

SOURCES ABOUT THE MONUMENT OF DAULETKEREY (KORGANSHA) ON USTYURT

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Abstract

The Ustyurt Plateau is considered a region rich in historical and cultural monuments. One of the greatest monuments of the plateau is the ancient settlement of Dauletkerey (Korgansha). Built in the Middle Ages on a caravan route, this settlement served to establish trade between nomadic tribes and sedentary peoples. According to local residents, the construction of this fortress is associated with the name of Alexander Bekovich-Cherkassky, who went to Khiva in 1717. However, both Russian expeditions and the results of subsequent archaeological research confirm that this monument was built during the heyday of the Khorezm state. Analyzing the data of Russian expeditions that crossed the Ustyurt plateau before the 20th century, the author finds out that there was a third caravan route.

Keywords: Ustyurt, fortress, signal tower, caravan routes, pottery kiln.

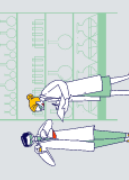
Introduction

Dauletkerey (Korgansha) fortress is one of the wonderful historical monuments in the southeastern part of the Ustyurt plateau. It was discovered during the archaeological excavations that there is a signal tower, a pottery kiln and other buildings near this fort. The monument is located in the lower part of the plateau of Ustyurt, at the coordinates of 44°29'16" north latitude, 58°11'27" east longitude.

Few written sources about the memory of Dauletkerey survived until the 20th century. In 1825-1826 reports of the first scientific expedition to the Ustyurt lowland under the leadership of Colonel F.F.Berg provide preliminary information about the Dauletkerey monument. In it, it is noted that on January 28, 1826, a detachment was stationed near the Ulu Kulmagir gulf, that there was a fortress called Dauletkerey in the southern part of the gulf. It is said that there is a fresh water well near the fort. F.F. Berg stated that this fortress, located 15 versts from the Ulu Kulmagir gulf, is called Dauletkerey by the local Kyrgyz (Kazakhs and Karakalpaks - E.Q.), who mistakenly believe that it was built by Prince Bekovich [5, p. 103, 212].

Dauletkerey fortress is also mentioned by A.I. Levshin, one of the founding members of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. He describes the caravan route from the city of Saraychik to Khiva along the western coast of the Aral Sea, and points out that the ruins of Dauletkerey are located on the western coast of the Aral Sea, opposite the Ulu Kulmagir gulf. The Kyrgyz told Levshin that "that fortress used to be a fortress where merchants used to come and trade" [2].

Analyzing the trade situation between Central Asia and Russia in the middle of the 19th century, P.I. Nebolsin describes the caravan routes passing through Ustyurt and mentions the



road Korgansha (Dauletkerey) fortress and the signal tower on the plateau. It says: "Three caravan routes pass through Ustyurt: upper, central and lower. Caravans follow the route led by the sarvan (caravan leader).

The central road passes along Ustyurt through the Bekovich fortress, through the Akbulak wells with little water, and the double wells of Kosbulak and the unpleasant-tasting Bukse (Boksu) wells.

The Bekovic fortress is called Dauletkerey by the Khiva people, and Korgansha by the Kyrgyz. It is located two versts from the sea. Now only one of its walls and a well have been preserved. Above the fort is a tower-like mound made of clay, which may have been built to observe the surroundings. [4, p. 109-110].

E.S. Saranchaev, a participant of the Khivan campaign in 1873, described the Dauletkerey fortress in more detail. He wrote that in a place called Dauletkerey, there are two wells one verst apart, the water in them is salty and has an unpleasant smell, but both people and animals drink it, there is a lot of grass and thorny plants around it, and small birds nest in it.

E.S. Saranchaev gives the following information in his work "Khivan expedition in 1873":

"On April 28, a march of 30 versts was made to the Davlet-Girey tract. On one of the terraces two wells were found, a mile apart from each other. The water in them was salty and had a special smell; however, people and animals drank it. About 2 versts north of the first well there was a lake with water that tasted brackish; around it there was quite abundant vegetation in the form of grass and thorns; the latter reached a fathom in height, and in its branches there were many small bird's nests.

Near the southern well there are the ruins of a fortification made of natural stones, hewn from the outside. This fortification, figures 4 and 5, appears in the form of a square redoubt, the sides of which are about 20 fathoms long. The surface of the terrace on which it is built is not horizontal, but has a fall of 15 degrees to the sea, through which the face facing the Chink is significantly higher than the others; however, its absolute height (about 3 fathoms) is greater, which was obviously done with the aim of protecting the interior of the fortification from views and shots from the terrace above. The best preserved is the front facing Chink; it contained the bases of two towers – one in the corner, the other in the middle of the front; both of them protruded forward as much as in the Khiva fortifications; the diameter of the upper base was about 8 feet. The parapet wall was not noticeable on any of the faces; there was also no valganga, due to which the fortification bore the character of the Khiva fortification of Dzhankala, which we encountered a few days later at Cape Urga.

Due to the fact that a significant part of the walls was in ruins, it was difficult to determine where the gate was located.

