



Anette Gangler, Heinz Gaube, Attilio Petruccioli  
**Bukhara – The Eastern Dome of Islam**

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Bukhara is one of the architectural miracles of the East. A Persian author of the Middle Ages called Bukhara the »Eastern Dome of Islam«. This honorary title was given to the city on account of its prestige as one of the most famous centers of learning in the Islamic world. Many outstanding scholars, among them the great philosopher and medic Avicenna (Ibn Sina), came from Bukhara. Therefore it is not surprising that the name of the city itself is traditionally derived from the Indian Buddhist term »vihara« (place of learning).

Bukhara, located in the fertile valley of the Zarafshan river is the third-largest city of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It was founded some decades after Alexander the Great's campaigns to the east. In the pre-Islamic period (before 700 AD) it was one of the cities of the Sogdian confederation and had grown to a considerable size. In the 10th century the Persian dynasty of the Samanids made Bukhara to one of the richest cities of the Islamic world and to the meeting point of the most famous scholars of the time. After the fall of the Samanids Bukhara declined steadily. It took about 500 years until the city became a political and intellectual center again.

After 1500 the Uzbek Khans controlled from Bukhara the most powerful state of Central Asia. Under the Uzbeks Bukhara was rebuilt and embellished with buildings. The high rising domes and façades of these buildings decorated with glazed tiles characterize the city's appearance up to the day. Under Uzbek rule the city also became a famous center of learning again. In 1868 the Khanate of Bukhara and its capital were conquered by the Russians. 1920 Soviet rule started, and since 1991 the city is one of the historical treasures of the independent Republic of Uzbekistan.

In this book a city planner, an architect and a historian trace the urban development of this outstanding city and analyze its architecture in urban and historical contexts from its origins in the pre Islamic period to the situation today. The authors did extensive fieldwork in Bukhara and have published a number of books and many articles on Near Eastern and Persian architecture and urbanism.

Anette Gangler teaches city planning at the University of Stuttgart. Heinz Gaube is professor of Oriental studies at the University of Tübingen. Attilio Petruccioli was Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1994 to 1998; today he teaches at the Politecnico de Bari.

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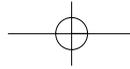
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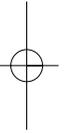
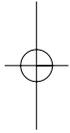
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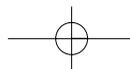


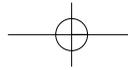
Anette Gangler, Heinz Gaube, Attilio Petruccioli

**Bukhara – The Eastern Dome of Islam**  
**Urban Development**  
**Urban Space**  
**Architecture and Population**



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**Bukhara was under Samanid rule  
the focus of splendor,  
the Ka'aba of empire,  
the meeting-place of the unique figures of the age,  
the rising-place of the stars of the literary men of the world,  
and the forum for outstanding personages of the time.**

ath-Tha'alibi (d. 1038)

**In the Eastern countries it is the copula of Islam  
and is in those regions like unto Baghdad.  
Its environments are adorned with the brightness  
of the light of doctors and jurists and its surroundings  
embellished with the rarest of high attainment.  
Since ancient times it has in every age been the place  
of assembly of great savants of every region.  
Now the derivation of Bukhara is from bukhar,  
which in the language of the Magians means  
»center of learning«.**

al-Juwaini (d. 1284)

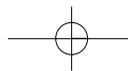


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## 1. Introduction

It was before the Russian revolution, that a Russian scholar, W. Barthold, laid the base of any further studies on Islamic Central Asia with his book *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion* (Barthold 1958). The book was first published in Russian in 1910 and the first edition of an English translation appeared in 1928. In this book, Barthold analyzed the major Arabic and Persian sources on the history and geography of pre Mongol Russian Central Asia or Turkestan, as it was called at this time, and gave a survey of the historical topography and history of the region.

After the Russian revolution and the consolidation of Soviet power in Central Asia, a number of scholars dedicated books or articles to the monuments, the urban development and the social organization of old Bukhara, the topics of the present book. Other Soviet scholars covered architecture, art and urbanism of the whole of Uzbekistan or the Central Asian republics. Some of these publications, which were helpful for our work, need to be mentioned here.

