The citadel is in the middle of the western wall. At present, it's a pyramidal hill with a flat ground. Hill's dimensions in the foundation are 70x80 m; height – 12-15 m. Shahrستان sides with the citadel to occupy the south-western corner of the site; its dimensions are 150x150 m. Entry inwards is located on the northern wall. A dome-shaped mound, 80 m in diameter and 15 m high, is 200 m westwards shahrستان. To all appearances, that was a fire tower. Two necropolises are located behind outer bank northwards.



Medieval Otrar.

Mosques of 14 c. AD and 16 c. AD

m; rectangular – 2,5x4 m, 2,5x3,7 m. Laid of mud-brick, the floor is puttied.

The dating of the necropolis above became possible due to a bronze coin with a human face on one side and a horse's on the other. Note that the coins of this type were minted on an area from Karshin oasis to Fergana in the 6-8 centuries. A nameplate with a peacock's (or cock's) depiction is identical to the one from nomadic burials in Irtysh as comparable to the Kimak one. Kimaks are known to start moving from Priirtyshye westwards in the second half of the 8 century. Nomadic embellishments, as well as horse bones from a town necropolis of Kostobe testify to the effect that people of different ethnical and religious groups were buried here.

Excavations on the Kostobe citadel revealed a group of buildings going back to the 6-12 centuries. Those found in the upper construction horizon are strongly damaged, for the citadel was used as cemetery since the 13 century. However, ceramics and coins enabled researchers to date the upper construction horizon to the 11-12 centuries. It was established that the earliest building complex on the citadel goes back to the 6-8 centuries. That was a fortress-castle with bypass corridors and utility and living premises bases on pahn and mud-brick. In the 9-10 centuries, the complex was rearranged: a bypass gallery was divided into separate compartments, mainly for domestic purposes. By dint of corridors these compartments were connected with living, main and cult space. Two promises in the form of large halls were unearthed. Just fragments are preserved to testify that the fretwork was made on thick layer of plaster, up to 7 cm.

In examining finds from the site Kostobe, explorers noted that they bear resemblance to artifacts that had been discovered in the excavations of Central Asian towns Afrasiyab, Varakhsh, as well as widely known cultural centers of the Near East. The site Kostobe is pertaining to "the sites with long walls" widely spread in the south-western Zhetysu, in Chuy and Talas valleys, in the south of Kazakhstan. The Kostobe excavations revealed a citadel building, burials at the town necropolis, provided abundant archaeological material,

A rural area is retraced within a radius of 3-5 km from the central ruins. Separate hillockies – remains of previous estates and castles – go upstream Talasu toward the site Tortkoltobe identified with Lower Barskhan en route of the Silk Road.

Excavations of the town necropolis of Kostobe made it possible to identify the nature of burials in the 6-9 centuries. Most remains were found in naus – funeral structures of rectangular and square forms. Their walls, 0,5-0,6 m thick, are laid of mud-brick. Dimensions of naus are different: square – 3,3x3,4 m; 3,8x3,9 m; 3,5x3,5



Irrigation system. Altyn aryk distributor, 10-13 cc .AD. Aerial photo

including ceramics, metal wares, coins, fretted articles. It goes to show that the site Kostobe was a large centre en route of the Silk Road [Baipakov, p.100-108].

Otrar. The site Otrar and monuments of the Otrar oasis. The site is noted for its archaeological monument Otrarobe that is located 10 km to the west from a railway station Timur. Another name is Farab, capital of the district-oasis Otrar-Farab. Now it is a part of the Otrar district of the South Kazakhstan region. Otrar is referred to in scores of works of medieval Arab, Persian and Turkic authors, including at-Tabari, Makdisi, ibn Khaukal, Hafiz Tanysh. There is also another name – Tarban, perhaps, a previous name of Otrar as a centre of Kangar possessions of Kangu-Tarban, according to old Turkic sources. According to geographer of the 10 century Makdisi, there resided “about 70,000 men” in Farab, there were a citadel, a Friday mosque, a bazaar at the junction of various geographical zones and caravan routes.

