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TRACES OF THE EXTENT OF KAYI IN THE ORANGAY REGION OF KAZAKHSTAN AND HISTORICAL PLACES IN ORANGAY AND ITS VICINITY

↘ *Rastros de la extensión de Kayi en la región de Orangay en Kazajistán y lugares históricos en Orangay y sus alrededores*

Vestígios da extensão de Kayi na região de Orangay em Cazaquistão e lugares históricos em Orangay e seus alrededores

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to study what traces of their stay the Kayi left in the Orangay region of Kazakhstan. This study utilises a range of scientific research methods, including descriptive, comparative, historical-critical, and dialectical approaches, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis. The investigation reveals that Orangay, situated within the Turkestan oasis and along a branch of the Great Silk Road, played a crucial role in the history of the Kayi tribe during the VIII-XI centuries. This region served as a focal point for the Oghuzes and witnessed the emergence of the Oghuz State in the Aral Sea region and the lower reaches of the Syr Darya. Orangay also marked the consolidation of the Kayi tribe, marking the beginning of their ascendance. Archaeological excavations in the Turkestan oasis provided concrete evidence of the direct connection between the Orangay region and the Kayi tribe, including the discovery of pottery adorned with snake patterns, characteristic of the Kayi tribe's material culture. In conclusion, this research establishes Orangay as a historically significant region for the Kayi tribe during the VIII-XI centuries in Central Asia.

KEYWORDS

Tribes, Turkic peoples, great steppe, Oghuz, material culture.

RESUMEN

Estudiaremos las huellas que los kayi dejaron de su estancia en la región de Orangay, en Kazajistán. Este estudio utiliza una variedad de métodos de investigación científica, incluidos enfoques descriptivos, comparativos, histórico-críticos y dialécticos, así como métodos de análisis y síntesis. La investigación revela que Orangay, situada dentro del oasis de Turkestán y a lo largo de un ramal de la Gran Ruta de la Seda, desempeñó un papel crucial en la historia de la tribu kayi durante los siglos VIII-XI. Esta región sirvió como punto focal para los oghuzes y fue testigo del surgimiento del Estado oghuz en la región del mar de Aral y las partes bajas del Syr Darya. Orangay también marcó la consolidación de la tribu kayi, marcando el comienzo de su ascenso. Las excavaciones arqueológicas en el oasis de Turkestán proporcionaron evidencia concreta de la conexión directa entre la región de Orangay y la tribu kayi, incluido el descubrimiento de cerámica adornada con patrones de serpientes, característicos de la cultura material de la tribu kayi. En conclusión, esta investigación establece a Orangay como una región históricamente significativa para la tribu Kayi durante los siglos VIII-XI en Asia Central.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Tribus, pueblos turcos, gran estepa, oghuz, cultura material.

RESUMO

Estudaremos as pegadas que os kayi abandonaram de sua estância na região de Orangay, no Cazaquistão. Este estudo utiliza uma variedade de métodos de investigação científica, incluindo abordagens descritivas, comparativas, histórico-críticas e dialéticas, bem como métodos de análise e síntese. A investigação revelou que Orangay, situado dentro do oásis do Turquestão e ao longo de um ramal da Gran Ruta da Seda, desempenhou um papel crucial na história do tribu kayi durante os séculos VIII-XI. Esta região serviu como ponto focal para os oghuzes e foi o testemunho do surto do Estado oghuz na região do mar de Aral e nas partes baixas do Syr Darya. Orangay também marcou a consolidação do tribu kayi, marcando o início de sua ascensão. As escavações arqueológicas no oásis de Turkestão forneceram evidências concretas da conexão direta entre a região de Orangay e a tribu kayi, incluindo o descobrimento de cerâmica adornada com padrões de serpentes, específicos do material cultural da tribu kayi. Concluindo, esta investigação estabeleceu Orangay como uma região historicamente significativa para o tribu Kayi durante os séculos VIII-XI na Ásia Central.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Tribus, povos turcos, grande estepa, oghuz, cultura material.

