



KHAZRATI IMAM COMPLEX IN TASHKENT AND CONSERVATION OF ABUBAKR KAFFAL ASH-SHASHİ TOMB

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ABSTRACT

This study includes the results of the documentary research and analyses of the hand recording studies carried out in the mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi in Tashkent, which is an ancient monument in the Khazreti Imam Complex of the XVI century. Khazrati Imam died in the 10th Century, but his Complex (Hastimom) buildings were built in the 16th-20th Centuries in different periods. The oldest surviving building is the 16th Century Barakkhan Madrasah, in the Complex. In the middle of the 19th Century, the Tillashaikh Mosque, the Moi Mubarak Madrasah, and the Mosque (not exist today) were built. In the early 20th century, the Tillashaikh Mosque rebuilt. In this study, the Complex buildings of Khazrati Imam will be investigated, and the monumental tomb of Kaffal Shashi, which shows many different interpretations, will be examined from the conservation point of view.

Keywords: *Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb, Tashkent, Conservation, Chillexana, Gulam Hussein.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is supposed to be built Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb, in the middle of the 16th century, in the protected old site (Sebzor) of Tashkent, by the famous designer Gulam Hussein. Today, it allocated in a historic ensemble Khazrati Imam Complex, consisting of other buildings around the Mausoleum of Abubakir Kaffal ash-Shashi (Figure 1).

This architectural ensemble received the name of Khazrati Imam (Holy Imam) in honor of the famous imam, an expert on the Quran, scholar, and preacher Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi. He was a great scholar and theologian. He was born in Tashkent, in 903, in the family of a handicraftsman - Kaffal (masters of making skilled locks). The child was named in honor of the companion of the Prophet Muhammad and the first Caliph - Abu Bakr. He got an excellent education in madrassas in Tashkent, and then in Bukhara, Termez and Samarkand. Deeply devoted to the Muslim religion Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi repeatedly carried out Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, travelled to the big cities of the Muslim world, meeting, and debating with the most prominent Muslim scholars of that time. His knowledge of theology was so great, and his authority was so indisputable that in the Arab world, Abubakr was named the Great Imam. About Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb, the first construction of the mausoleum, in the 10th Century, has not much information. It is supposed that, after Kaffal ash-Shashi's death, the place was considered as a holy location and protected (Advantour, 2022).



Figure 1. Khazrati Imam Complex (Khazrati Imam Mosque and Moi Mubarak Madrasah)

2. THE BUILDINGS OF THE COMPLEX OF KHAZRATI IMAM IN TASHKENT

Khazrati Imam Complex (Khasti Imom) was built in the 16th-20th Century, in Tashkent, and the cemetery and the architectural complex around it are named after the Imam. The oldest surviving building was the 16th Century Barakkhan Madrasah. In the middle of the 19th century; the Tillashaikh Mosque, the Moi Mubarak Madrasah, and the Jome Mosque, which do not exist today, were built. In the early 20th century, the Tillashaikh Mosque was rebuilt. The Office of Muslims of Uzbekistan is acting in the Khazreti Imam Complex, today (Figure 1-5).



Figure 2. Khazrati Imam Complex (Google Earth, 2022)



Figure 3. Overview of the the Khazrati Imam Mosque in Tashkent (Agency of Muslims of Uzbekistan, 2022)

2.1. Barakkhan Madrasah

Barakkhan Madrasah (Figure 4) was built in Tashkent (1531/32 - second half of the 16th century) by Navruz Ahmadkhan popularly known as Barakkhan. He was the khan of the Shaybanid Dynasty, the youngest son of Suyunchkhohajon (the governor of Tashkent). After the death of his father, he was the governor of Tashkent (1525-51), and then the khan of Movarounnahr (1551-56). During his period, Barakkhan organized many military campaigns to expand his territory. If we pay attention to the architectural structure of this madrasah, there are rooms around the courtyard and the western part of the madrasah is slightly more advanced. The foundation was made of stone; the thick walls were made of bricks of different sizes. There were originally two mausoleums (big and small) on the site of the Barakkhan Madrasah (Figure 4).

The big one belonged to Suyunchkhohajon, the first governor of Tashkent belonging to the Shaybanid Dynasty, and the small mausoleum belonged to Barakkhan but it was moved later to Samarkand. Three of the doors on its four sides later closed. The huge roof on the east side of the madrasah was decorated with colorful glazed bricks, handasiy and girih patterns. The top of the roof did not preserve (Figure 4).