In 1936, V.A. Shishkin (Shishkin 1936) published a small monograph on the architecture of Bukhara. It was a first attempt consisting of descriptions of the major buildings and a few photos. Plans of buildings are missing. Some years later, a monograph of similar quality on the cities of Uzbekistan written by the same author appeared (Shishkin 1943). After Shishkin, G.A. Pugachenkova and L. I. Rempel were the two outstanding scholars who broadened our knowledge of the art and architecture of Uzbekistan. One book of the two authors deals with the architecture of Uzbekistan (Pugachenkova 1958) and a second with the art of Uzbekistan including architecture (Pugachenkova 1965). Up to the present, these two books are the standard works on the art and architecture of Uzbekistan. Most of the plans of buildings of Bukhara which were republished in later books (e.g. Voronina 1969 or Brentjes 1979) originate from the two mentioned publications of these two scholars. In a later, some how bizarre but still helpful publication, L. I. Rempel treated life, daily practice, architecture, construction, craft and art of old Bukhara (Rempel 1981).

O. A. Sukhareva's interests were in a different field. She studied the social organization and the quarter structure of old Bukhara (Sukhareva 1976b). Whereas Sukhareva work is rich in details, a special perception of all the information she displays is missing. The maps published in her book are too general and in many cases incorrect. Anyhow, using additional sources, her work enabled us to correlate buildings with quarters as well as with the size of the quarters and the quarters' population.

The question of the Central Asian city was treated in a number of articles and books. The most comprehensive survey of Medieval Central Asian urbanism is the work of A.M. Belenitskii, I.B. Bentovich and O.G. Bo'shakov (Belenitskii 1973).

Up to the end of the Soviet Union, western scholars were not able to conduct intensive field research in Uzbekistan and in Bukhara in particular. Therefore, western scholarship was limited to editing or translating texts like R.N. Frye's translation of Narshakhi's *History of Bukhara* (Frye 1954) and historical studies like the same author's *Bukhara. The Medieval Achievement* (Frye 1965) or R. McChesney's article »Economic and Social Aspects of Public Architecture in Bukhara in the 1560's and 1570's« (McChesney 1987).

This changed after the independence of Uzbekistan. Early in the 1990s, we first had the opportunity to visit Bukhara and to build up the first contacts; and soon after, we started to conduct fieldwork in the city. In 1995, the three authors worked with students from MIT, Stuttgart university and Tübingen university in the old city of Bukhara for several weeks. The main emphasis was put on the southern half of the inner city (madina/shahristan) between the Taq Zargaran in the north and the Gawkushan area in the south. Here we examined whole quarters house by house, made plans of the houses and interviewed the inhabitants. We also surveyed carefully the other parts of the inner city and its periphery. The cartographic base of this work was a cadastral map of the city intra muros and the invaluable map of the same area by Parfenov-Fenin. The latter map was drawn around 1910 and shows more than 500 individual buildings and sites of the pre Soviet city. Outside the historic city, we surveyed some parts of the Soviet extensions of the city and interviewed the inhabitants. The same was done in the new quarters which were built after independence.

This work created the base for a first international symposium organized by one of the authors of this book and held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in November 1996. The papers of this symposium were published in 1999 (Petruccioli 1999). They represent a first attempt to organize and coordinate research on Bukhara on an international level. In addition to

this, they are a document of the state of affairs in research on Bukhara and of our knowledge of Bukhara.

At this point our book starts. It is the product of field work and library work. The authors are an urban planner (A. Gangler), a historian (H. Gaube) and an architect (A. Petruccioli). In a number of aspects, this book differs from the approach one finds in earlier publications of the Soviet period. It also differs from the first book on Bukhara published after independence (Kirichenko 1997). We concentrate on urban development, urban space, architecture and population. In doing this, we emphasize aspects which were not emphasized in earlier book. We also were keen in trying to present original plans and maps as much as possible and not to republish plans and maps published in earlier works. If this could not be prevented, the plans were redrawn.

After this introduction, the chapters 2 to 6, written by H.G., represent a historian's approach. This section starts with a general historical survey (chapter 2). Chapter 3 deals with the form of Medieval Bukhara. This is done within the context of the morphology of cities of ancient Sogdia and Eastern Iran. The plan of 10th-century Bukhara resembles closely the plan of 10th-century Herat and other cities of Eastern Iran and southern Central Asia. The origin of this planning scheme is obscure. Possible relations with Chinese and Indian principles of city planning are discussed. Nevertheless, local roots in Bactrian and/or Kushan principles of planning must be considered too.