It has to be recalled that large hills in place of ancient settlements are titled in tune with the times: Kok Mardan, Altyntobe, Jalpaktobe, Kuyuk-Mardan, Pshakshy-tobe, Kuyriktobe, Bozuk. Old names are forgotten, and just three of them, as known from written monuments, go back to the present-day ruins. As explorers establishment, the town Keder had once been located in place of Kuyruktobe; Oksyz in place of Vesij; Bozuk in place of Chilik (Shelek).

It was the South Kazakhstan complex archeological expedition (organized in 1971) that started exploring (organized in 1971) that started exploring Otrar and other monuments of the Otrar oasis. The excavations revealed an original civilization of the first half of the I millennium.

Of interest is the fact that in the Middle Ages palaces with main halls decorated with wall painting and wood carving were built in Otrar and towns of the oasis. Adornments, jewelry, silks were transported via the Silk Road. Islam came to spread in the urban and later nomadic population; mosques were built in towns and villages; Arabic was taught in madrasahs; preachers appeared to disseminate the faith; Koranic dicta on glazed bowls written. Thus, the first surah was inked on a crock from a building of the 10-11 century. On the other hand, cults of fire, ram, Zoroastrian vestiges were still spread, especially amidst settled nomads that rose in number in the 10-12 centuries.

Following the Mongolian invasion, Otrar, Sayram, Syganak, Zhent, Yangikent and other towns were rebuilt. Contributing to the growth of urban life was, inter alia, the dislocation of the international trade routes from the West to the East via Otrar and Khorezmshah. Numerous handicraft shops sprang, bath-houses, public buildings were built, a mint-place operated. In the reviewed period Otrar turned into a major economic and trade centre; a cathedral mosque



Medieval Otrar.

Excavation of sufa and tandurs

was built in the town during the Timur's reign, whose ruins were unearthed by archaeologists. Excavations provide materials on the latest period of town's existence (16-17 centuries) when the town formed a part of Kazakh khanate. Also discovered were urban quarters, streets and blind alleys, bazaars and squares. We have got an idea about an urban abode after a fire-affected abode was discovered together with remains of not only interior but implements as well that had securely been protected by a collapsed reed roof. It was earthenware of potters that made it

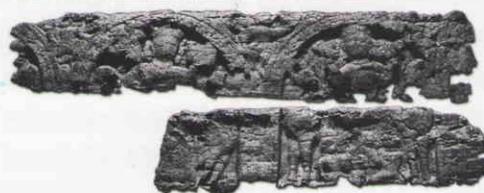
possible to retrace the development of handicrafts and changes of styles in ceramics for about two thousand years. Researchers came to a crucial conclusion: centuries, political changes and ethnic dislocations notwithstanding, a local ethnic dislocations notwithstanding, a local stratum of the Otrar's population with its established traditions of material and spiritual culture remained intact. In their view, much of what had been created by the people that inhabited banks of Syr Darya in the ancient times and the medieval period formed an integral part of the traditional Kazakh culture, a treasure-house of the world culture.

The importance of Otrar and the Otrar oasis as major object en route of the Silk Road is borne out by archaeological finds. These involve Chinese coins u-shu, Sassanid, Mongolian, Russian coins, as well as Sassanid gems (4-5 centuries), Chinese mirrors (13 century), wares (13-14 centuries), a silver treasure (13 century), articles from Eastern Turkestan [Baipakov, in co-authorship, 2006].

Sauran. The site Sauran is situated 40 km to the north-east from the town Turkestan on the territory of the Turkestan district of the South Kazakhstan region. The site is an oval walled ground whose swollen sections rose up 3 to 6 m. It is stretched 800 m from the north-east to the south-west and 500 m from the north-west to the south-east. A site space rises 2-2,5 above surroundings. Site's walls rest on stylobate, 2-3 m high. A closer look at the walls, well preserved remains, revealed that a fortified wall had, at least, twice been rebuilt.

