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MEDIEVAL ORNAMENTATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM OF AISHA BIBI IS THE IDENTITY KEY OF THE REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF KAZAKHSTAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Abstract. *The article is dedicated to the architectural monument of Kazakhstan, the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi, called by the architect T.K. Basenov «the jewel of memorial architecture of Kazakhstan and treasury of the Kazakh ornamental art». The mausoleums of Aisha Bibi and Babaji Khatun were built in the XI-XII centuries and are located 18 km southwest of Taraz city. The mausoleum is the identity key of the regional architecture of Kazakhstan in the XXI century.*

Keywords: *regional identity, the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi, the palace of schoolchildren in Nur-Sultan city.*

Introduction. The mausoleum of Aisha Bibi is an architectural monument of the Kara-Khanid period located in the Jambyl region near Taraz city, in the settlement of Aisha-bibi.

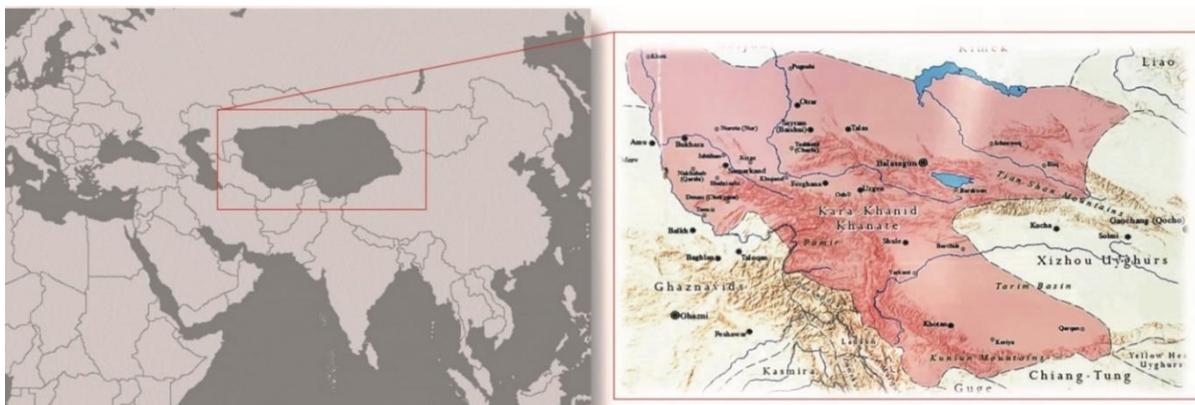


Figure 1 – KARA-KHANID STATE IN 942-1212.

The tragic love story of beautiful Aisha Bibi and young ruler Karakhan has 28 various versions. The girl was the daughter of the famous scholar and poet of the XI century Khakim Suleiman Bakirgani, known publicly as Zengi Baba, who was a disciple of Ahmed Yasawi. Karakhan fell in love with charming Aisha Bibi at first sight and made her a marriage proposal. But her father was set against the young ruler Karakhan, who was not of noble birth. It became an obstacle to their union, and the brave Aisha Bibi, accompanied by her nanny Babaji Khatun, warned her mother and ran away to her lover without asking the blessing of her father.

Having learned of the escape, Khakim exclaimed in anger: «You will cross six rivers and stop at the seventh one». Brave Aisha crossed 6 rivers, stopped at the seventh one, got off the horse, took off her headdress, refreshed her face, and when she reached out her hand for the headdress, she was bitten by a snake. The snakebite was fatal, and, feeling the approaching death, Aisha sent a messenger to Karakhan. He came immediately with an imam who managed to marry them. Karakhan only had time to whisper «you are my wife».

Struck with grief, Karakhan was torn between the retribution of fate and the tribute to love, so he ordered 62 masters of the East to build a mausoleum of unprecedented beauty and immortalize the name of Aisha Bibi. For the descendants, he left a Persian inscription in Arabic script about his tragic love on four corner columns of the mausoleum, but only one survived: «Autumn, rain clouds, the earth is beautiful...».

After her death, the nanny, Babaji Khatun, was buried next to the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi; her mausoleum in the complex with the mausoleum of Aisha is still a symbol of devotion.

