



Identification of narrative sources with archaeological data (medieval settlement Bytygay)¹

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Middle Ages, urban culture, ancient settlement, Nura-Ishim interfluve, Jochi Ulus, Ulug Ulus, Bytygay, Historical map, archival documents, narrative sources

MPHTИ 03.41.01

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.32523/org/10.32523/2664-5157-2022-3-103-117>

ABSTRACT

The article discusses and analyzes historical information and archaeological data on historical and cultural monuments dating back to the Middle Ages and located in the Tengiz-Korgalzhin microdistrict. All archival sources are dominated by information about Bytygay.

The functional purpose of the Bytygay² monument has always caused discussion. Some scientists considered Bytygay a full-fledged medieval settlement, while others considered it a necropolis. Archaeological excavations carried out on the monument showed that in the vicinity of Bytygay, there are numerous caravanserais, the remains of mausoleums built from simple burnt and decorated bricks. During the 2021-2022 field seasons, entire production centers were identified, specialized heat engineering facilities designed for drying, firing bricks and melting glaze. The Bytygay monument seems to be a complex historical and cultural object, which includes a settlement, a necropolis and production centers. The lower date of Bytygay refers to the XII-XIII centuries. And new materials from the burial complexes raise the upper date of the monument to the XIV-XV centuries.

Received 28 June 2022. Revised 05 July 2022. Accepted 15 August 2022. Available online 30 September 2022.



For citation:

Sakenov S.K., Kukushkin A.I., Burbayeva S.B., Rakhmankulov E.Zh. Identification of narrative sources with archaeological data (medieval settlement Bytygay) // Turkic Studies Journal. – 2022. – Vol. 4. – №3. – P. 103-117. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.32523/2664-5157-2022-3-103-117>

¹ The study was financially supported by the Committee of Culture of the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of program-targeted funding BR10164212 «Traditional types of residential architecture of the Tengiz-Korgalzhinskaya depression of the Middle Ages: origins and features of evolution.»

² In various Russian language archival sources, the name of the monument is given in different transcriptions Batagay, Butagay-Tam, Tatagay. The correct authentic, Kazakh name is Bytygay. The name was found out during ethnographic research and it is associated with the legend of the master Bytygay, who lived in the Middle Ages.

Introduction

The settlement of Bytygay, a monument of the 13th-16th centuries, is located on the left bank of the Nura River, 1 km east of the village of Korgalzhin, Akmola region of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Photo 1). The monument is located in the northern part of Saryarka, which consists of a series of low mountains, low hills and steppe (Vilesov, 2009: 92; Beisenov, 2000: 113). The region is famous for its rich flora, which surprises with rare plant species, and fauna, that consists of local animal species who originally lived here. The Tengiz-Korgalzhin lakes, in the zone of which the monument is located, are the largest water area of the steppe zone. In this part of the Eurasian continent, two major migratory routes of birds intersect: Central Asian and Siberian-South European. There are up to 350 species of birds, 43 species of mammals and 500 species of higher plants living in the protected area of the Reservation. More than 15 species of representatives of the ichthyofauna have been recorded in the water systems of the region (Andrusenko, 2002: 53; Hrokov et al., 2013: 110). For people who settled this area in ancient times, this was an important additional factor in the development of agriculture. The established trade routes from Central Asia to Western Siberia ran through the region, which ensured a huge variety of communication processes and involvement in interregional trade, political and cultural ties and relationships. In the Middle Ages, urban-type settlements located in the northern part of Saryarka were connected with the developed urban centers of South Kazakhstan and Central Asia by ancient caravan routes that ran through the Betpak-Dala desert. One of the shortest routes - was the road from the southern cities to the northern ones – the Urvan caravan route. Merchants, who overcame the central part of Saryarka, having crossed the Sarysu River, found themselves at the fork of two roads. The first road went in the direction to the North-northeast, passed through the valley of the Nura River, approached the Karaotkel ford through the Yesil River, and located 5 km above the current capital city of Kazakhstan – Nur-Sultan city. Then the route ran to the upper reaches of the Selety River and to the lower reaches of the Irtysh.