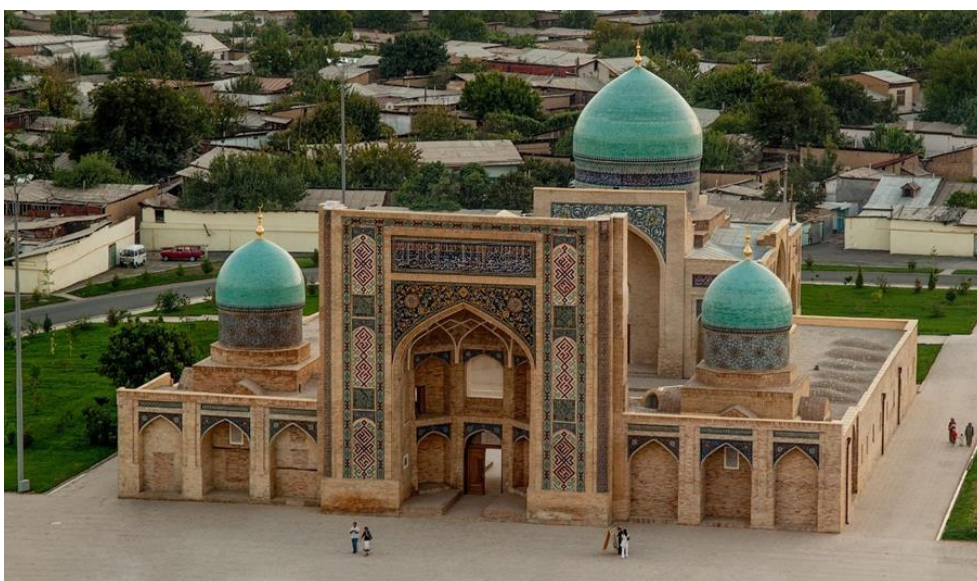


Figure 4. Barakkhan Madrasah General View (Karimova, 2022)

There were long rooms (koriahanas) in the four corners of the Barakkhan Madrasah. The shape and decoration of the building remained the same. Its 22-meter dome is decorated with blue glazed bricks (the dome collapsed during the 1868 earthquake). The 4.5-meter pedestal under the dome is decorated with handicrafts and girih patterns made of glazed bricks of different colors and surah's of the Koran are written. The Barakkhan Madrasah functioned as an educational institution and even served as a store during World War II. The complex was completely abandoned during the Soviet period. All mosques are closed. The Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb was later converted into a driver's school, and the Barakkhan Madrasah turned into a museum of atheism. Later, a cinema and a school were built in the middle of the complex, which negatively affected the view of the complex, which also had a dilapidated appearance. Khazrati Imam (Khastim) Square only came to the period of independence and literally restored its prestige and status. At the initiative and under the leadership of President Islam Karimov, the Khastimom complex was reconstructed in 2007, and received a new magnificent appearance. In particular, the newly built Khazrati Imam Mosque on the square is one of the unique architectural monuments. Today, the Barkkhan Madrasah is a historical site and is home to artisans, woodcarvers, embroiderers, and potters ("Barakkhan Madrasah", 2022) (Figure 4, 5a-b).

Although there was a renaissance in architecture in the Timurid Period in Uzbekistan, architectural activities in Uzbekistan have entered an extreme reconstruction process in the last 50 years. In reconstruction works, it is seen that architectural forms are exaggerated, and historical buildings are tried to be given more magnificent appearances than ever before. When the façade of Barakkhan Madrasa is examined, the door form shows either proportional imbalance or structural solution problems. Since the gate crown is too high, unsuccessful architectural solutions have emerged on the rear of the facade for structural strengthening (see Figure 5a-b).



Figure 5a-b. Mean Façade views from inside and outside of the Barakkhan Madrasah, Tashkent

2.2. The Moi (Muyi) Mubarak Madrasah

The Moi Mubarak Madrasah is located on the northwest side of the new Mosque, as a small historic building in the complex. It was first built in the 19th century in front of the Barakkhan Madrasah and later, rebuilt with baked brick in 1856-1857. The well decorated interior decoration elements were added to the construction in 2018 ("Moi Mubarak Madrasah", 2022). As it happened in the other buildings of the Complex, stucco ceiling decoration elements show high ornamented working. Today, the building is a museum for the exhibition of an holy old Korans, with a special one brought from Iran (Figure 6-7).

