

THE HISTORICAL PAGE OF KATQAL'A

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Annotation:The article analyzes the historical role of Katqal'a in the development of urban planning culture in the Khorezm oasis.

Key words: al-Tabari, al-Belazuri, al-Muqaddasi, G.Ya.Gulomov, Baratov P., al-Beruni, Amu Darya, Khorezm, Al-Fir, Afrig, Katqal'a.

Introduction.

During the years of independence, significant measures were taken in our country to educate young people in the spirit of patriotism, respect for national traditions and values, to bring up spiritually mature and physically healthy generations, and to protect their rights and interests.

At the same time, the analysis of the situation and the activities carried out in this field show that pressing issues related to the wide strata of youth-especially creating suitable conditions for unorganized young people to find their place in life, supporting them comprehensively, guiding them toward professions and ensuring employment, encouraging their initiatives-have not yet been organized at the required level.

This article aims to highlight the historical role of Katqal'a-located on the right bank of the Khorezm oasis-in the development of sedentary and agricultural life and culture, and its position within the defensive system during the ancient, early, and developed medieval periods.

Analysis of the Literature on the Subject.

Katqal'a, founded in the 4th century BCE by farming communities on the plains connected to the right bank of the Amu Darya, became one of the key cultural and economic centers during the early and developed Middle Ages, playing an important role in the development of urban planning and early statehood.

In the second half of the 6th century CE, due to population growth, some inhabitants of Katqal'a settled around the outer walls, forming new villages. One of these villages was Bushkanz, where the great thinker Abu Rayhon Beruni, who awakened the world from ignorance, was born.

Katqal'a consisted of three parts: ark, shahrstan, and rabat, with a total area of 219 hectares. Before the military campaigns against Khorezm in 712, the Arab geographer al-Tabari mentioned in his work the fortresses of Gurganj, Kat, and Khazarasp, providing the earliest known information about them. However, he did not record the fortresses built along the plains and elevations connected to the Amu Darya shore, which represented the harmony of life and creativity of the oasis population.

The Arab geographer al-Baladhuri, in his work "Kitab Futuh al-Buldan," noted that the fortified city of Kat, located on the right bank of Khorezm, had an area equal to that of Samarkand (219 hectares). He wrote the following about the city of Khorezm: "Khorezm consists of three parts surrounded by moats. Al-Fir is the most fortified section (which we consider to be the ark). In the center of the city, there was a large reservoir that provided water for the population."

The great encyclopedic scholar Abu Rayhon Beruni, in his fundamental works that still retain their scientific value, recorded that during the Afrighid dynasty, which ruled in southern Khorezm, the capital shifted from Topraq Qal'a to Katqal'a.

In the first half of the 10th century, the Arab geographer al-Istakhri, who visited Khorezm, provided extensive geographical information about Katqal'a in his writings. He stated: "The

capital of Khorezm is located north of the Oxus River. The main city of the country is called 'Kot' in the Khorezmian language. However, the Oxus destroyed it, and the people settled behind it. Later, the river (Jayhun) approached the fortress once again."

The fortress walls are in danger of deterioration. The Jome' Mosque is located behind the fortress. The palace of the Khwarazmshahs was situated near the Jome' Mosque, while the Jardur structure passed through the center of the city, dividing the urban area and the marketplace into two parts. The city's length covered approximately one-third of its total territory. The ruined fortification walls and gates have not survived. The remaining part of the city was reconstructed behind the destroyed section, in the lower part of the oasis. It was located on the western bank of the Oxus (Amu Darya) River, at a distance of three days' journey from Jurjaniya.

An anonymous author of Hudud al-'Alam wrote that "Kos" (Katqal'a) was considered the gateway to the Guz-Turk lands - a place where trade caravans from Turkistan, Transoxiana, and Khazar gathered. The inhabitants were described as fierce and warlike. The city was very wealthy; merchants purchased and exported cushions, covers, garments, coarse linen (karbos), wool, ice, and dairy products from there. In the second half of the 10th century, the Arab geographer al-Muqaddasī noted:

"Kos was also called the shahristan. It was located to the east of the Amu Darya. The Jome' Mosque stood in the center of the market, built upon a black stone foundation the height of a man, with wooden columns. The city was prosperous, abundant in scholars and learned men; its inhabitants lived comfortably with plentiful food and resources, and it was rich in skilled architects. It would be difficult to find such masters even in Iraq. They possessed beautiful voices for recitation, and their faces were of pleasant appearance."

He also remarked that other scholars had confirmed similar observations. In his fundamental work, G.Ya. Gulomov concluded that Katqal'a achieved a high level of economic and cultural development during the early and developed medieval periods.

Research Methods

Scientific analysis;

Chronological sequencing;

Comparison, discussion, and substantiation;

Logical reasoning and conclusion;

Application of findings from ethnography, archaeology, and geography.

Analysis

Based on theoretical and comparative analysis of written sources and the works of previous researchers, the historical development of the Katqal'a monument throughout the ancient, early, and developed medieval periods has been examined and synthesized into coherent conclusions.

Results

Using new perspectives and approaches, the study documents the topographic location and defensive architecture of Katqal'a, located on the right and left banks of the Amu Darya, from the 4th–3rd centuries BCE to the developed Middle Ages.

