



TO THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURAL PECULIARITIES AND RESTORATION HISTORY OF THE ZANGI-OTA COMPLEX IN TASHKENT REGION

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Abstract. This article analyzes little-studied archival materials of the Zangi-ota complex, located in the Tashkent region and formed since the times of Amir Timur, data of written sources, considers architectural peculiarities, originality, history and determination of methods of restoration of the complex, as well as its current appearance.

Keywords: Zangi-ota complex, Oy-Khoja, Ambar-bibi, murid, gurkhana, ziaretkhana, mosaic, mihrab, hujra, restoration.

The Zangi-ota complex, dating from the end of the 14th to the beginning of the 20th century, located in the Tashkent region, is of great scientific, historical and artistic value.

The Zangi-ota complex attracted the attention of scholars studying architectural monuments of Tashkent city and Tashkent region, such as V.A. Shishkin (1927), T.N. Smirnov (1944), I. Usmankhodjaev (1959), K.A. Shakhurin (1958-59), B.I. Zasytkin (1969), G.P. Snesev (1969), I.B. Nemtseva (1959) V.M. Filimonov (1978), V. Bulatova, L. Mankovskaya (1982), A. Ziyaev (2008), M. Yusupova (2014), who gave a detailed description of each monument of the complex with its construction history, plans, and photographs. According to these data, we can have an idea of how each monument of the complex changed from the beginning of the century to the present day. In 1975, this complex was researched by L.Y. Mankovskaya and was registered (passport) as a historical monument.

The foundation of the complex. It arose on the basis of the burial place of a sheikh, nicknamed Zangi-ota, who lived at the end of 12th - first half of 13th century. The mausoleum was built in 14th-15th centuries in honor of this popular "saint". His real name was Oy-Khoja, son of Tash Khoja, and his nickname was Zangi-ota, i.e. "dark father". Zangi-ota was born in the locality of Shash, was the fifth murid of Sufi Khoja Ahmad Yasawi, who was considered the spiritual head of all Turkic tribes of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and a murid of the mystic poet Suleiman Hakim-at Bakhyrgani¹. Zangi Ota's wife was Ambar-bibi (Anbar ana, Mother Amber)², daughter of Bughra Khan, ruler of the Qarakhanid state^{3,4}. Also, according to G.P. Snesev's source "Relics of pre-Muslim beliefs among the Uzbeks of Southern Khwarazm" in Khwarazm legends, the image of Ambar-bibi is sacred and means motherhood and fertility, which goes back to very ancient pre-Islamic beliefs. Many folk oral legends associated with her are very diverse, namely that Ambar is also the most famous saint and patroness of Khwarazm.

¹ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.76.

² Маньковская Л.Ю. Паспорт. Мавзолей Амбар-биби/ Камбар-ана. Материалы проекта «Свод памятников материальной культуры Узбекистана» в 1986-1992 гг. Архив ИИск. АН РУз. АН РУз. ИА(М)М24 №770/12. Ташкент, 1974. С.1-4.

³ Камаров П. Туркестанские ведомости, Ташкент, 1902, от 31 января. №9. С. 2.

⁴ Пугаченкова Г.А. Зодчества Центральной Азии, XV век. Ведущие тенденции и черты. Ташкент, 1976 г.

The connection of the image of Ambar-bibi with the surrounding nature – the sky, the water of lakes, the steppe – existed in folk tales⁵.

Therefore, this complex is popularly regarded as the patron saint of the family hearth of women and mothers. Together, Zangi-ota and Ambar-bibi were the religious and spiritual guides of many people, including ordinary peasants and various rulers. After the death of Zangi-ota and his wife, their tomb became a place of pilgrimage for locals and now even visitors from far away⁶.