According to the notes of historian Muhammad Salihhoja, *"There was a separate domed space of the madrasa, in which the hair of the Prophet was presented. The madrasah was consist of 13 rooms and a mini mosque, taught by two teachers - Imam Khan Mahdum and Abdulmajid Khan Eshan. There was a library for visitors, which contains many manuscripts of Oriental literature, including the Koran of the third caliph, Uthman"*. The new Moi Mubarak Madrasah was rebuilt by the order of the governor of Tashkent Mirzo Ahmad Kushbegi. In one of the special rooms of the madrasah, the blessed hair of the Prophet is presented in a small glass container ("Moi Mubarak Madrasah", 2022).

In the restoration work, the original characteristics of the building were not tried to be preserved, and the main load-bearing walls were built by producing new bricks. The interior shows an extreme interior decoration using new orientalist stucco decoration and crystal lighting. Although the

aforementioned building is a completely new building in situ, the fact that the interior wall thickness is 50 cm suggests that the current plan resembles the old building.



Figure 6. Overview of the Moi Muborak Madrasah, Tashkent (“Moi Muborak Madrasah”,2022)



Figure 7. The Holy Koran in the central exhibition hall in the Moi Muborak Madrasah (Ibrokhimov, 2007) *This ancient holy book is quite large and contains 353 parchment pages. The book was brought to Uzbekistan during the reign of Amir Temur. Russian scholars have confirmed the authenticity of the book (“Moi Muborak Madrasah”,2022)*

2.3. Tilla Shayx Mosque

The Tilla Sheikh Mosque is located to the west of the Moi Mubarak Madrasah (Figure 8). It was built by Tilla Sheikh (merchant), who was born in Parchab of Mahalla of Khazrat Imam District (1890-1902). The size of the mosque is 14 meters wide and 17.3 meters high. There are two identical small towers at the corners. In traditional architecture, the foundation is raised by 0.85 meters. At the entrance, there is a porch made of rectangular bricks. After the 1930s, the mosque closed and turned into an association of artisans. From 1972 to 1973, the mosque was renovated and expanded, another khanaqah was built next to the qibla, and the walls on both sides of the previous altar were removed and added. After the construction and renovation in 2007, the building of the Tilla Sheikh Mosque has become more decorated on the outside and inside, more convenient for worship of local people (“Tilla Shayx Mosque”, 2022).



Figure 8. The Tilla Sheikh Mosque, Tashkent (Arabbaev, 2015)

2.4. Khazrati Imam Mosque

It was rebuilt in 2007, after independence of Uzbekistan, on the initiative and under the leadership of President Islam Karimov and received a magnificent new appearance. The towers on both sides of the mosque are 57 meters high. The right tower was built by Khorezm masters, and the left tower was by Samarkand masters. One of the towers was completed in 26 days and the other in 28 days. These towers were rebuilt in accordance with the classical style of tower builders with separate schools (Agency of Muslims of Uzbekistan, 2022)(Figure 9-10).



Figure 9. General view of Khazrati Imam Mosque, Tashkent (2022)



Figure10. Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb shows a hilly location in the Complex (2022)

3. THE MAUSOLEUM OF ABUBAKR KAFFAL ASH-SHASHI

The Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi is one of the most significant cultural and the oldest architectural monuments of Tashkent, in the historical and architectural complex of Khazreti Imam is located in the old part of the city. The tomb is located on a hilly, strange position (Figure 10-11) in an old cemetery area which hasn't any remnants today. The Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi, which became a place of Muslim pilgrimage, built in a unique architectural style - khanakah (a shelter for dervishes and pilgrims). It located on a high platform (See section of the Building-Figure 20). Despite the massiveness, the Mausoleum of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi seems to be in a strange position not only because of the platform but also because of its crowning dome. It is interesting that the mihrab faces to the north, but not in the direction of Mecca, as in most of the mausoleums in Tashkent. Apart from a large cross-shaped hall, the building of the mausoleum has four tiers of cells (chillakhanas) for prayer, located in the corner pylons.

Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi layout. There are four chillakhanas ("chilla" means the solitude of asceticism and abstinence from lust for forty days, but also of being alone during this period) on four sides of the building, which are located at the four entrances of the mausoleum. Below this construction the mausoleum of his sons, the Great Imam Muhammad al-Shashi and Nizamiddin Shashi buried. The mausoleum also houses Muhammad Nomi and his father, Khoja Kalon, who came to Tashkent from Baghdad and stayed there. On the left side of the entrance is buried the famous Herat poet, Barakkhan's teacher Zayniddin Vasifi (Advantour, 2022).

When the photographic determinations taken in the last 100 years are examined during the research studies on the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi tomb, it is seen that the structure has undergone changes in the plan scheme and dome form, subject to very different interventions (Figure 11-15).



Figure 11. The oldest photo shows that this area was a huge cemetery area and the tomb of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi was built in a hilly position. The roof of the cupola shows a conical Turkish tomb (kumbet) character ("Tashkent History", n.d.)

3.1. The Earliest Period

The early form and construction material has not known. It can be thought that the oldest mausoleum structure of a square planned and central space had an entrance and probably had three windows on the other facades. It is possible that the mihrab protrusion on the right side of the main entrance was added at a later period when the building was used as a mosque. In this period, the window on the left side of the entrance was rearranged as the entrance door to this new mosque (Figure 12a-b). The mini-cemetery area, located on the opposite axis of the main entrance, seems to have been added in the 19th century during the last restorations. In that period, the window opposite the entrance was reshaped as a door, providing a transition to this mini-cemetery area. The chillakhana chambers in different forms on the corners of the walls must have been the spaces in the oldest plan of this building.

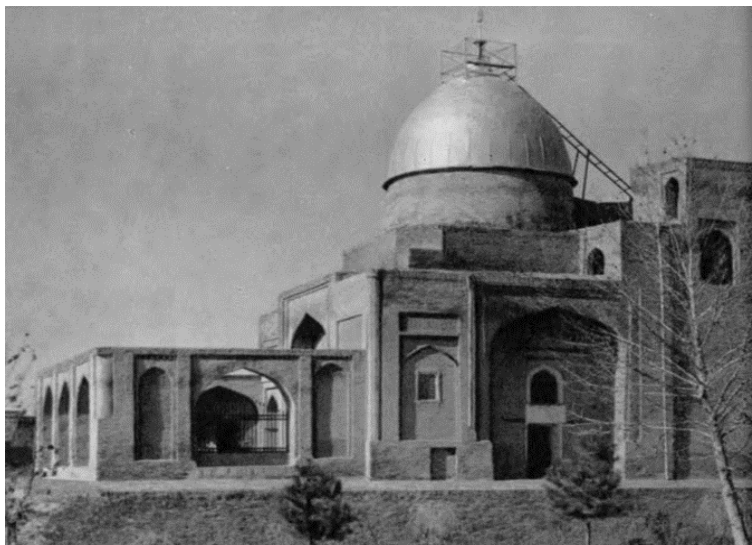
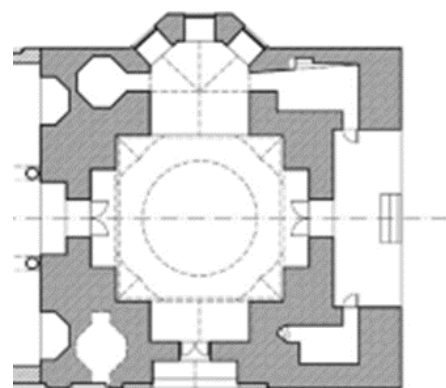


Figure 12. (a) An old photo of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb, Tashkent (around 1920)



(b) Probably the old form of the structure (partial restitution without mini cemetery (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)

The top cover of the dome partially reminds of a form worth examining in the oldest photograph. Khazrati Imam Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi was a person who died in 907. At that time, there was a

Karakhanid Turkish state in these lands and perhaps there was a Turkish Cult in that area, before Khazrati Imam Kaffal Shashi's tomb was built. The oldest photograph (Figure 11) suggests that this building had a conical Turkish cone (conical Turkish Kumbet form) but changed over time and lost its original form.

