

Bozok - the Turkic Cult Center in Central Kazakhstan

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ABSTRACT The ancient settlement of Bozok is located on the Southern outskirts of the Astana city, among the marshes of Ishim River's left floodplain. The topography of the Bozok settlement is not typical for settled monuments of Central Kazakhstan. The ruins of the ancient city buildings occupy a compact area on the Eastern shore of Lake Buzukty. This paper presents the results of a study of ancient Turkic cult center in Central Kazakhstan. The authors give a description of the archaeological site, analogy and dating. Researchers report that this is a rare type of monument. The aim of this research is to present the results of the Bozok settlement's research, characterized as an ancient Turkic cult center. The unique three-part settlement planigraphy and architecture, ritual burial of a man in the Northern quarter, and the sacrificial complex, testify to the special functional appointment of the object.

INTRODUCTION

The Bozok settlement reveals similarities with some early medieval monuments of Eurasian steppe on architecture and construction. Authors must first of all, investigate the non-standard system of fortification. This system was used for the first time by Hun in the towns of Central Asia. Archaeologists have now found more than ten settlements which have square shape and fortification like that of Bozok's. It includes moat and ram part and wooden fence around dwelling, which looks like Ivolgin settlements and Bayan Under settlement (Kyzlasov 2006: 144, 154-155). Besides the Hun's settlements, system of fortification, is also common among the settlements of Odintsovo culture of Upper Ob (VII-VIII centuries). Recently, it occurred in the architecture of Bulgaria and in the ancient Russian towns (Kazakov 1997: 183-187; Gubaidullin 2002: 32).

Architectural composition of the Bozok settlement finds the most striking similarity to the religious-memorial complex of ancient Turks (YI-YIII centuries). These type of monuments that were discovered in the Central Asia are princely memorial temples. Monuments of «Pereshchepino-Voznesensk» monument type were found in the Eastern Europe (Ambroz 1981: 14). The original idea belongs to the princely memorial temples of ancient Turks, where simple structures as rectangular mounds were found. Sometimes, there are stone walls on the inside of the area (Voitov 1976: 74-75) and also the Khagan's temples are like monuments to Kul Tegin and Bilge

Khagan (Zholdasbekov and Sartkozhauly 2006). There are an alley of sculptures and balbals and the stone turtles around it. The area of distribution of the khagan memorial temples reaches the Upper Irtysh in the west. Archaeologists have found the ruins of such complexes, the stone sculpture on the sitting men (Arslanova and Charikov 1974: 227). They also found the burials of Turkic shamans and musicians (Zhalmagambetov et al. 2015).

In the year 1959 in Tuva, L.R. Kyzlasov researched the memorial temple of Saryg-Bulun. Memorial temple of Saryg-Bulun is a Khagan's complex (1969: 33). Saryg-Bulun temple is similar to Bozok's, on architectural details and on the temple inside it. The memorial temple of Saryg-Bulun which dates from VI-VIII centuries, was a four-cornered platform surrounded by a moat and rampart of 36 m x 29 m. There was a protrusion on a west side of the rampart and on its surface, was found the ruin of a wooden temple in the form of eight-cornered yurt. An author of excavations, L.R. Kyzlasov was of the opinion that yurt as a sanctuary should be used for ritualistic ceremonies. There was a pitcher and some other things near the post hole in the middle of platform. Also, there were two stone sculptures of sitting men.

The group of monuments of «Pereshchepino-Voznesensk» type is located on the west of the Eurasian steppe. Their planning composition and structure are similar to memorial temples of the Khagans of Second East-Turkic Khanate (Ambroz 1982). The archeologists do not fully

understand the functions of the monuments dated from VII-VIII centuries. This, therefore, calls for settlements or funeral-memorial complexes. One of the most striking objects is Voznesenka, found on the Lower Dnieper which was excavated in the year 1930. The monument takes the form of a rectangle in shape area, and it is 62 m x 31 m in size. It is surrounded by stone-ground rampart. There is a stone crepidoma, with a diameter of 8-9 meters on the east side. Also, there are two pits filled with a lot of weapons, harness and burnt bones of a horse. The complexity of things dates the monument by the first half of the VIII century. Authors are interested in the crepidoma inside. Pletneva (2003: 39) reported that it was the foundation of construction like marquee or yurt.