Introduction

The territory of modern South Kazakhstan has a long history associated with the development of civilization, the emergence of the first cities in Kazakhstan, as well as the ethnogenesis of various peoples who played a significant role in world history. One of these peoples were the Oghuz, who became the ancestors of many modern Turkic peoples who lived in the VIII-XI centuries in the Aral Sea region and in the area of the Syr Darya River. Among the twenty-four Oghuz tribes, the Kayi tribe occupied one of the leading positions, with representatives of this tribe often holding the highest position in the Oghuz hierarchy. Ertugrul, the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, established the beylik in north-western Anatolia, which later became the core of the future empire, and he was a member of the Kayi tribe. Based on this, the Kayi are related to the ancestors of the modern Turkish people. Representatives of the Kayi tribe lived in vast territories throughout the Great Steppe. Chinese and Armenian sources write about Kayi, and in ancient Russian chronicles they are known under the name of Kovui (Kim and Chung, 2023). Evidence of the Kayi's presence can be discerned within the confines of contemporary South Kazakhstan. During the VIII-XI centuries, the Turkestan oasis, specifically the vicinity of the village of Orangay in the present-day Turkestan Region of Kazakhstan, served as one of their residential areas. In that era, one of the centres of the Oghuz state of the IX-X centuries was located here. The revelation of the historical significance of the territory of Southern Kazakhstan in the context of the ethnogenesis (ethnic group formation) and development of the Turkic tribes that influenced the formation of modern peoples and states in different regions of Eurasia is of undeniable relevance to the study of traces of the extent of Kayi.

Archaeologist Tuyakbaev (2009) explored the settlements of the Turkestan oasis, which includes the Orangay region. He drew attention to the presence of snake patterns on pottery found in Orangay, which may indicate traces of the presence of Kayi—"serpent people". The article by Tazhekeyev et al. (2020) is devoted to excavations in the Turkestan oasis and traces of the Oghuz culture in this region. The authors talk about the history of excavations in this region and focus their attention on the preservation of artefacts at the site of Jankent.

Farajova (2020) and Karshieva (2023) studied the spiritual culture of the Oghuz, among other things, the Oghuz folk epic Book of Dede Korkut as well as Oghuzname. Both researchers pointed to an important moral-ethical and universal-religious component of these works of Oghuz literature. Ahmadova (2022) devotes her paper to the study of Oghuz toponyms, which may indicate the places of settlement of the Oghuz tribes and traces of their presence in various regions.

Kekevi (2021) identifies the ancestral home of the Oghuz people and the Kayi tribe in the upper Yenisei, based on such early written sources as the Orkhon, Uighur and Yenisei inscriptions. In these monuments, the researcher sees some of the first examples of the use of the Oghuz language.

Despite the vast number of studies devoted to the history of the Oghuz tribes, the problem of the stay of the Kayi in the Orangay region, as well as the traces of their material culture and their influence on the history of this region, has not yet been subjected to special scientific research. The purpose of the article is to study the traces of the stay that the Kayi left in the Orangay region of Kazakhstan. In accordance with the goal, the following tasks were set:

- To characterize the ethnic composition and political significance of the Kayi tribe during their stay in the territory of modern South Kazakhstan.
- To determine what traces of material and spiritual culture were left by the Kayi in South Kazakhstan and, in particular, in the Orangay region.

Materials and methods

Various methods of scientific research were used in the process of writing the article: descriptive method, comparative method, historical-critical method, dialectical method, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis. Using a descriptive method, the primary collection of data was made regarding the Kayi tribe, its ethnogenesis, history and settlement, as well as living on the territory of modern Kazakhstan. With the help of this method, the features of the material culture of the Kayi, represented in the Orangay region of Kazakhstan, were determined. The descriptive method enabled drawing up a general picture of the position of the Kayi tribe in the society of that time, and, in addition, to understanding in which places of the Orangay region one can find traces of the presence of the designated ethnic group. Also, the descriptive method provided an opportunity to characterize Orangay and its vicinity as a historical place that occupies an important place in world history and the history of Kazakhstan.

The utilisation of the comparative method facilitated the examination and juxtaposition of data derived from diverse sources about the genesis and cultural aspects of the Kayi tribe. Also, the comparative method enabled the evaluation of the opinions of scientists about the ethnic and cultural position of the Kayi among the peoples of the Great Steppe of that time. Among other things, the comparative method helped to present the position of the Orangay region of Kazakhstan among the neighbouring regions of the Great Steppe, as well as to assess the place of Orangay and its vicinity in the history of the Kayi and the Oghuz as a whole. Comparison of the positions of scientists on this problem made it possible to come to a common denominator on the issue of the origin and ethnic development of the Kayi tribe.