Two gates led to the site. Main gates are located in the north-eastern part of the wall and a strong fortification flanked by two protruding towers with two floors. The entry is a 20 m long corridor-shaped passage formed by wall segments. A stone-paved street starts with the passage.

A ditch, 3 m deep and 15-20 m wide, was dug on the outside around the wall. It was bricked on both sides at the entry. A central street, 2 m from the north-eastern gates, looks a town square, dimensions 120 x 140 m. On the right and the left, 2 m hills bestrewn with brick fragments rise above the locality. The square is of rectangular contours and stretched axially along a main street. By perimeter, there are heaps of building ruins made of square baked brick, as is evidenced by brick fragments on these hills, especially on the north-western and the north-



Medieval Kuiruktobe.

Carved wooden panel, 7-9 cc. AD

eastern parts of the square. Associated with the early history of Sauran is the site Karatobe located 3 km to the south from a later medieval fortress with cultural layers dating to the mid- I millennium BC - 13 century AD

One of its components is the site Sauran, a suburban territory and a necropolis. An area of the ancient necropolis with a namazgoh-mosque is located to the east from town walls; in the south-east, there are fenced sections "hazira", probably with burials in the open air. Sauran excavations revealed two mosques inside the town, a mosque, a madrasah, a khanaka and an interesting system of fortifications, a namazgoh-mosque. All of these are monuments of architecture.

Note that kyagrizs are a unique monument of irrigation in the medieval culture of Kazakhstan. It was established that the town Sauran was located in the lower delta part of three mountain rivers springing from the mountains Karatau: Aksay, Tastaksay and Maydantal. Traces of kyagrizs have been detected along these river beds.

Also, archaeological and restoration operations are currently underway with the monument. Sauran was a crucial historical-cultural centre en route of the Silk Road. Testifying to this are coins minted in different towns of the Mongolian Empire; coins of Timur and the Timurides epoch (14 – first half of the 15 century); Russian coins of the 16 century; coins of the Central Asian towns (Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand) [Baipakov, in co-authorship, 2005].

Sygnak. The site Sygnak is located 20 km to the north-west from a railway station Tyumen-aryk, 1,5 km to the right from present-day highway Turkestan-Kzyl Orda. It has a form of irregular pentagon. Its topography is characterized by shahristan with a citadel in the south-eastern part. Dimensions of shahristan sides are as follows: northern side – 250 m; western – 360; southern – 250 m; south-eastern – 450 m and north-eastern – 350 m. Total area of the site is 20 hectares; height of the mound, previously town walls, is 6-7 m. Traces of building – estate, irrigable areas, canals are scattered central ruins within a radius of 2 km.

The town Sygnak had first ever been referred to in the sources of the 10 century, and in the 11 century Mahmud of Kashgar mentioned it as a town of Oghuzes. In the 12 century, Sygnak became a capital of the Kypchak state formation to last till the earlier – 13 century. Historian Juweyni described how Mongolians pillaged the town in 1220. In the mid- 13 century Sygnak was mentioned in the itinerary of the Armenian king Getum. Little by little, the town turned into a large political and economic centre of Syr Darya, 13 century. Sygnak became a capital of Ak-Ordya with typical mosques, madrasahs, bath-houses, other public institutions. Located on a brisk route of the Silk Road, the town, up to the 16 century, prospered at the expense of trade. Like other Syr Darya towns, Sygnak became an arena of the fierce struggle between rulers of the Central Asia and Kazakh khans in the 15-16 centuries. Earlier 16 century, according to Ruzbikhhan, the town was on the decline, the number of townspeople reduced, while in the ancient times “it was a flowering town and trade terminal abounding in large buildings, cultivated lands and various products. Merchants from Turkestan, Maverannahr, from the East to Kashgar and Khotan bring their goods to Sygnak and settle bargains and exchange with Desht traders”. In the reviewed period, Sygnak was famed for its architectural monuments, first of all, mausoleum of Kok Kesene. The town became desolate, like other Syr Darya towns, in the mid – 19 century.