Researchers can now include Bozok, to the architecture of the memorial temples of the Lower Dnieper; especially Voznesenka, which has analogies in Saryg-Bulun. The general feature was a creation around the platform of the rampart, placing a construction like "yurt" on the platform and the installation of a wooden stele.

The idea of the memorial temple led to the implementation of the funeral monuments. Barrow № 1 of Kaltyshino burial ground is one of them (Savinov 1997: 77-99). Architectural details, planning and complexity of religious buildings are similar to the memorial monuments of ancient Turks. The barrow № 1 of Kaltyshino, judging by the things, comes from X-XI centuries. The wooden funerary building and posthole of the stele are similar to Bozok. So details of the Bozok's architecture, like the planning of defensive constructions, "yurt" and vertical post, has an analogy to the construction of memorial complexes of ancient Turks (Tleugabulov et al. 2016).

Another category of objects that is similar to Bozok are Bulgarian and Slavic sanctuaries discovered towards the end of the first millennium and at the beginning of the second millennium. The Bulgarian sanctuary of the Tigashevo settlement is the closest analogy on architecture (Smirnov 1961: 140; Rudenko 2004: 61-62). Topography, size, rebuilding, fortifications, width of the passage, wooden fence and stele in the middle of the platform are common to Bozok and Tigashevo. There is a foundation of wooden stele in the middle of the sanctuary of the Tigashevo settlement with a wooden fence around it. Smirnov (1961: 141) believes that it was a large religious center of a tribe. "Double or, maybe, triple seg-

mentation of a sanctuary indicates it as a center for only priests. People are usually found in the space between the fences and in a platform around the first fence."

Archaeologists found sacrificial pits filled with animal skulls and fragments of pottery and semi-dugout. Ritual burial of humans are in the center of round building in the Northern part of Bozok, but human sacrifices are common in the religious practice in different epochs. The written sources describe the sacrifice of the Huns and Turks. Religious burials inside the corporate houses meet in the Slavic settlements of IX-X centuries (Timoshuk 1990: 35), which are towns with the functions of tribal sanctuaries. The Western Slavics also has these corporate houses. The name of this type of houses is *contin*. Here, meetings have been carried out as well as various ritual actions. The Slavic sanctuary is surrounded by Moats and ramparts with wooden idols in their centers. Human sacrifices are also typical for Polovtsian sanctuaries of X-XII centuries. These sanctuaries are the "sanctuary-pit" with a wooden statue.

Presently, authors now have a lot of information about a variety of sanctuaries and places of worship of ancient and medieval people of Eurasia. Some of them are systemized by regions and chronology (Rudenko 2004; Botalov 2008: 178-184; Shutova 2003: 63-65). Written sources recorded the existence of special places for the sacrifices and ceremonies of Huns and Turks. One of the capitals of the Central Asian's Huns, the Lunshen city, was the religious center. There were annual fees for sacrifices and ritual ceremonies (Kyzlasov 2006: 145). Christian Chronicle reported that the Caucasian Huns had pagan temples, shrines and sacred groves. It was a place of worship and sacrifice for sky, land and water (Klyashtorny 2002: 266-268).

Huns' annular settlements of I-II centuries in South Siberia are also sacred places (Kyzlasov 2008: 108-135), with powerful mud walls and deep moats that surrounded the places. There is no cultural layer on the inner platform. Botalov was allocated burial and funeral objects of Hun-Sarmatians in the Ural-Kazakhstan steppes. Their exterior and artifacts confirm the cult status of monuments (Botalov 2008: 178-184).

The topography of the Bozok settlement is not typical for settled monuments of Central Kazakhstan, as they occupy the high grounds above the floodplain terraces (Khabdulina et al.

