



# **HISTORICAL FOLKLORE AND HISTORICAL REALITY**

## **(ABOUT LEGENDS AND PARABLES ABOUT HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN USTYURT)**

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**Abstract.** The article talks about the historical reality in legends and parables about the historical monuments of Ustyurt. The author conducts a historical and linguistic analysis of why historical places called Pulzhai, Tengeshashkan and Dzhezkempir received such a name. Readers are also offered interesting information about the sacred place in the southeastern part of Ustyurt – the mausoleum and cemetery of King Ibrahim Adham.

**Key words:** Ustyurt, Pulzhai, historical reality, folklore, Ibrahim Adham, king.

Some aspects of historical folklore, that is, historical epics, historical songs, historical legends, and historical parables, are reflected in historical folklore, which have left an indelible mark on the life of the creative people or real persons [1, p. 4].

There are many historical epics, songs, parables and legends that reflect historical events in Karakalpak folklore.

A number of myths and legends have been created about the historical and cultural monuments found in the Ustyurt desert, which has been considered a paradise for nomads for three thousand years. One such legend is about the monument of Jezkempir.

To the west of the city of Kungrad, at a distance of about thirty kilometers, there is a historical place known by three names – Jezkempir, Pulzhai, Tengeshashkan. According to the information given to us by Jabbarbergen (Japaq) Shamuratov, an expert on the history of Kungrad district, a very rich woman named Jezbiyke lived in this area many centuries ago. People called her Jezkempir when she was old. She had countless wealth, several thousand chests full of gold. One day, she found out that extremely evil, merciless enemies are approaching. They were coming to the path of the enemies, destroying all cities and villages, burning houses and killing people. Jezkempir realized that his people could not stand up to this enemy, and he crushed their gold, cut the large coins in two or four, leaving the smaller ones as they were, and then scattered them like grain on the field and drove livestock to the mountains and deserts. At that time, she planned that *“rather than my wealth falling into the hands of the enemy, my people who made me rich should search for and use my gold pieces and my livestock”*. And so it was, it is said in the legends [2].

The name of this place, other than Jezkempir, Pulzhai, Tengeshashkan, is also related to the incident in the legend described above. Even today, one who searches here finds old bronze coins. Small pieces of gold and coins were also found in the old days.

Japaq's father Shamurat Khojabai uly (1909-1964) said that Jezkempir, mentioned in the legend, was the mother of Khorezmshah. Japaq Shamuratov heard the same thing from Jumabay, who is the same age as him. And Jumabay heard from his late father Dosbergen.

Khorezmshah's mother is Turkan Khatun (Khatun means ruler or the highest title given to women who ruled the state equally with rulers). In order to free Khorezm from dependence on the powerful Seljuk state and regain its independence, Khorezmshah Tekesh (reigning years 1193-1200) made an alliance with Jankisi, Khan of Kipchak, and married his daughter Turkan. At that time, Turkan Khatun's compatriots became the main force of the army of the Khorezm state. As a result, the Khorezm state occupied territories from the Aral Sea to the Indian Ocean, from Iraq to Eastern Turkestan [3].

Khorezmshah Muhammed (reigned 1200-1220) was completely under the influence of his mother, that is, the administration of the state was at the disposal of Turkan Khatun. The reason was that almost all military power was in his hands. Therefore, he did not accept the proposal of his son Jalaladdin Manguberdi to gather forces against Genghis Khan, but agreed to his mother Turkan Khatun's advice that each city should defend itself, thus weakening the enemy, and then an easy victory would be achieved. It is known from history that this advice did not pay off. However, Turkan Khatun is a historical figure. She has a direct contribution to the transformation of Khorezm into one of the most powerful countries in the world [2].

There is another legend about the origin of the names "Pulzhai" or "Tengeshashkan". "In the past there was a caravanserai in this place. A couple named Elmurat and Abadan lived in a caravan palace located along this caravan road known as "Nogai Road". They were childless. In old age, they give up hope of having children and start serving caravan merchants. The service fees from each merchant made them wealthy. After having no children to inherit the wealth, Abadan kempir (old woman) distributed bronze coins (zhez tege) to the people. Thus, the name Jezkempir or Tengeshashkan appeared" [4].

This historical place, better known as Pulzhai in scientific literature, consists of several historical objects.

On the edge of the Ustyurt plateau, in the place where the cliff changes direction from meridional to latitudinal, there are the ruins of a tower and as yet unidentified objects. From this place, to the terrace located below, there is a descent 15-20 m high. Above the cliff on the cape there is a fortified settlement. Below on the plain is a huge unfortified settlement and burial ground.

The complex was discovered by the Khorezm archaeological-ethnographic expedition in 1946, whose employees collected material from the surface of the monument and made a schematic plan. Brief results of this survey were published by Ya.G. Gulyamov.

In 1960, the monument was studied by an expedition team of the Institute of History, Language and Literature of the Karakalpak branch of the Academy of Sciences of the UzSSR. An instrumental survey of the unfortified settlement and burial ground was carried out, a trench was laid through the eastern wall, and lifting material was collected. The burial ground and settlement of the 12th-14th centuries have been scientifically described. The results of these works were published in 1963.

In 2003, the monument was examined within the framework of the INTAS project "Climatic Changes in the Holocene Epoch and the Development of Human Settlements in the Aral Sea Basin (CLIMAN)" by an international multidisciplinary group of specialists. The group identified new archaeological sites located in the vicinity of the Pulzhai settlement, carried out drilling and, based on the analysis of ancient bottom sediments, adjusted the existing dating of anthropogenic activity in this area in the first half of the 1st millennium BC - XII - late XIV centuries.



