

## HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY, ARCHIVAL STUDIES

### Sacred objects of the Karkaralinsky district of the Karaganda region

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**Abstract.** This article will discuss the history of the Karkaraly district of the Karaganda region and its sacred objects, which occupy a special place in the history of the Kazakh people, located on the outskirts of Saryarka, inhabited by the growing population of Karaganda. Karakaraly is the place of the ulus, which played a historical role in process of unification of the Kazakhs as a nation and the formation of the people. Central Kazakhstan, as a special region covering a very large territory, was part of the Kazakh Khanate and at all times played a very important role in the history of the state and the history of Kazakh people. Many unknown aspects of the Turgyn culture of the bronze and early iron ages of ancient Kazakhstan were discovered during the research of prominent Kazakh scientists, archeologists Alikey Margulan, Abdimanap Orazbaev, Kemal Akyshev, Mir Kadyrbaev who did a great job in studying the monuments of the Karaganda region. Yuri Popov, a local historian from Karaganda who began studying Karkaraly in 1953, wrote his study in 1981. Thus, thanks to the research of scientists, we can get familiarize with the holy places of our homeland.

**Keywords:** *Saryarka, cultural relics, archaeological complex, Karaganda region, Karkaraly, sacred objects.*

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#### Introduction

The purpose of the article is to explore the distinctive places of the Karaganda region of Kazakhstan, which is situated in the central part of Eurasia's vast expanse, and is a fertile and broad steppe area. To the west is the Torghai plateau, to the east flows the Karaganda River, and if you go further to the south, you will encounter the Balkhash lakes and the blue Ishim river. For centuries, this land has been the blessed homeland of the Kazakh people, who have lived in harmony with nature.

In 1934, the city of Karaganda was founded. The decision was made during the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the entire Soviet Union on January 10th of that year, which stated: "The settlement in the Telman

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district of Karaganda oblast - within the state trust for the use of the Karaganda coal basin - shall be renamed 'Karaganda' and converted into a city." At that time, the population of Karaganda was over 100,000 people. However, according to the 2009 census, the population of the region was 1,341,700 people (Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2011, p. 13). The history of Karaganda oblast begins with the northern branch of the ancient Silk Road that passed through its territory. This historical region was known as an economic and cultural exchange channel between Kazakhstan and other countries, and as a trading artery. During the 1930s and 1940s, when Stalin's purges were taking place, many people were exiled to Karaganda oblast. The infamous Karlag prison camp was located here. After World War II, the area became home to POW camps for German, Japanese, Italian, and Romanian soldiers, and a Memorial Museum was later established to commemorate the victims of Stalin's repression. According to historians, 5,152 prisoners of war were held in the region during this period. Nevertheless, the history of the region is rich and complex.

In the mid-15th century, a Kazakh nomadic tribe led by a skilled leader from the Shygys Khanate, who had entered the Golden Horde established by Batu, gained statehood of the blue horde, which contributed significantly to the development of its economy and the resolution of social and political issues of its people. From the 18th century onwards, the historical events that took place in Kazakhstan, particularly the raids of nomadic groups, were occupied by Russia. Thus, about two hundred years before the establishment of the first Russian fortresses in Saryarka, such as Karkaraly (1824), Aktau (1837), Ulytau (1841), and others, many nomadic tribes were gradually assimilated into the sedentary population, and the identity of the indigenous people was erased (Baltashuly, 2002). For example, Qurban'gali Khalid wrote in his work "Taurykh Khamse" about the formation of the Karakaraly district: "The formation of the Karakaraly district is known by the names of two khans: Bukai Khan and Tursyn Shyngys and Zhamantay Khan... they requested the Russian Kazakh army that had left Omsk and arrived at Karakaraly. From 1824 onwards, they started the construction with the help of a hundred Cossacks, interpreters and other personnel who came with them. Over time, a hundred houses were built, an army was formed, and the land was protected with trenches. A company, a battalion, and a battery of artillery were stationed there" (Khalid, 1992, pp. 45-46).

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Karaganda region has a rich history, and we can become acquainted with the remarkable places in the Karakaraly district.

### **Main Part**

If we delve into history, we can see the events and traditions that have contributed to the development of human society. As evidence of this, we can highlight the significant historical sites located in the Karaganda region. For example, the Kunanbai mosque in the Karqaraly district, "Kalmak Korgan", the city of Kent, KarLag, Taldy II ruins, Aktau settlement, Zheletau petroglyphs, Koyandy burial mound, and Begazy archaeological site.