According to a legend, after the death of Aisha, Karakhan came to the mausoleum every year with five red roses as a sign of his love.

Materials and methods. The research methodology is based on an integrated approach used in philosophical, historiographic, cultural cases. In the article, in particular, a number of methods were used:

- analysis of projects and illustrative materials (maps, photographs, drawings, sketches) presented in literature, electronic sources and open access networks;
- historical and evolutionary analysis in the formation of regional identity in architecture;
- As the research progresses, I start looking for deductive and inductive methods in identifying regional features of identity in the architecture of the XXI century.

Results and discussion. The first photo of the mausoleum was taken by S.M.Dudin during the expedition with V.V. Bartold in 1893. The studies were conducted in 1897-1910 by V.A. Kalaur and I.A. Castagne, in 1925, 1938-39 – by A.N. Bernstam, in 1925 – by B.P. Denike. The studies were continued in 1943 by a group of postgraduate students of the USSR Academy of Architecture under the supervision of Y.S. Yaralov. The study of the mausoleum was continued in 1950 by A.H. Margulan and M.M. Mendykulov, and in 1953 – by a group of architects headed by T.K. Basenov [2].

In the photo made by T. K. Basenov, you can see only the wall of the western facade with a small pointed-arched niche and small columns. At that time, the mausoleum was already in ruins, but even this fragment of the past constituted a masterpiece of ornamental art (Fig.2.a).

The measurements and studies by T.K. Basenov showed that the structural scheme of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi is by its nature outside the structural framework of ordinary buildings: «The novelty of the method of building the mausoleum walls has no parallels in either the previous or subsequent construction practice in Central Asia up to the 21th century» [2].

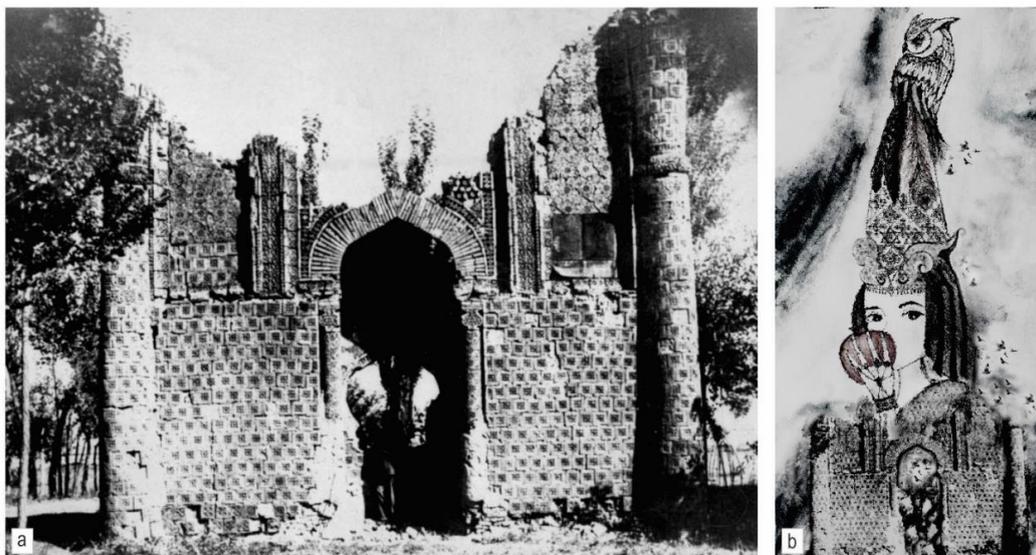


Figure 2a – The western facade of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi – a precious fragment of ancient times and medieval Kazakh architecture. Photo by T. K. Basenov, 1953;
b- Author's image of Aisha Bibi. Sketch by L.M. Aukhadiyeva, 2020.

The composition of the Mausoleum is central, it represents a square with firm corner columns, and the volume is a coated cubic form, which is still disputable among researchers [2].

The walls of the mausoleum consist of three layers of the outer layer of facing slabs, internal brick bearing walls with a thickness of 0.4 m. These layers serve as a formwork for internal filling, which is a mixture of defective terracotta slabs with a ganch (the Middle Asian name of reinforced clay) and clay (the backfilling thickness is 0.8 m) [3].