It has to be kept in mind that the site Sygnak is a genuine monument of history and culture, so it is no mere coincidence that essential archaeological and restoration work is underway in the town. It is a major historical-cultural centre en route of the Silk Road. The town is integrally related to the Silk Road by its location on this crucial trade artery; coins minted in Golden Horde, in the towns of Chagatay ulus; Central Asian ceramics, Chinese porcelain and celadon [Zholdasbayev, 2010].

Zhetyasar oasis. Monuments of Zhetyasar oasis are a group of safely fortified sites and related burial mounds (5 century BC – 9 century AD). An area under Zhetyasar sites stretches north-, east- and south-eastwards from the Zhetyasar terrain that entitled the culture. Note that it was discoverer S.P.Tolstov who in 1948 provided a description of the culture and a typology of the related monuments. In mid- 1960s, the Zhetyasar culture was specified in

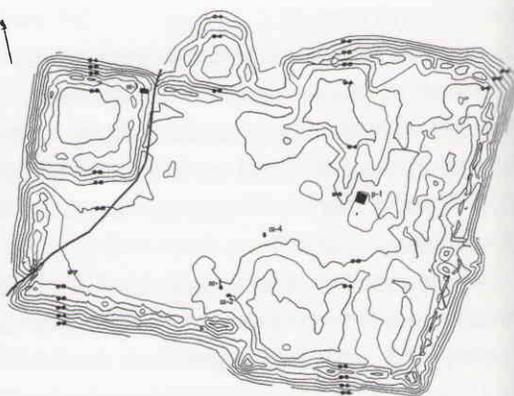
detail and divided into periods. Three stages were identified in its development to cover a) later 3-4 centuries; b) 4-6 centuries; c) 7-9 centuries. The Zhetyasar culture is notable for specific settlement, organization of settlements, and specificity of material culture. Out of half-hundred of presently identified Zhetyasar sites, worthy of note were multi-layered ones with well-developed fortifications and not a single unfortified settlement. The nature of settlements and their topography, architecture, fortification, construction engineering, layout of settlements as a whole and separate dwellings in particular are illustrative of extraordinary sustainability and conservatism of the culture. Many-storied Zhetyasar sites were placed in the direct proximity to a natural water source or reservoir and encircled with necropolis that numbered hundreds or even thousands of burial mounds.

When excavating the sites and necropolises of the Zhetyasar terrain, archaeologists collected a set of ware from different regions of Eurasia: Chinese and Khorezmian coins, Sassanid gems beads from Egypt, Syria and India, Baltic amber and Badakhshan lazurite, European (Laten) fibule, Chinese silk and Roman glass. These finds give grounds to claim that oasis' towns carried out transit trade with Silk Road states (Levina, 1986).

Zhankent. The site Zhankent, town Yangikent is located 20 km away from Kazalinsk on the right bank of Syr Darya. The site is of rectangular form, dimensions 375 x 225 m. In the north-western corner there is a citadel, dimensions 100 x 100 m, 7-8 m high. The topography of the ruins is characterized by a main street that connected gates in the eastern and western walls, with intra-quarter side-streets stepping aside from walls. In 1986, an archaeological expedition discovered a site and a sepulcher Myntobe consisting of hundreds of burial mounds. Note that the burial mounds are dated to the first centuries BC to the 18 century. Of interest are destroyed mosques of the 13-14 centuries, once faced with majolica slabs and bricks. Regular archaeological explorations on the site are underway since 2006. The excavations unearthed streets and dwelling space of shahristan going back to the 12-13 centuries; a street was partly excavated with estates on both sides on the citadel. An altar with protomes in the form of sheep's head dated to the 11-12 centuries was found in a room.

The site Zhankent-Yangikent, also titled as New Guziya, was a capital of Oghuzes, residence of ruler yagbu, maintained close relations with Khorezm. Archaeologists are prone to think that the town emerged long before Oghuzes and was rebuilt in the 10 century and fortified by Khorezmian builders.