The heydays of Bukhara's medieval history were in the 10th century. Under the rule of the Iranian princes from the Samanid family, Bukhara had reached the peak of its economic and cultural development. The court of the Samanids attracted the most famous scholars and artists. In addition to this, 10th-century Bukhara was the centre of the Persian cultural renaissance. Here the first large literary work in the New Persian language, the *Shahnameh* or *Book of the Kings* of Firdausi was written. Up to this time, Persian intellectual and artists wrote their works in Arabic only. After this, New Persian became more and more a language used by writers and scholars in Iran as well as in Central Asia and Islamic India. Samanid Bukhara attracted many travellers from far away and arouse the curiosity of the famous Arabic geographers of the time. They left valuable descriptions of the city. After examining the topographical and the archaeological evidences, these information are analyzed in chapter 4. Main emphasis is put on the shape and size of the inner city, the madina or shahristan, and the outer city, the rabad, as well as their main streets and gates.

Invading Turks ended in 999 this glorious period in Bukhara's history. The city became a place of secondary importance and received an almost fatal blow in 1220 when the Mongols of Chingiz Khan took Bukhara and destroyed it heavily. Under the Timurids, the dynasty which was founded by Timur or Tamarlane (1369–1500), Bukhara recovered slightly but was overshadowed by Samarqand, the capital of the Timurids. The last decades of Timurid rule were characterized by fights between different members of the Timurid family, and in 1500 the Uzbek Shaibanids took the city. Bukhara became the capital of the Uzbek state and remained capital under the Uzbek Janids and Mangids until 1868 when the ruler of Bukhara became a vassal of the Russian czars.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, under Uzbek rule Bukhara acquired the shape and appearance which characterize the old city until today. Many of the buildings of this period and whole parts of the old city were destroyed in the Soviet period. That is why in chapter 5 the city is presented as it was around 1900. This chapter is introduced by excerpts from descriptions of Bukhara of 1848 and the late 19th century. Around 1900, a very detailed map of Bukhara was drawn by Parfenov-Fenin. Following the traveller accounts, this map is analyzed and correlated with written information on the division of the city into quarters, the buildings in the quarters and the population. As in chapter 4, a small subchapter at the end deals with the water system.

Having created this base, the building activities of the 16th and 17th centuries are described in chapter 6. Main agents in these processes were 'Abdallah Khan (1557–1598), Imam Quli Khan (1611–1641), 'Abdal'aziz Khan (1645–1681) and their contemporaries. The most prominent of those were the Juibari Shaikhs of the Naqshbandis who undertook gigantic investments in the time of 'Abdallah Khan.

The urban fabric, poles and urban focal points as well as nodality and polarity of the city up to the period of the Uzbek Khans are analyzed in chapters 7. The methodological approach chosen in this chapter and in chapters 8 to 10, all written by A. P., differs from the approach chosen in the chapters 2 to 6. Whereas chapters 2 to 6 depend a great deal on information drawn from literary sources, the analyses and conclusions presented in chapters 7 to 10 found on a careful reading of the city's plan and the monuments.



1.01. View of the old city. The Great Mosque and the Madrasa Mir 'Arab.

1.02. View of the old city. The Taq, Tilpakfurshan and the Maghak Kurbi Mosque.



The building fabric of the old city of Bukhara dates from the Uzbek Khan period. Anything built prior to this has to be analysed retrospectively through the traces left on the urban layout by a typological process. Bukhara is seen as a living organism which is constantly undergoing and being enriched by a process of change. For this reason it cannot be analysed generally, but must be broken down into its component parts, which are mainly three: the building fabric, which must take into account the basic fabric (residential) and special fabric (public and commercial); movement, which must take into account routes and their hierarchical relationship to the building fabric, and the nodes, or focal points, and poles, which include not only monuments, but also those moments of discontinuity in the building fabric, i.e. squares, gateways and fords. At the same time it is important to recognise how each of these components is interconnected: how the building fabric relates to the routes, the route to the node and the node to the building fabric. Starting from the plan of the city these three components and then each monument individually are analysed and classified.