According to legend, the beginning of the construction of the mausoleum of Zangi-ota and his wife Ambar-bibi was laid by Timur. Historical sources link Amir Timur's visit to Turkestan and the construction of the Zangi-ota complex in honor of Khoja Ahmad Yasawi. Tashkent shrines are also connected with the cult of Yasawi, as Zangi-ota was a follower of Yasawi⁷. And also, for the followers of the teachings of Zangi-ota, living at the mazar and coming to worship, in the 18th-19th centuries were built residential hujras along the perimeter of the courtyard formed in front of the main portal of the mausoleum of Zangi-ota. Southwest side of the courtyard was occupied in 1870 mosque-namazgah, in 1914-1915 years in front of the mosque was erected minaret, and the garden for public festivities was fenced and decorated with a new entrance from the side of the village⁸.

Historically formed in the 14th - early 20th centuries, the cult-memorial ensemble consists of three open and closed territories: a vast garden; a complex of monumental buildings of the 14th-20th centuries; a cemetery with the Ambar-bibi Mausoleum⁹.

The first area, a wide avenue through the gate and passing through the old garden (the site of Ramadan and Spring Festival celebrations), has not been preserved.

The second area is a historical complex grouped around a trapezoidal-shaped courtyard with a sloping southwestern side, where a namazgah-type mosque is located. Originally the courtyard of the complex was located along the perimeter, but nowadays the hujras located in the northern facade have been demolished. In the southern corner is the mausoleum of Zangi-ota. Along the mausoleum in the southern and eastern facade, the hujras and khanaka of the madrasa¹⁰ have been built. The minaret in front of the mosque, built in 1914-15, was demolished in 2014.

The third area – the old cemetery adjoins the historical complex from the south. From the southern entrance there is a green path to the Ambar-bibi mausoleum¹¹.

Mausoleum of Zangi-ota – has a longitudinal-axis multi-chambered two-domed portal composition, inherent in a number of objects of 14th-20th centuries. The theme of a complex mausoleum, in which the tomb (gurkhana) and the hall for rites and commemoration (ziaretkhana) are divided, developed from the 11th-12th centuries and formed into a clear architectural composition only by the first half of the 14th century. The entrance portal, panels and mihrab in the interior of the mausoleum are decorated with carved mosaics and majolica,

⁵ Снесарев Г.П. Реликты домусульманских верований у узбеков Южного Хорезма. М., 1969, С. 240, 248-250

⁶ Зияев А. Зангиата. В прошлом и настоящем. Историко – архитектурный очерк. Ташкент, 2008 С. 7.

⁷ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.76.

⁸ Маньковская Л.Ю. Паспорт. Комплекс Зенги-ата. Материалы проекта «Свод памятников материальной культуры Узбекистана» в 1986-1992 гг. Архив ИИск. АН РУз. АН РУз. ИА(м)М24 №770/12. Ташкент, 1974. С. 2.

⁹ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.77.

¹⁰ Маньковская Л.Ю. Паспорт. Комплекс Зенги-ата. Материалы проекта «Свод памятников материальной культуры Узбекистана» в 1986-1992 гг. Архив ИИск. АН РУз. АН РУз. ИА(м)М24 №770/12. Ташкент, 1974. С. 2.

¹¹ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.77

in some places with gilding. In the gurkhana there is a carved white marble tombstone of Zangi-ota: a tall parallelepiped standing on a plinth. General sizes of a building – 18x13.8 m (on a portal), 9 m – width of a building (on ziairetkhana), height of a dome of ziairet-khona – 18,3 m, height of a portal – 10 m, span of an arch of a portal – 6.6 m, tombstone of Zangi-ota: 2.55x1.05 m, height 1.3 m with a plinth¹². Analogs of Zangi-ota's mausoleum and stages of evolution of this type of buildings are mausoleums of the 14th century – Buyankuli Khan and Saifiddin Bokharzi in Bukhara, Sheikh Mukhtor Vali in Khwarazm region and others. The culmination of their development were the largest Timur structures 80-90-ies of the 14th century – dynastic tomb Dorussiadat in Shakhrisabz and the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmad Yasawi in Turkestan¹³.

