

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL LIFE OF QASHQADARYO IN THE 1920S–EARLY 21ST CENTURY (THE CASE OF KASAN DISTRICT)

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Abstract: *This article studies the socio-economic and cultural development of Kasan district from the 1920s to the early 21st century. It analyzes the historical formation of the area, population migration, agricultural and industrial growth. The significance of archaeological sites such as Kosontepa, Lagmantepa, and Obrontepa is highlighted. The research reveals the historical evolution of Kasan and its role in regional development. This article is useful for those interested in history and economics.*

Keywords: *Kasan district, Qashqadaryo, socio-economic development, cultural life, historical monuments, Kosontepa, Obrontepa, agriculture, industry, migration, archaeology, historical evolution, Kushan Empire, population density, regional development.*

Located in Qashqadaryo Region of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Kasan district is one of the earliest established districts in the country, founded on September 29, 1926. The name “Kasan” is believed to originate from the mispronunciation of the ancient name “Kat,” derived from the word “Kas,” meaning “fortified city.” Historically, Kasan was an important stop on the Great Silk Road and a hub of artisanship and craftsmanship, with widely developed trades such as pottery, blacksmithing, woodcarving, chest making, decorative arts, jewelry, gold embroidery, carpet weaving, sewing, and textiles. Literature, art, and culture also flourished here.

Sources indicate that after the fall of the Bactrian state, the Kushan Empire ruled much of present-day Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan during the 1st–2nd centuries CE. The term “Kushan” is believed to have evolved phonetically into “Kashan” and later “Kasan.” This phonetic shift is attributed to the similarity in the Arabic script between the letters “sh” and “s.” Initially, the term “Kasan” appeared in Namangan region’s Kosonsoy.

The naming of Eshon Kasan cemetery and local neighborhoods supports the historical roots of the name. In short, the origin of the term “Kasan” is a worthy subject of scholarly study.

Until the 1950s, Kasan was a small village. By 1997, its population had reached 54,000. Between 1972 (when it was granted city status) and 1997, 16 neighborhoods were established. During this period, the town saw the development of 110 organizations, 6 industrial enterprises, 3 public dining facilities, 4 banks, 7 farmer markets, 83 schools, 44 kindergartens, 8 hospitals, 13 pharmacies, 17 medical centers and clinics, 44 libraries, 12 clubs, and other cultural, medical, trade, and administrative institutions.

From the 1950s onward, population resettlements occurred. Mountain dwellers were relocated to lowland areas where cotton was grown. Residents of Toshkurgon, Zarmo's, Vori, and Qiziltom in Yakkabog' moved to Kasbi and Mirishkor districts, establishing new settlements under the same names. In the 1980s, cotton growers from Chiroqchi reclaimed land on the fringes of the Karshi steppe, naming their new village Chiroqchi. Similarly, residents of Sherobod, Muzrabot, and Qizirik districts of Surxondaryo region—who had migrated to Dehqonobod, G'uzor, Yakkabog', and Kasbi in the 1950s—returned to Kasan, Nishon, Muborak, and Mirishkor in the 1980s, founding new villages with names like Surxon and Sherobod.

This naming process created a situation in which newer village names no longer corresponded to ancient naming conventions, which were based on natural, social, and spiritual factors. For example, the village "Chiroqchi" was named because Chiroqchi natives reclaimed the land and built cotton-growing settlements. Similar principles applied to other villages such as "O'g'in," established by people from mountainous areas of Yakkabog'.

Kosontepa, a significant ancient site, is located southeast of present-day Kasan city. The site covers an area of approximately 200×150 meters and rises 8–12 meters above the surrounding land. Excavations revealed remnants of buildings from later periods as well as artifacts from the 1st century BCE. Cultural layers dating back to the pre-Mongol era have also been uncovered. The ancient settlement, considered the predecessor of modern Kasan, originated in the 1st century BCE and continued to exist until destroyed during the Mongol invasion, after which the settlement shifted to its current location.

Lagmantepa, located near the ancient cities of Kasbi and Fazli, is believed to have developed during the same historical era as Kasan.

Another ancient site in the district is Obrontepa, situated at the foot of the Kasan mountains near the village of Obron. This location once held a large settlement. Remnants of architectural structures are visible, including a dome-shaped minaret approximately 18 meters high. The site spans 80×60 meters. Pottery from the 5th–6th centuries CE was discovered there, with upper layers yielding ceramic fragments from the 8th–10th centuries. Two coins with horse images and the "V" tamga were also found.

In conclusion, Kasan district is one of the oldest and historically rich regions of Uzbekistan, and its formation and development are deeply rooted in long-standing

historical processes. According to historical sources, the term "Kasan" dates back to the era of the Kushan Empire, during which this area served as a major center of craftsmanship, trade, and culture. During the 20th century—particularly between the 1950s and 1980s—the district underwent significant socio-economic transformations, characterized by population growth and the emergence of new rural settlements. This period saw the development of agriculture, industry, and infrastructure, making Kasan one of the key centers of the region.

Furthermore, the presence of ancient sites such as Kosontepa and Obrontepa clearly indicates that the region has deep historical roots. These archaeological monuments confirm that well-developed societies inhabited this territory in ancient times. Overall, Kasan district holds an important place in the history of Uzbekistan, and comprehensive research into its past contributes to a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical heritage of our people.

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