



## Charimgar Mosque in Karshi

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### ABSTRACT

This article is about the mosque in Karshi, known as Charimgar. The monument belongs to the buildings of religious architecture of the second half of the 19th century, has historical and architectural value in the structure of the city.

### Keywords:

mosque, mosque in Karshi, mosque Charmgar, architecture of mosques.

According to historical information, two mosques with the same name were known in the city of Karshi. One of them is located on UzbekistanSkaya Street, the other - on Yangi-Kucha Street. Both mosques are located in the ancient quarter of tanners (Charimgar quarter), which is reflected in the name of both mosques. The plan of Karshi-Kurgana with the Mosque Charmgar of the late XIX - early XX century, was drawn up by M.E. Mason in 1966.

The first scientific information about these mosques is given by M.E. Masson in his work "Capital Cities in the Region of the Lower

Reaches of Kashkadarya from Ancient Times". It describes in detail the historical events that took place in a vast area of this region. Along the Xandthe Aban there were shops-workshops of arbaksheian and a trading row of tanners. The latter lived in the immediately located guzar or village of Charimgar, which had grown by the described time so much that it had four quarterly mosques, that is, consisted of four parishes. <sup>1</sup> It was also confirmed that four mosques were built in the Charimgar quarter to serve its population.

<sup>1</sup> Masson M. E. Stolichnye gorodi v oblast'nosovyiv Kashkadarya s drevnei vremya. (From the works of the Kesh

archaeological and topographic expedition of TashSU - 1965-1966). – Tashkent: Izdatelstvo FAN UzSSR, 1973.



According to the descriptions of M.E. Masson, we know that the Charimgar quarter was located outside the former kala on the territory of the new bazaar, and the bulk of the population living here was divided into two territorial groups. Both groups included residents of two or three quarters (guzars) and several suburban villages.

At the end of the 40s of the last century, the architect A.Z. Zainuddinov first made an architectural description of the Charimgar mosque and its dating by a member of a special expedition to take cultural heritage objects on the state register of the Uzbek SSR.

Repeated examination of the monument, made in 1954 by N.I. Frenkel, much attention is paid to architectural decor.

The time of construction of the mosque is typical for the XVII-XVIII centuries. Judging by the size and richness of the decoration, the mosque can be attributed to the significant buildings of that time, and, perhaps, it was even a cathedral. This opinion is shared by N.I. Frenkel in the "Field Diary of the Survey of Architectural Monuments for State Protection ...", who studied the architectural monuments of Karshi and certain areas of the Kashkadarya region.<sup>2</sup>

In 1985, a group of architects of the Institute of UzNIPI Restoration began research work on

the monument with the aim of further restoration.

V. Zotov performed archaeological excavations, according to which it was established that the Charimgar Mosque was built on the site of an earlier structure, the remains of which were discovered during the study by pits.

It was not possible to accurately date this structure, but a small gap in the cultural layers suggests that it was erected in the first half of the XIX century, under the specific ruler of the Nesev viloyat Amir Haidar or his son Muzaffar (according to the report of V. Zotov)."

According to local old-timers, there was a primary school (maktab) at the mosque, where the children of the more affluent residents of Guzar were educated. Those who graduated from the school at the mosque could then enter the madrasah.

Darvazakhana and part of the hujras from the surviving older structure served as housing for ishans and classrooms for learning children. The ministers of the mosque lived in the southern wing, not far from the monument. The construction of the mosque was due to an increase in the population and a lack of premises for daily and Friday prayers.

According to old-timers, the mosque was built by Bukhara masters in the style of Tashkent quarter mosques.

<sup>2</sup> Frenkel N.I. Field diary of the survey and a brief description of the architectural monuments of Kashkadarya. Archive of the Main NPU for the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage

Sites of the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Inv.No1665/f87. - Tashkent, 1954.

When studying the mosque, A.Z. Zainutdinov drew attention to the beauty of the paintings, ceilings, which greatly distinguished it from other similar structures. As A.Z. Zainutdinov writes, "the preservation of the mosque is good, the ayvan on one side has been destroyed and the utility rooms and the house have not been preserved." In his opinion, there were 24 columns in the mosque at that time and all of them were processed one better than the other. On one of the columns there is an inscription: "made in 1179 AH usto Pirnazar under bobo Ibadullo Aksakal".

During field research in 1985, attention was drawn to this inscription. When cleaning the contours of the carvings of the Arabic inscription, it turned out that individual sections of the recesses were smeared with putty and painted over with oil paint, as a result of which the year 1279 was read as 1179 AH and the error in dating was 97 years. The year 1179 corresponds to 1775, and the year 1279 corresponds to 1862 According to Kh.T. Sultanov and the carved inscription on one of the columns has a translation: "Made in 1279 Hijri usto Pirnazar under the bobo Ibadullo Aksakal"<sup>3</sup>.

In 1949, the building of the mosque was used as an exhibition hall and a library of the House of Culture of Karshi.