The concepts of nodality and polarity define the quantity and quality of nodal and polar zones, whereas those of anti-nodality and anti-polarity define anti-nodal and anti-polar zones. The organisation of nodal zones involves not just the physical structuring of space or the type of building but also their function. Nodal functions and services occupy the centre, or nodal zone, while anti-nodal functions occupy the margins, or anti-nodal zone. Property value constitutes another important factor of differentiation. The low cost of anti-polar zones tends to favour not just the spread of production centres but also religious centres. Surrounded by functions that do not disturb the sanctity of the place. The Friday mosque occupies the geometric centre of the bazaars in Islamic cities. Dyer, tanner and butcher shops, on the other hand, are placed outside the city centre.

Chapter 8 treats two characteristic types of mosques: the guzar mosque and the Kiosk mosque. The typological processes of small to medium size monuments is examined. The minimum common denominator of Bukharan special buildings is a square construction module of circa 3.30 m, corresponding to six ghiyas (arms), with four walls, pierced by a single door and covered by a wooden roof with mono-directional beams. It may be simply a room in a house, or a bay, that forms part of a composition of similar structures that go to make up an isotropic plan adaptable to commercial or religious purposes.

A study of monuments in terms of typological process is based on the definition of building type as the organic summation of the construction features of buildings in a given place and time and relies on the axiom that, independent of their size, all special buildings in a city are related and that the spirit of place influences any changes made to them. A small neighbourhood guzar mosque, with a simple flat roof, will have been built according to the same construction module (or one of its multiples) as the Kalan Mosque with its many domes. Special buildings invariably derive from basic or residential building processes. If the habitation is a response to the need for shelter, the monument is a response to the need of a social group to represent its collective values. The monument, in turn, derives from the reorganisation of the basic fabric in

terms of specialised spaces and a more hierarchical composition. It would be impossible to imagine a city composed of special building fabric alone.

In dealing with large scale monuments (chapter 9), external cultural influences play a more central role. Above all, large monuments require more audacious techniques, for example, in vault spanning and decoration. So we have to imagine groups of specialised craftsmen, which formed itinerant corporations or guilds. In this context, the aesthetic aspirations of a whole society, including the lower classes, count less than the patronage of the aristocracy and high clergy, who prefer the latest trends in architecture coming from the capital and the court. While it is true that from the 16th-century Bukhara became the main cultural centre of Central Asia, and from 1560 to 1590 we can even speak of a Bukharan School, for two centuries prior to that the cultural centre was Samarqand. Moreover, Timurid cultural horizons were vaster and so artistic influences must be sought all over the empire. Architecture is a spatial and structural organism, the spatial axes of which may be read as a synthesis of the various psychological, ritual and practical interests of the user. The organisation and distribution of collective architectonic space is traceable to four type-models based on four increasingly organic degrees of axial plan, from the linear to the polar: mono-directional; bi-directional; tri-directional (with a vertical axis); and pluri-directional (with a vertical axis).

The results of these inquiries are summarized in chapter 10. The difference between Timurid and early Uzbek Khan period architecture is shown. The first ends in 1500, while the second lasts for the whole of the 16th and first half of the 17th century and may be divided into three phases. Timurid architecture is characterised by a quest for gigantic forms, achieved by reinforcing the vertical thrust of the portals and the main dome over the maksura, but often damaging the proportions of the building as a whole. The plan is generally on a longitudinal axis, which defines the two main nodes: the monumental entrance and the maksura.

The first phase of early Uzbek Khan architecture in the 16th century is linked to the building activity of 'Ubaidallah Khan. It is a time of experimentation with new forms or adaptation of Timurid forms to new contexts, such as the façade with blind niches of the Kalan Mosque, the introduction of the pentagonal iwan, or the pishtaq with lighter buttressing. The second phase from 1530 to 1560 is a moment of transition that coincides with the reign of 'Abdal'aziz I. The principle innovations, which will constitute the linguistic feature of the Bukhara School, now take shape: the quadripartite plan and complementary axes, the external loggias on more than one side, the façade framed by tower-like guldastah crowned by a lantern.

The third phase from 1560 to 1590 coincides with the establishment of a strong unified state under 'Abdallah Khan II. The main linguistic features are the pentagonal or faceted portals with semi-domes, while the guldastah become veritable cylindrical corner towers crowned by lanterns. The layout of the plan favours a quadripartite arrangement with a greater articulation of the main body of the building, which often protrudes from the outer perimeter. In section the arrangement of volumes emphasises the nodes, which correspond to collective spaces. The search for a more economical means of construction leads to the rejection of solid brick ma-

sorry walls in favour of triple layered walls (a hollow cavity between two baked-brick walls). Building activity continues in the next century, accentuating the decorative and illusionistic aspects of the interiors. The last century of independence sees a deep crisis, because of which, with a few exceptions, the great public buildings are left out, while the small buildings of the quarter continue to follow consolidated forms and techniques.

