



## THE ANCIENT CISTERN IN KARSHI CITY AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE

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Article history:	Abstract:
<b>Received:</b> 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 <b>Accepted:</b> 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	This article discusses the attention paid to historical and architectural structures built in the distant past in our country during the years of independence and their importance in educating young people in the spirit of patriotism and restoring them to their original form. The topic is analyzed on the example of an old cistern in the city of Karshi.

**Keywords:** Karshi, Shahrisabz, mosque, mausoleum, the cistern, Amir Temur, timurids, national values, cultural heritage, historical monuments, architectural structures, restoration

**INTRODUCTION.** Recent trends in the global economy, such as the rapid development of tourism and recreation, have a significant impact on the Central Asian region, including Uzbekistan, in various regions and countries[1.1]. The visit to the places of pilgrimage is connected with the tourism sector, which in the 21st century became the most advantageous sphere in the world. Now he is in third place after the field of automotive and oil refining. The development of the tourism sector is important in strengthening the national and regional economy[2.1].

If we look back at the long history of thousands of years, we can see that our homeland was one of the first cradles of world civilization. During this time, ancient monuments, madrasas and mosques, khanaqohs and caravanserais built in various regions of our country are not only famous buildings of their time, but also attract many foreign tourists today.

**THE MAIN PART.** The historical and architectural monuments built by supreme rulers or local governors in different periods in the Kashkadarya region stand out from the historical monuments of neighboring regions in their attractiveness and durability.

Today, 8,208 historical and architectural monuments are under state protection in our country, of which 4,748 are archaeological, 2,225 are architectural, 678 are monumental art monuments, and 532 are tourist attractions. More than four thousand material and cultural monuments are included in the UNESCO list [3. 212].

Kashkadarya region is also one of the regions where pilgrimage tourism is developing day by day. Currently, there are a total of 1,468 cultural heritage monuments in the region, of which 1,197 are archaeological, 208 are architectural, 35 are sculptural works of art, and 28 are places of interest [4].

First of all, when talking about oasis architecture, it is worth noting that some of the building materials used in the architectural structures built here are not found in other regions.

**LITERATURE ANALYSIS.** Most of the ancient architectural monuments that have arisen in the region were built in the cities of Karshi and Shahrisabz, in the Kitab, Yakkabog, Kamashi and Kasbi districts. The construction style of these structures does not repeat each other. In particular, a number of historically formed architectural monuments are also located in the ancient fortress of Karshi, the main city of the oasis.

Valuable information about the city of Karshi and its ancient monuments has been preserved in the sources. Medieval historians such as Ibn Khurdadbeh (IX), Yaqubiy (IX), Narshahi (X), Istakhri (X), Ibn Havkal (X) wrote about the ancient city of Nasaf in their works. For example, the historian Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi in his work "Zafarnama" wrote the following about the wintering of Sahibkiran Amir Temur in Karshi: "Hazrat ul-Qish stayed in Karshi with happiness and success and looked with compassion at the great, small, poor, and needy subjects with grace and generosity, and made efforts in agriculture and building"[5. 49].

The shah and poet Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur also wrote the following valuable information about this ancient city in his work Baburnama: "Another of the most famous cities of the Transoxiana region is the Karshi region, which is also called Nasaf and Naxhab. There is little water here, the spring is good, and the crops and melons are good. To the south of Samarkand, a little to the west, is the eighteen-mile road"[6. 110].

One of the historical structures built within the Karshi fortress is the ancient cistern. First of all, if we touch



on the word cistern, this term comes from the (Persian and Tajik) languages, and means sard - cold and ob - water, that is, cold water, or a place where cold water is stored [7. 514]. The lands located in the lower reaches of the Kashkadarya have long been considered one of the regions with a shortage of water, and a branch of the Great Silk Road also passed through the cities located in this area.

If we look at the history of the construction of ancient cisterns, it becomes clear that the history of the creation of these historical structures dates back to the 9th-10th centuries[8.136]. Researcher Sh. Turayev noted that the period of large-scale construction of Markur water structures dates back to the 16th-19th centuries[9]. Historical data indicate that there are a total of 44 cisterns in Movarounnahr, of which 29 were built in the Karshi desert, 3 in Mirzachul, and 1 in Choli Malik near Karmana[10. 136].

These water structures can be divided into three groups according to their geographical location, nature and relief, such as cisterns filled with snow and rain, rivers and streams or groundwater. The construction of the Karshi cistern is recorded in historical sources in the second half of the 16th century, that is, during the reign of the Bukhara Khan Abdullakhan II (1556-1598). In particular, the archaeologist M.Ye. Masson wrote the following about this: "Abdullahkhan II firmly subjugated Karshi together with Shahrisabz and Hissar in 1574. From this period, unlike Kesh, large-scale construction work was carried out in Karshi[11. 56].

The construction of a cistern is an extremely complex and time-consuming process, and unique building materials were used in its construction. In particular, the upper part of the Karshi cistern, filled from the Kashkadarya River, is dome-shaped, with a diameter of 14-15 meters and a depth of 10-15 meters. The walls and dome of this historical monument are made of baked bricks and mortar, and the foundation is made of hewn stones, and almost no wood was used in the construction.

The famous scientist O. Buriyev wrote the following about the building materials used in the construction of this ancient cistern: "For the construction of the structure, water, soil and sand were brought from a separate clean place, and mortar from Qarovulbazar and Nurota. Straw, reeds, and sedge ash were added to the sand. The bricks used for the building were also baked to perfection and camel hair was added to it. After the raw bricks were baked in the sun for 1-2 years, the best ones were selected from among them. Such bricks were called obi-gisht. At the same time, in addition to water, sheep's milk and camel hair were

also added to the clay mixture, which made the structure even stronger"[12. 137].

The Karshi cistern is located south of the Registan Square, and sources indicate that it provided water to the entire population of the city. This ancient structure has four corridors and is accessed by 40 steps. Unfortunately, this historical structure was almost completely neglected during the former Soviet era. In particular, M. Y. Masson spoke about it as follows: "Although the Karshi cistern was the most famous cistern of its time, it was not included in the list of monuments under state protection"[13. 10].

At the same time, it is worth noting that in 1938, by a special decree of the former Soviet government, the Odina Mosque was converted into a prison capable of holding 150 prisoners per year[14. 62]. This historical structure, which stood next to the Odina Mosque on Registan Square, was destroyed in the 1920s and 1930s.

Due to independence, the attention paid to historical architectural monuments and cultural heritage masterpieces in our republic has changed radically. Their repair and restoration work has been launched on a large scale. Based on the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On preparations for the celebration of the 2700th anniversary of the city of Karshi" dated September 29, 2004 and the resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On additional measures for the celebration of the 2700th anniversary of the city of Karshi" dated July 26, 2005, extensive creative work has been carried out. In particular, the prison on the territory of the Odina Mosque of the Karshi Registan was relocated to another place at the end of 2004, and in a short time the original architectural appearance of the historical buildings here was restored, and their surroundings were completely landscaped. The ancient cistern, built by the Khan of Bukhara, Abdullakhan II, in the 16th century, was also restored and renovated.

**CONCLUSION.** In conclusion, it can be noted that the role of historical and architectural monuments in educating the youth of New Uzbekistan, who are coming of age in our country today, in the spirit of patriotism is incomparable. In addition, these old and ancient monuments further increase the tourist potential of our Motherland.

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