3.2. Russian Period of 1920-1991

Lots of historical monuments were destroyed during the Russian period, but Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi mausoleum is still very well preserved. During the Russian occupation period, the mausoleum was restored, and the dome was built in the same way as the Moscow style domes, after the earthquake about 1920 (Figure 13). However, this dome was a false form, demolished during the years of independence, and rebuilt in the new style again. Before the earthquake, the monument was thoroughly studied by Uzbek and Russian architects. They measured the size of the Mausoleum and recorded the plan, section, facades. At present, these documents (Figure 14-15) are keeping in the Cultural Heritage Agency in Tashkent (Madaniy Meros Agentligi, 2022).



Figure 13. Facade (Backside) of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb and metallic covers on the dome after an earthquake (1920-1991); It looks like a Russian style church.

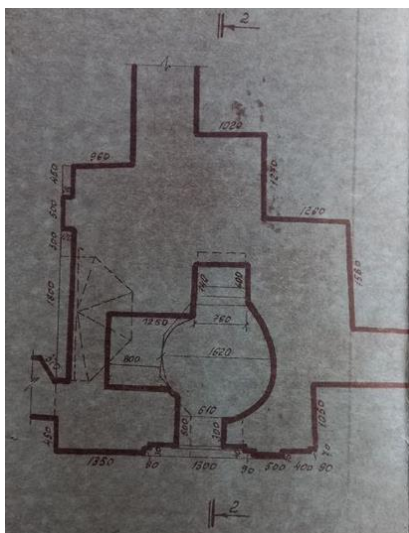


Figure 14. Hand recording of Chilakhana (Madaniy Meros Agentligi, 2022)



Figure 15. The entrance of the Chilakhana in an old photo. It was closed at the last restoration study (Madaniy Meros Agentligi, 2022)

3.3. Current Situation of the Tomb

If we pay attention to the plan of the monument, we can see the chilakhana (Figure 14) in the four corners of the building. It is known that in mysticism, "chilla" means the solitude of asceticism and the peculiar image of the path of the sect. Chilla consists not only of abstinence from lust for forty days, but also of being alone during this period, and this has been done under the guidance of a master. The chilla seating room is dark and there is no possibility to lie down, just a special place to sit. Sleep also occurs while sitting. During this period, chilakhanas were covered and closed. There are new mausoleums (Figure 16-20) in the new cemetery part of the monument at the backside of the Kaffal Shashi Tomb. Great Imam Muhammad al-Shashi and Nizamiddin Shashi who are Kaffal Shashi's sons and Muhammad Nomi and his father, Khoja Kalon, who came to Tashkent from Baghdad and stayed there, are buried here. It is supposed that these mausoleums were carried from different locations here, in the last century (Samashev et al, 2016).



Figure 16. After restoration (1928); new mausoleums added to the new cemetery area and a wooden roof had covered of the structure (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)

- **1991-2022 Years of Independence**

During the years of independence (1991-2022) through the efforts of Tashkent masters, the complex was completely restored. In the 16th century, the entire mausoleum of Kaffalal-Shashi Tomb was covered with elegant majolica and today only a few surviving fragments. Some inscriptions are restored - these are surahs of the Koran, which are written in white and gold. However, it is not possible to restore the inscriptions in green - the construction itself - information about the goodness of the architects, artisans, and the location of the mausoleum. The roofless part of the mausoleum is covered with a roof and the inside is reinforced with wooden pillars. All the graves around the monument were removed and the area was converted into a landscape area (National Library of Uzbekistan Name Dafter Alisher Navaiy, 2022 (Figure 17a-b).

Although Kaffal Sasi died in 903, the dome of his mausoleum is finally covered by a double-storied dome, which is popular in Tashkent and is seen over almost all historical buildings. In the restorations which are popular in recent years, it is seen that they preferred to apply the most magnificent general forms instead of the idea of "trying to build the first period by making a periodical analysis".