Chapters 11 to 13 concentrate on the Russian period, the Soviet period and the modern Uzbek period. In chapter 11 the urban development of Bukhara between the 19th century and the early 20th century is traced on the base of historic plans of the city. The plans analyzed are those of Eversman (1823), Khanikov (1843), an anonymous Persian map which was drawn between 1852 and 1856, Poslavskij's map of 1886 and the map of Parfenov-Fenin (first draft before 1900 and up dated several times).

A different and new approach to the understanding of the city starts with Poslavskij's plan of 1886. In this plan the hierarchy of the street pattern becomes evident. Many pathways fork out from the gates of the outer wall and meet in the centre, south of the shahristan. The way in which the pathways lead throughout the city and their depiction as narrow passages alludes to a firmly established historical system of pathways, which allows us to draw conclusions concerning the growth periods of the city and the course of previous city walls. But the plan shows also, that neither the comprehension of the fortifications and palaces nor the perception of the inner structure of the quarters is evident. Its importance lies in the fact that it illustrates the reality from outside in order to understand the economic and administrative structure of the city, and is thus a preparation for future interventions.

These tendencies started in the period of the 'civilisatory mission', which started with the colonial expansion of Russia into the steppes and oasis-cities in the middle of the 19th century. The economic development in Russia required the constant seizure of new territories that could be a merchandising market and source of raw materials. An increasing trading scope of Russia within Central Asia became more and more indispensable, and the diplomats of the Tsar and other Russian representatives of different governmental entities started studying the political and economic conditions of Bukhara. Bukhara exported cotton, silk, dried fruits and gowns, while Russia exported ready-made commodities, manufactured at factories and plants in large quantities. The »civilisatory mission« led to some military conflicts where at the end the conquered areas were united to the »General Government of Turkistan« in 1867. The sovereign emirate of Bukhara was placed under its protectorate, and in 1868 a peace treaty was signed between Bukhara and Russia. The authorities of Bukhara were obliged to secure the Russian merchants activities and to give permission for trading agencies. In a treaty of 1873 it was regulated that the Bukhara emirate had no rights to independent foreign relations.

On the basis of the plan of 1886 and a further plan of 1893 the urban development of Bukhara can be described since the Russian conquest of 1868. The military interests of the Russians are at first manifested in the buildings of barracks and a garrison in a walled space in the west of the city. The Russian military facilities such as garrison and ammunition depots, a Russian police station but also the residence of the Russian political agent, who was appointed by order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are marked. The agent was empowered to keep control over the economic and political relationship between Russia and Bukhara because the military interest changed more and more to become an economic interest. As a result of this economic relationship, the internal life of Bukhara changed. The feudal political institutions impaired, Russian interference into the economy took place and the infrastructure concerning trade and business between Russia and Bukhara increased.

Capital investment was intensified, and at the end of the 19th century various public and private banks opened in the centre of the city of Bukhara. The plan of Parfenov-Fenin shows about 400 religious buildings, which all seem to have still been in function, but also buildings with new functions like banks, pharmacies, a dentist's clinic and the first native Russian school which was founded 1894. With these buildings, two stories high and constructed in burned brick, a new centre was created in the traditional inner city around the Sarrafan Taq. At the periphery near the Kagan Gate ( Karshi Gate), the building of a new railway line in 1887, the commercial office of the Old Bukhara railway station, the railway station itself, the customs office and the old post- and telegraph lines office were all built in the typical colonial Russian style: long-stretched, white buildings, with one story, representative façades with arched windows and an emphasized part in the middle. The new functions combined with modern architectural elements demonstrated also in Bukhara the beginning of the Western »fin de siècle«.