Photo 1. Panorama of the village of Korgalzhin and the medieval settlement of Bytygay from a bird's eye view

The second road extended along the Sarysu River to the north, to the mouth of the Nura River; bypassing the grove, reached the Karaagach tract, Kulanotpes River and finally reached the settlement of Bytygay. The starting points of the caravan route in the south were cities of Otrar, Turkestan and Sozak (Margulan, 1997: 20-23).

There was another popular caravan route – the Zhety-Konur road, which ran from Tashkent to Akmolinsk (currently Nur-Sultan). Mostly goods from Central Asia were transported along this route. Its final stage consists of crossing the Sarysu River, then the road runs along the bottom of the Tolagai mountain, reaches the Kulanotpes River, from there along the right bank it comes to the mouth of the Nura River, and then through the settlement of Bytygay reaches Akmolinsk (Margulan, 1997: 25). When describing specific routes of caravan roads following the meridional direction, it is noteworthy that one of the nodal points on the trade routes is the mouth of the Nura River, where the medieval settlement of Bytygay is directly located.

Materials and methods

In 2021-2022, there was an archaeological research on the territory of the Bytygay settlement. Field prospecting and exploration works have been held in the area of the site of the monument. Aerial photography was done to detect new objects and determine the planographic features of the monument. The ruins of various structures were found on an area of 35 hectares, in many cases where brickwork protrudes to the surface. The largest area is reserved for the necropolis. Ruins of a caravanserai were found 5 km to the northeast on the right bank of the Nura River, and the remains of an old bridge and unidentified objects were found on both banks of the water stream.

Archaeological excavations were also carried out at an object located 70 m northwest of the reconstructed mausoleum. The structure was an oval pit 8×12 m, oriented along the west–east line. On the south side of the pit, brickwork was found on the surface of the earth. For a comprehensive coverage of the object, two excavations were laid in the 2021 field season with a total area of 320 m², and in the 2022 field season, four excavations with a total area of -220 m². Archaeological excavations were carried out by the method of continuous opening with the preservation of longitudinal and transverse edges. For a full-fledged analysis of the obtained data, traditional methods of comparative historical and formal typology, the method of analogies were used.

The degree of knowledge of the topic

Medieval settlement of Bytygay in narrative sources. We find the first mentions and descriptions of historical monuments of the region in the records and diaries of officials of the Russian Empire, travelers and members of various expeditions of the 18th-19th centuries. Similar information can be found in the writings and travel notes of P. Rychkov, I. Shangin, Sh. Ualikhanov, S. Bronevsky, A. Levshin, I. Castagne and others.

The first written report about the settlement of Bytygay is found in the book by P.I. Rychkov «Orenburg Topography», published in 1764 in St. Petersburg. The author gives a description of the ruins of the Bytygay mausoleum in the section «The ruins of ancient cities and buildings».

In 1813, the diplomatic mission of the Russian Empire, heading to Central Asia, stopped in the Korgalzhyn area. Philip Nazarov, a translator from the Kazakh language under the

commander of a separate Siberian corps, serves in its composition. In his travel notes, he remarks the lower reaches of the Nura as one of the stopping points and describes the ruins of the tomb structure located there, calling it the ancient pyramid Butagay-Tam (Nazarov, 1968: 257). An expert of the Kazakh language, Ph. Nazarov uses the term «Tam», which the local population calls the mausoleums.

In 1816, mining engineer I. Shangin visited this area on duty, and in his work he described the Bytygay mausoleum in detail. He reports that the ancient Bytygay mausoleum was built of baked bricks, quadrangular pine beams were used in the construction. Inside the structure, the walls are plastered; when preparing solutions, alabaster was used as a binder component (Shangin, 1820).