In 1868 during an earthquake the arch of the portal collapsed, the domes were badly damaged. During the repair of 1887-1888 the gurkhana was rebuilt, distorted by additions (decorative minarets, brick cornice). The interiors were plastered, the place of the mosaic panel was painted with oil paint underneath. The top of the portal has been repointed. The side and rear facades were extensively repaired. And also in the middle of the twentieth century the mausoleum was the subject of a complex architectural, archaeological and engineering study, works on strengthening, restoration and landscaping were carried out. Architectural measurements were made in 1944-1959 (B.N. Zasyupkin, A.N. Vinogradov, T.S. Smirnova), 1960s (I.A. Usmanhodjaev, A. Freitag, M. Akhmedshin, V. Gorokhov)¹⁴; archaeological study in 1958-1959 conducted by K.L. Shakhurin and N.B. Nemtseva¹⁵; in 1979, the restoration project was proposed by architect V.M. Filimonov. In 2014, large-scale construction and repair and restoration works were carried out in the mausoleum of Zangi-ota¹⁶.

Ambar-bibi mausoleum – one of the rare types of mausoleums of the 14th century, which includes a unique for the architecture of Tashkent composition – a single-chamber monument of geometric shape with a centered tomb, portal-dome composition, with beveled corners topped with a dome on a high cylindrical drum, as well as with an angular faceted structure. In the appearance of the mausoleum is characterized by the slope of the walls inward, the narrowing of the portal upward and conical reduction in the diameter of the drum to the top, which gives it a special expressiveness and monumentality¹⁷. The mausoleum is covered with a double dome on arched sails. The drum of the dome was originally solidly faced with glazed decoration, which was characteristic of monuments of the Timurid period. Dimensions of the mausoleum: general in plan – 6.37x9 m, height of the dome – 13.5 m, room – 4.7x4.8 m¹⁸. The Ambar-bibi mausoleum by its monumentality and originality is somewhat more modest than the mausoleum of Zangi-ota. As V.A. Shishkin wrote “this is a very small cemetery.... but it is

¹² Юсупова М.А. Средневековые памятники //Ташкентская область: история цивилизации и перспективы развития. Коллективная монография на английском, узбекском и русском языках. Ташкент, 2014. С. 111.

¹³ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.52-53.

¹⁴ Усманходжаев И. реставрационно проектное отчет о проведенных исследованиях мавзолея Зенги-ата. Архив АКН РУз. Т1987/У-74. Ташкент, 1959. С. 1-10.

¹⁵ Немцева Н. Реставрационно проектное отчет об археологических раскопках на территории Халим-ханы мавзолея Зенги-ата. Архив АКН РУз. Т2007/Н-50. 1959. С.1-5.

¹⁶ Историко-архитектурного комплекса «Занги-ота» в Ташкентской области. Эскизный проект благоустройства территории. Архив АКН РУз. Т9769/9-90. Ташкент, 2014. С.1-10.

¹⁷ Маньковская Л.Ю. Паспорт. Мавзолей Амбар-биби/ Камбар-ана.. Материалы проекта «Свод памятников материальной культуры Узбекистана» в 1986-1992 гг. Архив ИИск. АН РУз. АН РУз. ИА(М)М24 №770/12. Ташкент, 1974. С.2

¹⁸ Юсупова М.А. Средневековые памятники //Ташкентская область: история цивилизации и перспективы развития. Коллективная монография на английском, узбекском и русском языках. Ташкент, 2014. С.112

incredibly interesting with its original view”¹⁹. And also the type of centric composition is known in Central Asia since ancient times, the first of the known mausoleums – Ismail Samani in Bukhara (the end of 9th century)²⁰. The form of faceted portal-dome mausoleum is characteristic of the 14th century. To these forms turned architects in the early 14th century Samarkand. There were built vosmigrannye mausoleums – the world-famous Gur-Emir and Bibi-Khonim, in the necropolis of Shah-i Zinda – centric “Octahedron”. At the end of the 15th century, an octagonal portal-dome mausoleum of Rabia Sultan-begim was built on the outskirts of the Timurid state in the city of Yasy Turkestan²¹.