2015). The Bozok settlement is located among the marshes of the Ishim river floodplain. The ruins of the ancient city buildings occupy a compact area on the Eastern shore of Lake Buzukty. The area of the settlement is 800 metres by 400 meters. Inhabited territories have a width of about 0.4 km in the East-West line. It abuts the shore of Lake Buzukty in the West and it is surrounded by a chain of small marshes in the East. An artificial canal limits the territory of the monument from the south. The canal is dug from the southern tip of the lake to the east, in the direction of the nearest lake hollows. The length of the canal is 400 m, while the width is about 12 m. The whole system of artificial water courses and natural water bodies (marshes) is surrounded by the territory of the ancient city, with a total area of 1.3 km x 0.4 km. Therefore, the complex of natural and artificial obstacles complicates access to the settlement.

Structurally, the monument consists of four parts: the first is the oldest part – the three square-shaped platform is enclosed by moats and ramparts. The internal dimensions of platforms are, on average, 35 metres x 35 meters. There is a complex of dwellings-dugouts, at about 70 meters to the north, with a well and irrigation ditches, stretched from the lake. This is the second structural component of the settlement. To the south of the central platforms is the necropolis of the Bozok settlement which consists of the ruins of the mausoleum, brick kiln and Muslim burials of the XIII-XVI centuries. This is the third part of the archaeological site. Agro irrigation layout is adjacent to the ruins of the ancient city from the East and the North. This expands the boundaries of the habitable area. Its size on the North-South line does not extend beyond Lake Buzukty. Irrigation facilities are the fourth structural part of the Bozok settlement. Research has shown that the structural components of the monument did not occur at one moment. Ancient people repeatedly rebuilt, renewed and took care of this place.

The ruins of the monument have a typical steppe exterior. Low ramparts (height 0.6 m-1.0 m) surround the flat square platforms as the configuration of the platforms were allocated by the internal moats with baulks passage way.

The excavation research revealed that the Bozok settlement was founded in the VIII-IX centuries and functioned until the XV-XVI centuries, but it was inhabited before the X-XIII centuries. Later, the ruins of the settlement became a

place of burial. There are also mausoleums built of burnt and mud bricks used for Muslim burials and rites (Khabdulina 2016).

Objectives

This paper tried to investigate the oldest part of the monument which marked the first stage of the history of the Bozok settlement in the VIII-IX centuries. Authors referred to the three square-shaped platforms as “quarters”. Quarters are offset from each other and their composition ally have the kind of three petal rosette. The aim of this paper is to present the results of the Bozok settlement’s research, characterized as an ancient Turkic cult center. The unique three-part settlement planography and architecture, ritual burial of a man in the Northern quarter, and the sacrificial complex, testify to the special functional appointment of the object.

METHODOLOGY

It is difficult to determine the chronology and stratigraphy of moats, however, researchers have two dates. The first date helps to determine the date of construction of three quarters, while the second refers one of the stages of clearing the moat.

The first date was obtained from the buried humus soil under the rampart. The authors did stratigraphic sections of rampart on the settlement. The researchers selected samples of buried soils beneath them. Then authors did radiocarbon dating of buried soil’s humic acids in the Laboratory of Cenozoic Geology and the Paleoclimatology of the Institute of Geology and Mineralogy, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This gave the date 1500 ± 50 years ago. Calibration of the date showed the time interval was between the years 503 and 644 AD (95.4% probability). This date reflects the formation of diagnosing signs of humus. Conservation of these soil horizons interrupted further genetic development of diagnosing the signs of humus. Buried soil entails an “open-closed system”. So radiocarbon dates of humic acids of soil was interpreted as a minimum age of the buried soils. Therefore, the start time of construction of the rampart of the Bozok settlement should be attributed to a period of 50-100 years later, concerning the radiocarbon dates, or VII-VIII centuries.

Researchers found the ritual burial of a horse in the moat of East quarter, at a depth of 1.8 meters in 2009 and it is located at the entrance of the quarter. Researchers also found two pairs of iron bits and one horny psalia over the horse skull. Bits are laid on each other and the psalia are laid on top. Authors consider this complexity as sacrificial and it has been buried specially at the entrance during the construction of a moat and a rampart. It was common in the population of the steppe zone from ancient times. Perhaps, they were the construction victims. In this case, it is important that the bridle items would be detected together with the horse skeleton. It is also important that the sacrificial complex is detected at a depth of 1.8 m. This means that this complex was buried after the beginning of the construction of three platforms. Horse bridle items allow us to date this phase within the VII-IX centuries.