Later, the works of other researchers appear, in which attention is paid to other objects, and the Bytygay monument is presented as an ancient city. A similar presentation is found in an article by Major General S.B. Bronevsky, published in the «Domestic Notes» journal. The author describes the old ruins and draws readers' attention to the square of the ancient settlement (Bronevsky, 1830: 251-252). However, in 1831 A. Shakhmatov, who visited the Korgalzhin area and made drawings and a detailed description of the mausoleum, notifies that he did not find traces of the ancient city in the vicinity (according to: Krasovsky, 1868). In the second half of the XIX century famous Kazakh scientist Sh. Ualikhanov pays special attention to the monument. In his main works, he notes that in the steppes of Saryarka there are many ruins of ancient cities that can tell a lot about settled life, wealth and developed trade among nomads. The scientist's archive contains drawings and a description of the Bytygay mausoleum (Valihanov, 1964: 29-34; Valihanov, 1964b: 34).

The first stationary archaeological research on the territory of the Bytygay settlement was carried out in 1974 by the Central Kazakhstan Archaeological Expedition (CKAE) under the guidance of Professor Margulan. Members of the expedition on the right bank of the Nura River, near its old channel, recorded the ruins of a small settlement, identified as the settlement of Bytygai. The monument is dated 13th-16th centuries. According to Professor Margulan, on the territory adjacent to the Bytygay mausoleum, there was a city – Akshakent, marked on the medieval Italian maps of the Pizzigani brothers (14th century) and in the Catalan atlas (world map, 14th century). On the Catalan map, the settlement is shown as a trading center located on the caravan routes from Saraichik to Almalyk, through the Turgai and Sarysu steppes (Margulan, 1950: 90).

The CKAE staff examined the ruins of a 21 × 17.4 m structure. Bricks of various sizes were collected, including carved terracotta stalactites with floral ornaments (Margulan, 1950: 11). According to the field drawings, the plan of the studied building matched with the plan of the mausoleum from the archive of Sh. Ualikhanov.

In 2000, archaeological research at the monument was carried out under the guidance of Doctor of Historical Sciences M. Eleuov. A hill with a diameter of 30 m and a height of 1.2 m was excavated. The result of the scrupulous work of archaeologists was the discovery of the ruins of a memorial and cult structure built from baked bricks of various sizes and configurations. Bone remains of two buried individuals were also found there (Eleuov, 2000).

In 2006-2009 archaeological excavations on the territory of the monument were carried out by researchers of the republican state enterprise «KazRestavratsiya». The ruins of the mausoleum, which is dated to the 16th century, have been explored (Sembi, 2015: 153). Subsequently, based on archival data and field scientific drawings, the mausoleum was rebuilt.

At this stage of the study, the main scientific issue remains the determination of the functional significance of the monument under study as an object of historical and cultural heritage. It should be noted that in 1998, the famous Kazakh archaeologist Professor Akishev conducted exploratory work here. He examined every detail of the ancient settlement of Bytygay and the surrounding area. Based on the results of the work he made a situational plan. The scientist concluded, "the vast urban suburb in the form of the ruins of dozens of rectangular and rounded buildings are the remains of the dwellings of the urban people who served the residence of the governor and the urban economy. In general, the territory of the monument stretches as a strip along the root bank of the Nura River for more than 1 km. When planning the spatial organization of Bytygay, the topography of the area, the presence of natural barriers that could serve for defensive purposes were taken into account. The settlement is located on a cape formed by two connecting channels of the Nura River» (Akishev, 2008: 22).

In the current field season, the authors of this work carried out all stages of prospecting exploration work and aerial photography, as a result of which several objects requiring further research were recorded in the vicinity of the settlement. It should be noted that the authors do not share the opinion of some scientists who believe that Bytygay does not belong to the urban type monuments. However, since the authors did not need to solve this problem within the framework of this article, it will be covered in the following works.