1.03. View of the old city. The Great Mosque and the southern quarters.

1.04. View of the old city. The Great Mosque and the southern quarters.

1.05. View of the old city. The southern quarters near the Gawkushan complex.



Along the railroad track, 13 km southeast of Bukhara, the new Russian colonial city of »New Bukhara«, today Kagan, was established. The settlement with its extra-territorial rights was planned following the ideal of the »Garden City«. From 1902 onwards the »Garden City« concept of planning led to a strong movement in Russia (e. g. Semjonow 1912). The settlements following this idea were supposed to be connected by magistrates and are characterized by orthogonal, wide streets as well as irrigation-ditches and avenues with trees. Detached, one-story adobe buildings, faced with kiln-dried bricks and ornamented with plain relief decor prevail in these settlements.

The dense structure of the residential areas, which exists until today, was documented for one quarter on a map of the land-registry in 1995. As old plans show, the sizes of the houses and the sizes of the individual rooms are fixed in units of measures (gaz). The houses themselves are characterized by at least one inner courtyard, regardless of the size of the property itself on which the house is located. All rooms are grouped around the courtyard and are directly accessible from there. A typical element of all the houses are the split-levels with rooms partly underground, where it is warmer in winter and cooler in summer. At the fronts of the different wings of the house there are mud-built platforms where the inhabitants pass the time of the day. All the different levels of platforms and verandas are arranged with differing orientations to the sun.

Rooms such as the kitchen or stables, as well as the courtyard itself, are very important elements. They remind one of rural houses and demonstrate how strong the agricultural roots of this urban culture are. An access-way, where once the large wagons parked, and stables are needed for the autonomous provision of the large households. The wide access-ways are part of the living space within the house itself and present an important characteristic of the houses in Bukhara. As in all Islamic-Oriental cities, the separation of private and public spaces is an important characteristic in both the urban fabric and the houses of which it consists. Thus, a special room close to the entrance has the function of the reception room for guests. All the rooms are completely devoid of furniture or other elements than those fastened to the walls or the ceilings. The basic setup of all of these houses with their differentiation of rooms and their decor have their roots in a far-reaching tradition of Central Asia and show a consistency all throughout the time until the Russian Revolution. Russian Classicism or Art Nouveau can be found only in some elements of a few city palaces of the nobles.

The society of Bukhara maintained its tradition until change was forced upon it through the dispossession of private property. Until the revolution in 1917, the rich did not leave the old city. But, with the Russian Revolution, the confiscation and reallocation of large houses and wealthy families started. There are no wide extensions of new quarters in a more European style as we know them from the turn of the century in many other Oriental cities colonized by the French or the English. In the traditional, feudal society of Bukhara, which represented itself in the typical structure of an Oriental city with introverted private houses, there was no time to develop a substantial pre-socialist housing stock.

In May 1920 an socialist attack on Bukhara started, and in September 1920 Bukhara was seized and became the »People's Republic of Bukhara«. The changes which took place under Soviet rule (1920–1991) are subject of chapter 12. After the severe battles in which 75% of the city are said to have been destroyed, socialist rebuilding began. Based on the socialistic economic system with its planning and strong centralization, Bukhara became a colonial region which produced raw material.

On the aerial view of 1930, the city is still limited by its Medieval walls and seemingly unchanged. The population, which had been counted at 70 000 in 1911 and which had gone down to 50 000 in 1920, increased and the city was reconstructed with a new design for its central region. With the construction of the new railway station the infiltration of new elements into the old city starts from the eastern gate from direction of Kagan. But, also within the city new functions were established and started to displace traditional functions even though there was an attempt to combine the existing elements of architecture with modern forms. A lot of effort was expended to improve the public and social infrastructure of the city as well as the technical infrastructure. The water supply system and the electrical system were improved, and new streets were built. Old streets were widened and the dead-end alleys, the typical structure of an Oriental city, were broken through.

An exact reconstruction of the centre of the city is hardly possible. A plan of Ginzburg gives an impression of the central bazaar before 1930. This plan clearly depicts the disintegration of the traditional bazaar structure. This disintegration was the product of Soviet policy to monopolize the commercial activities. The historic centre of the city has lost more and more of its im-

Muslim army came to Bukhara it raided in the summer and departed in the winter. Khatun fought a little with each army that came and then made peace.» (NARTR, 47)

