

ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS OF KARAKALPAKSTAN AND PROSPECTS FOR ENSURING THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL ACCESSIBILITY

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Abstract: Karakalpakstan is rich in minerals, with huge deposits of gas, iron, kaolin clays, Glauber salts, marble, and granite. The state economy is based on agriculture, including cotton growing, rice growing, the production of melons, vegetables, and licorice, as well as industrial Karakul breeding and industries represented by energy, metalworking, food, and textile production.

Keywords: Karakalpakstan, historical monuments, archaeological excavations.

QORAQALPOG‘ISTON ME‘MORIY YODGORLIKLARI VA ULARNING EKOLOGIK MUHITDAGI FOYDALANISH IMKONIYATLARINI TA‘MINLASH ISTIQBOLLARI

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Annotatsiya: Qoraqalpog‘iston gaz, temir, kaolin gillari, glauber tuzlari, marmar va granitning yirik konlariga ega mineral resurslarga boy hududdir. Hudud iqtisodiyoti paxtachilik, sholichilik, poliz mahsulotlari, sabzavotlar va qizilmiya yetishtirish kabi qishloq xo‘jaligiga, shuningdek sanoat qorako‘lchiligi hamda energetika, metallga ishlov berish, oziq-ovqat va to‘qimachilik sanoatiga tayanadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Qoraqalpog‘iston, tarixiy yodgorliklar, arxeologik qazishmalar.

АРХИТЕКТУРНЫЕ ПАМЯТНИКИ КАРАКАЛПАКСТАНА И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЯ ИХ ДОСТУПНОСТИ В ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ СРЕДЕ

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Аннотация: Каракалпакстан богат полезными ископаемыми, включая крупные месторождения газа, железа, каолиновых глин, глауберовых солей, мрамора и гранита. Экономика региона основана на сельском хозяйстве, включая хлопководство, рисоводство, производство бахчевых культур, овощей и солодки, а также на промышленном каракулеводстве и отраслях промышленности, представленных энергетикой, металлообработкой, пищевой и текстильной промышленностью.

Ключевые слова: Каракалпакстан, исторические памятники, археологические раскопки.

INTRODUCTION

The administrative, political, and cultural center of Karakalpakstan is its capital, Nukus. Founded in 1932 on the site of a small village, Nukus, thanks to its favorable location, became the capital of the autonomy in 1939. Modern Nukus, with an area of more than 200 square kilometers, is built on the site of the ancient settlement of Shurcha, which arose in the 4th century BC and existed for almost eight centuries. Today, the capital of Karakalpakstan is a modern city with an established infrastructure and a population of about 300 thousand residents. There are theaters,

sports and entertainment venues, hotels, restaurants, shops, and markets in Nukus. High-tech technologies, which are essential attributes of our time, are being introduced into all spheres of life: high-speed Internet, satellite TV, and cellular communication with roaming around the world. For tourists, however, the main interest in the city, along with historical monuments, is, of course, its museums.

Few museums in the country can boast such a rich collection of paintings by Russian artists and such popularity in the world community as the Nukus Museum of Art named after I. V. Savitsky. The museum is named after the Moscow artist I. V. Savitsky, who came to Nukus in the 1950s and was appointed director of the museum in 1966. Igor Vitalyevich began to collect works of modern art, mostly avant-garde paintings that were banned by the existing regime. As a result, the collection expanded to 50,000 works of painting from the avant-garde and post-avant-garde periods, preserved here in distant Nukus. According to experts, this collection is the best art collection in the Asian region and the second largest collection of Russian avant-garde in the world.

Also of great interest is one of the oldest museums in Uzbekistan, the Republican Museum of Local Lore of Karakalpakstan, located on the first floor of the building occupied by the Museum of Art. Founded in 1929, it has expanded its collection over the years to 56 thousand items. The museum consists of three exhibitions: nature, archaeology, and ethnography. The Department of Modern History, which is dedicated to the achievements of the autonomy during the years of independence, also deserves attention. Visitors are particularly interested in models of ancient settlements and household items found during excavations. In the halls of ethnography, attention is drawn to an old women's costume with an intricate pattern of hand embroidery and a wealth of jewelry. There are also household items, kitchen utensils, and everything that the nomad's yurt contained.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article is based on a descriptive and historical analysis of information about the museums, fortresses, archaeological sites, and architectural monuments located in Nukus and its surrounding areas. The main materials include historical descriptions of Kyzyl-Kala, the Ayaz-Kala complex, Great Guldursun, Mizdahkan, Mazlumkhan Sulu Mausoleum, Chilpyk, Dzhanpik-Kala, and Koykrylgan-Kala.