Information about this mausoleum with a collapsed dome first appeared in print in 1897. In 1945-1949 the dome, the drum and the upper part of the portal were restored. The upper part of the drum was dismantled and laid anew, the outer perimeter of the drum was reinforced with ring iron ties, cracks were sealed, and the cladding was strengthened. In 1986-97, as part of the restoration research and design works of the Institute of UzRDI Restoration – the technical condition of the monument – its construction percentage of losses and preliminary engineering studies of the monument were determined²². In 2014, the territory of the monument was improved, the dome was covered with blue tin, the portal was repaired with facing tiles of glaze, and the interior of the building was decorated with ornaments (patterns, epigraphic inscriptions and stalactites-muqarnases)²³.

The **Namazgah-mosque**, a mosque in the Zangi-ota complex, was built in 1870 by the former kazi of Zangi-ota village. It closes the courtyard from the south-west and gives it a trapezoidal shape. Among the paintings of the mosque there was an inscription with the date 1870-1871 and the name of the master Kosh-Muhammad Kokandi. In 1914-1915 the mosque was repaired and partially reconstructed: the aivan was remodeled, a pitched roof was arranged over the gallery, the southern facade was rebuilt²⁴. The building is stretched along the courtyard, has a large portal-dome volume in the center and lowered wings of arched-dome galleries on the sides, as well as a wooden aiwan in front of the whole building. The interior was originally painted with flowers and inscriptions, the painting has not survived. Dimensions: 41x16 m, the width of the building body – 11 m without aiwan, diameter of the main hall dome - 5 m, gallery domes – 3 meters²⁵. The mosque belongs to the type of namazgah-mosques, it was used for various festive prayers. In the collection of Tashkent monumental monuments there are two of the largest of the known in Central Asia monumental namazgah-mosques belonging to the 19th century. One is in the ensemble of Hazrati Imam, the other in this complex Zangi-ota. The namazgah-mosque is built in the traditions of Central Asian architecture. The central portal-dome volume is highlighted, flanked on the sides of the

¹⁹ Шишкин В.А. Мазары в Зенги-ата//“В.В. Бартольд – туркестанские друзья, ученики и почитатели”. Ташкент, 1927. С.165-170.

²⁰ Аббасова-Юсупова М.А. Бухарская школа зодчества XV-XVII вв. (особенности и динамика развития). Самарканд, 2022. С.9

²¹ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.48-49

²² Предварительные работы по памятнику архитектуры XIV в. – Мавзолей Амбар-биби в поселке Зенги-ата Калининского района, Ташкентской области. Архив АКН РУз. Т8476/М-92. Ташкент, 1987 С. 5.

²³ Историко-архитектурного комплекса «Занги-ота» в Ташкентской области. Эскизный проект благоустройства территории. Архив АКН РУз. Т9769/9-90. Ташкент, 2014. С.1-10.

²⁴ Маньковская Л.Ю. Паспорт. Комплекс Зенги-ата. Материалы проекта «Свод памятников материальной культуры Узбекистана» в 1986-1992 гг. Архив ИИск. АН РУз. АН РУз. ИА(м)М24 №770/12. Ташкент, 1974. С. 2.

²⁵ Юсупова М.А. Средневековые памятники //Ташкентская область: история цивилизации и перспективы развития. Коллективная монография на английском, узбекском и русском языках. Ташкент, 2014. С.113.

four-bay in two rows of wings of arched-dome galleries, complemented by a light wooden aivan with kaivan on the front also²⁶.

Madrasah – in the Zangi-ota complex, this is the name given to the rows of hujras encircling the courtyard of the complex from three sides, and to a small darskhana built in their row (on the north-western side). By the character of architecture and constructions they date back to the end of the 18th - beginning of the 20th centuries. In 1914-1915 one-storeyed hujras of the madrasah are marked from the courtyard by the rhythm of shallow niches, only the darvazakhana in the center of the north-eastern part of the courtyard and the mausoleum of Zangi-ota, asymmetrically located in the southern corner, are marked by a portal. The madrasah is built of square burnt brick, repair sections of 1914-1915 are laid with rectangular bricks. The hujras are covered with lancet vaults, the darskhana and darvazakhana are covered with sphero-conical single domes. Unfortunately, during the reconstruction of the northern facade of the madrasah in 2014, the hujras were demolished.