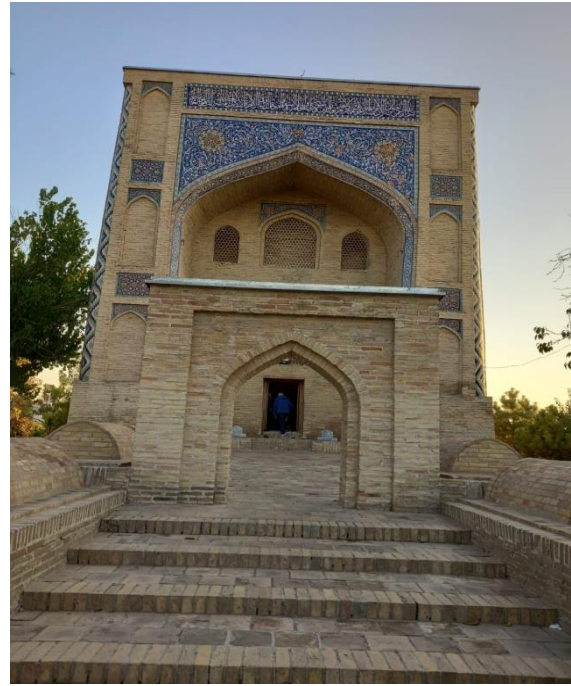


Figure17. (a-b) Main Portal of the Tomb of Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)



Figure 18. Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb with new graze brick decoration elements (Ibragimov Archive, 2022)

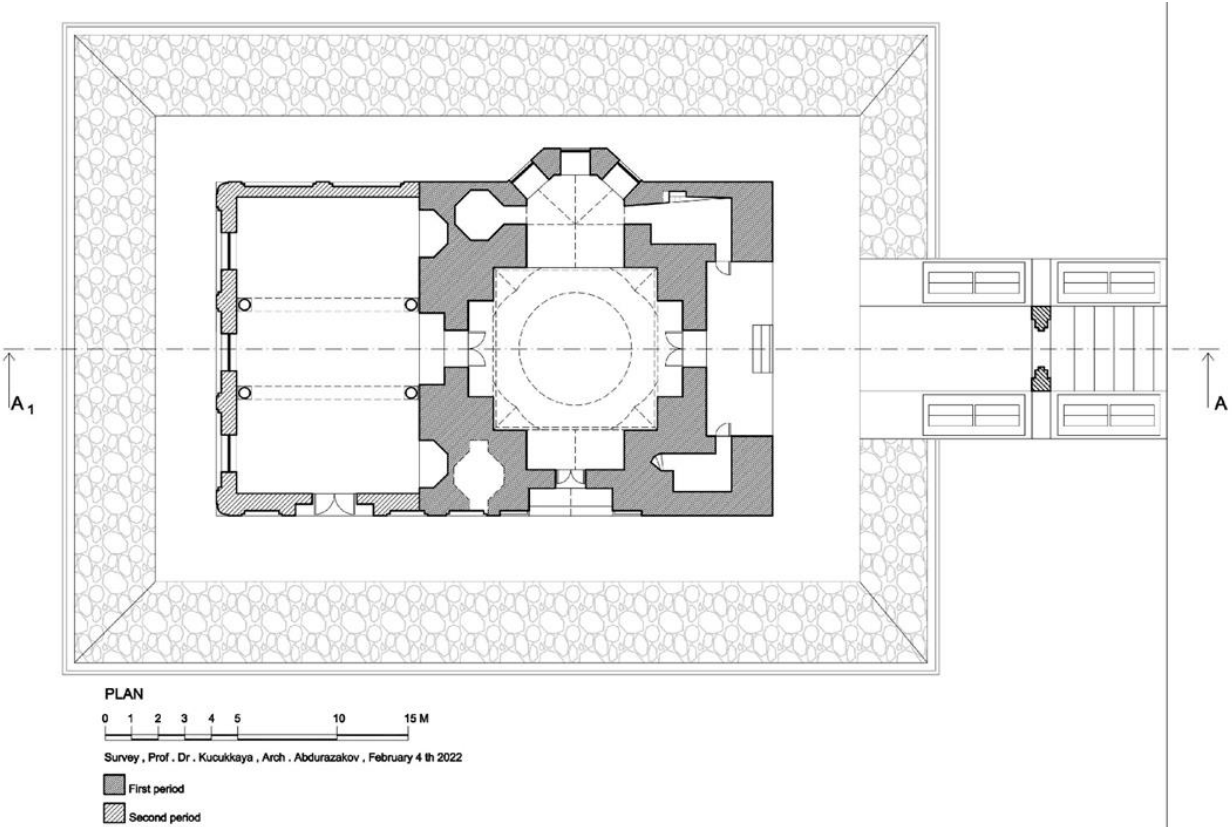


Figure 19. Plan of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)