RESULTS

Kyzyl-Kala (1st-13th centuries). The fortress stands on a plain 27 km north of the city of Biruni. The structure is oriented to the cardinal directions and has an almost square shape, measuring 65 x 63 m. Most likely, the fortress was built as a defensive structure and was part of a chain of border fortifications created to protect the north-eastern borders of ancient Khorezm. The outer wall of the fortress, cut through by two tiers of arrow-shaped loopholes for the convenience of archers, indicates the military purpose of the structure.

The Kyzyl-Kala fortress also served as the center of its agricultural surroundings and as an intersection of caravan routes through the pass of the Sultanuizdag range.

The Ayaz-Kala complex (4th-2nd centuries BC). The complex consists of two fortresses: Big Ayaz-Kala and Small Ayaz-Kala. The large fortress is located on a hill with a relatively flat surface. The fortress has a rectangular shape, with dimensions of 152 x 182 m. The perimeter of the outer wall is surrounded by 35 unfinished semicircular towers. The remaining fragments of the two-row external walls are slightly more than 2 meters wide at the base, and a two-level corridor with a width of 2.5 meters has been preserved between them. The most interesting fact is that the

fortress remained unfinished and was never settled, as evidenced by stacks of large-format bricks eventually covered with sand and by the lack of household items in the excavations.

An interesting legend is connected with the construction of the Ayaz-Kala complex. It says that the complex of fortresses was conceived by the ruler Ayaz Khan. He himself came from a poor and not noble family, for which he received the nickname Charyk Khan. Charyk was the name of shoes for the poor made from untreated leather. The most surprising thing is that the khan was proud of this nickname and ordered a small fortress to be built in the form of a poor man's shoe, a charyk, on the plain below, next to a large fortress.

Indeed, the small fortress, when viewed from the north side, very much resembles this shoe. In fact, it was completed and turned out to be a worthy outpost in the way of enemies.

Great Guldursun (4th-3rd centuries BC). This is a large border fortress of ancient Khorezm, located 26 km north-east of Turtkul. According to the plan, it is a trapezoidal structure with a size of 350 x 230 m, the corners of which are oriented to the cardinal directions. Until today, the exterior walls of clay and large-format bricks have been relatively well preserved. The corners, together with the observation semicircular towers, protrude from the walls by almost 18 m. During archaeological excavations, many bronze crafts and ornaments, antique and medieval ceramics, as well as coins of that time, were found here.

One of the most terrible legends is connected with this fortress. It says: "Once Guldursun was called Gulistan, a flower garden of roses. It was a very beautiful city, ruled by an old padishah who had a beautiful daughter. But suddenly trouble came, and hordes of Kalmyks swooped down from the steppe, sweeping away everything in their path. The Kalmyks besieged the city. The inhabitants fought bravely, but the siege did not last for a day or two; months passed, all the supplies were consumed, and famine set in. Then the padishah called a council, and one of the viziers proposed a clever plan. The inhabitants took one of the remaining oxen to the palace, fed it to the full with the remaining grain from the royal bins, and released it outside the city wall. The Kalmyks, who were also famine-stricken, caught and slaughtered it, and when they saw that its stomach was full of the choicest grain, they demanded that the military leaders lift the siege: if the besieged fed their cattle like this, they themselves did not need anything, which meant that the city was impregnable. Everything would have turned out to the joy of the besieged, but the treacherous Guldursun, secretly in love with the leader of the Kalmyks, sent him a letter describing the true situation of the city and asked him not to leave, promising that the fortress would soon fall. The Kalmyks remained, and the city fell and was burned and looted. When the traitor was brought to the prince of the Kalmyks, he looked at her and said: 'If she has betrayed her father and her people to the enemy out of passion, what will happen to me when someone else awakens her heart? Tie her to the tails of wild stallions, so that she can betray no one else.'"

A terrible death befell the treacherous beauty, and the place has since been named after her, Guldursun.

