

MEDIEVAL BATH OF ANCIENT BUKHARA

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ABSTRACT

Bukhara baths are of great historical and cultural interest as typical monuments of civil construction in Bukhara of the 16th century. They did not retain the rich decoration so characteristic of medieval baths in the East. In engineering and technical terms, the baths were an undoubted achievement of the era. U.Kh. Kamalov "Bukhara" 1974.[2]

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1. Bukhara Baths

The tradition of bathing in a bath in Bukhara is quite old. Mentions of this can be found in Narshakhi, the author of the "History of Narshakhi" dating back to the 10th century. In the 60s of the XX century, out of 18 ancient baths mentioned in the book by O. Sukhareva "Bukhara, XIX early XX centuries." Existing in pre-revolutionary times only in cities, the baths by their number and landscaping testified to the degree of development of urban life, they can be considered one of the achievements of the centuries-old urban culture of Central Asia. Well-developed techniques for their construction, a kind of architecture, a heating system, special waterproof compounds, etc. - all this confirms their long-standing origin. [3]

IX-X centuries - the period of the formation of the feudal cities of Central Asia, the development of urban life, urban construction. The buildings are varied in purpose: dwellings and workshops of artisans, palaces, administrative and commercial buildings, baths, mosques, minarets, mausoleums, madrasahs.

The fired brick construction technique continues the adobe construction techniques. The greater strength of the fired brick allowed for more advanced floor structures and therefore larger spans. Careful preparation of the clay, excellent firing, experience in establishing the optimal dimensions of the brick and, finally, the soft light yellow color determined its excellent technical and artistic qualities.[4]

In the "Canon of Medicine" Abu Ali ibn Sino (Avicenna) notes as a virtue of a good bath a solid structure, moderate temperature, bright light, good air, a spacious dressing room decorated with beautiful paintings, pleasant water.

Today, only two ancient baths have survived in Bukhara: one for women - Hammomi-Kunjak and one for men - Bozor-i Kord, next to the dome of Tok-i Telpak Furushon (Dome of headaddress sellers). The very arrangement of these baths with intricate labyrinthine rooms, with a gradual transition from a cool room to a hotter one, and so on, create a fabulous performance.

Narshakhi mentions in his book "Records of Narshakhi" about the custom of going to the baths. According to his sources, several bathing establishments were already operating in Bukhara. "Hamam Khan" (Khan bath) was the most famous of them.

Baths-Hamam were usually built as part of bazaar complexes and public buildings. Separately for the khan, the builders could erect a personal bath in the palace. A specially appointed person and his subordinates served these premises for the king all year round at any time of the day.

Medieval baths in the east differed in local type (peculiar only to a certain place) and gender. All bath complexes can be divided into city-wide and quarter ones. Citywide (bazaars) were located near the city's shopping centers.

In the baths, instead of a group of washing rooms, one large hall was erected, which was covered with a beam structure on four columns. The baths were combined with a teahouse.

The baths were multi-domed buildings heated through underground canals, decorated with murals and majolica panels, with a larger central hall, which surrounded the smaller vaulted rooms on three sides with a columnar aivan. Such honakos existed in Bukhara already at the beginning of the 15th century.

They were the largest and most visited. According to history, there were many bazaar baths in Bukhara, among them - Hammam Gavkusho, Hammam Hajja Porso, Hammam Sarrafon, and, of course, the most famous and oldest Hammam Bozor-i Kord (XVII century). It is interesting that despite its venerable age, it functions to this day, comfortably meeting everyone. Most of the baths in Central Asia had one bathing room. Consequently, the visiting order for men and women had a strictly planned sequence on different days of the week.

The interior layout of a typical bath building consisted of a reception room, a dressing room and a bathing area. From the outside, it is a one-story building with a domed finish and a convenient location. They were located at the crossroads of busy streets, along shopping arcades, among large residential areas and even outside the city. In large cities, the name "Hammam Kunjak" was popular, which means "corner bath". This indicates that during the construction, architects and master engineers took into account not only complex technical nuances, but also convenience and accessibility.



In Bukhara, during the construction of a hotel in the old part of the city, the remains of a medieval bath, destroyed at the beginning of the 20th century, were discovered. Entrepreneur Mukhammadsaid Boltaev at the beginning of the year purchased a house in the old part of

the
a



Bukhara for
construction
hotel. While



of

digging a foundation pit, workers stumbled upon the remains of an ancient structure. "We immediately invited specialists. It turned out that these are the ruins of an old bath, presumably from the 15th-16th centuries." - says the



businessman. According to the leading researcher of the Institute of Archeology of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan Jamal Mirzaakhmedov, the found structure is a typical bathhouse of the late medieval period. [5]

The lower structures, the combustion chambers and the heating system, have been preserved to a greater extent. The upper part was dismantled, as the archaeologist suggests, at the beginning of the 20th century. At the same time, civil structures were built in its place.