The main mystery of the period was the full appearance of the mausoleum. The scientists were set the task: «What shape could the dome have?!» A shape of a tent, or similar to the mausoleums of Babaji Khatun and Manas, or maybe as in the Samanid Mausoleum. Fig. 4.a special feature of the Babaji Khatun's dome is its double shell: the inner shell is hemispherical, and the ribbed outer, the pyramidal shell, is tent-shaped and corrugated [4]. We should note that for finishing the Karakhan-Aulie-Ata mausoleum, the figured burnt brick was used, which resembles the tiles of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi.

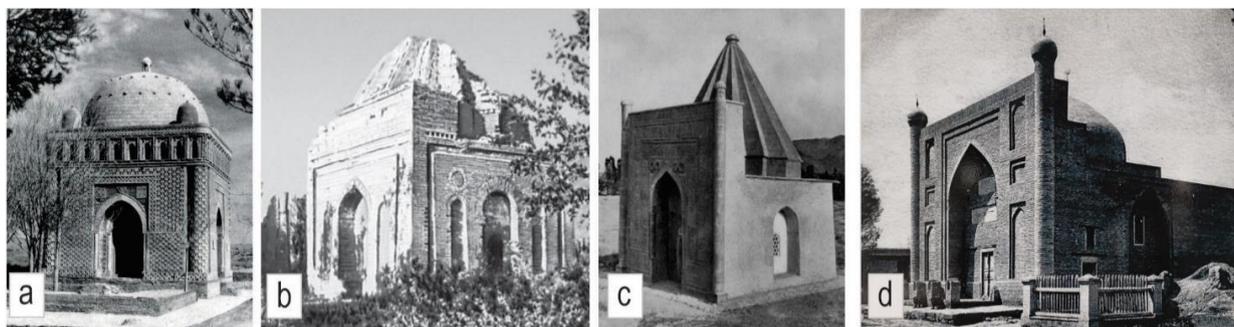


Figure 4 – a – the Samanid Mausoleum, IX-X centuries. Uzbekistan; b – the Mausoleum of Babaji Khatun, X-XI centuries. Kazakhstan; c – the Mausoleum of Manas, 1334, Kyrgyzstan; d – the Mausoleum of Karakhan, XI-XII centuries, Kazakhstan

On May 15, 1979, the Ministry of Culture of the USSR decided to complete the research work within one year in order to issue a task for restoration. A.O. Itenov was appointed the author of the project, professor M.M. Mendikulov – the scientific supervisor; other specialists were also invited. The consultations were provided by professor O.H. Khalpakhchyan and doctor of architecture L.V. Voronina from the Central Research Institute for the Theory of History and Architecture. The recommendations were also given by the famous scientists of the Institute of Art History of Uzbekistan G.A. Pugachenkova and L.Y. Mankovskaya, and a prominent specialist in the study of medieval architecture and art in Uzbekistan, doctor of architecture M.S. Bulatov. It was he who noted that the dome, most probably, had a shape of a cone or a multisided pyramid and was installed on a high cylinder - based. U. Zhanibekov noted that it was necessary to determine the impact of harmful emissions of a chemical plant located nearby on the monument. The project was discussed at several meetings dedicated to reviewing A.O. Itenov's project with the participation of various experts.

For various objective and subjective reasons, the works associated with the mausoleum were not completed. Twenty years later, in connection with the anniversary of the city of Taraz, the question of restoring the mausoleum was raised again on September 09, 2001, at the meeting headed by I.N. Tasmagambetov [5]. The previous project by A.O. Itenov was analyzed and finalized within three years.

The building of the mausoleum required more than 60 000 bricks with 72 types of floral patterns, the weight of which varied from 700 g to 8,6 kg. The bricks of 26x26x5 cm with a thickness were made of Sauran clay in floor kilns with the help of old manual technology. The restoration works were performed by the employees of the Turkestan branch under the supervision of A. Khalilayev.

As part of the State program «Cultural Heritage», the works on the restoration of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi were completed in November 2004 (Fig. 3.). Currently, the architectural monument is protected by the state as part of the historical and cultural museum and heritage site «Monuments of Ancient Taraz».