In 2004, 2012, 2014-2015, the monument was studied by the archaeological team of the Karakalpak State University. In particular, small-scale excavations were carried out inside the settlement in order to study the cultural layer and determine the nature and purpose of the remains of buildings, and objects of an unfortified settlement were also excavated.

Studies show that Puljay was a settlement and a nomadic place. Nomads came to this place to spend the winter and to exchange goods from caravans [5].

From the 10th century Khorezm gained its position in transcontinental trade relations. The main branch of the Great Silk Road through Central Asia passed through Khorezm. In the 11th-13th centuries, the cities of the South Aral region were connected to the countries of the Middle and Near East, India, China, Mongolia, Caucasus, Russia, Volga Bulgaria, Deshti-Kypshaq nomads in Eastern Europe through the transit route. At that time, the city of Git (now Pulzhai or Jezkempir) was built along this caravan route [6, p. 97-100].

The site of a caravanserai was also found in the Pulzhai historical complex [7, p. 87].

It is natural for legends to spread about major historical events or famous people. These legends about Turkan Khatun, a famous female ruler of her time, may not correspond to historical reality, but when Genghis Khan invaded, Turkan Khatun hid from Urganch with all her wealth on horses and camels, passed through Karakum safely, and was captured when she reached Ilal Castle (Northern Iran). We believe that these events passed from mouth to mouth and caused the origin of the Jezkempir legend. The fact that many coins were found during archeological excavations in this place also confirms that there is reality behind the legends.

One of the historical places in Ustyurt, which is the basis for the emergence of another legend and parable, is the cemetery of Ibrahim Shah.

The cemetery and mausoleum of Ibrahim Shah are located in the region bordering the Republic of Turkmenistan and Kungrad district. The following information is given about the cemetery and mausoleum of Ibrahim Shah in the book "Kungrad: Historical and Cultural Monuments" by Kh. Esbergenov: "The dome of Ibrahim Shah was built with flat stones typical of the Middle Ages in the style of the 14th century... Monument of XVII-XVIII centuries. The second dome in Ibrahim Shah is a 17th-18th century monument, Botentau (part of Ustyurt, so named because it stands out from the plateau) is a 9th-11th century monument with the grave of Ibrahim Adham" [8, p. 86]. In the book "Sacred places in Karakalpakstan" co-authored by G. Khojaniyazov and O. Yusupov, the Ibraym shah cemetery is also included in the list of cemeteries in Kungrad district [9, p. 63].

There are legends about Ibrahim shah:

Ibrayim Adham is a historical person. He was the shah of Balkh province (Afghanistan). He was famous as a just ruler, a sage, and a saint even in the shah period. He constantly cared for the poor, orphans, widows, blind and disabled. But one day he abdicated. Why?

It is said in the "Risola" of Quraysh: "From the narrations of Ibrahim ibn Adham Balkh. When he was chasing a fox or a rabbit during hunting, he asked from the unseen: "Are you created for this?!" comes the voice. Hearing that, he dismounted. He sent the shepherds of his grandfathers, gave him a horse, clothes and other things, and left for the desert.

Among the talents of his time, Ibrahim ibn Adham stood out for his wonderful oratory. The religiously literate Sufyon As-Sawri noticed him among those who came to listen to his teaching and hurried to finish his speech in order to respect the oratory and literacy of this good person. Thus, he became friends with scholars like Sufyon Sawriy and Fuzayl ibn Iyoz. Lived in Sham. He made a living by reaping and tending the garden [3].

According to another parable, Ibrahim Adham woke up to someone walking on the roof of the palace. He shouted, "Who are you?" he asks. Hearing the answer, "I'm looking for my camel," the king was surprised and asked, "What is a camel doing on the roof of the palace?" said. From the top of the palace, "O heedless one, you look for God on the golden throne wearing a gold robe, what does God do on the golden throne?" came a voice. This voice awakened Ibrahim's heart.

Muhammad Rumi (medieval historian) cites a third parable in addition to these: Ibrahim Adham did not like the fact that the traveler who came before him compared the palace to a caravanserai. Then the traveler asked Ibrahim if this palace belonged to him before. Shah said that several of his ancestors lived in the palace. "If one comes and one goes, why not a caravanserai?" the traveller said and disappeared from sight [2].

Ibrahim Adham, recognized as one of the founders of Sufism, is a well-known figure in the Muslim world. Stories, parables, as well as "Ibrahim Adham" were widely spread among our people before the October Revolution. This book was published under the titles "Ibrahim Adham Qissasi" [10] with S. Rafiddinov as the editor, and "Kissai Ibrahim Adham" [11] with K. Tohirov as the editor.

Ibrahim Adham's full name is Abiy Ishah Ibrahim Adham bini Sulayman bini Mansur Balkhi. He was born in Balkh, present-day Afghanistan. It is not known when he was born. He died around 778. His father came here as a result of the wars during the spread of Islam. He was a military man from the Banu Tamim tribe of Arabs, a royal family. For this reason, he managed to marry Malikai Hubon, the daughter of Malikshah. But he was not interested in taking the throne, he was a dervish. He was brought up in such a center.

According to information, Ibrahim Adham, who spent most of his life in Syria, was killed in a battle with the Byzantines [12]. However, it is not clear where the grave of Ibrahim Adham is, just like the symbolic graves of saints are in all cities and states. Ibrahim Adham, one of the founders of Sufism, a great figure widely known to the Muslim world, visited many countries to preach the teachings of Sufism, which he created as a group. It is possible that he came to our country for that purpose.

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