Psalia is a horny, rod-shaped with two holes and has a length of 12.2 cm. Psalia is made of deer horn spokes and is slightly curved. The tip of the horn is cut off and at the base was a rosette. The rosette had a one sharpened edge. Psalia surface was flattened in this place.

Horny rod-shaped psalias are known from the Early Iron Age. They apply to IX-X centuries. The same psalia was found in Tuva in Coquel burial mound 23 and was dated from VI-VII centuries (Weinstein 1966: 340), another one was in a Kudyrge burial ground in Altai.

The upper bits were iron one-ringed and are in two-parts with a length of 13 cm. The mouthpiece of a horse bit is round in cross-section and have a length of about 6-7 cm. The links of the bit end are 4.2 cm x 3.5 cm almond shaped rings. One of the links at the bit was baked onto an iron ring, with a diameter of 3 cm. Its origin is unclear. The lower bits were iron one-ringed and are of two-parts with a length of 11.5 cm. The mouth piece of a horse bit is round in cross-section. The design of the bit is incomprehensible. At each link, an iron ring is fixed with a diameter of 2.6 cm. Rings are baked onto the top or are specially riveted on the rod of mouthpiece of a horse bit round. They are about the same distance (5.5 cm; 6.0 cm) from the central ring of the bit. Their appointment is unclear. Maybe they serve as breakers.

These bits with psalias belong to the "katan-dinsky" type (Gavrilova 1965). Kubarev (2005: 120-121) selected them in type 3 in the summary of ancient Turkic complexes.

So these data allow authors to attribute the time of appearance and function of the Bozok settlement to the ancient Turkic era. Construction of the quarters began in VII-VIII centuries, according to the radiocarbon date of burial soil humus. One of the stages of the subsequent update of the moat, dates back to the discovery of a horse bridle in the horse sacrificial burial - VIII-IX centuries.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

During the years of excavation, researchers had fully explored the inner area of the northern quarter. The authors identified two building horizons. Received data and the constructions of the rampart and the moat are in doubt of the protective functions to a defensive structure. The deep moat and the rampart, surrounded the small areas of the quarters. The rampart was located behind the moat. The surface of the quarters was deepened further, till the dense mainland soil. The edges around the perimeter of the site were obliquely positioned towards the moat, and therefore, the inner wall of the moat is 0.5 m below the exterior. In this situation, it is difficult to imagine the possibilities of defence. Areas of the quarters became as if it was "sunken" in the rampart. From the point of view of defensive tactics, this planning is ineffective. A more reasonable approach explains the quarters as closed for mass human habitation (Tleugabulov et al. 2016).

The plan of study of the monument, architecture, ramparts and moats, observation of the stratigraphy strata of moats, and cultural layer of the northern quarter, allows us to speak about the special status of the settlement. The settlement originally combined the functions of residential and religious center of the ancient Turkic period. Currently, researchers confirmed these observations in the planning of the construction of structures of the lower horizon of the northern quarter. In the opening ritual of human burial at the center of the northern quarter, are found objects of a horse bridle, which is in the moat of the eastern quarter.

The geostrategic factor played the main role of choosing habitats. The Bozok settlement was located in the center of Sary-Arka, in a place where the sources of the rivers of the Northern Siberian Basin (Ishim, Selety, Shiderty) and the Central Asian Basin (Nura, Sarysu) meet. Trade caravans and military migration routes of the an-

cient population of Eurasia, intersected in the upper reaches of the Ishim River (Khabdulina et al. 2015). The latitudinal segment of the Ishim River was part of the turnpike road that connects the eastern regions of Eurasia to its western regions. The shortest route connecting the cities of the Great Silk Road with cities of Western Siberia passes through the upper reaches of Ishim. From written sources, the name of this meridional trade road is Khanzhol. Here, at the fort close to Bozok, it was possible to monitor and manage these flows. Thus, the Bozok settlement is located in a strategically advantageous location based on both the economic (the ancient “customs” point), and the political position (center of the northern part of the Sary-Arka).