### **Kunanbai Haji Mosque**

Located in the south-east of Karaganda region, in the area of Karqaraly, the Kunanbai Mosque bears witness to the legacy of great scholars of the past and plays an important role in our history. One example of this is the historical and cultural significance of the landmarks in the city. In the middle of the 19th century, the Kunanbai Mosque was built on a hill near the Karagai mountain range, in the style of the old city of Karqaraly and in the traditional Kazakh style of construction. Kunanbai himself had gone to St. Petersburg with other prominent figures to petition for the rights of the people, but was refused permission to visit the Governor of Orenburg. As a result, he became involved in rebellion and was eventually forced to flee to the Kazakh steppe. He was eventually pardoned and later became an important figure in Kazakh society, with his daughter Dildan later marrying the famous Kazakh poet Abai (Lambekuly, 2011, pp. 79-82). During the election held in the autumn of 1849, Qunanbay supported five leaders and won the Qusbec tribe, and was selected to the position of the head of Qarqaraly city.

Islam was rapidly spreading throughout the Kazakh steppes, and as a result, the need to establish mosques as places of worship became apparent. Qunanbay exerted his efforts to build a mosque in order to prevent the Kazakhs from being shocked and departing from their faith, and people who recited prayers, including sultans and leaders, began to speak out on this topic in places where they had gathered. In 1833, they requested permission to build a mosque and a madrasa in Qarqaraly, and submitted an application to the Ombi regional administration. In a letter written on November 23, 1847, Sultan Qusbec Taukin ordered that "we have chosen a site in the eastern part of the city, on the opposite side of the shops built for the future construction of the mosque

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with the participation of four officials of the Order and Kazakhs, which has been surveyed more than 60 times in the open area. Let's get it approved." A decree was issued to build a mosque by Major Qusbeck Tauekuly in the presence of Sultan Agha. It was announced that funds would be collected from the people for its construction. Thus, on March 16, 1848, with the leadership of Qusbeck Tauekin in the Karakaraly district, construction of the mosque began with the assistance of Sultan Kunanbai. However, many financial issues arose during the construction of the mosque, and in 1850, Kunanbai Oskembayuly, the head of Shekara, wrote a letter to Colonel Kleist asking for help. As a result, the mosque in Karakaraly was built with the support of Sultan Kunanbai, and it was completed within two years. Later, the mosque was transformed into a madrasa, a place for students, and a home for the poor. The Kunanbai Mosque played a significant role in promoting Islam in the Karakaraly region and educating children. In order to protect the historical and cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, the "Institute for the Protection and Restoration of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Kazakhstan" and the "Korkem-Surat Scientific-Restoration Association" from Almaty restored the Kunanbai Mosque in 1991.



Figure 1

**Kunanbai Haji Mosque (Lambekuly, 2011, p. 80)**

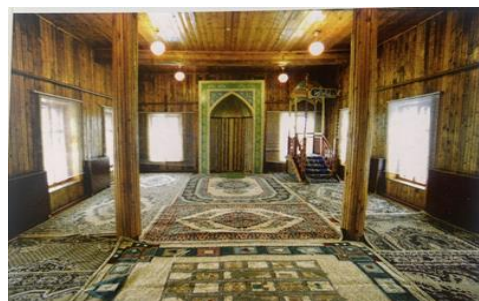


Figure 2

**Interior view of the mosque (Lambekuly, 2011, p. 81)**

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### **Tattimbet Kazangapuly mausoleum**

Tattimbet Kazangapuly (1815–1860) was a famous composer and dombra player from the Karaganda region, Kazakhstan. He was one of the founders of the school of traditional music and a master of folk music. In 1855, he performed for Alexander I, the emperor of Russia, as part of a Kazakh delegation in Western Siberia. He played several of his compositions, including "Bylqyl-daq," "Shaiyrqaldy," "Saryozen," "Alshagyry," "Kokeikesti," and "Sarjaylaynyng." All of these pieces were dedicated to the Saryarka region, where Kazangapuly was from. He died in 1862 at the age of 47 and was buried in the middle of the Babaly and Arqalyq mountains by the Tundik river in Karakaraly district. His father, Kazangap, and his mother, Kalai, are buried next to him, along with his wife. In 1984, a memorial was erected in his honor in the central square of Egindibulak village (Mausoleums of T. Kazangapuly, 2017, p. 383).

