

ЭТНОЛОГИЯ/АНТРОПОЛОГИЯ / ETHNOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY

Published in the Republic of Kazakhstan
Asian Journal “Steppe Panorama”
Has been issued as a journal since 2014
ISSN 3135-8055.
Vol. 13. Is. 5, pp. 1530-1550, 2026
Journal homepage: <https://ajspiie.com>

IRSTI / FTAXP / MPHTI 03.20
https://doi.org/10.51943/3135-8055_2026_13_5_1530-1550

ABAT-BAYTAK MAUSOLEUM AS A UNIQUE MONUMENT OF THE GOLDEN HORDE (ULUS OF JOCHI) PERIOD IN WESTERN KAZAKHSTAN (THE UIL-KOBDA LOCAL MICRO-REGION)

Beknazarov Rakhym Agibaevich ¹, Bisembaev Arman Auganovich ², Khavansky Alexey Ivanovich ³

¹K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University
(263 Zhubanov Brothers St., 030000, Aktobe, Republic of Kazakhstan)
Vice-Rector, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1033-9660>. E-mail: r.beknazarov@gmail.com

²A. Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology
(44 Dostyk Avenue, 050000, Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan)
Leading Researcher, Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4022-9910>. E-mail: abissembaev@mail.ru

³Bauman Moscow State Technical University
(5, 2nd Baumanskaya St., 105005, Moscow, Russia)
Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8502-8883>. E-mail: arkaim01@yandex.ru

© Valikhanov IHE, 2026

© Beknazarov R/, Bisembaev A., KhavanskyA., 2026

Abstract. *Introduction.* The article examines recent research on monuments of the Ulus of Jochi period in the Aktobe Region. Fieldwork focused on the Abat-Baytak mausoleum and its surroundings, where monumental funerary architecture is associated with the presence of the nomadic elite and nearby settlement sites. *Aim and objectives.* The study aims to examine the mausoleum and its settlement environment in the Uil-Kobda local micro-region and to assess the relationship between funerary monuments, settlement sites and changes in burial practices. *Materials and methods.* The research combines the processing and analysis of materials collected from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present, archaeological surveys to identify promising areas, and exploratory excavations. The material includes the Abat-Baytak mausoleum and its surroundings, the Koptam necropolis and settlement, and comparative evidence from the Kyzyltam mausoleum. *Results.* The monuments reveal the gradual spread of Islamic burial practices and increasing similarity in the composition and typology of grave goods, described as an “imperial” style. Settlement remains, irrigation structures and monumental architecture provide evidence for interaction between nomadic and sedentary communities. *Conclusion.* From the mid-fourteenth century, Islamic features became increasingly evident in the burial practices examined. These include shrouded burials oriented towards Mecca and the reduction or absence of grave goods. Other burials retained earlier ritual

features. Some archaeological assemblages also suggest population movements, including possible links with Southern Siberia.

Keywords: Ulus of Jochi; burial rite; Golden Horde; nomadic groups; Mongols; Kipchaks; Islamisation.

Acknowledgements. This article was prepared with grant funding from the Committee of Science of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025–2027, project IRN AP26103583.

For citation: Beknazarov R.A., Bisembaev A.A., Khavansky A.I. Abat-Baytak Mausoleum as a Unique Monument of the Golden Horde (Ulus of Jochi) Period in Western Kazakhstan (the Uil-Kobda Local Micro-Region) // Asian Journal “Steppe Panorama”. 2026. Vol. 13. No. 5. Pp. 1530–1550. (In Eng.). DOI: 10.51943/3135-8055_2026_13_5_1530-1550

АБАТ-БАЙТАҚ КЕСЕНЕСІ БАТЫС ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ (ОЙЫЛ-ҚОБДА ЖЕРГІЛІКТІ МИКРОАЙМАҒЫ) АЛТЫН ОРДА (ЖОШЫ ҰЛЫСЫ) ДӘУІРІНІҢ БІРЕГЕЙ ЕСКЕРТКІШІ РЕТІНДЕ

Бекназаров Рахым Ағыбайұлы ¹, Бисембаев Арман Ауғанұлы ², Хаванский Алексей Иванович ³

¹Қ. Жұбанов атындағы Ақтөбе өңірлік университеті
(Жұбановтар көшесі, 263, 030000, Ақтөбе, Қазақстан Республикасы)
Проректор, тарих ғылымдарының докторы, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1033-9660>. E-mail: r.beknazarov@gmail.com

²Ә. Х. Марғұлан атындағы Археология институты
(Достық даңғылы, 44, 050000, Алматы, Қазақстан Республикасы)
Жетекші ғылыми қызметкер, тарих ғылымдарының кандидаты, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4022-9910>. E-mail: abissembaev@mail.ru

³Н. Э. Бауман атындағы Мәскеу мемлекеттік техникалық университеті
(2-ші Бауман көшесі, 5, 105005, Мәскеу, Ресей)
Тарих ғылымдарының кандидаты, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8502-8883>. E-mail: arkaim01@yandex.ru

© Ш. Ш. Уәлиханов атындағы ТЭИ, 2026

© Бекназаров Р., Бисембаев А., Хаванский А., 2026

Аңдатпа. *Kipicne.* Мақала Ақтөбе облысындағы Жошы ұлысы дәуірінің ескерткіштеріне қатысты соңғы зерттеулерге арналған. Далалық жұмыстар Абат-Байтақ кесенесі мен оның маңында жүргізілді. Мұндағы монументалды жерлеу сәулеті көшпелі элитаның және жақын маңдағы отырықшы қоныстардың болуымен байланысты қарастырылады. *Мақсаты мен міндеттері.* Зерттеудің мақсаты — Ойыл-Қобда жергілікті микроаймағындағы кесене мен оның айналасындағы қоныстарды зерделеп, жерлеу ескерткіштері, қоныстар және жерлеу ғұрпындағы өзгерістер арасындағы байланысты анықтау. *Материалдар мен әдістер.* Зерттеу XIX ғасырдың екінші жартысынан бүгінге дейін жинақталған материалдарды өңдеу мен талдауды, перспективалы учаскелерді анықтауға бағытталған археологиялық барлауды және барлау қазбаларын қамтиды. Абат-Байтақ кесенесі мен оның маңындағы ескерткіштердің, Көптам қорымы мен қонысының материалдары, сондай-ақ Қызылтам кесенесіне қатысты салыстырмалы деректер пайдаланылды. *Нәтижелер.* Ескерткіштерден исламдық жерлеу ғұрпының біртіндеп таралуы және жерлеу мүкәммалының құрамы мен типологиясының бірізденуі байқалады. Бұл құбылыс «империялық» стиль ретінде сипатталады. Қоныстардың, ирригациялық құрылыстардың қалдықтары мен монументалды сәулет көшпелі және

отырықшы қауымдардың өзара байланысын көрсетеді. *Қорытынды.* XIV ғасырдың ортасынан бастап зерттелген жерлеу дәстүрлерінде исламдану белгілері айқындала түскен: мәйітті кебінге орау, жүзін Меккеге қаратып жерлеу, жерлеу мүкәммалының азаюы немесе мүлде болмауы. Өзге жерлеулерде бұрынғы ғұрыптық белгілер сақталған. Кейбір археологиялық кешендер халықтың қоныс аударғанын, соның ішінде Оңтүстік Сібірмен ықтимал байланыстарын болжауға мүмкіндік береді.

Түйін сөздер: Жошы ұлысы; жерлеу ғұрпы; Алтын Орда; көшпелі топтар; моңғолдар; қыпшақтар; исламдану

Алғыс. Мақала Қазақстан Республикасы Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігі Ғылым комитетінің 2025–2027 жылдарға арналған гранттық қаржыландыруы аясында дайындалды. Жобаның ЖТН: AP26103583.

Дәйексөз үшін: Бекназаров Р.А., Бисембаев А.А., Хаванский А.И. Абат-Байтақ кесенесі Батыс Қазақстандағы (Ойыл-Қобда жергілікті микроаймағы) Алтын Орда (Жошы ұлысы) дәуірінің бірегей ескерткіші ретінде // Asian Journal “Steppe Panorama”. 2026. Т. 13. № 5. 1530–1550 бб. (Ағыл.). DOI: 10.51943/3135-8055_2026_13_5_1530-1550

МАВЗОЛЕЙ АБАТ-БАЙТАК КАК УНИКАЛЬНЫЙ ПАМЯТНИК ЭПОХИ ЗОЛОТОЙ ОРДЫ (УЛУСА ДЖУЧИ) В ЗАПАДНОМ КАЗАХСТАНЕ (УИЛО-КОБДИНСКОМ ЛОКАЛЬНОМ МИКРОРАЙОНЕ)

Бекназаров Рахым Агибаевич¹, Бисембаев Арман Ауганович², Хаванский Алексей Иванович³

¹Актюбинский региональный университет им. К. Жубанова
(ул. Бр. Жубановых, 263, 030000, Актөбе, Республика Казахстан)
Проректор, доктор исторических наук, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1033-9660>. E-mail: r.beknazarov@gmail.com

²Институт археологии им. А. Х. Маргулана
(пр. Достык, 44, 050000, Алматы, Республика Казахстан)
Ведущий научный сотрудник, кандидат исторических наук, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4022-9910>. E-mail: abissembaev@mail.ru

³Московский государственный технический университет им. Н. Э. Баумана
(ул. 2-я Бауманская, 5, 105005, Москва, Россия)
Кандидат исторических наук, доцент
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8502-8883>. E-mail: arkaim01@yandex.ru