Zhankent (Yangikent) was not only a capital and a residence of Oghuz rulers but also the largest trade centre in the lower reaches of Syr Darya due to its geographical location: on the one hand, it connected steppes on the Central Kazakhstan with the Central Asia and the Near East; on the other hand – with Khorezm, Priaralye, Caucasus and Europe. The town was a centre of land and river trade, ships loaded with grain came here from Central Asian towns' downstream Syr Darya, according to ibn Haukal. In the 7-8 centuries, it was a residence of Kazakh khans. Zhankent is dated to the first centuries AD – 18 century. Prior to the 12 century, the



Medieval Dzhankent. Topographical map

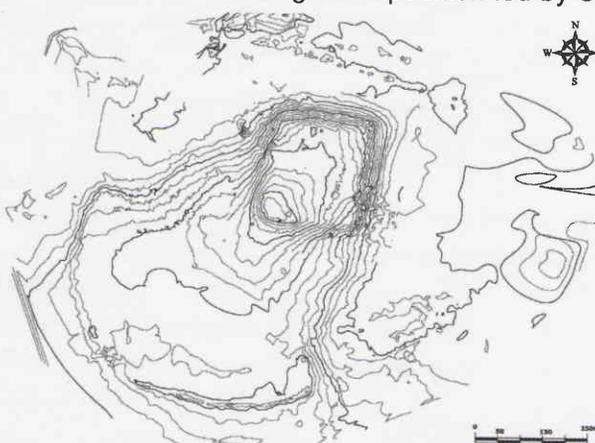
town was located on the site Zhankent; in the 13-14 centuries it occupied an area of the site Myntobe.

It would be appropriate to recall that the town Yangikent was the largest political and trade centre in the lower reaches of Syr Darya. The town prospered owing to its location on a brisk trade route of the Silk Road. Like other towns of the lower reaches of Syr Darya, the town became a centre of Oghuz and Seljuk statehood an ethno-genesis of Kazakhs. Earlier 13 century, Zhankent was destroyed by Mongolian-Tatar invaders, then rebuilt to play a crucial role in connecting towns of Priaralye with the Central Asia, Near East, Eastern and Western Europe. In the 18 century, the town fell into decay, the population left it, and Zhankent had never been rebuilt. At present, it is in the focus of archaeologists as a historical monument. Located at the junction of the Silk Road, the town was instrumental as a connecting link en route of the Silk Road. The archaeological monument is protected by the state; excavations revealed coins from Khorezm, Samarkand, Bukhara; ceramics from the Central Asia, Samarkand and Shasha; coins of Central Asian towns, as well as towns of the Golden Horde [Tolstov, 1962; Baipakov, 2007, p.282-290].

Kesken-kuyuk kala. The site Kesken-kuyuk kala, town Zhuvara (Khora) was located in the lower reaches of Syr Darya, 20 km away from the site Zhankent-Yangikent. The topography of the site is characterized by a citadel and a shahristan in the form of quadrangular mound, dimensions 230 x 210 m, 3 m high. Dimensions of the site along the line north-south are 840 m; west-east – 820 m. A central mound is surrounded by walls that impart it a square rising above a locality by 3 m, and may be divided into two parts: a citadel proper in the north-western quarter of the central mound, and a shahristan that encircled the citadel from the northern and eastern sides. It was a detailed topographical survey and subsequent contouring that enabled experts to admit the probability of the citadel on the general surface of the central mound. The citadel is retraced in the form of sub-quadrangular construction, dimensions 55-60 x 55-60 m, height is 1 m above a level of the central mound. A shahristan territory is a smoothed surface of once dense building.

The site goes, perhaps, back to the mid – I millennium BC – the developed Middle Ages, 11-12 centuries.

It was first explored in 1948 by the Khorezmian archaeological expedition led by S.P. Tolstov. Note that excavations are underway since 2007, following which 3 premises have been unearthed. The site Kesken-Kuyuk is identified with the town Khora/Khvara/Khuvara. The Chinese sources of the 7 century refer to the town Khulu that stood “on Sogdian route”. This information makes it possible to associate the town with Silk Road. Excavations discovered Khorezmian and Central Asian coins; Sassanid gem of the 4-5 centuries with a picture of the queen and an ancient Iranian inscription “Bilbig, a daughter of



*Medieval Dzhuvara (Kesken-Kuyuk kala).
Topographical map*

Vahran" that makes it possible to maintain that the site was located on the Silk Road [Baipakov, 2007, p.282-290].

