

**Abstract**

This article discusses historical and archaeological tourism in Namangan region. Also, an opinion was expressed about the study of Ahsikent, Munchoktepa, Mugtepa, Uchtepa as an important object of architectural monuments, and the tourism areas that can be developed in these areas and their surroundings today.

**Keywords:** tourism, archeology, Akhsikent, Munchogtepa, Mugtepa, Uchtepa, cultural heritage, economy, Uzbek tourism.

**Introduction**

Antiquities in the old cities of Uzbekistan, places where scholars who made a great contribution to world civilization grew up, attracted the people of the world and tourists. Also, the "Great Silk Road" that connected the East and West countries from ancient times through our country played an important role in the functioning of Uzbekistan as a center of ancient trade routes.

The Fergana Valley is rich in water sources, has a moderate climate, fertile soil, and there were very favorable natural conditions for human living and working in this land. It has been one of the places of the earliest human ancestors since the beginning of human history.

In recent years, the study of the history of our country based on primary sources has become one of the most urgent issues, especially in Namangan region.

Cities such as Aksikent, Koson, which served as the capital of Ferghana region, and settlements such as Munchogtepa, Ayritom, Mugtepa, Buonamozor, Kurgantepa, Kultepa, Kuyuktepa, Dahyakota, which are centers of ancient culture, have their own place. The above monuments are sources of rapid development of historical and archaeological tourism.

After the views expressed by the head of the country during his visit to Namangan region in November 2016, during the meeting with the representatives of the region, practical work was started to study the history of the ancient cities. In this meeting, he said: "...the famous architectural monuments of this land, such as Ahsikent, Munchogtepa, Ayritom, and Mugtepa, testify to the development of a unique civilization and rich culture in this area in the past" [4]. The ruins of the city of Akhsikent have been preserved on the banks of the Syrdarya River in the Toraqorgan district of the Namangan region. Akhsikent is the largest archaeological monument in the Fergana Valley. The city was founded in the III century BC [13]. It was the oldest capital, political, cultural and economic center of the Fergana Valley and one of the main cities of the Great Silk Road. The presence of an underground water facility and the location of the city in a convenient geographical location for defense are the unique aspects of



the city of Ahsikent. Industries such as glass and ceramics, metallurgy and weaponry are developed here [11].

Scientist O. Papakhristu, who did scientific work on Aksikent metallurgy, shows that Aksikent steel was made in high-temperature furnaces (khumdon) and fire-resistant clay pots (crucibles)[10:49].

Akhsikent served as the capital of the Ferghana Valley in the centuries BC, and in the second half of the VII-X and XV centuries.

A lot has been written about the special importance of this city in historical sources, in particular in "Boburnoma". Since ancient times, there was an underground water structure here, so it was considered convenient for defense. "One of the villages on the north side of the Sayhun river is Akhsidur, in books it is called Akhsikat bitadur... Andijondin is nine stone roads to the west. Umar Sheikh Mirza made Muni the capital, and a couple of years later, he built more ravines. There is no such fortified fortress in Ferghana" [9:8].

Archaeological research of Aksikent began in 1885. At first, professor of St. Petersburg University, famous archaeologist and orientalist N.I. Veselovsky worked. In 1913, the next excavation and research was conducted by I.A. Kastane. In 1939, during the construction of the Great Fergana Canal, Professor M.E. Masson was engaged in archaeological exploration here. Since 1960, specialists under the leadership of Academician of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, Yahya Ghulomov, have carried out archaeological excavations in Akhsikent. I.Akhrorov, Y.Qasimov, A.Anorboev and other research scientists conducted archaeological excavations in 1967-1969, 1970-1974, 1980-1990 and later and collected important information and physical evidence[12].

The study of the history of Aksikent and the transformation of this area into a tourist destination are gaining momentum today. In front of our scientists there are many scientific sources, archeological monuments occupying a huge area, which still need to be studied.