Today, among the famous medieval towns of Eurasia, there is no single monument, having the shape of a three-part composition. But this planigraphy has a special meaning and a code that its builders left for us. The division into three parts, each of which had its name, was characteristically meant for the nomadic residences of the rulers of the Turkic and Mongolian nomads, from ancient times. The name of the center was *ordu*, of right wing - *uchuk*, of left wing - *buzuk*. The Orkhon ruins recorded these terms. Later on, they were used as the names of the administrative structures of tribal alliances and early state formations. Hence, the federal division of the Kazakh Khanate on three juz and then, the names followed: AkOrda, KokOrda, and Golden Horde (Khabdulina 2016). It is arguable that the semantics of the spatial distribution of quarters of the Bozok settlement shows the standard of an elite residence of VIII-IX centuries. An indirect argument can be the name of lake “Buzukty” inscribed on large-scale maps of the Tselinograd area. Maybe the lake got its name from one of the foremost residences of the Oguz-Kipchak, by the action of their movement to the west. Despite the past hundreds of years, the term “Buzuk” has remained in the local hydronyms and its still being preserved nowadays.

In ancient times, when any space was rendered habitable, it became sacralized, and its construction was carried out by following special rational and irrational laws (Zhalmagambetov et al. 2015). The territory of the Bozok settlement is no exception. Researchers believe that its location, situated close to the coastal edge of the lake was a rational decision. The base of the fortress wall which was located literally at about 20-

30 meters from the water, closed the internal area, and at the same time, the monolith of fortress walls from the west, which is from the side of the lake. Passageways, judging from their topography, were internal communications between the “quarters”, and they were not well suited for household purposes, therefore, it was not suitable as a permanent habitat.

Functional Purpose

There are facts justifying the status of the settlement as a cult center. Among these facts are: a “swampy” topography of the monument, an unusual layout of fortifications (the inner moat, the outer rampart), a relative stratigraphy that fixes a repeated renewal of the moat and the rampart, layout and content of the construction’s lower horizon of the northern quarter, the opening of the sacrificial burial of a horse in the moat and the ritual burial of a man in the center of the northern area.

Discovery of a horse bridle at the sacrificial complex and the radiocarbon date of the buried humus soil that was conserved under the rampart, confirmed these facts.

The Bozok settlement has an unusual topography for Saryarka. Its creators have tried to “hide” in the swamps, in a low-lying valley of the Ishim River. Lake-marsh landscape of settlements was not uncommon in the Middle Ages, it was also used in the ancient times. Perhaps, natural barriers of this landscape served as protection. But, in this case, secrecy and inaccessibility further emphasize the cult status of the settlement. This place seems to have been associated with certain regulated activities of the ceremonial character.

Construction of all three quarters was carried out at the same time. Before the work commenced, a mark up of the future quarters to the dense mainland soil was performed and from the surface of this area, humus layer was removed, in addition to a part of the mainland’s layer. 3 m - 3.5 m wide strip that was adjoined around the perimeter to the inner wall of the moat was slanted obliquely, to a depth of 50 cm - 70 cm. And at this level builders had started to dig the moat for sometime. Thus, a vertical drop arose at the top level of the moat’s walls. Its inner wall was originally 0.5 m - 0.7 m, below the outer wall.

The ancient surface had remained just below the rampart-wall. It had aligned with a layer of

clean clay. Then, the builders had started to dig the moat and from the upper humus soil, they laid a small rampart of 3 m width and a height of 0.4 m. Yellow clay coated the surface of the small rampart. Thus, ancient builders created a core of the future wall, which gradually increased with its volume. From the moat's clay arose molded bricks, and then, reinforced slopes of the rampart. The inner walls contained beaten clay called *pahsa*. The height of the rampart-wall can be calculated by the volume of the soil guttered into the moat. On all profiles, it can be seen that the big volume of clay got down into the moat from the side of the rampart. Its thickness are about one meter. If this ground returns back to the rampart, then, it will increase its height by one meter. Considering the current size of the rampart, it can be argued that the original height of the wall was, at least, 2 m. The width of the base of the rampart is 7 m-8 m, and the width of the top – 4 m. The rampart flattened at the top, in cross section, has a trapezoidal shape.