Using the historical-critical method, it was possible to study the sources that provide information about the Kayi tribe. This method made it possible to look critically at the various data provided about the settlement of the Kayi tribe, its origin, language and culture, taking into account the context of time and the position of the author. Through the evaluation of sources through the prism of the historical context, the historical-critical method provided an opportunity to understand the most reliable information regarding the history of the Kayi tribe and the Orangay region of Kazakhstan as a whole.

The dialectical method of scientific knowledge provided an opportunity to understand the history of the Kayi tribe from the viewpoint of its development and influence on world historical processes. The dialectical method enabled the designating of the significance of the Orangay region in the history of Kayi and Kazakhstan. Through the analysis of the positions of scientists on this issue and their opposition, it was possible to obtain specific data on the presence of Kayi in the territory of modern Kazakhstan and the Orangay region in particular, as well as the settlement of Kayi in the territories of other countries. The dialectical method made it possible to obtain a general understanding of the role of Kayi in the ethnogenesis of modern Turkic peoples.

With the help of the analysis method, it was possible to reach specific conclusions about the presence of Kayi in the territory of the Orangay region of Kazakhstan and its influence on further historical and ethnogenetic processes. The use of the synthesis method enabled determining the common ground in the positions of scientists on this issue, as well as identifying the aspects of this issue which still require further research.

These research methods were integral to the comprehensive investigation of the Kayi tribe's history and their connection to the Orangay region, shedding light on their role in the ethnogenesis of modern Turkic peoples.

Results

During the VIII-IX centuries, the territory of modern South Kazakhstan, including the Turkestan region, and the Orangay region included in it, was the core of the settlement of tribes, which is part of a large Turkic union, known in history as the Oghuz. For the first time, the Oghuz appeared on the historical scene at the end of the VIII century, when they ousted from the territory of present-day Kazakhstan another nomadic Turkic people, the Pechenegs, who migrated to the steppes of the Northern Black Sea region. From then, until about the XI century, Oghuz were considered enemies of the Pechenegs (Bazaluk, 2019). During the IX century, Oghuz settled in the steppes to the north, east and west of the Aral Sea, as well as along the valley of the Syr Darya River. In the IX-X centuries, the Oghuz state was formed with a centre in the city of Jankent, which was also called New Guzia (by analogy with Old Guzia, located in Semirechye, where the Oghuz originally lived). It was in Jankent that the residence of the Yabghu, the head of the Oghuz state, was located. This city does not exist today. The site of Jankent is an ancient settlement located in the Kazaly District of the Kyzylorda Region of Kazakhstan. In addition to Jankent, which was a fairly large city for its time, the large Oghuz cities include Jand, Asanas, Gorguz, Khiam, Nujah, Badagah, Daranda, Darku, Ruzan, Gharbian (Pilipchuk, 2014). The Oghuz settlements of that time include Orangay, which at the moment has the status of a village located in the Sawran district of the Turkestan region of Kazakhstan (Tuyakbaev, 2009).

The Oghuz union included twenty-four tribes. Their exact list varies in the sources of that time. The most complete description and number of the Oghuz tribes was given by one of the first researchers of the Turkic peoples, a philologist and lexicographer of the XI century M. Al-Kashghari (1985) in his fundamental work *Diwan Lughat al-Turk (Compendium of the Languages of the Turks)*. The list of Al-Kashghari looks like this: Kynyk, Kaiyg (Kayi), Bayundur, Iva (Yive), Salgur, Afshar, Bektili, Bukduz, Bayat, Yazgyr, Eymur, Kara-buluk, Alka-bulyuk, Igder, Urekir, Tutyrga, Ula-yondlug, Tyuekr, Pecheneg, Juvandlar, Jebni, Jaruklug, Khalaj I, Khalaj II. Paying attention to this list, it is worth noting that the Kayi tribe is mentioned second, which indicates it as one of the largest and leading tribes in the Oghuz Union. The privileged position of the Kayi among other Oghuz tribes is also indicated by the fact that it was the representatives of this tribe who often occupied positions of power in the Oghuz state. The Oghuz usually follow the rule, according to which "the Kayi and Bayat tribes are at the head of the people" (Bazaluk, 2018). Yabghu of the Oghuz state originated from the Kayi tribe. The name of the Kayi tribe was translated as "strong" or "solid". Another interpretation of the meaning of the name of the tribe is "possessing strength and fortitude" (Pilipchuk, 2014).