In 1954, during the survey of N.I. Frenkel, attention was also drawn to the richness of the interior decoration of the winter hall, however, the mihrab niche from numerous repair layers completely lost the original decor. N.I. Frenkel even suggested that, judging by the size and richness of the decoration, it could be one of the significant mosques, maybe even a juma mosque.

During research in 1985, it was found that the structure lost up to 80% of its original appearance during its existence. The northern

and southern iwans and 1/3 of the eastern one were completely lost. Part of the eastern wall of the winter hall was lost. The preserved premises during the period of adaptation to the house of culture were divided into a number of small rooms and a hall. An assembly hall with a stage was added on the site of the northern iwan. During the construction, the building worked under the leadership of Khudaiberdy Iusto Al-matdon.

According to the description of the monument, we can say the following. The Charmgar Mosque is a rectangular building measuring 13.5x12.8 m on the sides, oriented in the east-west direction, surrounded by a tripartite building on the southern, northern and eastern sides, supported by 15 columns. The total size of the mosque, including the iwan, was 20.8x16.4 m along the north-south line.

The main façade faces east. The walls of the winter mosque are painted over. The western wall is dissected into panels and niches, which are contoured with ganch rods and stripes of relief ornament.

The wooden columns are painted with blue oil paint. Some of the columns are installed on stone bases, some - on wooden ones. Of the nine columns - two smooth with a pear-shaped shape at the base, three - the trunks are 16-sided, hewn, ending above the rounded part with teeth. The three columns at the bottom are processed in the shape of a ball with a modachel ornament consisting of four blades. One of the columns, located in the middle of the first row, has a very fine and deep artistic carving on the modahils and a strip of fine carvings on top of the base.

The ceiling is divided by powerful beams into four longitudinal parts. The outermost parts are evenly articulated throughout the secondary beams, and the two middle ones are further divided by the beams into two parts.

<sup>3</sup> Sultanov, Kh.T., Gilmanova, N.V. Historical, architectural and artistic heritage of Kashkadarya. – Tashkent: Fan va texnologiyalar nashriyot-matbaa uyi, 2022. - 328 p.



The western half of the middle part is also divided into 4 squares by main beams. This part of the ceiling is raised. Each square is divided by secondary beams into a kind of caissons framed by a ganch sharaf. On the entire ceiling on the beams are laid vasses, painted in red. The beams have an artistic painting with geometric and floral ornaments. The paintings are dominated by a white background, the patterns on it are made in blue, red, green. The sides of the beams are painted with a blue tone. In the sharaf, in addition to color painting, gilding is used. Interesting configuration have subbalances.<sup>4</sup>

The winter room of the mosque has a flat beam ceiling resting on 9 columns. In the 50s,

the monument was heavily rebuilt with a significant change in its planning structure and original appearance. The southern iwan was completely destroyed, the northern and eastern ones were laid by the wall.

Inside, the southern and northern colonnades were laid. In connection with the reconstruction of the building, the wooden structures of the ceilings of the southern and northern iwans were completely lost, the wooden structures of the ceiling of the mosque and the eastern iwan were almost completely lost.



<sup>4</sup> Sultanov, Kh.T., Gilmanova, N.V. Historical, architectural and artistic heritage of Kashkadarya. – Tashkent: Fan va texnologiyalar nashriyot-matbaa uyi, 2022. - 328 p.

In 1996, the roof was repaired, attic along the rafters of roofing tin. Structurally, the building is a spaceless structure with a flat beam ceiling of both the mosque and the iwans.

The beam ceiling is wooden, consists of main beams resting on wooden carved columns through figured underbalances and secondary beams with figured consoles. A vassa is laid on top of the secondary beams.

During the period of its adaptation to the regional House of Culture, after the collapse of the northern and southern iwans, work was carried out to rebuild and adapt the monument,



Состояние мечети до реставрации.

During the renovation period, the décor of the ganch carving on the west side of the winter hall was also lost.

Two compartments of the western wing of the ceiling of the central part of the winter hall of the mosque are solved with an increase and are richly decorated with ganch stalactites along the perimeter of the recesses. Beams, voussa are painted with colored floral ornaments. Also richly decorated are two compartments of the eastern, central half of the hall, but without a raise and without ganch stalactite belts.

in connection with which, it completely lost its original appearance.

The winter hall of the mosque with a flat ceiling with 9 columns was divided into 3 small office rooms, cut off along the axis of the columns of the southern wing, and the northern part along the axis of the columns was cut off to the extension for the cinema hall. As a result, of the 6 columns of the mosque hall, a room with 3 columns, adapted for a glazed lobby, has been preserved. The cornice of the iwan was lost or cut off during the adaptation, and the columns were lined with plywood.



Мечеть Чаримгар, ул. Узбекистанская (проект).

Wooden doors are lost completely, and in the late period of reconstruction, the doorways are almost all laid. Judging by the layout of the structure, the decoration of the interior and in comparison with other, similar structures - Kurgancha, Chakar, etc., it follows that double-leaf carved doors with double-sided carvings were installed in the monument. Also, all the panjar grilles above all the doorways and two overlooking the western facade have been lost.