Conclusion

From the late 4th century BCE, after separating from the Achaemenid Empire, the Khwarazm State pursued an internal policy aimed at mastering the right and left banks of the Amu Darya. Along the main irrigation canals extending from the river-at their sources, middle, and lower reaches-small, medium, and large fortresses were constructed. One of these fortresses was Katqal'a, erected on the plains connected to the right bank of the Amu Darya. The study presents conclusions regarding its historical significance and urban role.

Recommendations

It is proposed to restore Katqal'a, which once embodied the harmony of human settlement and life, based on the surviving sections of its defensive walls, thereby reviving its ancient and developed form as a valuable cultural and historical monument.

The plain that reflects the image of the Aral Sea - formed as a result of repeated paleotectonic movements between the Kyzylkum and Karakum deserts - is referred to in geographical literature as the Khorezm-Tashauz (Dashoguz) Plain.

Located in the northwestern part of the Turan Lowland, the Khorezm oasis differs from other natural and geographical regions of Uzbekistan in terms of its landscape, natural-climatic conditions, natural resources, and population distribution.

The land, rich in legends and ethnonymic toponyms, has long been inhabited by a settled, agricultural population whose contribution to the development of irrigated farming, urban planning culture, and Uzbek statehood is no less significant than that of other regions of Uzbekistan.

Over centuries, the Amu Darya River, through its mineral-rich and sediment-laden waters, deposited fertile layers of silt, giving rise to the Khorezm oasis. The distinct geographical positions and settlement patterns of the right and left banks of the oasis are clearly reflected in physical-geographic maps.

Although our ancestors who inhabited the Khorezm oasis are mentioned under various names in written sources, they effectively utilized natural resources in cooperation with nomadic pastoral communities, developing their crafts, advancing technological innovations, and steadily progressing along a complex historical path.

Archaeological excavations carried out in ancient settlements on both the right and left banks of the Amu Darya - inhabited by farming populations - have yielded material findings that serve as important sources for studying the history of Katqal'a. From the late 4th century BCE, after gaining independence from the Achaemenid Empire, the internal policy of the Khorezm State focused primarily on mastering the humid and fertile lands situated between the Kyzylkum and Karakum deserts.

During the 4th–3rd centuries BCE, the rulers of Khorezm (notably Farazman and Kaykhusraw) constructed major irrigation canals - Kaltaminor, Tozabog'yob, and Amirobod - on the right bank of the lower Amu Darya, while on the left bank they diverted irrigation channels from the Dovdon and Daryolik tributaries of the Amu Darya. Fortresses were built at the sources, middle sections, and ends of these canals, reaching a classical stage of hydraulic and defensive engineering. Among the micro-oases that emerged through this process, one of the most prominent was Katqal'a.

From 305 to 995 CE, during the reign of Arsamukh, Katqal'a served as the capital of the Afrighid dynasty in southern Khorezm. Meanwhile, in northern Khorezm, an independent Khorezm State existed, having gained autonomy from the Samanid dynasty, with Mizdahkan as its capital.

Thus, two independent states emerged within Khorezm, reflecting political fragmentation; they operated separately and often with mutual caution and distrust toward one another. In 995 CE, as a result of the military campaigns conducted by Ma'mun I, ruler of the Northern Khorezm State, aimed at expanding territorial boundaries, the activities of the Afrighid dynasty came to an end, marking their permanent disappearance from the pages of history.

From 995 to 1017 CE, the Ma'munid State dominated the political landscape of the Khorezm oasis, with Gurganj serving as its capital. Although Katqal'a lost its political importance as a

state center, during the developed medieval period it continued to thrive as a hub of trade and craftsmanship, and played a significant role in the development of river communication routes. Archaeological excavations conducted by Yu.P. Manilov at Katqal'a uncovered artifacts dating to the antique, early, and developed medieval periods. These findings serve as valuable sources for studying the social and economic relations, ethnic processes, and the historical role Katqal'a played in the development of Khorezmian statehood.

Located southwest of the modern Beruniy city, Katqal'a was surrounded on all sides by defensive walls. The western wall measured 621 meters in length, the southern wall measured 206 meters, while the northern wall preserved parts of the outer fortification, where remnants of semi-circular towers can still be found. The defensive interval between these towers was 33 meters, with lateral extensions of 6 meters and a width of 3.5 meters. A gate was situated between the northern and southern walls. The area of the monument preserved from the riverbank covers approximately 40 hectares. Excavations along the western wall yielded archaeological materials dated to the 9th–11th centuries CE.

Conclusions

Based on the above-mentioned historical and archaeological data, the following conclusions have been drawn:

Since the 4th century BCE, during the centralized Khorezm State, Katqal'a emerged as one of the key settlements established by local populations who supported internal policies aimed at transforming the fertile plains on both the right and left banks of the Amu Darya into prosperous, cultivated lands. From 305 to 995 CE, the Afrighid dynasty governed the Southern Khorezm State, with Katqal'a serving as its capital and primary political center.

Although Katqal'a lost its political significance after 995 CE, during the period of the Khwarazmshahs, it maintained its importance in the economic, social, and cultural development of the region. Beginning in the 9th century CE, Katqal'a contributed significantly to the development of international communication and trade routes along the Amu Darya River.

During the 10th to early 13th centuries CE, in the "Golden Age" of the Great Khwarazmshah Empire, when Khorezm experienced high levels of political, socio-economic, and cultural progress, Katqal'a - alongside other major cultural and economic centers - served as an important socio-economic and religious-ideological center.

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