The tamga of the Kayi tribe was a sign that was interpreted as a bow with two arrows on the

sides and an arrow in the middle (Figure 1). This tamga subsequently became a kind of sign that was used by representatives of the Ottoman dynasty, which originated from the Kayi tribe. Among other things, Kayi's tamga was minted on early Ottoman coins, and Ottoman weapons were branded with it (Duran and Head, 2018).

Figure 1. Tamga of the Kayi tribe

Figura 1. Tamga de la tribu kayi



Source/fuente: Duran and Head (2018).

Speaking about the list of Oghuz tribes of Al-Kashghari (1985), it is worth noting that among them he also mentions the Pechenegs, who were previously rivals of the Oghuz. By the XI century, when Al-Kashghari wrote his work, the Pechenegs lost their former power and joined the Oghuz association, being in opposition to a new force in the Great Steppe—the people of the Kipchaks (Mukhajanova and Asetilla, 2016). It was not uncommon for the peoples of the Great Steppe when some tribes, weakened or defeated, joined an alliance led by a stronger tribe, the victorious tribe. In this regard, the ethnic composition of tribal unions could be heterogeneous. Being Turkic at its core, such an alliance could include, for example, the Mongol tribes. That is why the question of the ethnic origin of the Kayi tribe remains unresolved.

According to Al-Kashghari (1985), for some time, the Kayi were bilingual, i.e., they were fluent in both the Mongolian and Turkic languages, but later they assimilated and became an exclusively Turkic tribe. One way or another, later sources say nothing about the Mongolian-speaking Kayi or their bilingualism (Pilipchuk, 2014). The original place of settlement of the Kayi was the land in the upper reaches of the Yenisei and Ob rivers, as well as the northern spurs of the Altai Mountains, where they coexisted with the Kirghiz. Initially, they were allies of the Tokuz-Oghuz, with whom they later migrated to the steppes of the Aral Sea region and the Syr Darya valley. Some of the first evidence of Kayi can be found in Chinese sources, where they are called “chi or si” (Kekevi, 2021).

The snake was considered one of the key totem symbols of the Kayi tribe (Akhinzhonov, 1995). Based on these data, it is interesting to trace the connection of Kayi with the Orangay settlement in South Kazakhstan. It should be assumed that the history of Orangay goes back to the times when it was one of the centres of the Oghuz Kayi tribe. Indeed, in the very name of the settlement, one can notice a connection with the totem symbol of Kayi – a snake, since the word “oran” in ancient Turkic languages means “snake” (Sattorova, 2022). It is also interesting to note that the second component of the name of the city “gai” is consonant with the name of the Kay tribe. In addition, the name of the village Orangay is consonant with the historical name Uryankhai, the Uryankhai region and the Uryankhai people. Such an analogy allows concluding that the Uryankhai could be an offshoot of the ancient Kayi tribe, the “snake people”, and the Uryankhai region can to some extent be correlated with the ancestral home of the Kayi (Tuyakbaev, 2009).

Orangay is about 1300 years old. The first permanent settlements in its place arose in the VIII century when the Kayi moved to this region. From this, it can be concluded that the founding of Orangay is associated with the Oghuz state and the Kayi tribe living here. The emergence of Orangay and its neighbouring settlements is connected with the road that has been running here since ancient times. In the VIII-XVI centuries, this road was one of the branches of the Great Silk Road, passing through the Great Steppe. Other historical places adjacent to Orangay include Kushatu, Siganak, Altarak, Shornak, Kornak, Chobanak, Dashnak, Djuinek. During the excavations conducted in the Orangay region by an archaeologist, an employee of the Turkestan Museum Azret Sultan. Objects associated with snake symbols were found in the Orangay settlement: snake-like rings, bracelets, necklaces, pottery, which indicate the connection of Orangay with the snake people of Kayi (Mamajonova, 2021).

