

KHIVA - IS THE PEARL OF THE EAST AND FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM!

Salaev Ergashbek

Khorezm Mamun academy, Khiva, Uzbekistan

Abstract: The article describes several results of a comprehensive study of the architectural monuments located in the city of Khiva.

Key words: Ichan-Kala, Dishan-Kala, survey, deformation processes, crack, strengthening, madrassah, minaret.

Uzbekistan is one of the oldest regions in the world, and its territory has been the site of the development of world civilisation for many millennia. It is no coincidence that the Bactrian, Sogdian and Khorazmian States, the contemporaries of ancient Greece, Rome and Achaemenid Iran, arose on its territory. The Great Silk Road, linking the East and the West, passed through here.

Thanks to the Silk Road, Uzbekistan's cities grew economically in the 11th and 12th centuries, and a vast process of medieval urbanisation was underway. Recognising the importance of this vast cultural heritage, the first President of Uzbekistan, Islam Abduganievich Karimov, said at the first session of the Oliy Majlis: "The preservation and restoration of unique historical monuments created by the Uzbek people and constituting a national treasure is an important part of our spiritual programme. We have inherited this national treasure from our ancestors. Therefore, we must cherish it as the apple of our eye and pass it on to future generations", paying great attention to the preservation and revival of our culture [1, p.25].

Since independence, the protection of cultural monuments has become state policy. Uzbekistan has a Law on the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Objects. This law regulates all matters relating to the preservation, restoration, conservation and use of cultural heritage objects.

Uzbekistan currently has 8,210 registered cultural heritage sites, of which 532 are landmarks, 678 are monuments of monumental art, 2,252 are architectural monuments and 4,748 are archaeological monuments, all under state protection. During the years of independence, many architectural monuments were restored and museum areas improved in connection with the anniversaries (2200-2750) of cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Karshi, Shakhrisabz, Tashkent and Termez. The development strategy aimed at accelerating the country's development includes measures to improve urban planning and architecture and to solve problems related to the preservation of architectural monuments and their appropriate use. This area includes work to improve the infrastructure of tourist routes through the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage monuments in accordance with management plans drawn up to ensure the sustainability of Khiva's architectural monuments.

Ten cities in Uzbekistan with the highest concentration of architectural monuments have been included in the list of historic cities, including Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Shakhrisabz, Tashkent and Kokand. Uzbekistan has become a full member of the international organisation UNESCO, and

the architectural monuments of the Ichan-Kala museum reserve in Khiva were included in the World Heritage List in 1990.

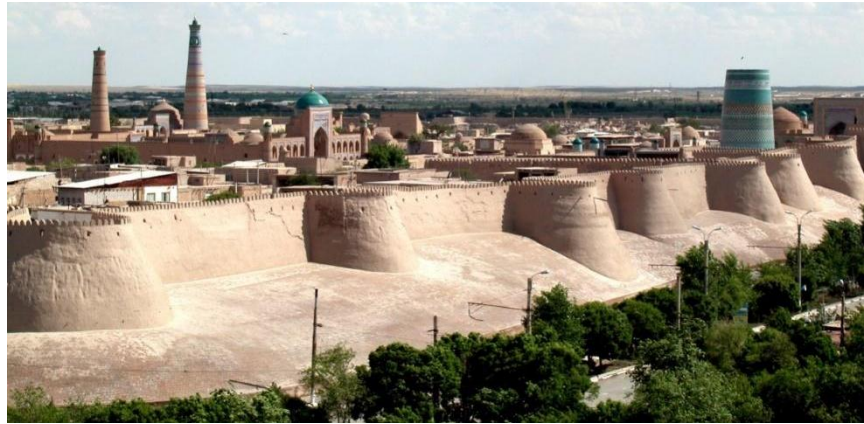


Figure 1: Structural stability of the Ichan-Kala fortress wall during earthquakes (Khiva city)

Khiva is located in the south of the Khorezm region of Uzbekistan. It is the only complete surviving monumental city in Central Asia. (Fig. 1). Its historical destiny and architecture are closely linked to the historical and cultural development of Khorezm, an ancient cultural oasis in northern Uzbekistan. The civilisation of ancient Khorezm can be traced back to the Neolithic period (fourth to third millennium BC). The oasis of Khorezm arose in the fertile, vast delta of the great Central Asian river, the Amu Darya, which carries its waters into the Aral Sea.

It seems that this is the time when the canonical plan of the ancient Eastern city was put together in the form of a rectangular, square or circular outline of walls oriented towards the cardinal points and divided along the axes by the main streets; this plan was ascribed a symbolic image of the universe, on the image of which the city was built.