Since 2014, a number of restoration works have been carried out in the Zangi-ota memorial complex, during which incorrect solutions and restoration methods were applied.

The following conclusions can be drawn in conclusion:

- Zangi-ota complex is one of the most valuable historical and architectural monuments of Tashkent city and Tashkent region, which occupies an area conventionally divided into three parts;
- at present it has lost to some extent traces of its former grandeur, the reason being that many repair and restoration works and changes during its existence have led to a significant change in its original appearance;
- the old garden part of the complex, where Ramadan religious festivals and spring festival celebrations were held, has been significantly modernized, and the pond and shiipan to the south of the Garden Alley have been demolished;
- the historic sacral part of the complex originally had a perimeter courtyard, but during the 2014 renovation, the hujras along the northern line of the courtyard were demolished, exposing the sacral courtyard;
- in the center of the courtyard of the complex there was a three-tiered octagonal minaret of 1915-1915, resembling a bell tower, unfortunately demolished in 2014 during the process of restoration and improvement;
- new modern buildings and a minaret, not typical of Tashkent architecture, were built in front of the namazgah-mosque;
- Zangi-ota mausoleum is a unique monument of architecture, which preserved traces of polychrome decoration of the times of Amir Timur and Ulugbek, it includes one of the largest carved tombstones of the era of Amir Timur, is a pearl of Central Asian architecture of the late 14th-15th centuries and has great scientific, historical and artistic value;
- Ambar-bibi mausoleum is a domed one-chamber mausoleum of geometric shape with a small portal, it is noticeable that now it has changed in comparison with the way it looked before;
- the Ambar-bibi mausoleum was covered with a double dome, and inside the outer dome were arranged radial sides to increase strength, typical of the 15th century, and a system of beams to anchor them; since the walls of all facades were covered with layers of plaster during the

²⁶ Булатова В.А, Маньковская Л.Ю. Памятники зодчества Ташкента XIV-XIX вв. Ташкент, 1983 г. С.55.

mid-20th century renovation process, it is likely that they conceal traces of the former facade decoration;

- the ancient dome, destroyed in the late 19th century, and the top of the portal were rebuilt in 1945-1949, the top of the drum was dismantled and put back together, the walls and plinth were rebuilt in some places, and the roof was re-laid;
- the namazgah-mosque is a late medieval example of Tashkent architecture;
- in particular, in the architecture of the mosque: traditional luxurious design of pavilions, ceiling columns, proportionality of the volume with the open pavilion, elements of interrelation with the environment – all this indicates the use of medieval traditional architectural styles.

In the middle of the twentieth century, research conducted in the Zangi-ota complex, archaeological and engineering-geological surveys, conservation and restoration works were timely carried out by renowned specialists in the field of monument protection. The right methods were chosen in the creation of protection zones and restoration of monuments. During the years of independence, modern repair methods were improperly used in the reconstruction of the memorial complex. The old historical appearance of the complex was partially lost and carelessly restored. On the one hand, attention to the complex led to restoration and improvement of the building, and on the other hand – to partial or complete loss of its historical appearance and architectural value.

And also this shrine and complex associated with Zangi-ota and his wife Ambar-bibi, who is also a murid of Sufi Khoja Ahmad Yasawi and mystic poet Suleiman Hakim-ota Bakyrangani, is one of the unique masterpieces of history, national spirituality and values of Uzbekistan. Therefore, such revered places should be preserved and worthily handed over to future generations. The works and mentorship of great thinkers, who theoretically and practically enriched the science of mysticism, their religious, spiritual and social views as mature historical personalities who actively participated in the life of the country, occupy a special place in the history of Uzbekistan. Therefore, the study, research and preservation of their religious and educational heritage, quality restoration of known and poorly studied complexes and other monuments is a very significant task today.

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