Along the inner perimeter of the rampart was the moat of depth 2.6 m - 2.8 m, width at the top - 4.8 m, at the bottom - 1.5 m. The rampart's bottom was flattened. Walls by the rampart's side had the stairs. On the inner side, moat had a steep profile. There was a passageway of a width of 2.3 m in the middle of the south side of the quarter. These constructions surrounded the inner area, with dimensions of 35 m x 35 m. A wooden fence surrounds the inner edge of the area. Traces of it are fixed, in the form of holes for pillars, which stood at a distance of 3.5 m - 5.0 m, from each other. Pillars with a diameter of 20 cm - 30 cm are found here. In some of them, wood rot was found. The founders apparently repaired the fence because 3-4 series of pillar holes was cleaned in areas adjacent to the corners of the blocks.

Moats, ramparts, and passageways were built originally and they are associated with the constructions of the lower horizon of the northern quarter. Two building horizons were opened in the inner area of the northern quarter. The thickness of the cultural layer was 0.6 m - 0.7 m. Construction horizons were separated by a sterile layer of clay of 15 cm - 20 cm. Constructions of the lower horizon consist of a circular ditch and the arcuate ditch, that was cleared in the south-east corner and the burial pit in the center, with lines of pillars obstructing the territory of the quarter in a latitudinal direction.

In the center of the northern area was a circular ditch with a 7 m diameter. The ditch had a

width of 1.0 m - 1.3 m, and a depth of 0.2 m. The outlines of the ditch are surrounded by postholes, and the base of the wooden pillars is preserved in some of them. A gap is fixed at the north-eastern side of the annular ditch. A large pillar that has repeatedly been repaired was cleared at 2 m from it with a diameter 0.5 m, - around it was dug an additional four pillars.

A grave orienting on the west-east was found at the center of the ditch. At the bottom of the grave, the burial site of a man was opened, he was found in a bent position on the left side, and the head was oriented to the west. Bones were poorly preserved, and thus, were half-decayed. Arms were bent at the elbows and placed perpendicular to the torso. Hands were chopped off and were placed under the bones of the forearm, and the fingers to the stomach. There were no items. The depth of the hole from the ancient surface is 0.7 m, and from the top of the quarter - 1.2 m.

The circular ditch surrounded with postholes is similar to a base of yurt-shaped building. From the width of the ditch and postholes, we can describe the construction of the walls. It is quite a powerful wall of clay bonded by a wooden frame. The gap in the northeast side reinforces the idea of the entrance to the yurt, from the east. A pillar was dug 2 m opposite the entrance, to a depth of 0.5 m, which formed the base of a wooden stele.

Two transverse lines of twin-pillar holes were fixed in the space between the annular ditch and the entrance, to the quarter archaeologists. A distance of 4 m is between them. Northern line (at 10 meters from the entrance) crossed the quarter from the west side to the east. This line is represented by a posthole oval shape (0.3 x 0.2; 0.4 x 0.3 m), and pair bases of two wooden pillars were found during filling. The second line was short, located 6 meters opposite the entrance. By viewing the rectangular holes, we can say that pillars of timber sizes, 20 cm x 10 cm were found here. They extend in two parallel rows at a distance of 1.3 m. In some holes, wood rot was preserved. These lines were repaired, and there are overlapping holes. Overall, it looks like this was a construction in the form of wicker wall, set in front of the entrance to the quarter.