In addition to the material culture, the Oghuz had a rich spiritual culture. Their legends and tales speak of the origin and ancient history of the Oghuz. Most of the Oghuz legends trace the origin of the people to the legendary progenitor—Oghuz Khan. His name is usually interpreted as “arrow”, in connection with which the bow and arrows were often included in the symbolism of the tamga of the Oghuz tribes, including the Kayi, as already mentioned above. According to legend, the Oghuz tribes descend from the grandchildren of Oghuz Khan, the sons of his six sons. So, the progenitor of the Kayi tribe was Kayi, the eldest son of Gun Khan, the eldest son of Oghuz Khan (Karshieva, 2023). Oghuz Khan is described in a cycle of legends known under the general name “Oghuz-name”. Part of this epic was included in one of the most famous monuments of Oghuz literature—the *Book of Dede Korkut* (Farajova, 2022).

A large migration of the Oghuz tribes from the territory of the Aral Sea region to the west began in the XI century. Part of the Oghuz migrated to the Dnipro region and settled in the steppes on the territory of modern Ukraine. Here the Oghuz tribes were known under the name of the Black Klobuks (Black Hats, literal translation from the Turkic “Karakalpak”). Among the Black Klobuks, the Kovui people are mentioned, which correlates with the Kayi tribe (Pilipchuk, 2014). Most of the Oghuz migrated to the territory of Western Asia. Here in the XI century, the Seljuk State was created, which was ruled by the Seljukids – the descendants of the Oghuz Khan Seljuk (Smagulov et al., 2018). Among the Oghuz who migrated from Central Asia to Anatolia were representatives of the Kayi tribe, who continued to play a prominent role in society. It was from this tribe that the Ottoman dynasty emerged, which created the Ottoman Empire. In Western Asia, the Oghuz became the ancestors of the modern peoples of the Turks and Azerbaijanis (Babayev, 2023). The legacy of the Oghuz and the Kayi tribes can now be traced in various regions of Asia and Europe. Traces of their stay are geographical names associated with the name of Kayi. One of these toponyms is Orangay, where the Kayi lived before their great migration to the West.

The historical evidence presented in this study sheds light on the significance of the Oghuz tribe, particularly the Kayi tribe, in the VIII-IX centuries and their role in shaping the region of modern South Kazakhstan, including the Turkestan and Orangay regions. In summary, this study highlights the historical significance of the Oghuz and Kayi tribes in shaping the region’s culture, migration patterns, and heritage, leaving a lasting impact on the history of South Kazakhstan and beyond.

Discussion

In historical science, there are different opinions regarding the origin of the Kayi tribe and its direct connection with other peoples who lived in the Great Steppe and neighbouring regions, as well as the possible correlation of the Kayi with the modern toponyms of different countries. One of the researchers who studied this issue and put forward his original theory was Akhinzhanov (1995). He was one of the first to draw attention to the “snake symbolism” associated with the Kayi tribe and the fact that in some sources the Kay people are called the “people of snakes”. In this regard, the researcher suggested that such names as Uryankhai, and, therefore, Orangay can be associated with the “snake people”. In addition, the researcher drew attention to the presence of “serpentine patterns” on the objects of material culture belonging to the Kayi tribe. According to the version of Akhinzhanov (1995), the Kayi tribe is identical to another well-known steppe people—the Kimaks, who created the Kimak Khaganate in the Great Steppe, which existed in the VIII-IX centuries to the north of the Oghuz state. This argumentation is also based on the theme of snakes, which occupied a special place in the culture of the Kimaks. It is worth saying that some statements regarding Kayi are not indisputable, although they have the right to be. First of all, it concerns the theory about the identification of Kayi with Kimaks. Also debatable is the question of whether the Kay and Kayi tribes, mentioned at the same time in different sources, are the same people. Nevertheless, one should not deny the important contribution made by the researcher to the study of the history of the ancient Oghuz.