© ИИЭ имени Ч. Ч. Валиханова, 2026

© Бекназаров Р., Бисембаев А., Хаванский А., 2026

Аннотация. *Введение.* Статья посвящена последним исследованиям памятников эпохи Улуса Джучи на территории Актюбинской области. Работы проводились в окрестностях мавзолея Абат-Байтақ, где монументальная погребальная архитектура связана с присутствием кочевой элиты и близлежащими памятниками оседлого населения. *Цель и задачи.* Цель исследования — изучить мавзолей и его поселенческую округу в Уило-Кобдинском локальном микрорайоне и рассмотреть взаимосвязь погребальных памятников, поселений и изменений погребального обряда. *Материалы и методы.* Исследование включает обработку и анализ материалов, полученных со второй половины XIX века по настоящее время, археологические разведки для выявления перспективных участков и рекогносцировочные раскопки. Используются материалы мавзолея Абат-Байтақ и его окрестностей, некрополя и поселения Коптам, а также сравнительные данные по мавзолею Кызылтам. *Результаты.* На памятниках прослеживаются

постепенное распространение исламского погребального обряда и унификация состава и типологии погребального инвентаря, характеризующаяся как «имперский» стиль. Остатки поселений, ирригационных сооружений и монументальная архитектура свидетельствуют о взаимодействии кочевых и оседлых сообществ. *Заключение.* С середины XIV века в изученных погребальных традициях всё явственнее проявляются признаки исламизации: захоронение в саване, ориентация лица умершего в сторону Мекки, сокращение или отсутствие инвентаря. В других погребениях сохранялись более ранние обрядовые черты. Ряд археологических комплексов также позволяет предполагать перемещения населения, в том числе связи с Южной Сибирью.

Ключевые слова: Улус Джучи; погребальный обряд; Золотая Орда; кочевые группы; монголы; кыпчаки; исламизация.

Благодарность. Статья подготовлена в рамках грантового финансирования Комитета науки МНВО РК на 2025–2027 годы. ИРН проекта: AP26103583.

Для цитирования: Бекназаров Р.А., Бисембаев А.А., Хаванский А.И. Мавзолей Абат-Байтак как уникальный памятник эпохи Золотой Орды (Улуса Джучи) в Западном Казахстане (Уило-Кобдинском локальном микрорайоне) // Asian Journal “Steppe Panorama”. 2026. Т. 13. № 5. С. 1530–1550. (На Англ.). DOI: 10.51943/3135-8055_2026_13_5_1530-1550

Introduction

A debate has arisen among the modern Turkic-speaking states of the post-Soviet space over which should be considered the direct successor to the Golden Horde. Periods of economic instability and the desire to formulate ideological concepts that unite the population serve as catalysts for works in the “folk history” genre. Direct archaeological evidence can help provide a sound basis for assessment. The aim of this study is to examine the Abat-Baytak mausoleum and its surrounding settlement area in the Aktobe Region of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a monument associated with the nomadic elite and one of the centres of the Ulus of Jochi (the Golden Horde).

Archaeological sites of the Ulus of Jochi period (thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) in Kazakhstan significantly outnumber those of the preceding Kipchak period (eleventh–early thirteenth centuries). The earlier Oghuz-Pecheneg period (eighth–early eleventh centuries) was characterised by conflicts involving the Pechenegs and Oghuz, as well as Old Rus', Hungarian and Turkic political formations, including the Khazar Khaganate and Volga Bulgaria.

The Aktobe Region, which comprises a significant part of the larger region of Western Kazakhstan, is one such region with distinctive monuments from the medieval era. The region extends for approximately 800 km in a north-south direction and comprises several natural-geographical zones: forest-steppe, steppe, desert and semi-desert. The presence of these zones, the state of the water network, the temperature regime, and the richness of the flora and fauna collectively determine the suitability of the ecological niche for human communities and thus influence the number, nature and distribution of archaeological sites from various eras.

The Aktobe Region, bordered to the north by a major river – the Ural – and bisected from south to north by its largest left-bank tributary, the Ilek, was a well-settled area during the Middle Ages. The vast territory stretching from the Caspian Lowland in the west, the Turan Depression in the south-east, the Ustyurt Plateau in the south, and the Ural River valley in the north encompasses the range of geographical zones mentioned above. A desert zone, in the form of the Big and Small Barsuk sand dunes, is found in the Northern Aral region. The northern part of the region under consideration is occupied by the forest-steppe: small in area, with no clearly defined southern boundary, and extending into the steppe in the form of separate islands. A relict forest area, Urkach (Orkash), with a concentration of forest patches, extends deep into the steppe, in the area of the Ilek, Emba and Or river basins (Chibilev, 1987: 86–103).

From a geographical perspective, the term “Aral-Mugalzhar Region” applies to the Aktobe Region, with its extensive river network, the Mugalzhar mountain range, the relict sands of Orkash and Barkyn, the massifs of the Barsuks Deserts, and the Nurin floodplains. The richness and diversity of geographical niches suggest a wide range of archaeological sites, as evidenced not only by existing,

discovered and studied sites, but also by those that remain poorly understood, information on which is derived from chance finds and collections. A clear division into four geographical micro-regions can be traced, linked to the river network – the primary aspect of life support throughout all periods of human history. River courses also served as factors in the demarcation of nomadic territories, to some extent defining the boundaries of ethnic and political groups.

The main river of the Northern Aral (Aktobe Region) – the Ilel, together with its tributaries – flows northwards, gradually veering westwards towards its confluence with the Ural. The Ilel basin, together with its tributaries, constitutes the first micro-region. The largest number of Early Iron Age sites are concentrated in the Ilel basin, which is explainable from a physical-geographical perspective. The Ilel is a major, left-bank tributary of the Urals, carrying its waters along a meridian; thus, it is ideally suited for nomadic movements from north to south along its banks. It is full-flowing and has rich tributaries of its own, capable of supporting the livelihoods of large pastoralist communities.

The second micro-region – the Uil-Kobda micro-region, situated in the west – encompasses two administrative districts of the Aktobe Region, Kobda and Uil, as well as the northern part of the Baiganin District. The Kobda River, also known as Great Kobda, flows in a meridional direction, whilst the Uil flows largely in a latitudinal direction; however, on the whole they form a single geographical complex, as confirmed by ethnographic data.

The third micro-region, the Temir-Emben micro-region, is situated in the central part of the Aktobe Region, in its southern half. The presence of contract territories belonging to oil-producing companies presents difficulties. The territory is rich in historical monuments from various eras and covers the areas of the Mugalzhar, Temir and the northern part of the Shalkar districts. The micro-region is bisected by the Mugalzhar Mountains, which stretch from north to south. This extension of the Ural Mountains is, in modern geographical tradition, designated as the conventional boundary between Europe and Asia. Although the mountains themselves do not constitute an insurmountable obstacle, certain differences can be observed between the eastern and western parts of the micro-region, both in terms of the monuments and the natural features. This factor may account for the identification of local variants within the group of monuments under study.

The fourth micro-region is designated as the Or-Irgiz micro-region and covers the south-eastern part of the Aktobe Region, extending across the territory of the present-day Irgiz, Khromtau and Aitekebi districts. Like the Uil-Kobda micro-region, this micro-region is characterised by a transition from steppe to semi-desert, but it also comprises the Eastern Mugalzhar, extending to the Nura floodplains (Akhatov, Bisembaev, 2015: 503–505).

The Great Kobda basin covers the western part of the Aktobe Region. This watercourse originates in the western spurs of the Mugalzhar Mountains, flows across the Sub-Ural Plateau, almost parallel to the middle Ilel, into which it flows at the border with the Orenburg Region of Russia in the north-western direction. It provides a waterway, together with its tributaries, that is well-suited to north-south travel. This feature, combined with the rich steppes of feather grass on both banks, presents a highly favourable ecological niche for the habitation of ancient communities across various historical periods. A preliminary analysis of the archaeological and ethnographic sites in the Kobda District reveals the richness and diversity of its cultural and historical heritage.

The Kobda River basin demonstrates a close connection with the Uil River basin in the western part of the Aktobe Region, evidenced by the similarity of the archaeological sites. This similarity creates a local concentration of such sites, spanning a variety of eras. This is also confirmed ethnographically: on both banks of the rivers lie the necropolises of the same Kazakh clans of the Junior Zhuz (jüz), who roamed the Kobda and Uil regions. In a broader geographical context, the Uil-Kobda micro-region forms part of the Aral-Caspian historical and cultural region, which encompasses the Turan Plain, the Caspian Lowlands, the Mugalzhar, Mangistau and Ustyurt. Administratively, it forms part of Western Kazakhstan, which comprises four major regions: Aktobe, West Kazakhstan, Mangistau and Atyrau. This is the central zone of the Eurasian continent and the Steppe Belt. Such a geographical setting inevitably influences the richness and diversity of the local historical and cultural heritage.

Materials and methods

Research into monuments from the High and Late Middle Ages in the Aktobe Region was conducted along three main lines: the processing and analysis of existing materials obtained from studies carried out across the region from the second half of the XIX century to the present day; the conduct of exploratory work to identify the most promising areas for the location of Golden Horde monuments; and reconnaissance excavations.