Figure 2: General view of the Ichan-Kala complex in Khiva

The walls of Ichan-Kala (the inner city) are a rare surviving example of a medieval fortification. Their base is higher than that of Dishan-Kala (the Outer City), probably because of the natural relief (after all, according to legend, the city was founded on a sand hill!) The walls are made of mud and adobe blocks and are up to 10 metres high. Outside the walls, massive semi-circular towers

(kunguras) stand every 30 metres. The walls and towers were flanked by a crenellated parapet with loopholes for firing during sieges. The system of defensive fortifications included water-filled moats at the foot of the walls, which can still be seen in the micro-relief to the south, while paved roads and streets were laid in their place to the north and west.

Over time, the gate lost its defensive function and became an element of urban amenity; thus, the surviving Dishan-Kala Kosh-Darwaza gate (see Fig. 3b), an original multi-chamber structure with a double passage, is decorated with coloured tiles. The eastern gate of the Ichan-Kala Palvan-Darwaza (see Fig. 3a) was transformed through several reconstructions into a shopping arcade with a long passage, covered domes, with benches in side arches, extending from the Ichan-Kala wall to Rabat, where the bazaar was located.

At the city gates were the markets and the commercial and hotel-like buildings that served them (Karavan-Saray and Timi), as well as the city's sanitary services - the baths. The market beyond the Palvan-Darwaza gate extended within Dishan-Kala as far as the Abdal-bobo complex, next to which was a special bazaar: slaves were sold there.



Figure 3a. The eastern gate of Ichan-Kala Palvan-Darwaza



Figure 3b. General view of the Kosh-Darwaza gate

It is in the places of crowded gatherings, near the bazaars, where cult complexes were usually built, including the city's cathedral mosques and madrasahs. In addition to these buildings (including Ak Mosque, Kutlug Murad-Inak -1812, Abdullakhan and other madrasahs), the complex of Ichan-Qala was located at the eastern gate of Ichan-Qala and in the 1930-1940s. In the XIX century also the palace of the Khan, here was built the new palace of Allakuli-khan (in pr.1825-1842) Tash-hauli. Thus, the administration, court, clergy and trade were concentrated here. A series of such important processes has naturally led to the formation of the largest ensemble of public buildings in Khiva, wedged into the dense development of Shahrستان, cut through by narrow street passages between the blind brick outer walls.

The city, as a single organism with interrelated and subordinate parts, reflects the medieval philosophy from which the architects derived their inspiration, embodying the idea of harmony with an impeccable sense of proportion and taste, in a variety of forms without breaking the unity of the whole [2, p.65]. Harmony and balance, simplicity and expressiveness, which still capture the imagination of visitors today, are the result of high culture and the professional skill of their authors. Harmony comes from the contrasting juxtaposition of opposing principles; the strong plasticity of the domes of monumental buildings, the verticality of minarets and the flat roofs of residential quarters, the smoothness of the illuminated blank surfaces of walls and the deep recesses of the shaded niches of portals and columned *aivans*, the juxtaposition of large public buildings and the small, intimate scale of houses - enhance expressiveness, emphasise each other. What does the

unique ensemble of Khiva consist of - original, dissimilar creations or, on the contrary, typical, standard elements enlivened with the help of urban art? What was the measure of individual creativity of medieval architects and their social norms - canons? These questions are of interest to today's architects and academics, who are learning the secrets of the craftsmanship and experience of their colleagues, embodied in their works.

Architecture arises from the urgent needs of human society; it is an artificially created habitat that organises life processes in forms that correspond to natural conditions, the level of development of building technology and the social ideas they are meant to express, regardless of their direct utilitarian purpose. The centuries-old wisdom is expressed both in the largest architectural organism, the city, and in its part, the ensemble, in public or residential buildings, and in the development of their parts, down to the decorative details [3, p. 250].

The inimitable ensemble of Khiva is not an accident, but a natural creative result of the art and work of Khorezm architects, who inherited the centuries-old architectural traditions of Khorezm, the cradle of the ancient culture of the Eastern peoples. Some rules of this art have survived in fragments in the works of great medieval scholars. The most valuable documents are the surviving monuments in which this theory is embodied. For this reason, their study and preservation has become a matter of national importance.

*a)**b)*

Figure 4: Islam Khoja Minaret (a) and a fragment of the wooden column of the Tash-Khawli Palace (b)

In conclusion, it should be noted that every architectural monument located on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including the architectural monuments of Khiva, is essentially an open-air museum. All such monuments must be protected and preserved for posterity.

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