Research devoted to the Orangay region in the history of ancient civilizations and peoples of the Great Steppe has been intensively carried out in recent years by the Kazakh archaeologist, an employee of the Turkestan Museum Azret Sultan, M. Tuyakbaev. This scientist is the author of a dissertation dedicated to the cities of South Kazakhstan, which at one time were part of the Great Silk Road. He studied the history of the ancient cities of Kazakhstan from the time of their foundation to the XVIII century. Among the populated areas of Kazakhstan, M. Tuyakbaev also studied the Orangay region and historical sites in its vicinity. In addition, the archaeologist drew attention to the snake theme in the objects of the material culture of the Oghuz era, which made it possible to link these objects with traces of the Kayi tribe, as mentioned in the sources as the “people of snakes”. Speaking about the contribution of the archaeologist to the study of Kayi, it should be emphasized that this archaeologist did a lot to study this issue. In some aspects, Tuyakbaev follows the opinion of S. Akhinzhanov, especially regarding the “serpent theme” in the Kayi culture. In general, one can agree with the conclusions of M. Tuyakbaev about the Oghuz era as a key moment in the history of the Orangay region of Kazakhstan. The village of Orangay has its roots in antiquity and its foundation is fully linked with the presence of the Oghuz from the Kayi tribe here (Tuyakbaev, 2009).

Another archaeologist and employee of the Azret Sultan Museum, Zholdasov (2018), wrote about the finds made in the Orangay region. In particular, he drew attention to the stashes of coins, which are presented in the collection of the said museum in the city of Turkestan. The researcher mentions a large treasure found at the settlement of Kultobe, located in the Turkestan oasis near Orangay. In addition, the stashes of coins minted in Samarkand and Bukhara in the XIII-XIV centuries were found in 2012 in Orangay itself, which indicates the continued successful economic development of Orangay and neighbouring cities during the Mongol era. Zholdasov (2018) focuses on the importance of Orangay and the Orangay

region as part of the Turkestan oasis, and one can certainly agree with this aspect of his research. At the same time, it should be said that this archaeologist has very little to do with the Oghuz era in the history of Orangay, practically without touching on the topic of the presence of Kayi in the Orangay region.

Pilipchuk (2014) wrote about the Kay tribe and its settlement outside Central Asia in the XI-XII centuries. This researcher sees Kaepichs known from the Russian annals as the heirs of the Central Asian Kay. He refers Khan Aepa Osenevich, the father-in-law of the Kyiv prince Yuri Dolgoruky and the grandfather of the Vladimir prince Andrey Bogolyubsky, to the Kay tribe. Also, the researcher agrees with the opinion that the Kay were originally a Mongol tribe that later adopted the Turkic language. However, the author believes that the proto-Mongolian Kay tribe is not identical to the Oghuz Kay tribe, which is related to the founding of the Ottoman Empire. According to Pilipchuk (2014), the Kay was a Mongol tribe, while the Kayi were originally Turkic. It has already been said above that it is not entirely clear how identical the Kayi and Kay tribes, mentioned in different sources at the same time, can be among themselves. The statement of Y. Pilipchuk (2014) that these are completely different tribes, can hardly be accepted unambiguously. At the same time, in general, it can be taken as a reliable version that the Kayi were originally a Mongol tribe that became an ally of the Turks at a certain period in history.

The Turkish scientist Kekevi (2021) wrote about the Kayi tribe, its early history and ancestral home. He, among other things, considers the theory of the upper reaches of the Yenisei as the ancestral home of the Oghuz tribes. The researcher studied the ancestral home of the Oghuz through the prism of analysing the monuments of the Oghuz language and the presence of Oghuz dialects in various Turkic languages by comparing them. From the author's viewpoint, the earliest references to the Oghuz can be found in the Orkhon and Uighur inscriptions, as well as the Yenisei inscriptions, which may indicate this region as the ancestral home of the Oghuz. Taking into account the statements of the scientist, it is quite possible to agree with the opinion that the upper reaches of the Ob and Yenisei were the ancestral home of the Kayi tribe. In addition, the importance of the studies of the Oghuz written monuments conducted by Kekevi (2021) should be emphasized.

Among the researchers of the monuments of Oghuz culture and writing, one can mention such scientists as Duran and Head (2018). They devoted their work to studying the tamgas of the Oghuz tribes. The researchers identified the tamga of the Kayi tribe, designating it as a bow with two arrows on the sides and an arrow in the middle. These researchers believed that arrows were often the basis of the tamga of the Oghuz tribes because the very name of the Oghuz people is interpreted as "arrows". The study of the tamgas of the nomadic peoples of the past is of great importance for a better understanding of the ethnic origin, culture and political traditions of those tribes.

The spiritual culture of the Oghuz, in particular, the monument of Oghuz literature "Kitabi dede Korkud", was studied by Farajova (2022). The author emphasizes the universal significance of the image of Dede Korkut, common to all the Oghuz and their modern descendants.