Figure 3 – General view of the mausoleums of Aisha Bibi (right) and Babaji Khatun (left).
Photo by L.M. Aukhadiyeva, 2021.

To express the artistic idea, the ancient architects have almost invented a new structure of a wall and a new technology for creating an ornamental carpet of the mausoleum, the strength of which made it possible for the ornamental decoration to survive from the 11th -12th centuries to this day.

Ancient masters used a variety of techniques for assembling terracotta forms in combination with simpler forms and in connection with openwork ribbons. Heightwise, the corner columns have an entasis at the corners of the mausoleum and taper upwards; in a narrow place, they are tightened by a relief roll, after which the columns widen again (Fig. 4.a.) On the western column in the 18th course of masonry, there are tiles with the inscription in Arabic made in the Cufic style («Autumn, rain clouds, the earth is beautiful...»), translated by A.M. Belenitsky, who believed that it is a part of some saying or poem, the beginning and end of which, apparently, were on the ruined columns [2] (Fig. 4c.).

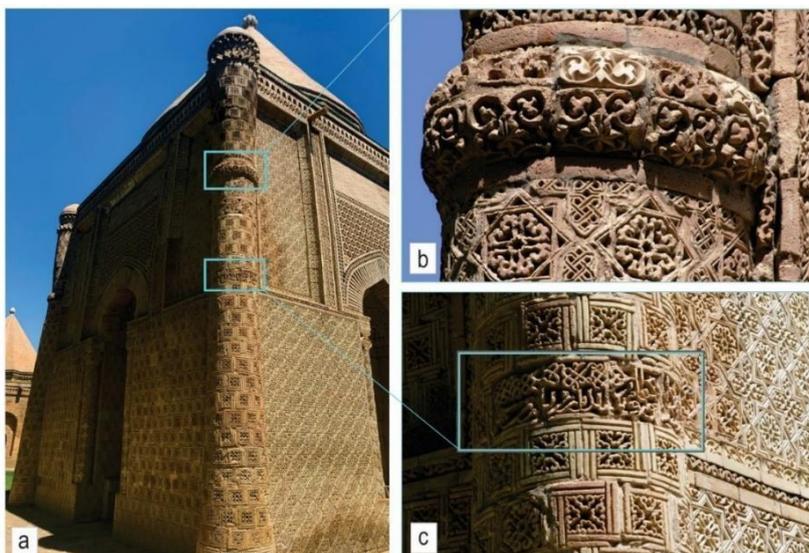


Figure 4. a – fragment of the western column; b – relief roll; c – inscription in Arabic «Autumn, rain clouds, the earth is beautiful...» Photo by L.M. Aukhadiyeva, 2021.

The small columns are ended with a tulip-shaped capital in the corners of the niches, connected by arch roofs, reinforce the frame of the mausoleum and take a part of the load. The floral ornament of the mausoleum facades are located side by side with such cosmogonic symbols as the cross, «the four corners of the earth» - «tört qulak», «star» - «jýldyz», a symbol of the sky and the sun, and such zoomorphic symbols as «qoshqar múiiz», the ram's horns. But the main motif is tulip, the surface of which consists of stylized stems and leaves that give picturesqueness and shimmer, because the whole ornament is relief and creates a light-to-dark volume. This or another discreet motif of the «flower, leaves and stem» ornament creates picturesqueness and allows to evenly fill the space inside the tulip, which became a popular motif and a universal technique for giving the building a regional character.

However, the main motif of the decoration is tulip, the surface of which consists of stylized stems and leaves that give picturesqueness and shimmer, because the whole ornament is relief and creates a light-to-dark volume. This is a completely unique work of the ancient architect, the creation of a new order, which reflects the

regional architecture of the 11th -12th centuries. Fig. 5a.b. On the terracotta column, we see ornament «tört qulak» and «jýldyz» (Fig. 5c).

