

# **End of the Long Way. Tamgha-signs from Qarshovul-tepa as a marker of Nomad's sedentarisation process**

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## **Abstract**

Qarshovul Tepa is located in the Tashkent Oasis (ancient Chach). Due to its geographical position Chach played a major role as a contact and transfer zone between settled oases and nomadic steppe.

Qarshovul Tepa was a small town (about 6 hectares). Excavations here are important because we do not have any early medieval site in the Tashkent Oasis which in the big scale. That complicates our understanding of many historical and cultural processes, does not allow to prove many theoretical assumptions, to support them with facts and proofs. One such problem is the question of the sedentarisation of nomads – the tribes which were descendants of nomadic Saka and known as the people of Kang-chü from Chinese sources.

Different kinds of ceramic vessels from Qarshovul Tepa excavations are marked with tamgha, i.e. property signs. They are, undoubtedly, signs of owners. Our finds are dated to the 7th – the beginning of the 8th century, that means, they were used for some centuries after nomads started to switch to a sedentary way of life, most likely, in the 3rd-4th centuries AD. Nevertheless, the popularity of signs shows that the tradition has not been forgotten. Even on the eve of the Arabian invasion inhabitants of the small town remembered their belonging to particular clans or tribes. The further accumulation and studying of tamgha-signs from archaeological sites of the Tashkent oasis will allow us to investigate one of the important questions of the history of Chach, namely the process of sedentarisation of nomads.