

# History of the Ancient Cities and Peoples of the Lower Amudarya

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**Abstract:** *In the part of “Yasht” of “Avesto” Khorezm is praised as a “Thousand-duct river”, “A region which is rich in lakes and fields”. Ancient capital of Al-Khorazmi, it is situated on the left coast Amu Darya, it is also called “Al-Mansura” in Arabic sources. In general, the territory of Khorezm is not only in Central Asia, but also in the East and in the human civilization.*

**Keywords:** Gurganj, Khiva, Durriy Flower, Asfandiyarkhan, A.L.Kunn, New Urgench, “Shahabad”(“Shavat”).

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Khorezm region, situated in the north-west of our Republic and left coast of down stream of Amu Darya is bordered with Karakalpakstan Republic from north and north-east, Turkmenistan from south and south-west and Bukhara region from south-east. The population, especially, consists of Uzbek people (96,3) and also, Turkmen, Russian, Kazak, Tatar, Karakalpak and other nation's people live here.

In the part of “Yasht” of “Avesto” Khorezm is praised as a “Thousand-duct river”, “A region which is rich in lakes and fields”. Ancient capital of Al-Khorazmi, it is situated on the left coast Amu Darya, it is also called “Al-Mansura” in Arabic sources. According to Beruni, Al Fir was a clay and raw brick castle on the outskirts of Khorezm, a three-storey fortress, one of which was situated in one another. AL Fir is about ten miles or more. Every year, Jayhun broke down, demolished and destroyed it. Finally, nothing remained in this place in 1305 (993 B.C) in the period of Iskandar.

After that, the capital was removed to Gurganj. The city was founded by Abulgazi Bahadirkhan, han of Khiva, in 1646. After Amu Darya had changed its water course and flowed towards Aral sea, Gurganj and Vazir (Ancient Urgench) remained waterless. Abulgazi Bahadirkhan transferred the people of Gurganj and Vazir to the Southern part of Amu Darya and he encircled that place with wall and gave it the name “New Urgench”. After that the name of ancient Gurganj stay changed to Urgench.

At the period of Anushaxon, the son of Abulgazi Bahadirkhan, (1664-1689), near New Urgench a big channel was dug and it was named “Shahabad”(“Shavat”). In the left coast of down stream of Amu Darya, Channel Shavat crossed the city and divided Urgench into southern and northern part. In the northern part, there were dwelling houses, scientific and cultural institutions, service centres and in the southern part manufacturing plants were situated.

Since New Urgench (Present Urgench) was situated in the silk road, it turned into rapidly developed commercial and trade centre. The distance between New and Old Urgench was 170 km. According to local historians, New

Urgench was a fortress which was encircled with 4-5-metres wall. In the city approximetly 5 thousand people lived and many little workshops, stores were open.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the newspaper “Turkiston viloyati” published on August, in 1873, the following words are written about Urgench: “Its size was nearly equal to the Kazan city's on the shore of Aral sea, it was a small city encircled with walls, and situated 12-mile far from Amu Darya. There was no beautiful city like Urgench from Aral sea to Khiva. It is covered with gardens and bourns”.

Urgench's name appears in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. The book “Avesto” says Urga (Urgench) was the city of Vurukash (Aral sea). Due to natural disasters, Urgu moved to the ancient Urgench region. It was called Gurganj until the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In 712, the city was called “Jurjania” after the Arab occupation. After the Mongolian occupation, in 1221, the city was called Urgench. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century European sources, the city was called “Urganl”.

Over the years of independence, Urgench has expanded into Urgench, where “Navruz”, “Taraqiyot” and “Universities” are located in the north part of the city. In 1992-2002 the monumental complexes such as “Buyuk allomalar xiyoboni”, Al-Xorazmiy”, “Al-Beruniy”, “Amir Temur”, “Mirzo Ulug'bek”, “Abulg'oziy Bahadirkhan”, “Ogahiy”, “Komiljon Otaniyozov”, “Avaz O'tar o'g'li”, “Humo qushi”, “Jalaliddin Manguberdi”, “Avesto” were erected.

In the past, there were some groups in the Uzbek tribes living in Khorezm. Most of the irrigation canals from Amu Darya were distributed among the tribes and seedlings, and they were gradually engaged in agriculture. These tribes in Khorezm comprise qo'ng'iroq, mangit, kipchoq, dormon, hydr and other tribes.

The “Urganjiylar” ethnographic group originally came from Khorezm, but not in various cities and villages in Khorezm. The formation of this group is connected with the name of Genghis Khan. In 1221, when Mongolian troops attacked Khorezm, some of Khorezmian people escaped

from exile and moved to Mavarounnahr and Khurasan. Migrants call themselves the common name - “Urgenji”, which is the basis of the Urgenji. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, due to the economic crisis and the spread of the plague, another part of the population moved to the Bukhara region, neighboring Khorezm. According to the 1924 report, 26 Urgench residents lived in Bukhara Region. In the twentieth century, Urgenji’s smaller groups lived in Samarkand, Navoi, Andijan, Namangan, Jizzakh, Ferghana provinces and northern Afghanistan. Urgenchians mainly engaged in extensive farming and craftsmanship. Part of Urgench has preserved old traditions, while most of them have adopted local traditions.