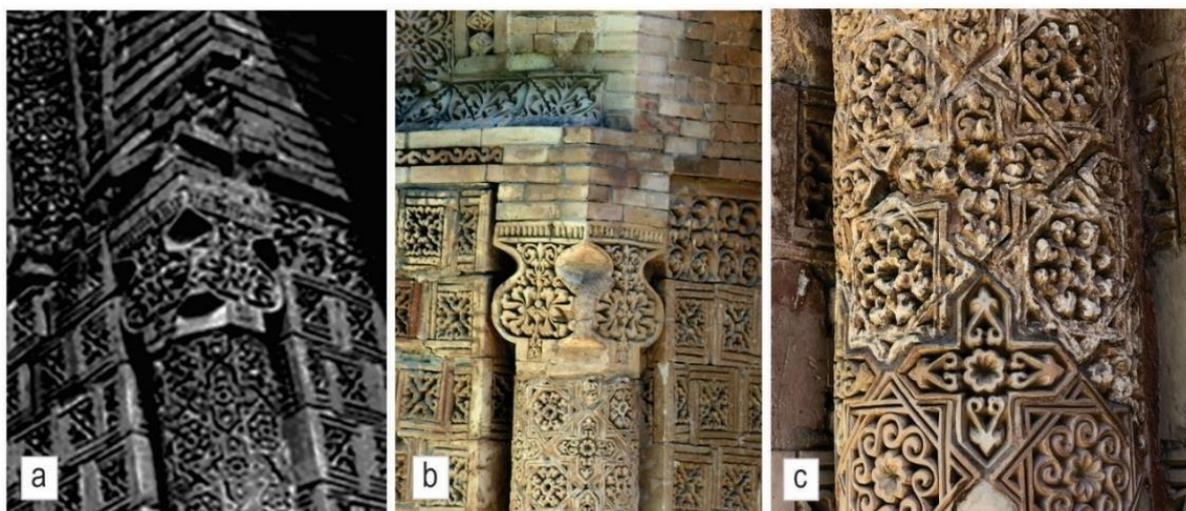


Figure 5 – a, b – column with a tulip capital; c – «tört qulak» ornament.

Close in the symbolism of the «star» and «tört qulak», as well as endless variations on this theme are found in the ornaments of the Arabic world, and it is not a coincidence; it means that among the 62 famous ancient architects invited there were some architects from the Maghreb who took part in the development of the ornamental shell of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi and knew traditional ornamental art used in the architecture of Morocco (Fig. 6a). The ornaments «tört qulak» - the four corners of the earth and the «star» are the main motives of the walls of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi (Fig. 6b.), the pure form of which created the basis of the regionality of the Palace of Schoolchildren in Nur-Sultan city (Fig. 6c).

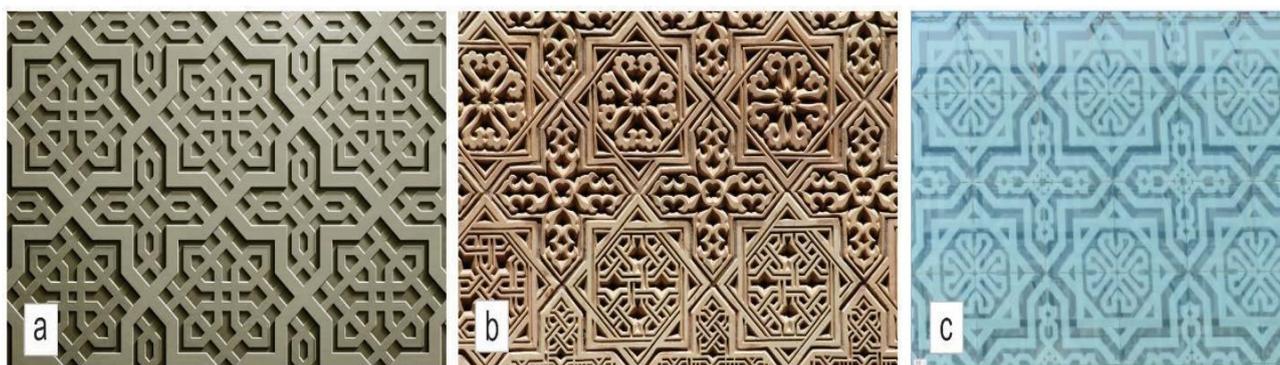


Figure 6 – a – Moroccan ornament; b – ornament of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi; c – ornament of the Palace of Schoolchildren in Nur-Sultan city.