However, judging by the ruins, it can be assumed that the fortification had two gates: one in the eastern front, facing the sea, the other in the southern, facing the Khanate of Khiva.

On the terrace directly overlooking the fortification there is a solid building made of unhewn pieces of stone; it appears in the form of a truncated tetrahedral pyramid, the side of the base, as well as the height, is about 3 fathoms. As for its purpose, it probably played the role of a watchtower. The Kyrgyz I interviewed spoke of this fortification as the construction of the

Russians (Prince Bekovich-Cherkassky), although this is hardly true, since Bekovich's detachment went much further south. It would be more correct to assume that these are the ruins of one of the fortified caravanserais, built during the flourishing era of Arabian trade and the power of the Khiva Khanate" [6].

Theodore-Friedrich Baziner, who visited Khiva in 1842 as part of an expedition led by Gregor Danilevsky, also recorded what he saw in his report about the signal tower located on the terrace above the Dauletkerey fortress. He notes that he saw 12 similar signal towers along the eastern part of Ustyurt and the Dauletkerey fortress, the local people associate their construction with the name of Bekovich. He wrote that: "At the top, at the height of the Urga foothills, there are fragments of one of the outermost bends of the bypass wall. Nearby stands a quadrangular tower built from broken limestone in the shape of an Egyptian pyramid without a top. Each of its sides is 39 feet at the bottom, 25 feet at the top, and the height is 28 feet. The tower is solid and there are no stairs to the top. We saw exactly the same tower on September 4th. It also stands on the edge of the plateau opposite the ruins of a small quadrangular springboard, located several fathoms deeper on the slope and called "Davletgerey". There are several such towers with associated ski jumps on the eastern edge of Ustyurt. As far as I could find out, their number is twelve; we saw only three more, besides the two mentioned, namely: one at Karaumbet, one at Kaskajol and the last at Akcheganak, and they are all exactly the same. The Kirghiz told us that they were built by the unfortunate prince Bekovich, who, as is known, at the behest of Peter the Great, undertook a military campaign against Khiva in 1717, but was treacherously killed after he allowed himself to be persuaded to do so by the promises of the Khivans to enter their country under little cover. This seems quite incredible to me, firstly, because Bekovich went from Mangyshlak to Khiva and it was difficult for him to get to these places; secondly, because these jumps were too small for the troops, because they could not even accommodate our small caravan; and finally, thirdly, because a lot of time and labor must be spent on their construction, since not only all the towers, but also the walls of the Davletgerey springboard are made of huge stones of the same shape and carefully cut. In my opinion, these jumps were once caravanserais and were equipped with pyramid-shaped towers so that they could be seen from afar" [1].

The written information of the members of the expedition that passed through Ustyurt was confirmed by modern archaeological research.

The monument has the shape of a rectangle measuring 50x44 m, oriented by the walls along the cardinal points. They are preserved in height from 2 to 3.6-4.8 m. The thickness of the walls at the top is different and ranges from 1.6 to 3.2 m. The walls have a slope to the base of about 78°. On the western wall at the corners there are round towers in terms of shape, and in the middle of the wall - a semicircular shape. The western and eastern walls are well preserved, the northern and southern walls in the middle part are destroyed. The monument is located on the slope of a ridge. The height difference from the base of the western wall to the base of the eastern wall is 10 m.

Rooms can be traced along the eastern wall and the eastern part of the northern wall. One of them, measuring 4.23 x 3.60 m, has been excavated. In the center on the floor there is a hearth

with a pre-focal pit. The finds are represented by blue glass beads of spherical and oval shapes and shells with holes for stringing. The ceramic material dates back to the 12th – early 13th centuries. The herringbone masonry used on the tower on the southwestern corner is characteristic of Khorezm of the Golden Horde period. The presence of two floors in the premises, partial redevelopment and construction techniques characteristic of the 13th-14th centuries indicate secondary burning of the fort. The settlement is the remains of a trading post located far to the north, where trade exchanges between the Khorezmians and nomads coming from the north took place.

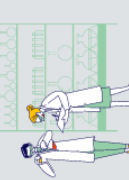
Near the settlement there is a tower made of stone slabs measuring 8.15 x 8.15 m at the base, preserved at a height of 4.7 m. Currently, it is located on the edge of a landslide that has sunk since the end of the 19th century. At 25 m from the modern level of the Ustyurt plateau. The tower is a sign of the location of the settlement under renovation.

A pottery kiln with a combustion part, round in plan, 2.08 m in diameter and 0.84 m in height was excavated 80 m south of the settlement. In a circle, along the walls, there are 10 round vents with a diameter of 0.24-0.30 m. Hearth diameter ovens 1.8 m. The chamber for loading dishes has not been preserved. By analogy, it is dated from the 12th to the beginning of the 13th centuries. 120 m southeast of the furnace there is a rectangular structure made of stones measuring 5.8 x 5 m with an entrance 1.26 m wide in the southern part. There is no cultural layer. Based on raised ceramics, it is dated to the 12th – early 13th centuries [3, p. 82].

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