Characteristics of the production center. The foundation of the structure was fixed at a depth of 0.9 m from the modern surface of the earth. It had a rectangular shape measuring 10.2×6 m, with a long axis oriented from west to east. The building consists of two rooms separated by a wall of baked bricks. The two rooms are connected by a passage; in the western part there is a large room (6×7.8 m), in the eastern part - a small one (0.9×5.7 m).

The small room has a rectangular shape. The outer eastern wall and the inner wall separating one room from another are well preserved. The entrance to the room was from the south side through the staircase. The base of the steps is made of the mainland remnant, and then lined with burnt bricks; their width is 0.9 m, height is 0.2 m. The size of the bricks is $12 \times 12 \times 4$ cm (Sakenov et al., 2021: 142).

At the level of -1 m, a floor made of baked bricks was fixed. The end and interior walls made of identical brick have been preserved to a height of up to 0.4-0.5 m. The walls were built with two bricks, in some areas up to seven rows of masonry were preserved. The thickness of the wall is 0.3 m. In the wall separating the room, there is an opening 0.9 m wide, filled with a layer of ash 0.3 m thick. In addition, niches were made in the wall on both sides near the passage: the right one was 0.3×0.6 m, the left one was 0.4×0.6 m. Round stone millstones were found in the north-western corner of the room.

The condition of the large room is poor. In the center of the southern wall, there is a 1 m wide opening. A staircase passage was also cleared here, four steps from the mainland remnant survived. The fact that they were lined with bricks is evidenced by traces of masonry.

On the east side of the main entrance in a large room at a level of -1 m from the modern surface of the earth, there was a «pool» arranged in the floor. In terms of plan, the construction had a square shape, dimensions 2.1×1.8 m, depth 0.2 m. The container was intended for soaking ganch and other mixtures, which were subsequently used in the production of glazes. The floor of the «pool» is lined with $25 \times 25 \times 4$ cm bricks, and the sidewalls are lined with $25 \times 20 \times 4$ cm bricks. Alabaster mortar was widely used in the construction of this archaeological monument (Sakenov et al., 2021: 267-283).

In the western part of the room, the ruins of two furnace structures were cleared. The first oven is located in the southwest corner. In plan, it is round in shape, 1.5 m diameters. According to the section of the collapsed walls, the vault was domed. There was an accumulation of soot, ash and charred firewood at the mouth of the furnace. Slags, crafts of various shapes, melted under the influence of a strong fire, were found nearby.

The second heating facility was located in the northwest corner. In plan, the furnace is round, 0.8 m diameters. The masonry of the furnace base has been preserved. The section and collapse of the walls indicate that the furnace was of an open type. Most likely, it was intended for melting glaze.

The third furnace is located closer to the northwest corner. It was intended for firing bricks. Fireplace type stove. The length of this heating device was 2.4 m, but only the lower part survived. According to the analysis of profiles, the furnace had two levels: the lower is for the firebox, the upper level with a vaulted ceiling is the calcination chamber. The stove is made of bricks in two rows. In the profile of the northern lines of the brows, two round spots 0.15 m in diameter were recorded. The distance between them is 1.2 m. Most likely, these are traces of horizontal chimneys.

The floor is even in every room and apparently, it was completely lined with bricks. To this day, only the laying of the floor in the north-eastern part of the room has survived. The size of the brick used is $25 \times 25 \times 4$ cm.

Results

The production workshop located on the territory of the ancient settlement was fully explored as a result of the archaeological work. The workshop is a production area of a 10.2×6 m rectangular shape. Long walls are oriented along the west-east line. The choice of a place is connected with the presence of an output of raw materials - ganch. In the first part of excavation, before raising the walls, a foundation pit was dug to a depth of about 1 m. Then, walls were built that are made of baked bricks, two entrances were built with stair structures that descended to the floor. In the inner wall there was a vestibule, through which a passage was made to both rooms. Three heat-engineering structures (furnaces) designed for different technological processes were recorded inside the workshop. A "pool" on the floor was for ensuring a continuous production cycle. Evidence of the production activities of the inhabitants of this region are found tools, stone millstones, hoes, melted defective objects and slag.