This monument is important in increasing the tourism potential of Namangan region. Presentations about ancient Akhsikent are also held at tourist exhibitions in our country and abroad. As a result, interest in the historical monument is increasing among local and foreign tourists. So far, tourists from countries such as Belgium, Austria, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, and India have visited. In 2017, in accordance with the president's order, in order to study Kadamjo, increase its attractiveness and the flow of tourists, great work was started on the preservation and research of the historical monument of Akhsikent, and the creation of its true history.

With the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 831 dated October 16, 2017, the Ahsikent directorate was established for the purpose of comprehensive in-depth research of the ancient monument. [3]

Another such monument that can be an object of archeological tourism is Mugtepa archeological heritage located near the city of Kosonsoy in Namangan region, a place with a history of more than 2200 years. Very little information is given in written sources about the history of Mugtepa's appearance and stages of its development. Therefore, the study of its history is mainly based on the material evidence found during the excavations carried out by archaeologists in this area and the results of written scientific research.



Mugtepa is located near the city of Kosonsoy, its area is not very large. The monument consists of two parts: the ark (fort) and the city.

Both parts are surrounded by a defensive wall with watchtowers. There has not been much research done here. Partial archaeological excavations were carried out in 1948, 1982, 1990 [10:44].

An arch stands out in the south-west side of Shahristan, materials from the beginning of our era and the late Middle Ages were found. According to the researchers who conducted research in Shahristan, this place was very skillfully protected. That is, the side where the enemy attack is expected is fortified with an additional wall [10:45].

Doctor of History, Professor Adhamjon Ashirov stated that "...in 1896, the Russian researcher N. Sherbina-Kramerenko conducted archaeological excavations in the ruins of Koson for the first time. In his report on the study of the northern regions of the Fergana Valley, he noted that materials of archaeological value can be obtained from this place. A year later, N. Bryanov expressed his opinion against Sherbina-Kramerenko and wrote that although the ruins of Mugtepa on the site of the city of Koson have an ancient history, they do not have rich archaeological materials that illuminate the history of this city. In our opinion, the author made such a conclusion because preliminary researches were carried out in the ancient city of Koson during this period and researchers did not dig up rare materials that speak about the history of the city in the depths of the mother earth" [6].

Even later, archaeologists studied the ruins of Mugtepa with great interest. Because the remains of this old city are extremely ancient and have rich historical information. Today, the archaeological objects found in this place are stored in the Kosonsoy History Museum, and scientific research is being carried out.

Historians of the 15th and 16th centuries do not give information about Mugtepa, but they tell about the nearby Koson.

Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur "Another Kosandur. It is located in the north of Akhsi. It is a smaller town. ... Akhsi suyi comes from Kosan. It is good land. There are kindergartens. He states in his work that "Vale safoliq nurseries are located all along the banks of the river... There is an obsession of Osh and Kosan people in Safa and the air".

At the beginning of the 8th-9th centuries, life stopped in Mugkala. In our opinion, the population will begin to settle in the place of the current city - Kosonsoy [10:46].

The remains of Mugtepa's defensive walls have been preserved to this day. The ceramic vessels made by the city artisans in the past, found during the researches, are of high quality in terms of their manufacturing technique and technology, and it is evidence that the characteristics of the settled urban culture, in particular, crafts, were highly developed in this area.

A number of works are being carried out in order to restore the ancient history and rich culture of our people.

- Adequate protection, conservation and preservation of the Mugtepa archaeological heritage site
- Organization of archaeological excavations, archaeological excavations and archeological control at the site by archaeologists who have obtained an open sheet and permit at the site.



- Development and implementation of the scientific-historical concept of the complex based on the results of in-depth scientific and archaeological research;
- Creating favorable conditions for tourists, scientific researchers and visitors;
- To organize modern recreation centers outside the protected area of the object while preserving the historical appearance and take other necessary measures to increase the tourist potential of the object;

By the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 788 of October 2, 2018, the protection and research complex of the archaeological heritage site "Mugtepa" was established[2].

Munchogtepa, another complex of archaeological monuments, is located on the banks of the Syrdarya river, 2 km south of the city of Pop, in the Namangan region.