Archaeological sites dating from the period of the Ulus of Jochi or the Golden Horde (thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) are more numerous in Kazakhstan than those from the preceding period: the pre-Mongol, Kipchak period, spanning the mid-XI to the early XIII centuries. The earlier Oghuz-Pecheneg period in the steppe, dating from the eighth to the early eleventh century, has been studied in connection with conflicts between the Pechenegs and Oghuz, the involvement of Hungarian groups, and relations with the Khazar Khaganate, Volga Bulgaria and Kievan Rus' (Artamonov, 1962: 352–419; Pletneva, 1958). Archaeological sites from the Kipchak, pre-Mongol period – the mid-XI to early XIII centuries – which are well documented in the literature, are for the most part located in the Northern Black Sea region. Their origins are linked to the western group of the Kipchaks, known in Russian chronicles as the Cumans. In Kazakhstan, sites from this period are very limited, and their discovery is largely fortuitous, as the vast majority of burials are situated within large burial mounds dating from the Bronze Age or the Early Iron Age (Bisembaev et al., 2006: 409–413). The scarcity of sites, which often lack their own burial mounds and are instead “embedded” within mounds of earlier periods, is likely due to the “depopulation” of the steppe in the early centuries of the second millennium and the general instability of the situation, which forced the population to “conceal” their burials. This aspect was most likely linked to a complex set of causes, the main ones being environmental and political factors, which were interconnected. The periodically alternating phases of aridity (drying) and humidity (moistening) in the steppe had a significant impact on such a finely tuned economic mechanism as nomadic pastoralism. The vast steppe belt stretching from the Danube to Ordos, spanning more than ten thousand kilometres, exhibits varying conditions along its entire length. In the western part, it encompasses the naturally fertile steppes of southern Ukraine, the steppe region of Crimea, and the Northern Ciscaucasia. In the central part, it comprises the Southern Urals and Western Kazakhstan; to the east, it extends from Sary-Arka to the borders of Southern Siberia, Transbaikalia and Western Mongolia. Within this distinctive natural and climatic region, a cultural and historical unity emerged amongst the nomadic peoples, a pattern that recurred from the Early Iron Age, and continued into the Hunnic and Turkic eras. The settlement of the steppes, which had begun in economic terms as far back as the Bronze Age, was actively continued by nomadic populations in the Middle Ages.

Archaeological sites from the Golden Horde period in the steppe zone are divided into two main categories: burial and settlement sites. This fact was noted by the eminent researcher of nomadic antiquities, G. A. Fedorov-Davydov, who emphasised that this was an artificial coexistence between the nomadic steppe and the city, sustained by the unifying force of the despotic authority that khans possessed (Fedorov-Davydov, 1976: 114).

Results

Abat-Baytak mausoleum and its chronology

In the picturesque Beskopa tract, on the left bank of the Great Kobda, a major tributary of the Ile River, stands the majestic mausoleum of Abat-Baytak, dating from the Golden Horde era (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Abat-Baytak mausoleum before restoration. Photograph from the collections of the Centre for Preservation, Research and Restoration of the Aktobe Region Department of Culture.

In this part of the Aktobe Region, numerous archaeological sites from various periods are concentrated around the waterways of the Kobda River basin and its tributaries. The main north-south orientation, together with the Ilek River, makes this waterway particularly attractive for a nomadic way of life. The presence of this well-preserved archaeological and architectural monument has made this place a sacred site for Kazakhs not only from the neighbouring areas but also from the entire West Kazakhstan region.

The Abat-Baytak Mausoleum, which holds not only archaeological and historical but also sacred significance, is situated in the Great Kobda river basin. Its location is closely linked to the history of the nomadic tribes that played a significant role within the Ulus of Jochi. The name of the river, Great Kobda, may be related to a hydronym in Western Mongolia, where the Kobdo River flows (Bol'shoi slovar'..., 2003: 311–312). In the basin of the Great Kobda River, archaeologists have discovered the remains of late medieval settlements, as well as numerous fragments of saqiya vessels used for drawing water. Various small funerary structures are situated around the mausoleum of Abat-Baytak. They date from the Golden Horde period. However, research into the area surrounding the mausoleum is hampered by the rapid expansion of the modern cemetery, which encroaches upon the site of the more ancient burials and often covers them over.

Records of the Abat-Baytak mausoleum date back to the XVIII century. P. I. Rychkov, author of “Topography of Orenburg”, refers to the monument as “Baytak”, noting that it was first depicted in a drawing by A. I. Rigelman. The author notes that “along the river known as Great Kobda, near the Baytak tract, there are signs of an ancient town, where dug canals, arable fields and vegetable gardens are still visible to this day. There is also an ancient building with vaults...” (Rychkov, 1887: 276).

The mausoleum had long attracted the attention of J. A. Castagne, an enthusiast of the Orenburg Regional Archaeological Society (ORAS), who included a description of this site in his seminal work “Antiquities of the Kyrgyz Steppe and the Orenburg Region”. In this book, the mausoleum is mentioned alongside famous sites such as the Balgasyn Tower and the Kyzyl-Tam mausoleum on the Kargala River, also known as the “twin” of Baytak (Kastan'e, 1910: 73–75; Kastan'e, 1911: 91–92). In the late twentieth century, discussion of this monument focused largely on its architectural and planning aspects (Adzhigaliev, 1983; Mendikulov, 1987) (Fig. 2). During this period, the first steps were taken towards its restoration, which involved reinforcing the collapsed portal with modern brickwork set on a foundation of modern cement. However, the accelerated destructive processes that

soon began at the interface between ancient and modern technologies forced the restoration efforts to be halted until the beginning of the XXI century. In 2004, as part of the “Cultural Heritage” programme, comprehensive work was carried out, including both excavations and restoration activities, which led to both positive and negative consequences in terms of drawing attention to this mausoleum.

The mausoleum is included in the State List of Historical and Cultural Monuments of National Significance approved by Order No. 318-HK of the Minister of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated 11 July 2025.



Fig. 2. Abat-Baytak mausoleum after restoration.

In the context of this study, the attempts at cultural and chronological interpretation previously undertaken by researchers of the mausoleum are of greater significance. For instance, the architect M. Mendikulov dated its construction to the pre-Mongol period, i.e. the first quarter of the XIII century, correctly suggesting, on the whole, that its architectural principles had Khorezmian roots (Mendikulov, 1987: 46). S. I. Adzhigaliev (now known as S. E. Azhigali) was categorical in his assessment, dating the mausoleum to the turn of the XIV–XV centuries and even to the early XV century (Adzhigaliev, 1983: 58–59). E. A. Smagulov, who carried out excavations inside Abat-Baytak in 2004, suggests that the construction of the mausoleum, as well as similar structures at the Zhayik settlement in the West Kazakhstan Region, took place in the first half of the XIV century, during the reign of Khan Uzbek, when Islam became the state religion (Smagulov, 2006: 133–135). An interesting artefact was recovered from the main burial: a staff finial, fashioned in the shape of a six-flanged mace (Fig. 3). In addition to this artefact, iron coffin fittings and remnants of clothing were found.



Fig. 3. Iron finial from the Abat-Baytak mausoleum.

The devastating campaigns waged by Timur in the late fourteenth century severely affected the Golden Horde and displaced part of its population. This context is relevant to the dating of monumental construction, but does not by itself establish the date of Abat-Baytak. Its architectural similarity to the Trans-Ural mausoleum of Kesene, or the “Tamerlane Tower”, in the Varnensky District of the Chelyabinsk Region, dated by the cited researchers to the first half of the fourteenth century, supports a comparative assessment (Botalov, Malamud, 2001: 162–167). Taken together, the published datings remain divergent, and a more precise chronology requires further evidence.

The mace head is currently housed in the repository of the West Kazakhstan Regional Museum of History and Local Lore.

The active engagement of the public and a large-scale media campaign at the turn of the century, on the one hand, brought this religious monument out of obscurity; on the other, some damage was sustained. At present, on the northern side, the modern cemetery has encroached almost right up to the walls of the mausoleum, making it impossible to obtain authentic photographs from the north. Virtually all photographs taken since the restoration have been taken from the south-west, from the site of the late medieval necropolis that sprang up almost immediately following the mausoleum, from where the modern graves, clad in white silicate brick, are not visible. An example of the rapid emergence of a necropolis around its patron from ethnographic times is “Khan Molasy”, a large modern burial ground that sprang up around the site of the presumed burial of Abulkhair Khan, ruler of the Junior Zhuz, in the mid-XVIII century. This necropolis also expanded southwards from the main burial site.

The preceding discussion suggests the following conclusions:

the mausoleum belongs to the medieval architectural tradition of the Golden Horde, although its precise date remains debated;

its dating should be considered alongside regional evidence for Islamisation, without assuming that the adoption of Islam occurred simultaneously across the entire population;

the location of the mausoleum marks the ancestral grazing grounds of an elite group within the ulus system of the western wing of the Ulus of Jochi (just as Kesene denotes an elite group within the Ulus of Shibani in the Trans-Ural region);

the construction of the mausoleum led to the formation of a three-layered (chronologically) and three-part necropolis around it – Late Medieval to the south, Early Modern to the west and Modern to the north;

given the scale and significance of the site, labour may have been drawn not only from the local community but also from more distant settlements, possibly including Koptam (Bisembaev et al., 2024);

despite significant human impact in the twentieth century, traces of settlement and brick production may survive in the surrounding area;

the construction of such a complex implies access to specialised architectural knowledge and resources; settlement sites in its vicinity may help identify the communities involved.