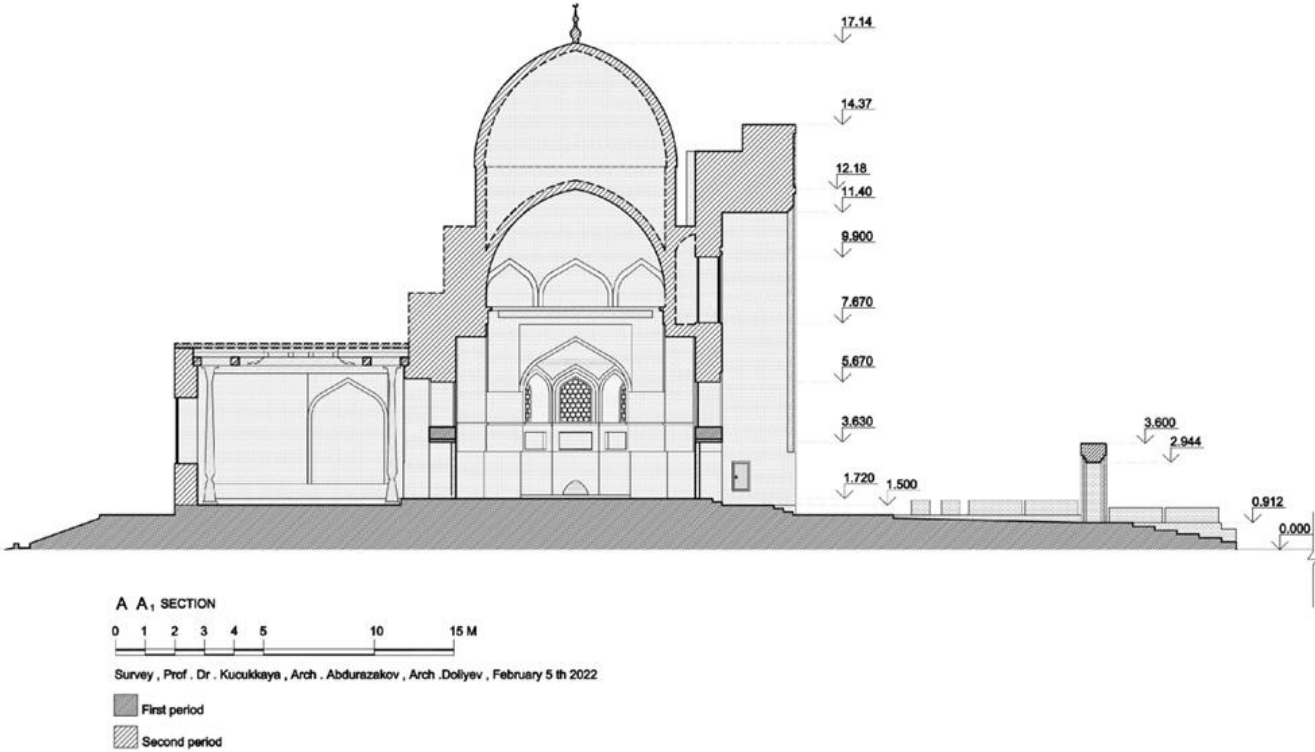


Figure 20. Section (A-A) of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)

3.4. An Investigation on the Origin of the Composition of the Construction

It is not known how the tomb of Khazrati Imam Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi was when it was built in the 9th century and what happened to it; from the photographs taken within the last 100 years, it is understood that the building was repaired in different periods and in different styles. Today, the stepped entrance corridor, which provides access to the entrance level 120 cm above the ground level and on which stone coffins are lined up on both sides, (Figure 21) shows a strange composition. This composition is like Bilge Kagan's cult complex, which was built in the 500s, with balbals on both sides and the tomb located on the full axis (Figure 22). Considering that the Western Göktürks lived in these lands between 400-600 years; It can be said that the entrance composition of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb was inspired by a very old Turkish structure that used to exist here. Let's not forget that between 600-1200 years old Turkish states lived in these lands (Khudyakov, 1985; Samashev et al., 2016).