"The remains of the boilers have also survived. And if in ancient times the boilers were large, home-made, then here, perhaps, the system was rebuilt in the last period and smaller boilers, presumably of a Russian model, were installed. After the study, we can say more," the archaeologist told Sputnik.



It is already known that this is a whole bath complex. Such establishments in the East, due to climatic features, were very popular, and were also quite a profitable commercial enterprise.

"All of them were furnaces. The heating system was located under the floor, and thus the heat was distributed throughout all rooms," Mirzaakhmedov.

From the central room of the building, there were internal galleries. There were hot and cold rooms, allowing the body to adapt to temperature gradually. There was also a hairdresser's, a laundry, a massage room, a room for intimate hygiene, a prayer room, and medicinal herbal baths.

Friends often gathered in the baths, and trade deals were made. After a long journey, the caravaneers always came here to wash and wash their clothes.



"Any archaeological site is unique in itself, and each of them differs from each other in methods of craftsmanship, perfection of execution, novelty of design. This find has its own distinctive feature - its heating system," explains the archaeologist. [5]

How in Rome

The uniqueness of the heating system is also noted by the private architect-restorer Zoirshokh Klichev. He says: there were 24 baths in the city, only three have survived to this day. Two of them are still in operation, and one is a catering establishment.

However, none of them today can be found like that, since they were modernized during the Soviet era.

"Here we can read everything. These cauldrons, under them a whole labyrinthine system of fat channels that heated cast-iron vats. This is a ready-made subject for research for those who are engaged in architecture," - said Z. Klichev.

The specialist is sure: the remains of the Kavshiolak bath were found in Bukhara, and he draws attention to the brick shape, which is atypically large for such objects. In his opinion, this may indicate an earlier age of the monument than archaeologists suggest.

The architect-restorer also pays special attention to the wall covering of the preserved pools. In his



opinion, it may be a special plaster found also in the ancient cities of Italy.

“This thick layer of plaster is made in a special way. It has spent so many years underground, but it has not lost its strength. No scratches remain on it. A similar material was used by the masters of Ancient Rome. I think this is the same technology. Civilizations on the Great Silk Road influenced each other in everything, especially in the construction trade, "Klichev.

The monument is awaiting detailed study. The further fate of the object will be decided by the local authorities. [5]



Karshi bath (1592/93)

An interesting object is the famous Karshi bathhouse, the construction of which dates back to the 16th century. After the restoration, the building of the ancient bathhouse, according to the aksakals, lost its former properties. There is a legend that due to the peculiar structure, the heat in the bath was maintained with the help of the flame of just one small candle.

The architecture of the Karshi baths is very similar to the famous medieval baths of the 16th century in Bukhara, Samarkand, Shakhrisabz. The medieval bath, in addition to its main hygienic purpose, served as a place for friendly and business communication between the townspeople. The Herat poet of the 16th century Zayiniddin Vasifi even sang the bath in verse:

As usual, it is buried in the ground to reduce heat loss. The above-ground part of the bathhouse with a dressing room, a mosque and a teahouse. Its underground part consists of a suite of domed halls connected by arched passages. The arrangement of the halls is three-row in cross-section, five-row in length. The central hall - kinnik - is highlighted in size. The premises of the bathhouse had a strictly defined purpose and, depending on it, were heated in different ways. The first room is cool and served as a dressing room for underwear. The second, with a moderate temperature, called "dam olish", was used for relaxation when going to warm soap rooms and on the way back, in order to avoid a sharp temperature drop. In the central hall, with a rectangular sufa in the center and in the side soap rooms, with a step-bench along the perimeter of the walls, preparations for the massage and massage took place. In the last three halls - hunukhana, garmkhana and modcha, connected respectively with reservoirs of cold, hot and warm water, water was collected.

The reservoirs, hunukhana and modcha, are rectangular in plan, covered with low domes of the "balkhi" system, the rest of the halls - with circular domes on shield sails. [5]

The technical characteristics of the ancient Bukhara baths are admirable and are still little studied by modern scientists. From an engineering point of view, it is very difficult to create a completely unique heating system using ordinary wood, maintaining different temperatures under the floor, with a spherical ceiling that does not allow suffocation in such a large room with many rooms.

Summing up, we can say that the activities of the baths were of great importance in the life of the population of eastern countries. People were cleansed and received wellness treatments. Over the centuries, some of the rituals associated with the bath were formed in the region.

It is necessary to state the fact that the baths built in Central Asia were built in densely populated areas, around the caravanserais, mainly in the city centers. In our opinion, this state implied the cleanliness of merchants and artisans, the performance of religious rites in purity. [6]

Thus, the bath in the material and spiritual culture occupied a significant place in the life of the people and continues to arouse the interest of researchers. The belief in its effectiveness has been growing among the population lately. In our opinion, this happens for several reasons, the most significant of which should be considered the interest of the population in a healthy lifestyle through a traditionally established culture, where a prominent role belongs to the bathhouse. We need to restore this tradition, build public baths, using the experience of our ancestors.

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