The image of Dede Korkut cannot be compared with any image in terms of its functional semantics... In the epic, he is an elder, a sage, and all-knowing, but also

acts like a shaman... Dede Korkut, who in the first sentence of the epic describes a special relationship with God, is a character with rich theogonic semantics. (Farajova, 2022: 60)

Another researcher of the Oghuz epic is Karshieva (2023), who devoted her work to the study of the Oghuzname epic. In a scientific paper devoted to this epos, the author considers the legends about the origin of the Oghuz and Oghuz tribes, as well as the influence of the Oghuz epic on the culture and literature of the Turkic peoples, descendants of the Oghuz tribes. Research by Farajova (2022) and Karshieva (2023) provides insight into the spiritual culture of the Oghuz. Their papers, among other things, helped to determine how the Oghuz represented their origin and the origin of individual Oghuz tribes, and what moral and religious guidelines the ancient Turkic peoples set for themselves in the past.

From the analysis of the history of the issue, it can be concluded that a sufficient number of researchers have studied the history and culture of the Oghuz and individual Oghuz tribes, in particular. At the same time, there are not many specialized studies devoted to the special place of the Orangay region in the history of the development of the Oghuz and the Kayi tribes. Only a few archaeologists who excavated in the Orangay region noted traces of the presence of the Kayi here, linking the found objects of material culture with the snake people mentioned in written sources (Seo et al., 2022). At the same time, quite a few aspects of the history of the Kayi and traces of the extension of this tribe in the Orangay region of Kazakhstan remain unresolved. So, there is no consensus regarding the identification of the Kayi tribe and the Kay tribe mentioned in various medieval sources, the question of the original ethnic origin of the Kayi remains debatable, for example, they were Turkic or Turkicized Mongols, the statement about the possible identification of Kayi with Kimaks is controversial.

The present discourse delves into the historical and cultural dimensions of the Oghuz tribes, with specific attention directed towards the Kayi tribe situated within the broader Oghuz confederation. Ultimately, this research substantiates the extensive impact exerted by the Oghuz and Kayi tribes, as they undertook migrations to various territories, encompassing Western Asia and Anatolia. The significance of the Kayi tribe in the rise of the Ottoman dynasty and the subsequent establishment of the Ottoman Empire highlights their enduring historical influence.

Conclusion

The study of the designated issue led to the following conclusions. During the VIII-IX centuries, the territory of modern South Kazakhstan, including the Turkestan oasis and the Orangay region, was the place of settlement of the Oghuz tribes, who created the Oghuz State, which included the Aral Sea and the lower reaches of the Syr Darya River. One of the leading places in the Oghuz community was played by the Kayi tribe, whose representatives occupied the position of the Yabghu – the head of the Oghuz State, whose residence was in the city of Jankent. Initially, the Kayi were a Mongol tribe that was in allied relations with the neighbouring Turkic tribes. Their ancestral home was probably the upper reaches of the Ob and Yenisei rivers, from where they migrated with the rest of the Oghuz tribes to the Aral Sea region and the upper reaches of the Syr Darya. For some time, bilingualism was widespread among the Kayi: representatives of the tribe spoke the Mongolian and Turkic languages.

During the excavations that took place in the area of Orangay and the settlements of the Turkestan oasis, objects of material culture related to the Kayi tribe were discovered. Particularly noteworthy are ceramics with snake patterns. This once again emphasizes that the Orangay region was one of the centres of the presence of the kayi in Central Asia, since the kayi in the written medieval sources are called “serpent people”, and the Yabghu of the Oghuz is called “serpent king”. The name Orangay itself also has the designation of a snake in its root. The history of Orangay dates back to the VIII century, when the Oghuz settled here, so the foundation of Orangay, as well as neighbouring settlements, can be associated with the Kayi tribe.

Further studies should focus on archaeological exploration to uncover additional artefacts related to the Kayi tribe in the Orangay region, complemented by linguistic and historical research to delve into their migration patterns, linguistic evolution, and interactions with neighbouring tribes. Comparative analysis with neighbouring regions, genetic studies to trace modern population connections, investigation of local oral traditions, and interdisciplinary collaboration will collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the Kayi tribe’s historical presence, cultural significance, and its impact on the Orangay region’s heritage, enriching our knowledge of Central Asian history and its enduring legacy.

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