The ethnographer, writer, and art researcher Akselau Seydimbek provides extensive information about the life and creative legacy of Tattimbet in the encyclopedia "Kazakh Music Art" (Lambekuly, 2011, p. 89). Tattimbet revived the tradition of Kazakh kobyzy music and was recognized as a great kobyzy player who taught at a famous music school. He is highly regarded as a prominent musician in the history of Kazakh kobyzy music. His legacy is remembered through the Nysan ceremony, which honors his spirit and involves visiting his burial place.



Figure 3

**Tattimbet Kazangapuly mausoleum**  
(Mausoleums of T. Kazangapuly, 2017, p. 383)

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### **Koyandy fair**

Although the fame of the famous Koyandy fair, which has already gone far in its era, has faded over the years, its lessons and historical value, engraved on the palm of the body of time, have not declined. Anyone who touches the holy soil of Karkaraly wants to find time to go to Koyandy. Although there is a long way to the place of birth, now is the time to set foot in the historical place of the country, which was not only the first trading place in the Kazakh steppe, but also a great center of art.

In June 1905, at the Koyandy (Botov) fair near the city of Karkaraly, a petition was organized on behalf of the Kazakh people to the emperor P. Nikolai. It was signed by 42 prominent Kazakhs from Karkaraly uezd of Semipalatinsk region. Later, Kazakhs from other districts of Semipalatinsk and Akmola regions joined him. The petition was sent from the city of Karkaraly. From there, on July 22, 1905, it was sent to the king's name by local post-telegraph. Political heroes known to write the petition A. Bukeikhanov, A. Baitursynov, Zh. Akbaev, T. Nurekenov actively participated (Koyandy fair, 2017, p. 277).

The history of the Koyandy fair can be traced back to the 19th century. In particular, during the summer of 1848, on the way to the Karasor River, Varnava Botov, a resident of Yalutorovsk, organized a caravan that produced goods for the Kyzylzhar market. The purpose of the caravan was to bring goods to the market for the Kazakhs who had gone there to sell their own goods, in exchange for four different types of goods. The market started functioning from May 15th and continued until June 15th. The main product sold at the market was livestock. According to the information provided by the Karakalpak journalist Ahmetbek Eri'nuly, up to 40 million heads of livestock were sold in a single month, including up to 200,000 sheep and goats. The number of animals sold at the market increased every year, and in 1869, more than 100 million animals were sold. In addition to its economic significance, the Koyandy market played an important role in the development of Kazakh theater. Kalibek Kuanyshbayev, one of the pioneers of Kazakh art, played several roles in various plays, and his performances in the "shanshars" (Kazakh comic operas) were well-received by the public and contributed to the growth of Kazakh theater.

In the Karkaraly petition, demands were also made to prevent the violation of the rights and dignity of the local

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people, to prohibit the tyranny of royal decrees, to organize the education of the people in their mother tongue, to stop the settlement policy, and to return the confiscated lands to the Kazakhs.

According to the villagers, some construction materials of the warehouse, which has been neglected for more than a century, were found at the time. He was exhausted because he survived the theft. However, the information that made us happy and brightened our souls was that some relics are preserved like butter in the houses of villagers, waiting for Koyandy's work as a cultural complex to revive and become a tourist object in the future.

The rich and instructive history of the Koyandy fair, hidden behind the ruined walls, will certainly not leave anyone indifferent. This is why Koyandy soil is especially valuable for anyone who cherishes the past and seeks to learn from its national art. However, it is heartbreaking to see that Koyan, whose fame spread to the world at the time, is now on the verge of collapse with only a skeleton wall.



Figure 4

**The current location of the Koyandy-Botov fair  
(Omarbekov, 2000, p. 19)**



Figure 5

**Koyandy fair (Koyandy fair, 2017, p. 277)**

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### Conclusion

In conclusion, there are enough historical and cultural monuments and objects in the Karaganda region. Karaganda region is a natural, historical and very sacred place of Kazakhs. We believe that its future lies in the wealth of this holy land, that sooner or later it will serve mankind. Every monument belonging to our region is a testimony of our history and an indicator of the heroism of our ancestors. However, today it is necessary to include these valuable monuments in the list of UNESCO, carry out restoration works, and conduct a lot of research on the historical holy places in that region. These sacred objects are important manifestations of the culture and history of our country, it is our duty to clearly preserve them and pass them on to future generations.

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