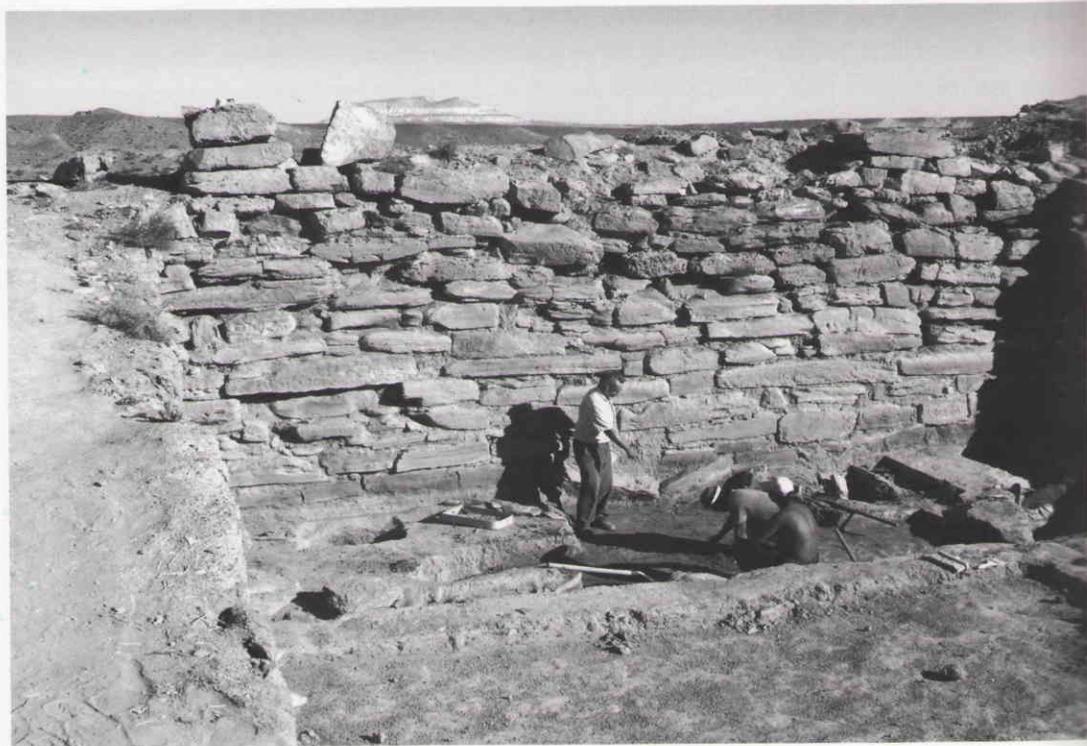
Saraychik. The site Saraychik is located higher than the mouth of the ruler Ural on the right bank, between the river above and its duct Sarachinka. A part of the site falls to the village Sarayshyk. It was fortified walls that protected the site from the south and the north. As far back as in the 1940s A.H.Margulan, engaged in exploring the region, pointed out that the ruins stretched 1,5 km along the river.

The site Saraychik was mentioned by medieval traveler Ibn Battuta in his travel notes, as well as by Plano Carpini and Guillaume Rubrouck that inadvertently visited the town on their way to the capital of Mongols – Karakorum. Note that the site Saraychik was located en route of the Silk Road, as evidenced by written sources. That was a large trade and handicrafts center on the caravan route from China and the Central and Western Asia to Europe.

Excavations of Saraychik made it possible to uncover residential districts of the ordinary people. They consisted of mud-brick houses with 2-3 rooms each, heated by flues laid beneath a floor. Of interest are earthenware, glazed one included, Syrian glassware, Chinese porcelain, Khorezm bowls, bronze jugs and Iranian dishes.