According to the 2022 preliminary results of archaeological excavations, two burials of the Golden Horde period and one early Muslim burial were investigated on the territory. 3 km west of the center of the settlement, on the right bank of the Nura River, one brick kiln was explored. Such data allow expanding the boundaries of the medieval city.

One of the architectural, compositional and stylistic features in the construction of cities, villages and memorial and religious buildings in the Middle Ages is the widespread use of decorative, ornamented terracotta bricks. They are found in two types: plain and glazed. New materials made it possible to distinguish six types of fired bricks, one type with an ornament without glaze and other ornamented and covered with glaze.

According to the materials obtained at the settlement of Bytygay, in the Middle Ages there was a center for the production of bricks, as well as architectural and finishing materials. The production process was divided into three main technological cycles, which ensured the quality production of tiles of all types. In the production of ceramic tiles, the raw materials

were mixtures of various rocks and minerals, mainly clay of good quality. On the territory of the settlement Bytygay, many deposits of various types of clay are recorded, in which raw materials are still mined.

The first production cycle included the production of unglazed tiles. This is confirmed by the samples of finished products found on the territory of the production site, many fragments and defective products, waste and slag. During the second production cycle, an ornament was applied to the dried and unfired surface of the tile, after which some products were covered with glaze. Then, in accordance with the sequence of actions of the master, the tile is fired. This complex process was carried out in specially designed heat engineering structures, one of which was found inside the production workshop. The next cycle – drying of finished products. In the territory of the second excavation in the field season of 2021, the study of a building intended for these purposes has begun, excavations continued in 2022.

On the territory of the settlement Bytygay was also used the method of double firing. The first calcination was done in order to strengthen the base, the second calcination was done to stabilize the ornament and glaze. Such calcination was done in continuous furnace at temperatures from 900 to 1250 °C and above. After cooling, the tile acquired high mechanical strength. Calcination of products completes the technological process of manufacturing tiles. The final product was terracotta bricks and tiles of various sizes and types, covered with glaze.

Construction and decorative materials made at the settlement were also used to decorate the facades of other mausoleums and tombs located in the region. The example is the objects found on the territory of the Zhanibek-Shalkar mausoleum, located 17 km northeast of the Bytygai settlement. Studies of the monument showed that during the construction and in the design of the portal-dome part there were used bricks and tiles covered with turquoise glaze (Yarygin, 2015: 384). Glazed tiles with green and turquoise colors were found in the ruins of the walls of the Zhanibek-Shalkar mausoleum. There are tiles with ornaments that are combined with floral, geometric and epigraphic elements.

Architectural historians associate the blossoming of the “turquoise style” with the name of Amir Timur and the Timurid era (end of the 14th-15th centuries) (Pugachenkova, 1976: 103-104). According to the code of the Golden Horde mausoleums compiled by E.D. Zilivinskaya, the Zhanibek-Shalkar mausoleum belongs to the type of portal mausoleums with a massive portal (Zilivinskaya, 2014: 144).

The object of scientific research and an informative source for scientists are terracotta tiles with floral ornaments collected on the territory of the excavation. There are samples of plates decorated with geometric patterns. Archaeological reports and collection records of the Central Kazakhstan Archaeological Expedition indicate that fragments of bricks with signs of the Sultan’s tamga were found on the territory of the ancient settlement of Bytygay (Archival reports, 1975: 21).

The bricks have high-quality calcination. Ceramic utensils, on the surface of which tribal and sultan tamgas are applied, are found in large quantities in the cultural layer of the medieval city of Otrar (Akishev et al., 1972).