Munchoqtepa monument complex consists of Munchogtepa, Balandtepa, Temirkasmoqtepa. In 1987-1994, scientific and research works were carried out in the cemetery of Munchogtepa. The ancient cemetery is located on the right bank of the Syrdarya, 1.5-2 km south-west of the present city of Pop. But in the upper part of the cemetery there is no external sign indicating his grave. The pile of soil piled on top of the graves was leveled over time, and its area was used for economic purposes. Only the cemetery on two north-eastern and south-western hills has survived to us. They were tentatively named Munchogtepa I, II [11:72].

Old Pop is a real treasure for archaeologists. The discovery made in 1988 under the leadership of archaeologist Abdulhamid Anorboev surprised everyone. The discovery of reed coffins dating back to the 5th-7th centuries, before Islam, showed that the burial ceremony was unique in the land population here. As a result of the examination of various objects placed in the reed coffin with the corpse, it is proved that the influence of Sogd and Choch culture was strong. Among the fossils, there are thin fiber cotton bows and arrows, a complex folded flute, a hoe handle, a boot mold and many household items, which testify to the musical culture of that time [10:41].

The discovery of perfectly preserved silk and thread headpieces from Munchogtepa mounds has opened new pages in the history of not only textiles, but also the clothing of the peoples of Central Asia. Studying these clothes in situ and researching them in laboratory conditions shows that the clothes of the ancient Ferganas were made in a very complex manner[11:179]. Just like a house, the mortuary has vaulted ceilings and elaborately polished walls and floors. The huts were built to be very seismically strong, and they could not be affected by strong earthquakes. The corpses of the dead are placed in reed coffins inside the crypt. Coffins - selected reed stalks are rounded and attached to each other with the help of wooden pegs, giving them a unique box (coffin) shape. All prepared coffins are closed with a lid made of reeds and tied with a reed belt.

All this, fabric clothes, leather and shoe remains show that our ancestors paid special attention to making everyday clothes.

Climate, physical, chemical, biological, microbiological processes are part of the continuous processes that gradually erode the structure and appearance of historical monuments. Due to the influence of these processes for a long time, the structure of the rare monuments, the composition of alloys, and the colors of the patterns that give shine gradually fade and erode, causing great damage to the ancient structures. The effects of such harmful processes can be



seen in ancient historical monuments such as Aksikent, Munchogtepa, Kuyultepa, Kuyuktepa, G'ovozontepa [7].

One of the main factors in the attraction of foreign tourists to Uzbekistan is the historical and cultural heritage of the Great Silk Road, and the number of visitors is increasing due to the hospitality of the people of Uzbekistan.

Tourism has become one of the important social, economic and cultural factors in the globalized world. The total revenue in this sector of the economy is trillions of dollars, and more than one billion people travel around the world every year. Tourism is not only a type of commercial services, but today the sustainable development of tourism markets provides an opportunity to create new jobs and develop related industries [8].

The Head of State, the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the State Committee for Tourism Development, the Namangan Regional Government and the Ministry of Culture are conducting practical work to create all the necessary conditions for the organization of large-scale visits of local and foreign pilgrims and tourists to historical monuments.

Nowadays, tourism is one of the promising sectors that bring high income to the national economy. Uzbekistan is a country with great potential in the field of tourism. There are more than 7,300 objects of cultural heritage in our country, and most of them are included in the UNESCO list[5].

During the years of independence, the legal and economic foundations of tourism were created in our country. By the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on July 27, 1992, the national company "Uzbekturizm" was established. State and public organizations related to the network were included in its composition, regional departments were established. In 1993, the national company "Uzbekturizm" became an equal member of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

In recent years, great importance has been attached to the development of tourism in our country.

In conclusion, measures are being taken to develop domestic tourism in the Fergana Valley. It is emphasized that the main task is to seek solutions to the issues of studying, preserving, using, popularizing and sustainable management of historical and cultural heritage, in particular, archeological monuments.

There are more than 250 objects of tangible cultural heritage in Namangan region. It is the honorable and responsible duty of everyone to seriously study this great heritage, to preserve it carefully and to pass it on to future generations.

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