The pattern of the mausoleum of Aisha Bibi was used by the architect N. Yavein in the architecture of the Palace of Schoolchildren in Nur-Sultan city (Fig. 7.), turning the anonymous surfaces of the glass blocks of a modern building into recognizable traditions, which indicates a significant mutual influence of human values in a given period and in a certain cultural space, namely, on the territory of Kazakhstan.



Figure 7 – a – main entrance of the Palace of Schoolchildren in Nur-Sultan city;
b – view from Momysuly Avenue. Architect N. Yavein «Studio 44» 2011.

It is quite obvious that these ornaments in Fig. 6. a.b.c. are made in a single cultural and regional space, where common traditions and significant mutual influence of human values prevailed in the architecture of the places of worship on a large territory from Central Asia to North Africa during the Middle Ages.

In this case, the ornament is a unique and exclusive phenomenon for the cultural tradition of the medieval civilization. In the ornaments of Aisha Bibi, it is a combination of symbols: «cross - tórt qulak» – for seasons of the year, four corners of the world; «stars – jýldyz» - heaven, the universe; «tulip bud» - the image of a young girl. These symbols set the tone; they tell about the awakened love and its early death, about time, space, the universe and the purpose of life.

This small architectural monument, in modern terms, is the result of interdisciplinary connections, brilliantly combined by 62 ancient architects and taken from the fields of architecture, science, arts and philosophy on the basis of the achievements of the social worldview and the level of the Eastern construction and crafts in the Middle Ages.

For any people, it is natural to cherish its history and its achievements and use this history as a basis for its image of the future and in its aspirations for the future. Any form, any manifestation of human culture is always associated with an ethnic

group because there is no culture without a person, without his creativity and the values of traditions.

Regional identity is of great social and cultural significance for the political self-identification of the state, nation, and territorial communities of the region, which are manifested in ideas and traditions, like in the architecture of Aisha Bibi, and recreated in modern buildings aimed at self-preservation and raising the status of the state in the world system of states.

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XI-XII ҒАСЫРДАҒЫ АЙША БИБИ КЕСЕНЕСІН БЕЗЕНДІРУДІҢ ОЮ-ӨРНЕКТІ МОТИВТЕРІ XXI Ғ. Ғ. ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ АЙМАҚТЫҚ СӘУЛЕТІНІҢ БІРЕГЕЙЛІК КӨЗІ РЕТІНДЕ

Аңдатпа. Сәулетші Т.К. Басенов атап көрсеткен «Қазақстанның мемориалдық сәулет өнерінің інжу-маржаны және қазақ ою-өрнек өнерінің қазынасы», Қазақстанның сәулет ескерткіші Айша бибі кесенесі қаралды. Айша-бибі мен Бабаджа кесенесі-XI-XII ғасырларда салынған, Тараз қаласынан оңтүстік-батысқа қарай 18 км жерде орналасқан. Кесене XXI ғасырдағы Қазақстанның аймақтық сәулеті сәйкестігінің қайнар көзі болып табылады.

Түйін сөздер: аймақтық бірегейлік, Айша-бибі кесенесі, Нұр-Сұлтан қаласының оқушылар сарайы.

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**ОРНАМЕНТАЛЬНЫЕ МОТИВЫ ОФОРМЛЕНИЯ МАВЗОЛЕЯ
АЙША БИБИ XI-XII ВЕКА КАК ИСТОЧНИК ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ
РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ АРХИТЕКТУРЫ КАЗАХСТАНА XXI ВВ.**

Аннотация. *Рассмотрен памятник архитектуры Казахстана мавзолей Айша Биби, названного архитектором Т.К. Басеновым «жемчужиной мемориального зодчества Казахстана и сокровищницей казахского орнаментального искусства». Мавзолей Айша-биби и Бабаджи-построены XI-XII века, расположены в 18 км юго-западнее г. Тараз. Мавзолей является источником идентичности региональной архитектуры Казахстана XXI века.*

Ключевые слова: *региональная идентичность, мавзолей Айша-биби, дворец школьников г. Нур-Султан.*