Reconstruction of the Cult Center

Thus, the following picture emerges. The inner area of the northern quarter is over 1,200 sq. m and it is tightly closed on all sides by a high

and big rampart wall, deep and wide moat and a wooden fence. Entrance, with a width of 2.3 m, was in the middle of the south side. A yurt-shaped building stood in the middle of the area. At 2 meters from the entrance of this building, was dug wooden "pillar" or stele. Yurt-shaped building fenced off from the south of the two rows of wooden posts dug in pairs. The first row of the quarter's entrance side was short and it could get to the west and east. The second row crossed the whole area from edge to edge. A ritual burial of a man with a severe and displaced wrist was discovered in the center of the yurt-shaped building.

In addition to this planning structure of the inner area, unconventional layout of the rampart and the moat was noted, as well as the above-mentioned details of construction of the quarter. Constructions of the rampart and the moat brings doubt to the protective functions of defensive structures. Deep moat and rampart surrounded the small areas of quarters. The surface of the quarters was deepened further, till the dense mainland soil. The edges around the perimeter of the site were obliquely positioned towards the moat, as well as the inner wall of the moat, to 0.5 m below the exterior. In this situation, it is difficult to imagine the possibilities of defence. Areas of the quarters became as if "sunken" in the rampart. From the point of view of defensive tactics, this planning is ineffective. Probably, additional meaning should be sought for such planning.

The quarters are explained as closed, for mass human habitation. Construction of the lower horizon of the northern quarter, can testify in favor of using it as a sacred site, the place of some rituals. Perhaps, someone was living in a yurt. Archaeologists discovered the ritual burial of a man in the center. This fact provides an additional argument in favor of the cult purpose of the northern quarter.

Filling of moats and the stratigraphy of the cultural layer of the northern area, indicate the duration of use, repeated renovation, and cleaning of this area. The traces of repair of wooden constructions and the stratigraphy of moats confirmed it. In the profiles of the pit, it can be seen that after its initial construction, the moat was dug twice. After a certain period of time, the moats was cleared to a depth of 2.0 m -2.2 m. By that, its contours shifted slightly. This update is especially evident in the moat's profiles of the eastern quarter. Here, even the top of the wall of the rampart, was truncated obliquely. For a long time, the moat was hollow. Gradually, the ground

comes to the moat on both sides. A thick layer of clay came down from the side of the rampart. Gray loam came down from the side of the inner area. For the third time in the already filled moat, bricks were laid in the center in two layers. They were visible in the profiles at a depth of 1.0 m from the top. The builders of the Bozok laid yellow clay bricks horizontally, and fastened it with a black humus silt solution. Gradually, humus is formed above this level, alternating with layers of clay. Pillars were dug in the second stage, along the south side of the area.

CONCLUSION

Architectural composition, a complex of constructions of the lower horizon of the northern quarter, as well as the semantics of planigraphy, allows for the interpretation of the origin of the Bozok, in the general flow of historical events of Turkic Kaganates' period.

The Bozok settlement due to its location, connects in a single chain the cult-memorial complexes of the eastern and the western edges of the Eurasian steppe. It shows the routes of movements of the Turkic-speaking nomads in the way of development of new spaces. The Bozok settlement reflects the initial stage of development of the Turkic nomads of the Eurasian space. Their first residences on the new lands combine the functions of both residential and sacral centers.

The researchers defined that the formation of a complex spatial structure consisting of defensive, residential, industrial, commercial and cult objects of different times is related to the initial choice of the place for the cult center of the ancient Turkic period. Later periods which expressed the status of the sacredness of this space, was preserved in the genealogical memory of generations.

The study substantiates the high degree of importance of the region of Central Kazakhstan in the process of resettlement and spread of the Turkic-speaking ethnic groups on the territory of Kazakhstan, in the medieval period, based on the example of the Bozok settlement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further comprehensive study of the Bozok settlement gives a specific historical knowledge about the processes occurring deep in the steppe regions of Kazakhstan, in the era of Turkic Khanate, Kipchak Khanate, and Ulus Zhoshi. Devel-

opment of the concept of the Bozok Archaeological Micro-region will lead to deepening of the methodological base, extracting historical knowledge from archaeological sources.

In the future, the authors plan to explore the historical-cultural and environmental factors of formation of a complex socio-spatial structure of the Bozok settlement. Based on radiocarbon dating, chronological framework of existence and cultural development stages of the Bozok will be refined.

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