An analysis of the decor and manufacturing technology of these items allows us to date the monument to the 14th-15th centuries and associate with the influence of the Timurid architectural fashion. In the architecture of Central Asia in the first half of the 14th century glazed, carved and embossed terracotta tiles are actively used. The technology of manufacturing ceramic products using the technique of painted majolica and the use of such decorative coatings as mosaic plaster on a silicate basis for the walls of the house are also developing

rapidly. The bricks were covered with fusible colored transparent glaze and opaque enamel. The surface of stalactites made of ceramic mass was also covered with a layer of glaze.

The flourishing of this architectural style and the production of these building materials are associated with the reign of Amir Timur (1336-1405). Exactly in the state of the Timurids a whole network of ceramic production industry for architectural and finishing works appears and develops. There are schools of masters of architectural decoration; the most famous were the schools of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khorezm (Pugachenkova, 1976: 102-103). On the territory of Kazakhstan, monuments of this period, coinciding in striking features of the architectural style, are found in various regions of the country: in the west, this is the settlement of Zhaiyk (Baipakov et al., 2005), the mausoleum of Abbat Baitak (Azhigali, 2002), in the north - the settlement and mausoleum of Kyzyl-Oba, in the east – the Kalbasun tower (Smagulov, 1996), in the south – the mausoleum of Kerderi 2 (Voyakin, 2008: 335-345) and sites of the Otrar oasis (Smagulov, Erzakovich, 1996; Baipakov, 1998).

All the listed monuments of history and culture of Kazakhstan are united by one state formation - Ulyg Ulus, a single architectural style, one culture - Muslim, and they are located at the intersection of caravan routes. It is necessary to mention one more detail that is important: they are all located on large expanses of picturesque landscapes; The flora and fauna here are very diverse. In particular, the well-known settlement of Saraichik is located in a picturesque place on the right bank of the Ural River (Tasmagambetov, Samashev, 2001), the settlement of Zhaiyk is on the Chagan River (Azhigali, 2002), in Central Kazakhstan the medieval settlement of Bozok is on the eastern shore of Lake Buzukty (Akişev, Khabdulina, 2004), the settlements of Ayakkamyр, Baskamyр and the mausoleum Jochi Khan - in the mountain forest Ulytau (Eginbayuly, 2001: 98-106; Smailov, 2015), while the cities and the mausoleum in southern Kazakhstan are concentrated in the Otrar oasis (Ageeva, Pacevich, 1958). The settlement of Bytygay, inscribed in the surrounding landscape of the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn region, was no exception.

Conclusion

The creation of conditions and the complexity of the technological process of making tiles indicate the high professional skills of medieval masters. Based on the obtained data, the production workshop, investigated at the Bytygay settlement, can be dated to the XIV-XV centuries and considered as one of the important craft centers of Saryarka in the Middle Ages. The approval and observance of certain standards in the construction business, the organization of complex technological production as additional factors confirm the functioning of the developed industrial structures of that time in the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn region.

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**Нарративті дереккөздерді археологиялық деректермен сәйкестендіру
(Бытығай ортағасырлық қалашығы)**