The main artefact from the primary burial chamber

In the central grave (burial No. 1), the incomplete skeleton of a mature adult male was identified. At the bottom of the pit, amongst decayed wood, iron components (plates, brackets, angle irons) from the coffin's fastenings were uncovered. Among these parts, an iron six-flanged mace head was discovered, featuring a ribbed head and a round socket for the handle. Its reported total height is 9.5 cm, and the diameter of the socket is 2.6 cm (Smagulov, 2004: 40). Our aim is to provide a detailed description and analysis of this artefact.

Undoubtedly, this is a pommel for a wooden handle. Unfortunately, the burial had been looted, so no traces of the original position of the shaft have survived. The pommel is cast in one piece from high-quality iron; it was originally well-finished and polished on the outer surface (which undoubtedly contributed to its better preservation from rust within the grave). It consists of a central, main biconical section, the surface of which is divided into six equal segments (a six-segment design) by triangular recesses and grooves. The apexes of the cones, which are paired with their wide sections facing each other, are beveled. On one side of the bicone, two paired round washers are cast in a stepped arrangement, upon which, in turn, a small, four-sided bipyramidal cap is mounted. On the opposite side of the finial, a cylindrical hollow sleeve is cast. Overall, the artefact is in good condition, apart from a shallow layer of rust covering the entire surface of the discovery.

What could this have been? – A staff? A sceptre? A rod? Whichever interpretation is true, it is clear that this object from the central grave of the Abat-Baytak mausoleum was not placed there by chance and represents one of the symbols of the buried individual's authority and honour. In various religious and mythological traditions, staffs and sceptres were associated with divine power, creation and fertility. The scope of use for staffs is very broad. In particular, J. J. Frazer, in his work 'The Golden Bough', notes that 'after the autumnal equinox, the Egyptians celebrated a festival known as "the birth of the solar staff"'. It was believed that as sunlight and warmth waned with each passing day, the sun felt the need to lean on a staff' (Frezer, 1980: 88). In many world mythologies, the staff (sceptre) is associated with the symbol of the creation of the world and fertility, and is sometimes seen as a link between the earthly world, the cosmos and the afterlife (refer to the parallels with the symbol of the tree – the Bayterek of Turkic mythology!). In the biblical narrative, the prophet Moses (Musa, Moshe) used a staff when he parted the sea with it and brought water from a rock during his wanderings in the desert. Closer to our region, objects serving as staffs or staff finials, dating back to the Neolithic era, were crafted from stone and, evidently, from bone. The Bronze Age saw the emergence of so-called animalistic sculpture, known chiefly in Central Kazakhstan. Examples of this often echo the compositional features of small-scale anthropomorphic sculpture – such as, for example, the stone staff from Semey (Semipalatinsk), a pestle with a horse's head depicted with a high-raised mane, and a stone depiction of a camel's head, all cited by Academician A. H. Margulan in his work. Similar stylistic features in the depiction of the horse's head can also be observed on stone finials from the Novo-Orsk region (Beknazarov, 2005: 16–19).

It is also necessary to mention that artefacts similar to our finial are frequently found in rich Scythian burial mounds; these are “bronze and iron objects intended for attachment to a shaft, usually fitted with slotted bells or suspended bells and decorated at the top with a zoomorphic or – less commonly – anthropomorphic image and a geometric symbol” (Perevodchikova, Raevskii, 1981: 42). What is particularly interesting is that a distinctive feature of Scythian artefacts is the detailing of fluted elements on the body of the pommel, similar to our artefact. The closest parallels can also be found among the Oghuz, where “the elders would elect a king by throwing their staffs upwards (towards the gods); the one whose staff landed in the centre of a circle drawn on the ground was therefore made ruler” (Basilov, 1992: 29).

By the XIV–XV centuries, during the Golden Horde period, most of the territory of Western Kazakhstan had come under the influence of Islam, in particular one of its branches – Sufism, a mystical and ascetic tradition within Islam (Azhigali, 2000: 84–94). The ardent preachers of this doctrine were called dervishes; new members were admitted to their ranks through a special initiation rite and were presented with the following attributes: a cloak (khirqa), a rug (serzhade), the order’s banner (aleem), a drum (tabla or tabl), a headdress or crown (taje) and a staff (asa) (Trimingem, 1989: 155).

In this regard, we would like to focus on the staff of a prominent preacher of Sufi Islam in Western Kazakhstan during the XVIII–XIX centuries: Beket Myrzaguly (Beket-Ata). The staff is made of wrought steel, with a square cross-section and a cylindrical pommel; steel loops are forged onto the main shaft in two places. Why does the staff have these loops? According to ethnographic evidence, this iron object was not intended as a walking aid; on the contrary, its owner carried it on his back in a case, as indicated by the elaborate design of the loops and the sharp lower end.

The ritual use of Beket-Ata’s iron staff, known as “kök asa”, raises a question about its function beyond that of a walking aid. In the ethnographic interpretation discussed here, it was used in rituals associated with ancestral spirits (aruaq). The element “kök” can mean “blue” or “sky”. The noun “asa” (“staff”) should be distinguished from the intensifying adverb “asa” (“very”, “extremely”) (Makhmudov, Musabaev, 1987: 41). The etymology of the ritual term requires a separate linguistic analysis.

The main artefact discovered in the central burial chamber of the Abat-Baytak mausoleum was long regarded as the pommel of a staff (sceptre) belonging to a prominent figure of the Kazakh-Nogai period in the West Kazakh steppe, who adhered to Islam (burial in a sagan, westward orientation, face turned towards the Qibla, etc.) and was evidently of the Sufi tradition of the late medieval period.

However, the paper by the renowned Mongolian archaeologist Tsagaan Turbat, “Elite Burials from the Mongol Period in Eastern Mongolia”, which he presented at the International Symposium “The Golden Horde as a Model of Steppe Civilisation: History, Archaeology, Culture, Identity”, held in Astana on 19–20 May 2026 under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, introduces significant revisions to the aforementioned viewpoint. A miniature from a medieval manuscript clearly illustrates the purpose of this object as, first and foremost, a sceptre, and, probably, as a mace or “six-pointed club” (Fig. 4). The specimen from Abat-Baytak has a very small hole for the handle, which creates a risk of breakage when blocking a blow. Therefore, the former purpose is the most likely. If, according to the Mongolian archaeologist’s dating, his specimens date from the XIII century, whilst the date of Abat-Baytak remains debated, then the possibility that such an object was passed down through generations should be considered. Alternatively, it may have been crafted as a marker of membership within the elite.



Fig. 4. Slide from Tsagaan Turbat's presentation "Elite Burials from the Mongol Period in Eastern Mongolia", delivered at the International Symposium "The Golden Horde as a Model of Steppe Civilisation: History, Archaeology, Culture, Identity", Astana, 19–20 May 2026.

The settlement area surrounding the mausoleum

The aura of legend surrounding the mausoleum should not hinder scientific research. For instance, oral folk tradition links the mausoleum to the burial site of Abat, son of Asan "Kaigy", a philosopher of the turn of the XIV–XV centuries. The prefix "Baytak", in this case meaning "broad" or "universal", is intended to explain the rapid construction of this structure (according to legend, in three days; and, again according to legend, the use of chopped horsehair and birds' eggs in the moulding mixture).

One of the sites under investigation in the vicinity of Abat-Baytak is the settlement of Kosotkel, which appears to have been occupied by a sedentary population, possibly including migrants from Central Asia. They may subsequently have been joined by groups of impoverished nomads, cut off from their traditional nomadic way of life due to a shortage of livestock and the inability to migrate. The settlement is situated on the right bank of the Great Kobda River, opposite the modern village of Baytak (formerly known as Ropovka) (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Topographic map of the Baytak settlement.

In 2006 and 2023, excavations and exploratory pits were carried out on the site of the settlement. The largest of these measured 7×7 m and 10×5.5 m. These excavations were conducted with the aim of studying the layout of the residential complex, its architectural features and overall planning. The remains of Structure No. 1 consist of a small, almost square mound measuring 19×18.50 m, with clearly defined boundaries in the form of trenches up to 0.4 m deep. To the south-east, the structure adjoins a larger and probably later structure. The excavation was carried out in the south-eastern part, covering a corner of the building and the space between dwellings. During the work, the structure of a wall built of unfired bricks was revealed. The space between the dwellings presumably served a drainage function. The stratigraphy of this structure was characterised by complex interactions between hydrological, aeolian and anthropogenic factors.

The remains of Structure No. 2 consist of a square-shaped elevation measuring 39×38 m, with clearly defined boundaries marked by trenches up to 0.6 m deep. Excavations were carried out in the north-western part, covering the entrance and part of the external drainage trench. The remains of Structure No. 3 are characterised by a complex shape: in the eastern part they are oval, whilst in the western part they are square. The overall dimensions are 40×20 m, also bounded by trenches up to 0.6 m deep. Here, the excavations were concentrated in the central part, extending to the inner wall.

The dwellings at the Kosotkel settlement were built exclusively from unfired bricks. No kilns or fragments of finished products were found, suggesting that the bricks for the Abat-Baytak mausoleum were produced and fired elsewhere. This points to the need to commence new exploratory work to identify settlement sites around the Abat-Baytak mausoleum.