Excavations also revealed a mosque and other cult buildings. The fact the town was one of the major trade and handicraft centers on the Silk Road is evidenced by finds of imported Chinese and Iranian ceramics, bronze and glassware from the Central Asia and Iran. Trade relations are manifest in coins minted in Golden Horde, Khorezm, Samarkand and Iran. Note that a mint-place was active in Saraychik in the 14-15 centuries.

The site Saraychik is protected by the state; archaeological and conservation work is underway on the site. The site is a major historical and cultural centre on the Ural-Caspian



Medieval Kzyl kala. Outer wall, 12-13 cc. AD

segment of the Silk Road [Tasmagabletov in co-authorship, 2001].

Zhayik. The site Zhayik is located 10 km to the south from Uralsk, on the right super-water-meadow terrace of the river Ural. It has no artificial defensive fortifications in the form of mounds, walls, ditches. Natural gullies and river ducts were borders of the site.

In 2001-2004, explorations were carried out on the site Zhayik by the Institute of Archeology named after A.H.Margulan within "The Cultural Heritage" program framework.

Excavations of three adjacent hills showed that ruins of detached estates were hidden under them. Dwelling and household buildings were made of mud-brick. Dwelling houses were heated by kanns – heating system. Thickness of main walls is 70-80 cm.

The analysis of layouts, technical methods of housing construction of Volga towns and the settlement "Zhayik" is indicative that the engineering-construction culture of towns in the basin of the river Ural was predominantly affected by house-building traditions of Khorezm and Syr Darya oases. Site layouts concur with those of post-Mongolian Urgench, Otrar, Turkestan. Just details of interior and heating system differed.

Unearthed ruins of a both-house are illustrative of a well-developed town of the 13-14 centuries in place of the present Ural site. Identical buildings were revealed in Otrar (13-14 centuries), Kayalyk and towns of Povolzhye. They were built to comply with an integral plan with some insignificant distinctions.

As an object of history, culture and architecture, the site Zhayik is protected by the state. Stationary archaeological and restoration work is underway on the site. The monument is a major historical-cultural centre located on the Ural-Caspian segment of the Silk Road. The discovery of coins of the Golden Horde rulers of the 13-14 centuries; coins minted in Otrar, Samarkand, Bukhara; fragments of Chinese porcelain and Central Asian glazed ceramics are evidence of close trade relations between the town and China, Central Asia and Iran [Baipakov in co-authorship, 2005].

Kyzylkala. The site Kyzylkala is dated to the 9-15 centuries. Located 18 km to the north-east from the settlement Shetpe, Manistaus region. Its main part stretched along the two river channels that merge into a single course.

The site consists of the remains of the central fortification with numerous estates around it that become apparent by a high mound (3 m high). The protruding central and square fortification is encircled by a stone wall, 1,2-2 m wide. There are main gates in the middle part of the north-western wall. Constructively, the gates are formed by two towers. Also, angular and two intermediate towers, totaling 13, are noticeable from the outer side due to salient elements of stone masonry of the fortified wall. The site development around the fortress is traced back by foundations or mass distribution of crocks of earthenware, splinters of plinfa, fragments of animal bones. Total area of the site is 50 he.



Medieval Kyzylkala. Aerial photo

The site Kyzylkala was a large fortified populated locality and trade centre in South Prikaspiy. With its major geographical location on the western branch of the caravan route along the Caspian littoral, the town took control over an important trade road that led to the towns of Povolzhye, Caucasus, Russian principalities, Volga, Bulgaria and Western Europe. Basically, the site Kyzylkala was a caravanserai around which a large settlement with developed handicrafts and agriculture gradually came into being. Excavations revealed voluminous material, including ceramics, metal fabric and coins.

Starting from 2007, active work has been underway to prepare for trans-boundary nomination of the Silk Road section; China-Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). A list of monuments for preliminary nomination has been drawn up; documents for nomination into the UNESCO List of World Heritage prepared. The materials on the Kazakhstan segment of the Silk Road will be attached to the project above.