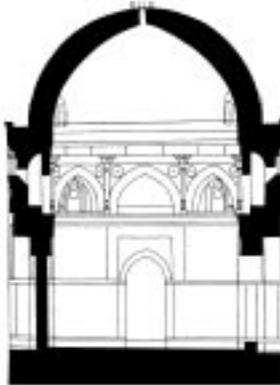
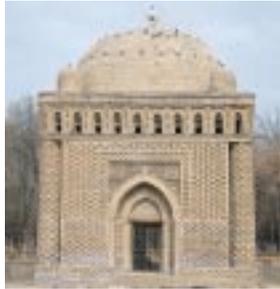
Qutaiba b. Muslim initiated the first changes. His military activities were aimed at a more permanent presence of the Arabs in Sogdia and the rest of Transoxania. It took Qutaiba ten years, from 705 to 715, to conquer – or re-conquer Central Asia up to the Jaxartes. Between 706 and 709 his activities concentrated on Bukhara where he faced severe problems. Narshakhi writes: »The inhabitants of Bukhara became Muslims, but each time after the Muslims withdrew they apostatized. Qutaiba b. Muslim converted them to Islam three times, but they (repeatedly) apostatized and became infidels. The fourth time he made war he seized the city and established Islam there after much difficulty. He installed Islam in their hearts, and made (their religion) difficult to them in every way. They accepted Islam in appearance but in secret worshipped idols. Qutaiba thought it proper to order the people of Bukhara to give one-half of their homes to the Arabs so that the Arabs might be with them and inform of their sentiments. Then they would be obliged to be Muslim. In this manner he made Islam prevail and eradicated traces of unbelief and the precepts of the fire-worshippers. ... He built a grand mosque, and ordered the people to perform the Friday prayer there so that God the Exalted would reward the people of Bukhara for this good (deed) at the final judgment.« (NARTR, 47f.)

The death of Caliph al-Walid in the year 715 marked the end of a glorious phase of Muslim conquests. In al-Walid's time it was not only Qutaiba's campaigns which carried the banner of Islam far to the east. In the west, the Iberian peninsula was also conquered during his caliphate. After his death, the regime of al-Walid and his father was destroyed in the east. The mighty »vice-king« of the east Hadjdjadj b. Yusuf also lost power, and with him his protégé Qutaiba. Qutaiba was killed in a mutiny which he had started, and weaker governors followed him. Only a few years after his death much of what he had conquered and brought under Muslim rule was endangered or gone (Barthold 1958, 186–191).

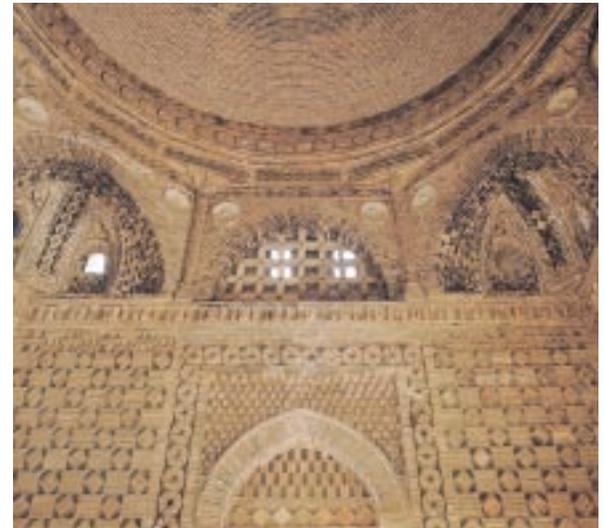
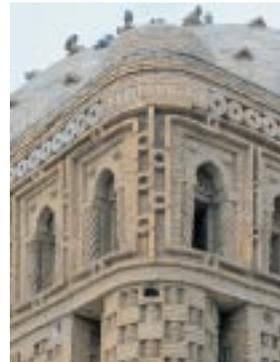
In addition to inner-Arab conflicts and disagreements as well as general changes in politics by the pious Caliph Omar II., Chinese politics towards the west had changed. The Chinese supported the Turks, who in turn encouraged the local rulers of Sogdia to rebel against the Arabs. It took more than 20 years until a governor of Qutaiba's qualities, Nasr b. Sayyar (738–748) was appointed. Nasr's predecessor, Asad b. 'Abdallah al-Qasri, had begun to restore Arab sovereignty in Central Asia, and Nasr regained what was lost after Qutaiba's death.