The western wall of the winter hall was originally finished with ganch carvings with figured mirrors and niches. Currently, the loss of carving is 95% and recreating the original décor is almost impossible.

The floors in the premises are currently wooden. During the archaeological study of the monument with pits, it was found out that the flooring, foundations and parapets of the walls on the monument were made of burnt square bricks with a cross-section of 19 \* 19 \* 4 cm, taken from a destroyed, more ancient structure.

Landscaping of the territory is lost completely. Currently, on the site of the southern iwan, there is an asphalt road 7 m wide from the preserved load-bearing walls of the mosque to the groin fence enclosing the garden of the manor plot. The possible used plot of land from the residential building to the fence is 3.6 m. The territory adjacent to the northern facade of the mosque occupies a small area from the edge of the iwan to the corner of the earlier brick structure, where there is a steep decrease to 1.5 m. Currently, the walls of a residential building have been erected on the lower part.

In April 2011, by the decision of the khokim of the city of Karshi dated 06.04.2011, under No. x-268/4, an assessment of the technical state of the monument was made and the following conclusions were made: at present, the south-western corner of the walls has subsided, deep cracks have appeared, the upper part is strongly eroded by atmospheric moisture, freely penetrating inside, the wooden pillars of the frame are rotten, and the lower ones are also rotten. the basement of the north-western part, part of the western wall sagging, with deep cracks. The western facade of the mosque, facing the side of the courtyard of the residential building, is decorated with two window openings. The glazed blocks inserted into the windows are repair, the ganch panjara blocks are lost.

The condition of the wall is unsatisfactory, with many repair bookmarks. The wall is covered with metal mesh, partially fixed with clay and cement plaster. The northern part of the wall is partially plastered with cement mortar. The lower parts of the wall are destructive. The blind at the western façade is

made of burnt rectangular bricks. The brick is crushed in places.

In the immediate vicinity of the western wall of the mosque there is a water pipe, the water from which flows into a small vegetable garden with several trees, which is broken just behind the blind of the western facade of the mosque. The installation of a water pipe in the vicinity of the monument negatively affects both the supporting structures of the structure and its appearance.

The southern facade of the mosque is open towards the road (quarterly), a level that corresponds to the floor of the mosque. The ivan in front of the façade is lost. There are four door-window openings on the façade. The filling of the openings is lost. Tagsinch wall is below ground level in front of the façade. In the rainy season, water flows inside the mosque.

The upper part of the wall is not completed, i.e. without a parapet. This section of the wall has been repeatedly repaired by local residents (mainly with clay coating). The wall in this area is blurred. The ancient beams carved with the sea in the places of support on the wall from the long-term penetration of atmospheric moisture and prolonged exposure to a damp state rotted. The surface of the wall is plastered with cement mortar on top of clay, in some places it peels off.

The plane of the walls is smoothly plastered with cement mortar over clay. There are cracks on the surface of the wall, mainly in its northern part. The walls are decorated with patterned mirrors in the "kirma" technique.

The décor is partially lost, the mihrab niche, decorated with stalactite on the dome, with traces of many repairs. The edges of the stalactites have lost their clarity.

The inner part of the walls (southwest, northwestern part of the western wall; western and eastern part of the northern wall, western part of the southern wall) is deformed. The frame posts are rotten in places, the filling of the cat frame is lost in places, blurred.

The floor in the interior is lined with burnt rectangular brick on a concrete base with pouring the seams with cement mortar. The surface of the floor is uneven with a slope to the north, with sagging areas, damp.

A cement screed is also made over the hung section of the roof. On the rest of the roof, namely over the ancient beam ceiling carved with painting, a backfill was made (the soil mixed with construction debris), on top of which there is a coating of rolled roofing material, the surface of which is torn and with many holes. The preservation of the mosque is good. The total area of the land plot is 0.032 hectares<sup>5</sup>.

In May 2021, in order to study the architectural monuments of Kashkadarya, we managed to visit the Charmgar Mosque, dated to the second half of the XIX century, which, unfortunately, has not preserved its original appearance after reconstruction. Since the monument belongs to the structures of religious architecture of the second half of the XIX

century. and has historical and architectural value in the structure of the city, the decision of the Executive Committee of the city of Karshi of 20.03.85 under No. 81/3, the monument was taken under the protection of the State. The mosque is now not operating for its intended purpose, there is a children's art studio, where repair work has just been carried out. When the building of the mosque came to an unusable condition and required restoration work, it underwent repair work that violated its authenticity. As a result of the alterations and repairs, the original design and appearance of the mosque are irretrievably lost, and at the same time the artistic decor of the ganch carvings, the alkhi with painted floral ornaments, there is no decor on the dome a mihrabnoy niche and with ganch stalactites.



**The current state of the mosque of the XIX century. in Karshi.  
Mihrabnaya nis a.**

**Foto Garifulina I.R. May, 2021.**

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<sup>5</sup> Used materials submitted by the State Inspectorate for the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Sites of Kashkadarya Region: Karshi, Nasaf Street, 41.

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