For instance, targeted exploratory work along the tributaries of the Uil and Kobda rivers led to the discovery of the large Koptam necropolis, situated on top of a former settlement dating from the era of the Ulus of Jochi. The Koptam necropolis and settlement are situated 12.5 kilometres south-west of the village of Taskop in the Temir District of the Aktobe Region, on both banks of a major tributary of the Ashchiuil. The total distance as the crow flies from Abat-Baytak is just over 100 km. A topographical survey was carried out on the main group of mausoleums, and a detailed plan of the layout of the sites and irrigation structures was drawn up.

Further comprehensive archaeological, ethnographic, cultural studies and natural science research should provide the basis for extensive cultural and historical reconstructions. The aim is to obtain an objective picture of the origins and functioning of this religious monument in Western Kazakhstan – the Abat-Baytak mausoleum and necropolis – and to clarify its role and significance in the history of the Ulus of Jochi.

Between 2025 and 2026, exploratory excavations were carried out at two large settlement complexes on the right and left banks of the Kobda River. On the right bank lies the Bulak settlement complex, covering an area of approximately 150 hectares and consisting of two blocks. It is characterised by thick layers of animal bone ash, finds of red-clay pottery, and fragments of metal artefacts.

The Baytak settlement complex is situated on the left bank of the Kobda River, in the immediate vicinity of the mausoleum itself. It consists of three separate blocks, bounded by silted-up ditches and the ruined remains of walls. The complex extends in a north-south direction. The smaller section, designated by the letter A, is situated to the south, adjacent to a modern farm; further north lies section B, which is larger in area, and the northernmost section, C. The total area of the settlement complex exceeds 200 hectares.

Like the Bulak settlement complex, it contains deposits of ash, pottery and fragments of metal artefacts. Thus, material has been obtained at the intersection of archaeology and ethnography—taking into account the extensive necropolis surrounding the mausoleum—which will allow us to take a fresh look at the issue of the ethnogenesis of the Kazakh people, the initial stage of which took place in the Ulus of Jochi.

Consequently, the settlements of Kosotkel, Baytak and Bulak can be linked to the builders of the mausoleum or to those who served the social elite of the local nobility. At the same time, it has become clear that a whole “cluster” of such settlements was in operation, possibly each with its own economic specialisation. The main focus of further research should be on a comprehensive archaeological and ethnographic study of not only the Abat-Baytak mausoleum and its immediate surroundings, but also the wider area within the Uil-Kobda local micro-region and neighbouring territories. The comprehensive nature and interdisciplinary approach to the study of the material and spiritual monuments of this chronological and ethnographic period will enable a systematic reconstruction of the ethno-cultural, social and demographic processes, issues of clan settlement, centres of spiritual life and much more in the region.

The most thorough systematisation of funerary monuments, dating back to XIII and XIV centuries, has been carried out in Western Kazakhstan, where systematic research has been conducted over the last thirty years and the findings of previous years’ work have been summarised (Bisembaev, 2010: 121–180; Maryksin, 2012: 243–248).

Overall, across the Eurasian steppe belt stretching from the Altai Mountains to the lower reaches of the Danube, there are approximately 3,000 burials dating from the Golden Horde period, more than half of which are those of Golden Horde Muslims (Ivanov, 2015: 17). The highest concentration of these is found in the administrative centre of the Golden Horde – the Middle and Lower Volga regions. Next come the neighbouring regions of the Southern Urals and the Southern Trans-Urals.

Monuments from the second half of the XI to the XIV centuries have been the most extensively studied. This phenomenon can be explained by the abundance of material from this period, the presence of a significant number of striking monuments with a wide range of parallels, and the emergence of large series of similar monuments in major burial grounds. There are far fewer plundered burials. All this points to a significant stabilisation of the situation in the steppe during the period under consideration. In a number of burial grounds that were in use for a long period, common, characteristic features emerge, indicating that people who were close relatives were buried at these sites. The presence of burial grounds containing several graves of the same type allows such groups of burial mounds to be compared with one another on the basis of a number of characteristics, revealing certain differences.

The direction in which a burial is oriented is an important part of the funeral ritual. It reflects religious prescriptions, including the Islamic requirement that the face of the deceased be directed towards Mecca, and may also provide information about the cultural traditions of pre-Islamic communities. For instance, a westward orientation has been associated with pre-Mongol Kipchak groups. The emergence of north-facing burials has been interpreted as a possible marker of groups arriving from the east. A similar pattern is clearly evident in the first centuries AD, indicating the

penetration of Hunnic groups into Alani territory. Overall, the orientation of the skeletons varies – westward, southward with deviations to the east or west, and north-eastward; north-westward and eastward orientations are represented in small numbers. Northward-facing burials account for one-tenth of the total, which does not contradict the overall picture. This is further reinforced by the recent research in Ulytau, a sacred centre of the Middle Ages, revealing a difference in the location of north-facing burials, which are situated in entirely different topographical niches to the sites from the preceding period of the Kazakh steppes (Usmanova et al., 2020: 184–217).

Regional archaeological context

When discussing promising areas for further research, it is worth noting the presence within the Aktobe Region of large mausoleums dating from the Golden Horde period – Abat-Baytak, Kyzyltam and Balgasyn – which served as markers indicating the locations of large nomadic groups during the late medieval period. The construction of such grandiose monuments would not have been possible without a significant concentration of human resources, the presence of sedentary agricultural communities knowledgeable in architectural techniques and methods, and the capacity to produce large quantities of fired bricks.

The dense arrangement of the mausoleums, built from both unfired and fired bricks of the Golden Horde standard size ($25 \times 25 \times 5$ cm), suggests that a brick-firing complex may be discovered in the future. The bricks were reused in the mausoleums. They often bear tamga marks in the form of various lines and spiral patterns, made with the fingers whilst the bricks were still wet. Reconnaissance excavations revealed original architectural techniques used in the construction of these structures. The necropolis, which overlays the former residential structures, is situated on both banks of the Ashchiuil River and its small tributaries. Furthermore, the entire area is covered by artificial canals, water catchments and drainage channels, forming a dense network of irrigation structures erected during the settlement's period of active use. Preliminary studies have demonstrated the potential for further research into this settlement and its surroundings. Unfortunately, research, as before, remains sporadic and fragmentary. Recent specialised studies have also examined major monuments of this period, including the Jochi Mausoleum (Usmanova et al., 2022: 74–80).

The chronological group of monuments from the High and Late Middle Ages is highly representative. The total volume of material is quite sufficient for cartographic and other analyses. A number of burial grounds, situated very close to one another and sharing a single common name but with different numerical designations – I, II, III, IV, etc. are designated by a single symbol on the map, as in most cases they represent a single complex divided into parts by the authors of the studies. The overall distribution of the burial grounds on the map shows their even distribution across the area of the region under study. A certain concentration is observed in the western part beyond the Ural River, in the basins of the Bolshoy Uzen and Maly Uzen. The eastern zone is slightly less rich in terms of the number of sites. These sites are completely absent in the southern part, within the desert zone. However, this does not indicate their absolute absence. This is explainable by the fact that the southern part of Western Kazakhstan has been poorly studied. Mapping of sites from the pre-Mongol and Golden Horde periods, grouped chronologically into the 11th–14th centuries, shows that the distribution of burial mounds with different ritual characteristics, as presented in the literature, into two local groups, which are burial mounds with earthen mounds in the western group and those with stone mounds in the eastern group, with the boundary between the groups running along a meridian line near the city of Aktobe —has not been confirmed (Ivanov, Kriger, 1988: 43; Ivanov, Yaminov, 1993: 154–160). Furthermore, the number of secondary burials is significantly reduced.

Discussion

The turbulent political events of the XI–XIV centuries are also reflected in the archaeological evidence, enabling researchers to divide the sites into three chronological groups: 1) pre-Mongol (11th–early 13th centuries); 2) the Golden Horde, pagan period (mid-13th to the first third of the 14th centuries); 3) the Golden Horde, Muslim period (mid-XIV to early XV centuries). This chronological division is based on the dating system developed by G. A. Fedorov-Davydov. The reliability of the

dating is further supported by burials containing coins. An established nomenclature exists in the literature, with a traditional scheme of classification into types based on existing classification systems, which has stood the test of time. Thus, there is no need to develop a new classification (Fedorov-Davydov, 1966; Ivanov, Kriger, 1988).

The similarities in the features of the burial rite are complemented by the fact that the composition of the grave goods placed in the grave, and their individual categories—such as stirrups, bits, arrowheads, mirrors, scissors and earrings—undergo a process of “standardisation”. A certain degree of unification is taking place: graves with similar rites contain a specific set of objects, characterised by typological similarity. Drawing on existing chronological studies in the literature concerning artefact assemblages, and taking into account the geographical location of the Western Kazakh sites themselves, it appears plausible to offer a chronological interpretation of these assemblages and, to some extent, an ethnocultural one as well.

The rapid advance of the Mongols, who reached the borders of Western Europe, bore some resemblance to the Hunnic multi-ethnic invasion of the IV–V centuries, which followed the same routes. The similarity in this case was also evident in the fact that, as they advanced westwards, the Mongols drew the tribes of the nomadic circle, who had been defeated and subjugated, into the orbit of their invasion. The year 1243, in which Batu established himself on the Lower Volga, is conventionally associated with the consolidation of the western Jochid polity known as the Golden Horde. By the mid-thirteenth century, the Golden Horde controlled an extensive territory, stretching from the Prut-Dniester interfluvium, to the Irtysh and Balkhash. In this case, transitional landscapes served as a natural boundary. In essence, the Golden Horde fully incorporated the territories in which the Cuman-Kipchaks had previously settled (Egorov, 1985: 31–47). Subsequently, geographical trends moved towards a reduction in territory.