Аннотация. Мақалада Теңіз-Қорғалжын шағын ауданында орналасқан орта ғасырлардан қалған тарихи-мәдени ескерткіштер туралы жазба, тарихи және археологиялық деректер талқыланып, талданады. Аталмыш жұмыста мұрағаттық материалдар мен очерктерден алынған ақпараттар мен карталар пайдаланылады. Тарихи карталар ең мазмұнды болып шықты, оларда өлкенің тарихи және мәдени ескерткіштердің орналасқан жерлері дұрыс көрсетілген, сонымен қатар жергілікті топонимдер мен гидронимдер берілген. Барлық мұрағат деректерінде Бытығай орта ғасырлар қалашығы туралы деректер басым. Осы деректерді сараптай келе, шетелдік ғалымдар, саяхатшылар мен Ресей империясының шенеуніктері арасында Бытығай жайлы функционалдық мақсатына қатысты нағыз ғылыми пікір талас болған көре аламыз. Кейбір ғалымдар Бытығайды толыққанды ортағасырлық шаһар деп есептесе, басқалары қорым деп есептеді. Ескерткіште жүргізілген археологиялық қазбалар Бытығайдың маңында көптеген керуен сарайлар, қарапайым күйдірілген және шынымен (глазурь) әшекейленген кірпіштен тұрғызылған кесенелердің қалдықтары бар екенін көрсетті. 2021-2022 жылдары археологиялық қазба маусымында тұтас өндіріс ошақтары анықталды, кептіруге, кірпішті күйдіруге және глазурь балқытуға арналған мамандандырылған жылу техникалық қондырғылар ашылды. Бытығай елді мекен, қорым мен өндіріс ошақтарын қамтитын күрделі тарихи-мәдени нысан болып айқындалды. Археологиялық деректер бойынша Бытығайдың ірге тасы XII-XIII ғасырларда қаланған. Ал жерлеу кешендерінің жаңа материалдарына сүйенсек, шаһардың даму кезеңі XIV-XV ғасырлармен мерзімделеді. Бірінші кезеңдегі жерлеу кешендері ерте мұсылман жерлеу дәстүрлерінің аймаққа енгенін көрсетсе, екінші кезең кешендері Ұлық Ұлыс мемлекетінде қалыптасқан жерлеу канондарын көрсетеді. Жазба және археологиялық деректерді сәйкестендіру арқылы орта ғасырларда өлкеде дербес далалық қала мәдениетінің дамығанын айғақтайды.

Кілт сөздер: Орта ғасырлар, қала мәдениеті, ежелгі қоныс, Нұра-Есіл қос өзен аралығы, Жошы Ұлысы, Ұлық Ұлыс, Бытығай, Тарихи карта, мұрағат құжаттары, дерек көздері

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**Идентификация нарративных источников с археологическими данными
(средневековое городище Бытыгай)**

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются и анализируются исторические сведения и археологические данные по историко-культурным памятникам, датирующимся средними веками и локализующимся в Тенгиз-Коргалжинском микрорайоне. В данной статье использованы тексты и карты из архивных материалов и очерков. Наиболее информативными оказались исторические карты, на которых с большой точностью указаны историко-культурные памятники региона, помимо этого, переданы местные топонимы и гидронимы. Несмотря на то, что в большинстве архивных источников отражается информация о Бытыгае, острые дискуссии вызывают его функциональное значение. Некоторые ученые предполагают, что Бытыгай – это полноценное средневековое городище, другие считали его некрополем. Археологические раскопки, проведенные на памятнике, показали, что в окрестностях Бытыгая расположены многочисленные караван-сарай, остатки мавзолеев, возведенных из простых обожженных и декорированных кирпичей. Во время полевых сезонов 2021-2022 гг. были выявлены целые производственные центры, специализированные теплотехнические сооружения, предназначенные для сушки, обжига кирпичей и плавки глазури. Авторы статьи полагают, что памятник Бытыгай является сложным историко-культурным объектом, в состав которого входят городище, некрополь и производственные центры. Согласно археологическим данным, нижняя дата Бытыгая относится к XII–XIII вв., а новые материалы из погребальных комплексов поднимают верхнюю дату памятника до XIV-XV вв. Погребальные комплексы первого периода показывают проникновение в регион мусульманских погребальных традиций, а комплексы второго периода демонстрируют устоявшиеся погребальные каноны Улыг Улыса. Совокупность письменных и археологических источников свидетельствует о развитии самостоятельной степной городской культуры в регионе в Средние века.

Ключевые слова: средние века, городская культура, городище, междуречье Нура-Ишим, Улыс Жошы, Улыг Улыс, Бытыгай, историческая карта, архивные документы, нарративные источники

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