Mizdahkan (9th century). The Mizdahkan site is located near the city of Khojeyli, not far from Nukus. It is located on an area of 200 hectares and consists of the fortified fortress Giaur-Kala, the fortress of the "infidels", which was founded on the site of a settlement dating back to the 4th century BC, a necropolis with the mausoleums of Shamun Nabi, Mazlumkhan Sulu, Halfa Yerezhep, and a caravanserai.

There are two citadels on the territory of the fortress: an ancient one and a later one. At the beginning of the 13th century, people left the fortress. The last burial in the necropolis dates from the 14th century.

Next to the ancient graves, one can still see the ruins of the Golden Horde city of Antakia of the 13th-14th centuries, spread over an area of 80 hectares. During archaeological excavations, many coins, household utensils, highly artistic items made of gold, and ossuary burials were found on the site of the necropolis. The Mazlumkhan Sulu Mausoleum (13th-14th centuries), a semi-underground mausoleum located in the northern part of the Mizdakhkan necropolis, is very unusual in its composition and design.

According to legend, it was originally the palace of the khan's daughter Muzlum-Sulu, the Beautiful Martyr. When the city was captured by "infidels", their leader, blinded by the beauty of the girl, fell in love with her, and the unfortunate woman reciprocated; the angry father killed Muzlum-Sulu and ordered her to be buried in her own palace, which was turned into a mausoleum.

The building is built in a specially dug pit; only the dome and entrance arch are visible above the ground. The mausoleum includes the main and small halls, several rooms, a long corridor, and a lobby. The hall is covered with an octagonal dome, and the sides of the dome have windows covered with lattice bars. In the niches of the central hall, two tombstones were installed.

It is assumed that the building was a place of ancient worship.

Chilpyk (2nd-4th centuries). It is located 43 km south of Nukus and is presumably a ritual structure of pre-Islamic culture. It was built on a volcanic hill of pyramidal shape. The construction material is clay taken from the sediments of the Amu Darya and raw bricks made from the same clay. The building is a circular structure with a diameter of 70 m and a height of about 15 m.

According to archaeologists, Chilpyk is a ritual building of the Zoroastrians, where the dead were left until their bones were completely cleansed of flesh and then buried in ossuaries.

In the following centuries, the structure was used as an observation tower and even as a prison.

Dzhanpik-Kala (9th-14th centuries). The settlement of Dzhanpik-Kala is one of the most picturesque monuments on the right bank of the Amu Darya. In the Middle Ages, it was a port city that had extensive trade relations with various countries of the East and West. The settlement is located 6 km south-east of the village of Karatau in the spurs of the Sultanuizdag range.

The date of the last settlement of Dzhanpik-Kala is dated by scientists to 1345-1346 on the basis of discovered coins, and the oldest pottery found by archaeologists dates from the 4th to the 1st century BC, which suggests that people came to these places at the same time.

To date, only the plaster walls of the citadel, which was located in the eastern part of the settlement and presumably had a complex configuration, have survived. Fragments of its walls are decorated with close semi-columns topped with stepped arches. During archaeological excavations in the fortress, numerous artifacts brought from various countries of the world, including China, India, Egypt, Russia, and Europe, were found.

Koykrylgan-Kala (4th century BC-4th century AD). It is a religious structure, in the center of which there is a round two-story building with a diameter of 44.5 m, surrounded by a defensive wall with nine towers.

The design of the building and the location of the windows allowed scientists to reliably establish that the construction of the structure was specifically aimed at using this object for astronomy and observation of the starry sky. It was also indirectly confirmed that the star Fomalhaut, which is one of the brightest and most revered stars, was the symbol to which the temple was dedicated.

The construction of the temple was probably somehow connected with the cult of water in ancient Khorezm, since the name of the star Fomalhaut in Arabic means “the end of water in the mouth of the southern fish.”

No less interesting are the fragments of statuary ossuaries found here, some of which are now stored in the State Museum of the Peoples of Uzbekistan. The nature department boasts meticulously executed dioramas of the landscapes of the Ustyurt Plateau, Kyzylkum, and the Aral Sea.

DISCUSSION

The monuments and museum collections described above show that Karakalpakstan possesses a rich architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage. Their study and presentation create opportunities for strengthening tourism, improving public awareness, and ensuring wider access to historical and cultural sites.

CONCLUSION

There are many unique sights, remarkable monuments of archaeology, history, and culture in and around Nukus. Therefore, the preservation, study, and accessibility of these monuments remain important prospects for the cultural development of Karakalpakstan and for introducing its heritage to a wider audience.

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