Scholarly research frequently refers to a thesis from the works of a medieval author, mentioned by V. G. Tizengauzen, stating that Genghis Khan assigned a force of 4,000 warriors to his eldest son, Jochi (Tizengauzen, 1884: 33). This reported figure has been used to explain the absence of a specific archaeological group associated with the Mongols; that is, there is no certainty regarding the identification of any sites that could be unequivocally linked to their culture. Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence does record changes associated with the Mongol invasion. There is a significant increase in the number of north-facing burials, which likely indicates the advance of tribes from the east. This change in orientation may be an indicator of ethnic and religious shifts, reflected in the fact that for the Mongols, the south was the sacred direction.

The archaeological finds under study include birch-bark tubes and small figurines carved from metal (silver, bronze, copper and others), known as ongons. These figurines are concentrated predominantly in the Volga region, whilst objects known as “bokka” are a characteristic feature of XIII–XIV-century female burials. The prevalence of these objects can be partly explained by the influence of fashion trends in the nomadic society of the time, similar to the prevalence of ornamented bone inlays on quivers, which served primarily decorative purposes.

G. A. Fedorov-Davydov identified another feature of the burial rite that was adopted from the East—the construction of burial mounds. His works systematise the changing ritual practices of the Golden Horde period, including a significant increase in the number of north-facing burials, the absence of horse bones in graves, stone linings above the burials, and the use of burial platforms (Fedorov-Davydov, 1966: 160).

The period of the Golden Horde’s existence is characterised by significant migratory processes, directed both westwards and eastwards. These migrations were probably not driven by natural-geographical factors, but by forced resettlements of tribes organised by the Mongols. This is evidenced by the appearance of early types of burials characteristic of the Oghuz and Pecheneg periods in the Volga region, whilst the number of similar sites in the Porosye, Lower Don and Azov regions is declining. This points to a mixing of various types of burials and grave goods with different chronological and geographical contexts.

The late XIII and early XIV centuries were marked by a temporary economic upturn in the conquered territories, thanks to the actions of certain groups of Mongol feudal lords. They realised

that constant plundering led to the impoverishment of the population and only short-term enrichment. Sustainable economic exploitation required the restoration of the former economic infrastructure. From the late XIII century through to the 1360s, there was a revival of old economic ties, which significantly influenced urban development throughout the territory of the Golden Horde. However, the hasty construction of urban centres using forced labour took place without taking historical, geographical and economic factors into account. This has been proposed as one factor affecting the subsequent abandonment and limited recovery of some urban centres (Shnidshtein, 1985: 78–81).

The cities of the Golden Horde generally existed for a relatively short time compared with the centres of Semirechye and Southern Kazakhstan. The largest number of burials dates precisely to the XIII–XIV centuries, the period of the Golden Horde's existence. The burials are classified into two main groups: those carried out according to pagan traditions and those bearing traces of Islamic influence. The first group spans a broad chronological period across the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and exhibits considerable diversity in the characteristics of the funeral rites.

The location of the iconic, sacred mausoleum of Abat-Baytak in the Great Kobda basin is directly linked to the presence of a large nomadic group that held significant influence within the Ulus of Jochi. A possible connection with the hydronym Kobdo in Western Mongolia has been proposed. Traces of late medieval settlements have been found along the course of the Uly Kobda River. A large number of fragments of saqiyah (water-carrying) vessels have been discovered. The area around the Abat-Baytak mausoleum itself is dotted with small burial structures dating from the Golden Horde period. Surveying the area adjacent to the mausoleum is hampered by the rapid expansion of the modern cemetery, whose structures are covering the ancient burials.

In this respect, the absence of a large settlement (such as the village of Taldysay near Abat-Baytak) close to the heavily damaged Kyzyltam mausoleum in the Kargaly District of the Aktobe Region has allowed the area adjacent to the mausoleum to be preserved in the state in which it existed at the time of the mausoleum's construction. Unfortunately, the mausoleum, situated on the north-western shore of the large Kargaly Reservoir, 14 km south-west of the village of Kos-Estek, is now severely dilapidated. Its original condition can only be surmised. The surrounding area, just like that of Abat-Baytak, is dotted with small burial structures from the medieval period. A natural-geographical factor plays a role here – Kyzyltam is situated on a grass-covered rocky hill, and the entire soil is filled with fine gravel, which makes it difficult to construct burial structures and dig gravel pits, in contrast to the location of Abat-Baytak, on the loose sandy soils of the left bank of the Great Kobda.

Conclusion

The Golden Horde period is characterised by significant transformations in burial rites, reflecting a shift in their geographical orientation from east to west and north. Burial mounds continue to be constructed using stone materials, as in the preceding period, and traces of funeral feasts can still be identified here. At the same time, the shapes of the grave pits became simpler. There was a noticeable disappearance of the practice of burying horses alongside the deceased, which was replaced by their symbolic presence in the form of horse-harness elements accompanying the deceased. A section of the population with Oguz-Pecheneg roots, resettled by the Mongols from Eastern Europe, retained the tradition of placing bones in the grave, albeit in a diminished form – often limited merely to placing hooves near the deceased or at their feet. It is likely that changes in the custom of burying horses are linked to the consequences of the Mongol invasion, which significantly weakened the economic foundations of the local population.

Furthermore, during the Golden Horde period, burials were recorded in various regions whose evolutionary roots can be traced back to earlier times in Southern Siberia. However, such finds are still relatively few in number (Botalov, 1992: 230–239). The grave goods from burials of this period are undergoing a process of unification, both in terms of their composition and typology. A notable feature is the appearance of birch-bark tubes, which were particularly common in female burials of this era. Moreover, the process of "standardisation" of grave goods is observed across a vast territory, spanning an area from the southern Russian steppes to Eastern Kazakhstan.

From the mid-fourteenth century onwards, the influence of Islamisation became evident in the burial customs of nomadic societies. A section of the population, particularly those living near urban centres, began to bury the dead strictly in accordance with religious requirements: they built brick crypts, wrapped the bodies in shrouds and laid them facing Mecca, leaving no additional objects beside them.

At the same time, a distinction can be observed in the rites for women and children, whose funerals were conducted according to a simplified ritual. Another section of the population, whilst continuing to follow nomadic traditions, still formally observed Islamic rites, but continued to orient burials according to the previous directions and to place grave goods in the graves.

The assemblage of objects discovered in XIII–XIV century burials is an important element of the culture of that period. Some of these objects have clear chronological boundaries, which helps to date archaeological sites more accurately. Other artefacts may span a wider time period and are used as supplementary chronological markers. All of them clearly reflect the nomadic nature of the people, and their presence in the burials may contribute to assessments of the gender of the deceased and, to a certain extent, social distinctions within society.

It should therefore be emphasised that major events in the political life of the nomads of the Eurasian steppe, reflected in shifts in the dominant tribal groups, also led to changes in ethno-cultural processes, which in turn were reflected in the archaeological material. Despite all these changes, the general trends in funerary rites can be reconstructed and allow us to trace the evolution of ritual elements across chronological periods. During the High and Late Middle Ages, the territory of the Aktobe Region constituted one of the centres of nomadic confederations. Evidence of this is provided by large religious architectural structures – the mausoleums of Balgasyn, Abat-Baytak and Kyzyltam – the construction of which would have required the following conditions to be in place: the presence of a settled population familiar with architectural techniques and capable of producing a significant quantity of fired bricks; a high concentration of human resources; and the considerable financial and economic resources of the clan group that erected such structures in honour of their revered kinsman, etc.

References

- Adzhigaliev, 1983 — *Adzhigaliev, S.* Abat-Baitak – vydayushchiysya kompleks pamyatnikov narodnogo zodchestva [Abat-Baytak: An Outstanding Complex of Vernacular Architectural Monuments]. *Izvestiya AN KazSSR. Seriya filologicheskaya* [Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR. Philological Series]. 1983. No. 2. P. 56—63. (In Russ.).
- Akhatov, Bisembaev, 2015 — *Akhatov, G. A., Bisembaev, A. A.* Kharakteristika prirodno-geograficheskikh uslovii Zapadnogo Kazakhstana kak ekonishi kochevogo naseleniya rannego zheleznogo veka i srednevekov'ya [The Natural and Geographical Conditions of Western Kazakhstan as an Ecological Niche for Nomadic Populations in the Early Iron Age and Middle Ages]. *Kazakhskoe khanstvo v potoke istorii: sbornik nauchnykh statei, posvyashchennykh 550-letiyu obrazovaniya Kazakhskogo khanstva* [The Kazakh Khanate in the Flow of History: Articles Marking the 550th Anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate]. Almaty, 2015. P. 503—513. (In Russ.).
- Artamonov, 1962 — *Artamonov, M. I.* Istoriya khazar [History of the Khazars]. Leningrad: Gossermitazh, 1962. 523 p. (In Russ.).
- Azhigali, 2000 — *Azhigali, S. E.* U beregov Prikaspiiskoi istorii – Tarikh tagylymy [On the Shores of Caspian History — Lessons of History]. Book 2 of the series *Kaspii kairany*. Almaty: Dzhuldas i kompaniya, 2000. 328 p. (In Russ. and Kaz.).
- Bartol'd, 1897 — *Bartol'd, V. V.* Otchet o poezdke v Srednyuyu Aziyu s nauchnoi tsel'yu. 1893—1894 gg. [Report on a Research Trip to Central Asia in 1893–1894]. Saint Petersburg, 1897. 152 p. (In Russ.).
- Basilov, 1992 — *Basilov, V. N.* Shamanstvo u narodov Srednei Azii i Kazakhstana [Shamanism among the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan]. Moscow: Nauka, 1992. 328 p. (In Russ.).
- Beknazarov, 2005 — *Beknazarov, R. A.* Qazaqtyn dasturli tas qashau oneri [Traditional Kazakh Stone-Carving Art]. Almaty: Tipografiya OP, 2005. 160 p. (In Kaz.).
- Bisembaev, 2010 — *Bisembaev, A. A.* Kochevniki srednevekov'ya Zapadnogo Kazakhstana [Medieval Nomads of Western Kazakhstan]. Aktobe, 2010. 248 p. (In Russ.).
- Bisembaev et al., 2006 — *Bisembaev, A. A., Usmanova, E. R., Botalov, S. G.* Pamyatniki kypchaksko-polovetskogo etapa (XI – nachalo XIII veka) [Monuments of the Kipchak-Cuman Period (Eleventh—Early Thirteenth Centuries)]. *Arkheologiya Yuzhnogo Urala. Step'* [Archaeology of the Southern Urals. The Steppe]. Chelyabinsk: Rifei, 2006. P. 409—413. (In Russ.).
- Bisembaev et al., 2024 — *Bisembaev, A. A., Khavanskii, A. I., Zhanuzak, R. Zh.* Issledovaniya srednevekovykh mavzoleev v urochishche Koptam v Zapadnom Kazakhstane [Research on Medieval Mausoleums in the Koptam Tract in

