

On the holy sites of Kazakhstan

In a set of cult buildings the memorial constructions – mausoleums are especially relevant. The development of a cult sacred in Islam, imposed on ancient reverence of spirits of ancestors, especially strong among Kazakhs was a fertile field for this kind of architecture.

The mausoleums of South Kazakhstan region can be divided into some groups according to its sacred character or the place it occupies in religious beliefs of the population. First of all, the sacred mausoleums concern early Islam in the south of Kazakhstan, built above the tombs of the first missionaries preaching Islam on the territory. These are mausoleums-mosques such as the Baba-Ata in Suzak region and Arystan-Bab under Otyrar, Sairam mausoleums Abdel-Aziz-Bab, Mir-Ali-Bab, Padshakh-Malik, etc. there are a lot mausoleums in the region, concerning sufi tradition in Islam. One example is certainly Khoja Akhmed Yassawi's mausoleum, the mausoleum of Kara Bura (Bura-khan), who was the co-worker of the founder of Karakhanid dynasties of Karakhan, in Suzak region and also the mausoleum of Imam-Markoz in Shabanak village of Turkestan region and other. The mausoleums were raised, as a rule, as portal-dome constructions which were traditional for Central Asia where the institutes of Islam were stronger. the mausoleums of saints of separate districts, where professional works and Turbat village were built in more original, archaic forms. The mausoleums of the ancestors of Kazakh tribes Baidybek-Ata and Domalak-Ana are especially relevant in this regard. There are also mausoleums constructed above burial places of real historical figures (Rabi and Sultan-Begim, Esim-Khan, Khadzhi-Mukan and others).

The name and the life of Khoja Akhmed Yassawi defines one more circle of monuments which includes the mausoleums of his mother Karashash and father Ibragim-Ata and others, close to this saint.

The architecture of mausoleums is strictly traditional, staying within usual standard of late cult architecture. As planning and architectural factors could not influence the location of two similar facades, there is nothing to do but relate structural features of two-portal mausoleums with their sacral content with characteristics of functional order.

As the reference in the written sources and legends, historical and archaeological significance of the settlement itself refer the origin of the mausoleums to XII-XIII centuries, though it is reasonable to search for their analogues in this period of Central Asian history of architecture.

Origin of two-portal mausoleum as an element in evolution of single-compartment mausoleums from centric type to portal-dome is excluded, as centric and portal-dome types were developed in parallel. Attempts of A.M.Pribytkovskaya definitely connect addition of centric mausoleums, in particular mausoleum of Samanids in Bukhara and mosques with influence of Samanid and Khorosan chortaks raise doubts.

Dated by the beginning of 20th century, the mausoleum of Mir-Ali-Bab among Sairam mausoleums is the youngest monument. But its origin goes deep into the centuries. Behind an existing building, the remains of the mausoleum of Padishakh-Malik-Baba are extant. It was possibly constructed in 15th century. It was two-portal.

A monument of early Islam in the south of Kazakhstan is another Sairam mausoleum, Abdel-Aziz-Bab. It is situated in northern part of Sairam, on the fenced cemetery. Its name represents the Kazakh variant of the Arabian name Abd al-Aziz. This name was widely spread among Muslim clergy. The word “bab, baba” in Arabic means “the confessor, the instructor”.

Turkestan region, as a whole, preserved a number of remarkable constructions displaying architectural quality. Among them preserved a number of remarkable constructions displaying architectural quality. Among them the mosque of Shamet-Ishan in Karnak village (19th century), constructed following the traditions of Fergana architecture mausoleum Zhunus-Ata in Ikan village and mausoleum Imam-Markoz have already mentioned and there is also a minaret in Shabanak village.

There are also ruins of Sauran city in Turkestan region. It is known that Erzen, the son of the governor of Ak-Orda Sasy-buka owned Sauran and built constructions – medrese, khanaki, mosques which are not extant anymore.

It also possible to meet a set of interesting architectural monuments in open space of boundless steppe of northern areas of South Kazakhstan. For example, the mosque Nogai-Ishan constructed in the beginning of XX century in the center of Suzak village. It is remarkable for its main façade, in which old portal forms are originally combined with two minarets and a loggia of a lancet outline with an openwork wooden lattice and a wreath above an arch. It is a vivid example of connection of traditions and innovations, which have touched cult architecture in Kazakhstan at the end of XIX-XX centuries.

In Soviet times, the cult architecture was perceived as a whole and as the phenomenon relic, the history of it belonged to the past. Cult buildings had the

right for existence only in quality of “monuments of architecture and art” and the right was admitted only for single outstanding products of architecture. Working mosques and churches, as a rule, were located in adapted rooms and if there were any new buildings under construction they were deprived of any architectural idea and art expressiveness. But the situation has radically changed after the sovereignty of Kazakhstan. After revision of the role of religion in the society the construction of cult buildings has quickened. Not all from them can be counted as products of architecture, but in this period there are many objects, that will be part of history of Kazakhstan architecture since they possess the advantages inherent to original products of architecture. This splash is prepared by all-thousand –year development of architecture in South Kazakhstan and without this heritage it would be impossible. Development of this invaluable fund goes basically as it seems to us, in two ways. The first goes through studying and processing of the classical heritage of the architecture of Central Asia and Kazakhstan and the creation of new modern cult buildings on the basis of traditional forms.

The regional mosque Amali-Salikh is constructed by this method in Shymkent. The volumetric and spatial idea of Fakhreddin-Razi mausoleum in Kunya-Urgench is based on the composite decision of the mausoleum of Kazakh tribe ancestor Baidybek-Ata constructed under G.Sadyrbayev’s project.

Thus, the new page is written in the history of architecture of South Kazakhstan. It is reputed, that century time network in architecture will not be interrupted.