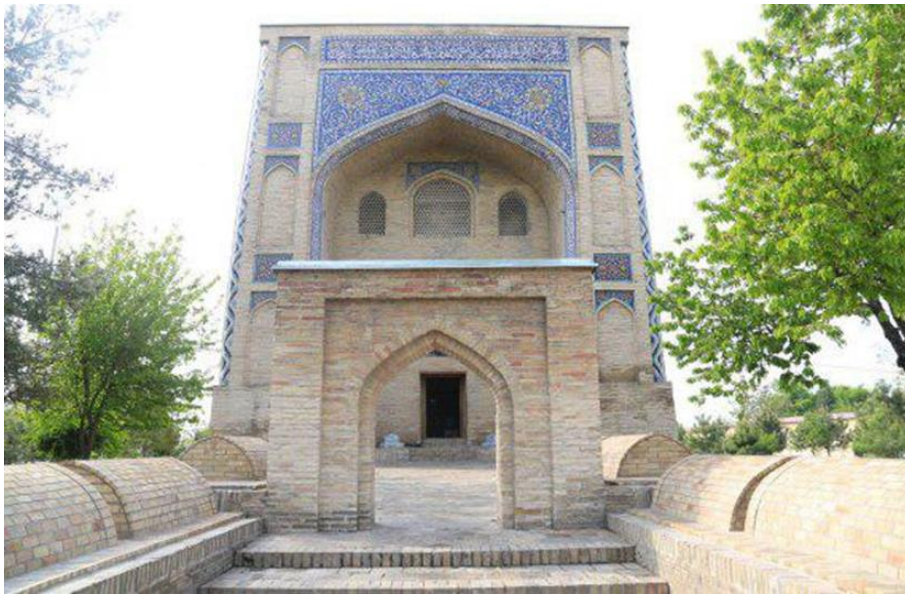


Figure 21. Tashkent, Steps and Coffins at the Entrance of the Kaffal Shashi Tomb (Abdurazakov Archive, 2022)

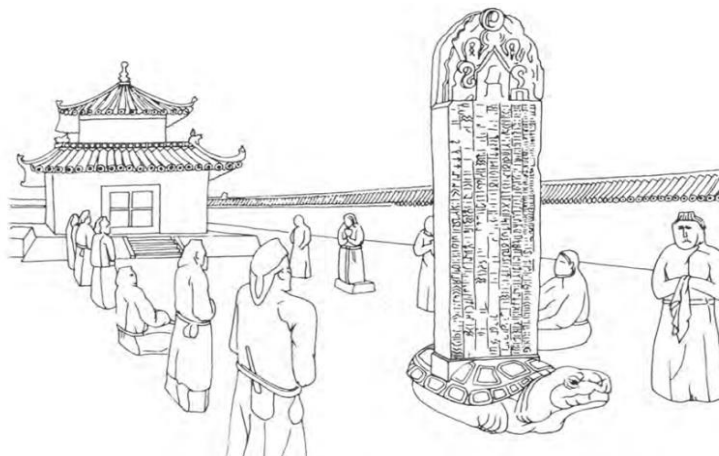


Figure 22. Graphic reconstruction of the cultural –memorial complex in honour of Bilge Kagan in Orkhon like the structure of the Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb. If we pay attention well, there are graves on both sides of the entrance at Abubakr Kaffal ash-Shashi Tomb. There are also statues on both sides of the entrance to the monument in the pictures (Khudyakov, 1985; Samashev et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

The buildings in the Imam Complex have been subjected to many interventions throughout history, and there have been periods when they were deliberately and willfully demolished. For this reason, it is seen that brut brick material is still used in new buildings as an effort to keep the spirit of historical memories alive in Tashkent. Instead of recreating history, it is necessary to try to pass on the historical values that have survived to the present day, with all their original qualities, to future generations.

The research works allow for the following recommendations: conservation and restoration of the monument from time to time; ensuring the continuity of control and preservation of the monument. It is necessary to observe the following conditions: use the monument while preserving its architectural integrity and original decoration, adapting the monument to a new function without any changes; archaeological and historical research of the monument should always be carried out before and in conjunction with the restoration work. It is advisable to involve only qualified specialists in the conservation and to be carried out by the traditional masters and experts.

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During the hand recording studies in the Hazrati Imam Complex, TIACE, Fall 2021



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