- Western Kazakhstan]. *Arkheologiya Evraziiskikh stepei* [Archaeology of the Eurasian Steppes]. 2024. No. 2. P. 328—339. (In Russ.).
- Bol'shoi slovar'..., 2003 — *Bol'shoi slovar' geograficheskikh nazvanii* [Comprehensive Dictionary of Geographical Names]. Ekaterinburg: U-Faktoriya, 2003. 832 p. (In Russ.).
- Botalov, 1992 — *Botalov, S. G. Askizskii kurgan mongol'skogo vremeni Kula-Aigyr* [The Askiz Burial Mound of Kula-Aigyr from the Mongol Period]. *Rossiiskaya arkheologiya* [Russian Archaeology]. 1992. No. 2. P. 230—239. (In Russ.).
- Botalov, Malamud, 2001 — *Botalov, S. G., Malamud, G. Ya. Pogrebal'nyi kompleks Kesene* [The Kesene Funerary Complex]. *Ufimskii arkheologicheskii vestnik* [Ufa Archaeological Herald]. Iss. 3. Ed. by V. K. Fedorov. Ufa: NM RB, 2001. P. 162—167. (In Russ.).
- Chibilev, 1987 — *Chibilev, A. A. Reka Ural: istoriko-geograficheskie i ekologicheskie ocherki o basseine r. Ural* [The Ural River: Historical, Geographical and Ecological Essays on the Ural River Basin]. Leningrad: Gidrometeoizdat, 1987. 168 p. (In Russ.).
- Egorov, 1985 — *Egorov, V. L. Istoricheskaya geografiya Zolotoi Ordy v XIII—XIV vv* [Historical geography of the Golden Horde in the 13th-14th centuries]. Moscow: Nauka, 1985. 245 p. (In Russ.).
- Fedorov-Davydov, 1966 — *Fedorov-Davydov, G. A. Kochevniki Vostochnoi Evropy pod vlast'yu zolotoordynskikh khanov* [Nomads of Eastern Europe under the rule of the Golden Horde khans]. Moscow: Izd. MGU, 1966. 272 p. (In Russ.).
- Fedorov-Davydov, 1976 — *Fedorov-Davydov, G. A. Iskustvo kochevnikov i Zolotoi Ordy. Ocherki kul'tury i iskustva narodov Evraziiskikh stepei i zolotoordynskikh gorodov* [Art of Nomads and the Golden Horde: Essays on the Culture and Art of the Peoples of the Eurasian Steppes and Golden Horde Cities]. Moscow: Iskustvo, 1976. 228 p. (In Russ.).
- Frezer, 1980 — *Frezer, Dzh. Dzh. Zolotaya vetv'. Issledovanie magii i religii* [The Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion]. Moscow: Politizdat, 1980. 832 p. (In Russ.).
- Ivanov, 2015 — *Ivanov, V. A. Kochevniki Zolotoi Ordy. Istoriya, kul'tura, religiya* [Nomads of the Golden Horde: History, Culture and Religion]. Ufa: Izdatel'stvo BGPU, 2015. 208 p. (In Russ.).
- Ivanov, Kriger, 1988 — *Ivanov, V. A., Kriger, V. A. Kurgany kypchakskogo vremeni na Yuzhnom Urale (XII—XIV vv.)* [Burial Mounds of the Kipchak Period in the Southern Urals (Twelfth—Fourteenth Centuries)]. Moscow: Nauka, 1988. 103 p. (In Russ.).
- Ivanov, Yaminov, 1993 — *Ivanov, V. A., Yaminov, A. F. Pogrebal'nyi obryad zolotoordynskogo vremeni v Yuzhnom Priural'e (sravnitel'no-tipologicheskaya kharakteristika)* [Burial Rites of the Golden Horde Period in the Southern Urals: A Comparative Typological Assessment]. *Kochevniki Uralo-Kazakhstanskikh stepei* [Nomads of the Ural-Kazakhstan Steppes]. Ekaterinburg: Nauka, 1993. P. 154—161. (In Russ.).
- Kastan'e, 1910 — *Kastan'e, I. A. Drevnosti Kirgizskoi stepi i Orenburgskogo kraia* [Antiquities of the Kyrgyz Steppe and the Orenburg Region]. Orenburg: Tipo-lit. T-va "Karimov, Khusainov i K-o", 1910. 336 p. (In Russ.).
- Kastan'e, 1911 — *Kastan'e, I. A. Nadgrobnye sooruzheniya Kirgizskikh stepei* [Funerary Structures of the Kyrgyz Steppes]. Orenburg, 1911. *Trudy Orenburgskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi komissii*. Iss. XXVI. 187 p. (In Russ.).
- Makhmudov, Musabaev, 1987 — *Makhmudov, Kh. Kh., Musabaev, G. G. Kazakhsko-russkii slovar'* [Kazakh-Russian Dictionary]. 2nd ed., revised and expanded. Alma-Ata: Gl. red. Kaz. sov. entsikl., 1987. 507 p. (In Kaz. and Russ.).
- Maryksin, 2012 — *Maryksin, D. V. Ob odnom tipe syrtsovykh ogradok Zapadnogo Kazakhstana* [A Type of Adobe Enclosure in Western Kazakhstan]. *Izvestiya Samarskogo nauchnogo tsentra Rossiiskoi akademii nauk* [Bulletin of the Samara Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences]. 2012. Vol. 14. No. 3. P. 243—248. (In Russ.).
- Mendikulov, 1987 — *Mendikulov, M. M. Pamyatniki narodnogo zodchestva Zapadnogo Kazakhstana* [Folk architecture monuments of Western Kazakhstan]. Alma-Ata, 1987. 160 p. (In Russ.).
- Perevodchikova, Raevskii, 1981 — *Perevodchikova, E. V., Raevskii, D. S. Eshche raz o naznachenii skifskikh navershii* [Reconsidering the Function of Scythian Finials]. *Srednyaya Aziya i ee sosedi v drevnosti i srednevekov'e* [Central Asia and Its Neighbours in Antiquity and the Middle Ages]. Moscow: GRVL, 1981. P. 42—52. (In Russ.).
- Pletneva, 1958 — *Pletneva, S. A. Pechenegi, torki i polovtsy v yuzhnorusskikh stepyakh* [Pechenegs, Torks and Cumans in the Southern Russian Steppes]. *Trudy Volgo-Donskoi arkheologicheskoi ekspeditsii* [Proceedings of the Volga-Don Archaeological Expedition]. Vol. I. Materialy i issledovaniya po arkheologii SSSR. No. 62. Moscow; Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo AN SSSR, 1958. P. 151—226. (In Russ.).
- Rychkov, 1887 — *Rychkov, P. I. Topografiya Orenburgskoi gubernii: sochinenie P. I. Rychkova 1762 goda* [Topography of Orenburg Province: P. I. Rychkov's Work of 1762]. Orenburg: Tip. B. Breslina, 1887. 405 p. (In Russ.).
- Shnaidshstein, 1985 — *Shnaidshstein, E. V. Pechenezhskie pamyatniki Nizhnego Povolzh'ya* [Pecheneg Monuments of the Lower Volga Region]. *Istoricheskaya etnografiya* [Historical Ethnography]. Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo LGU, 1985. P. 79—86. (In Russ.).
- Smagulov, 2006 — *Smagulov, E. A. Mavzolei Abat-Baitak: nekotorye itogi arkheologicheskogo issledovaniya* [Abat-Baytak Mausoleum: Some Results of Archaeological Research]. *Izvestiya NAN RK. Seriya obshchestvennykh nauk* [Bulletin of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Social Sciences Series]. 2006. No. 1. P. 126—135. (In Russ.).

