

From The Religious Educational Buildings in The Syrdarya Basin: Kaljan Ahun Madrasa

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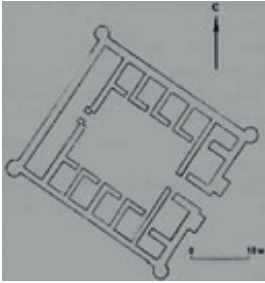
Abstract: The vast lands of modern Kazakhstan, especially the Transoxania region, have been a geographic region in which the Turks have played an important role throughout history. For example, in the Syrdarya basin in the 9th-10th centuries. There is a city of Yangikent/Dzhankent, which was the capital of the Oghuz period until the first half of the 19th century. It is known that after converting to Islam, various religious architectural structures were built in the region, especially hanikahs and madrasas. Since the Syrdarya basin is strategically located and was the object of constant wars for regional dominance, religious architectural structures have not survived to this day. Archaeological excavations conducted in different periods have uncovered ruins of structures. According to the researchers, it has been established that the cities were abandoned due to war and the retreat or change in the course of the Syrdarya River. Although educational structures were built in the region from the early days of converting to Islam, only ruins remain.

Although there is no exact data about when the first madrasahs were built, there are different opinions on this matter. However, one of the first buildings mentioned in the sources as a madrasa belongs to the jurist and hadith scholar Abu Bakr Ahmed ibn. This is the building of Dar as-Sunna in Nishapur, founded by Ishaq. However, madrasahs and lodges made a significant contribution to the spread of Islam among the Turks of Turkestan and Khorasan. In general, madrasa structures providing education can be found in all regions where Islam has spread. As madrasa structures became more widespread, they were supported by the income of foundations created under the patronage of sultans, influential statesmen, and wealthy individuals.

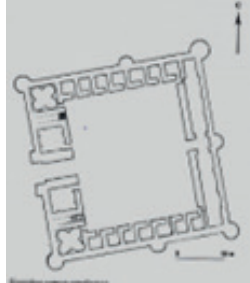
In this report, we will focus on the Kaljan Ahun Madrasa, which made a great contribution to the education and training of the population of the Syrdarya basin. The Kaljan Ahun Madrasa is significant because it is the only surviving example and is located in the Kyzylorda region in the Syrdarya River basin. The madrasa was built in the shape of a square with an open courtyard. It consists of student rooms and classrooms (mosques) facing the courtyard on three sides of the square courtyard. The building continued to function as a madrasa until 1922. Since religious education was prohibited in the Soviet Union, the madrasa building was used for other purposes. Today, the building, registered and protected by the Department of Nature Protection of Kazakhstan, has been restored. This study focuses on the 20th century. The plan, architecture and decoration of the Kaljan Ahun Madrasa, built in the early 19th century, were studied using a comparative method. In addition, its place and significance in Turkish-Islamic art were emphasized by comparing it with other madrasahs in the region.

Keywords: Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Kaljan Ahun, Turkish-Islamic Architecture, Madrasa, Religious Buildings, Syrdarya.

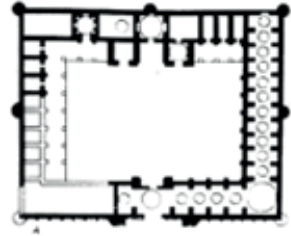
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Mangistau, Beldeuli Caravansarai plan (14th century) (Collection of Monuments.)



Mangistau, Caravansarai Koskudik plan (14th century) (Collection of Monuments.)



Herat, Kush Ribat Caravansarai plan (late 15th century) (A.G. Pugachenkova)

As a result, it is the only example of religious educational structure (madrasa) with a square plan and an open courtyard that has survived to this day. A common feature of the madrasa is that all the student cells overlook the central courtyard. The madrasa has retained its originality in architecture and planning. Kaljan Ahun was an outstanding cleric, educator and religious scholar who contributed greatly to the spread of Islamic culture among the people, provided religious education and will live in the memory of people for generations. Kaljan Ahun encouraged the construction of religious educational structures, not limited to religious education only. Thus, many madrassas were built in the region. However, since the madrassas were built entirely of adobe bricks, they have not survived to this day. Kazakh believers played a major role in conveying the true religion of Islam to the population in a simple and understandable language, linking it with national values in the daily lives of people of the same religion. Despite the oppression of Tsarist Russia at that time, by spreading religious education in the Kyzylorda region, the clergy of today's Kazakhstan made a great contribution to the development of Islamic values and a high level of religious and ideological activity in the country.

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