Another of the ancient cities of lower Amu Darya is Khiva. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the city was under the control of the state of the Cenons, and then it was part of an independent Khorezm. Khiva was originally developed as a city of craftsmanship, and in the second century BC, when the city was under the sand, the walls of Ichan Kala ruined, and the population abandoned it. In the beginning of the city, life in the city began to be restored. In the early Middle Ages, the Khiva was surrounded by a wall of defense. The city was occupied by the Arab military commander Qutayba in 712. The city was expanding and expanding in the early Khorezmshah era. In 1220-1221, Khiva was destroyed by the armies of Genghis Khan. Later it was restored. Khiva was the capital of the Khiva khanate in 1389, beginning from the 16<sup>th</sup> century till February 2, 1920, in the Timurid state. Dethronement of the year 1873 was conquered by the Russian troops, according to the contract Gandimiyon into the Russian Empire. In 1920-1924, Khiva was the capital of the Khorezm People’s Soviet Republic.

Some researchers say that the name of the city is derived from the ancient word “Xiauv” which is closer to the Khorezmi language than the “Xiuav” castle, which was derived from the ancient times of Khiva (Haydenik-Khivak-Kheva-Khiva). The architectural monument of Khiva is located in the Dishan castle area, near the grave (near the Garden Gate). Muhammad Rahimhan 2 was built under the supervision of master Hasanquli Azizhan. According to the novel, three brothers of the saint (Nizomiddin, Alouddin, Sharofiddin) and Khiva’s khan named Asfandiyarkhan were named “Four Shavvats” (in the local pronunciation they became “shavvat”, “shabbaz”). It is now buried in the cemetery, their graves are under sycamore, but this place is now a pilgrimage.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are three madrasahs, mosques, towers, turbines and pools, and trees around the four blocks. The central mosque in the south is four columns, with a dome of 9 degrees, with a conopy. Old timers are decorated with patterns. On the marble tap at the top of the gate of the mosque, the name of Khorezmian master Mohammad Nazarov was written and the time of the order. The tower near the mosque (with a diameter of 2.5 meters) is decorated

with bricks and blue circular shapes. In the north-east of four main basins, Madrasah Tillaboy, Madrasah Asfandiyarkhan in the east, Madrasa built by Khudaybergan Karvansarayi in the south-east corner. Its population is Uzbek, Tatar, Russian, Turkmen and other nationalities.

Khiva has a distinctive place among this ancient cities in terms of its historical past, architectural structure and monumental preservation. It is also known as the city of Ichan Kala, the city of Athens, Rome, Cairo, is the 100<sup>th</sup> city in the list of world heritage, which is sacred land that has brought great people such as Al-Khorezmi, Najmiddin Kubro, Shahobiddin Khivaqi, Pahlavon Mahmud, Muhammad Rahimkhan (Feruz), Munis, Ogahi.

One of the cities on the right bank of Amu Darya is Turtkul. Instead of ancient Turtkul village, on August 13, 1873, Turtkul named Petro-Aleksandrovsk in honor of the Russian kings. The town was built in 3227 (about 12 miles from the shores Amu Darya River) of Matniyaz, a hilltop temple built for the city. The city was rectangular (Four blossoms) on a solid plan.

The city is known as Durgul, the Persian term Durri Flower, which is interpreted as a fertile, golden type. It is a strategically comfortable city that is dominated by the Russian Slavic political and administrative division of the Syrdarya Amudarya Department. From 1925 the administrative center of the autonomous region of Karakalpakistan became the first capital of Karakalpakistan ASSR in 1932. The shoreline of the river was flooded by the right bank and Amu Darya came closer to Turtkul. In 1925, the Amu Darya river flowed 8km from Turtkul, and in 1934, the river flowed 500-800 meters from the city. During the years 1938-1940, the coastline despite the measures taken against them, the city was washed away and in 1949 the city was moved to a new place, to Nukus. Today Turtkul is one of the most economically and culturally developed cities in Karakalpakistan.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Another largest city in the Republic of Karakalpakistan is Hujayli. The centre is located on the left bank of the Amu Darya River. The name “Hujayli” appeared in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century. In one story that Russian researcher A.L.Kunn heard, Hujayli was built by eshon Alamin Hoja who moved from Tyrkistan. Also there are some stories that it was founded by sofiys. The ancient city of Hujayli (Railway station) was built in connection with the transfer of the railway in 1952-1953.

In general, the territory of Khorezm is not only in Central Asia, but also in the East and in the human civilization. “We should seek the historical roots of the Uzbek statehood from Khorezm which has almost 3000-years history”, said I.A.Karimov and this statement is the proof of our opinion.

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