Tizengauzen, 1884 — *Tizengauzen, V. G.* Sbornik materialov, odnosyashchikhsya k istorii Zolotoi Ordyy. Vol. I: Izvlecheniya iz sochinenii arabskikh [Collection of Materials Relating to the History of the Golden Horde. Vol. I: Extracts from Arabic Works]. Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1884. 563 p. (In Russ.).

Trimingem, 1989 — *Trimingem, Dzh. S.* Sufiiskie ordeny v islame [The Sufi Orders in Islam]. Translated from English. Ed. and introduction by O. F. Akimushkin. Moscow, 1989. 328 p. (In Russ.).

Usmanova et al., 2020 — *Usmanova, E. R., Dremov, I. I., Panyushkina, I. P.* Etnokul'turnyi kod voinskiikh formirovaniy Ulusa Dzhuchi (po arkheologicheskim svidetel'stvam mogil'nika Karasuyr, Ulytau, Tsentral'nyi Kazakhstan) [Ethnocultural Code of Military Formations of the Ulus of Jochi (Based on Archaeological Evidence from the Karasuyr Burial Ground, Ulytau, Central Kazakhstan)]. Dzhuchi: lichnost', epokha, pamyat' [Jochi: Personality, Era, Memory]. Ed. by A. K. Kushkumbaev. Almaty, 2020. P. 184—217. (In Russ.).

Usmanova et al., 2022 — *Usmanova, E. R., Uskenbai, K. Z., Kozha, M. B., Panyushkina, I. P., Solov'eva, L. N., Akhatov, G. A.* Mavzolei Dzhuchi-khana: realii, legendy i obryad [The Mausoleum of Jochi Khan: Realities, Legends and Ritual]. Arkheologiya Evraziiskikh stepei [Archaeology of the Eurasian Steppes]. 2022. No. 3. P. 74—80. (In Russ.).

Литература

Адзигалиев, 1983 — *Адзигалиев С.* Абат-Байтак – выдающийся комплекс памятников народного зодчества // Известия АН КазССР. Серия филологическая. 1983. № 2. С. 56—63.

Ажигали, 2000 — *Ажигали С. Е.* У берегов Прикаспийской истории – Тарих тағылымы [2-я кн. из серии «Каспий кайраңы»]. Познават. издание. Алматы: Джулдас и компания, 2000. 328 с.

Артамонов, 1962 — *Артамонов М. И.* История хазар. Л.: Госэрмитаж, 1962. 523 с.

Ахатов, Бисембаев, 2015 — *Ахатов Г. А., Бисембаев А. А.* Характеристика природно-географических условий Западного Казахстана как экониши кочевого населения раннего железного века и средневековья // Казахское ханство в потоке истории: Сборник научных статей, посвященных 550-летию образования Казахского ханства. Алматы, 2015. С. 503—513.

Бартольд, 1897 — *Бартольд В. В.* Отчёт о поездке в Среднюю Азию с научной целью. 1893—1894 гг. СПб., 1897. 152 с.

Басилов, 1992 — *Басилов В. Н.* Шаманство у народов Средней Азии и Казахстана. М.: Наука, 1992. 328 с.

Бекназаров, 2005 — *Бекназаров Р. А.* Қазақтың дәстүрлі тас қашау өнері. Алматы: Типография ОП, 2005. 160 с.

Бисембаев, 2010 — *Бисембаев А. А.* Кочевники средневековья Западного Казахстана. Актобе, 2010. 248 с.: ил., цв. фото.

Бисембаев и др., 2006 — *Бисембаев А. А., Усманова Э. Р., Боталов С. Г.* Памятники кыпчакско-половецкого этапа (XI – начало XIII века) // Археология Южного Урала. Степь. Челябинск: Рифей, 2006. С. 409—413.

Бисембаев и др., 2024 — *Бисембаев А. А., Хаванский А. И., Жанузак Р. Ж.* Исследования средневековых мавзолеев в урочище Коптам в Западном Казахстане // Археология Евразийских степей. 2024. № 2. С. 328—339.

Большой словарь..., 2003 — Большой словарь географических названий. Екатеринбург: У-Фактория, 2003. 832 с.: ил.

Боталов, 1992 — *Боталов С. Г.* Аскизский курган монгольского времени Кула-Айгыр // Российская археология. 1992. № 2. С. 230—239.

Боталов, Маламуд, 2001 — *Боталов С. Г., Маламуд Г. Я.* Погребальный комплекс Кесене // Уфимский археологический вестник. Вып. 3 / отв. ред. В. К. Федоров. Уфа: НМ РБ, 2001. С. 162—167.

Егоров, 1985 — *Егоров В. Л.* Историческая география Золотой Орды в XIII—XIV вв. М.: Наука, 1985. 245 с.

Иванов, 2015 — *Иванов В. А.* Кочевники Золотой Орды. История, культура, религия. Уфа: Издательство БГПУ, 2015. 208 с.: ил.

Иванов, Кригер, 1988 — *Иванов В. А., Кригер В. А.* Курганы кыпчакского времени на Южном Урале (XII—XIV вв.). М.: Наука, 1988. 103 с.

Иванов, Яминов, 1993 — *Иванов В. А., Яминов А. Ф.* Погребальный обряд золотоордынского времени в Южном Приуралье (сравнительно-типологическая характеристика) // Кочевники Урало-Казахстанских степей. Екатеринбург: Наука, 1993. С. 154—161.

Кастанье, 1910 — *Кастанье И. А.* Древности Киргизской степи и Оренбургского края. Оренбург: Типо-лит. Т-ва "Каримов, Хусаинов и К-о", 1910. 336 с.

Кастанье, 1911 — *Кастанье И. А.* Надгробные сооружения Киргизских степей. Оренбург, 1911 (Труды Оренбургской учёной архивной комиссии. Вып. XXVI). 187 с.

Марыксин, 2012 — *Марыксин Д. В.* Об одном типе сырцовых оградок Западного Казахстана // Известия Самарского научного центра Российской академии наук. 2012. Т. 14. № 3. С. 243—248.

Махмудов, Мусабаев, 1987 — *Махмудов Х. Х., Мусабаев Г. Г.* Казахско-русский словарь. 2-е изд., испр. и доп. Алма-Ата: Гл. ред. Каз. сов. энцикл., 1987. 507 с.

Мендикулов, 1987 — *Мендикулов М. М.* Памятники народного зодчества Западного Казахстана. Алма-Ата, 1987. 160 с.

Переводчикова, Раевский, 1981 — *Переводчикова Е. В., Раевский Д. С.* Ещё раз о назначении скифских наверхий // Средняя Азия и её соседи в древности и средневековье. М.: ГРВЛ, 1981. С. 42—52.

- Плетнева, 1958 — Плетнева С. А. Печенеги, торки и половцы в южнорусских степях // Труды Волго-Донской археологической экспедиции. Т. I. Материалы и исследования по археологии СССР. № 62. М.; Л.: Издательство АН СССР, 1958. С. 151–226.
- Рычков, 1887 — *Рычков П. И.* Топография Оренбургской губернии: сочин. П. И. Рычкова 1762 года. — Оренбург: Тип. Б. Бреслина, 1887. 405 с.
- Смагулов, 2006 — *Смагулов Е. А.* Мавзолей Абат-Байтак: некоторые итоги археологического исследования // Известия НАН РК. Серия общественных наук. 2006. № 1. С. 126–135.
- Тизенгаузен, 1884 — *Тизенгаузен В. Г.* Сборник материалов, относящихся к истории Золотой Орды. Т. I: Извлечения из сочинений арабских. СПб.: Типография Императорской Академии наук, 1884. 563 с.
- Тримингэм, 1989 — *Тримингэм Дж. С.* Суфийские ордены в исламе / пер. с англ.; под ред. и с предисл. О. Ф. Акимовской. М., 1989. 328 с.
- Усманова и др., 2020 — *Усманова Э. Р., Дремов И. И., Панюшкина И. П.* Этнокультурный код воинских формирований Улуса Джучи (по археологическим свидетельствам могильника Карасуыр, Улытау, Центральный Казахстан) // Джучи: личность, эпоха, память: сборник научных статей / отв. ред. А. К. Кушкумбаев. Алматы, 2020. С. 184–217.
- Усманова и др., 2022 — *Усманова Э. Р., Ускенбай К. З., Кожя М. Б., Панюшкина И. П., Соловьева Л. Н., Ахатов Г. А.* Мавзолей Джучи-хана: реалии, легенды и обряд // Археология Евразийских степей. 2022. № 3. С. 74–80.
- Федоров-Давыдов, 1966 — *Федоров-Давыдов Г. А.* Кочевники Восточной Европы под властью золотоордынских ханов. М.: Изд. МГУ, 1966. 272 с.
- Федоров-Давыдов, 1976 — *Федоров-Давыдов Г. А.* Искусство кочевников и Золотой Орды. Очерки культуры и искусства народов Евразийских степей и золотоордынских городов. М.: Искусство, 1976. 228 с.
- Фрэзер, 1980 — *Фрэзер Дж. Дж.* Золотая ветвь. Исследование магии и религии. М.: Политиздат, 1980. 832 с.
- Чибилев, 1987 — *Чибилев А. А.* Река Урал: историко-географические и экологические очерки о бассейне р. Урал. Л.: Гидрометеиздат, 1987. 168 с.
- Шнайдштейн, 1985 — *Шнайдштейн Е. В.* Печенежские памятники Нижнего Поволжья // Историческая этнография. Л.: Издательство ЛГУ, 1985. С. 79–86.