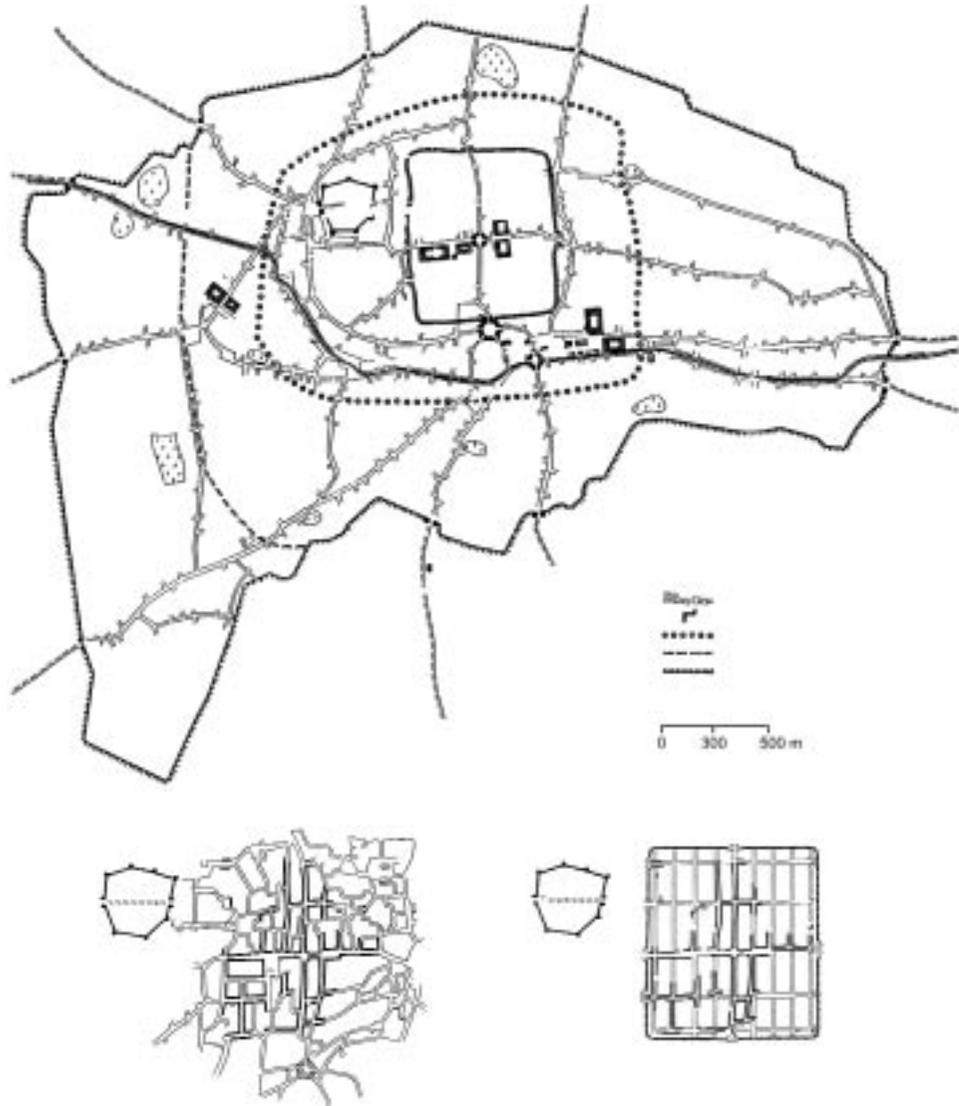
Nevertheless times had changed. There were not only the local population and the traditional rulers of small political entities with whom the Arab governors had to share power, and who, whenever they saw a chance, tried to shake off the Arab yoke. And there were not only the Turks, who had formed powerful alliances in Central Asia. Among the Arabs themselves and between Arabs and newly converted local Muslims severe disagreement and strife weakened the position of Umayyad rule in the east. Tribal and religious factions fought each other. Between 747 and 750 Abu Muslim, a native of Isfahan and supporter of the Abbasids, had turned the whole east against the Umayyads. His activities were instrumental in the downfall of the Umayyads and the rise of the Abbasids. Still Abu Muslim's regime was not accepted in Bukhara, where a first revolt, headed by Sharik b. Shaikh al-Mahri, started in 750. This was cruelly suppressed by Abu Muslim's general Ziyad b. Salih. Many Bukharians, locals as well as Arabs, were killed, and the city was set on fire (Daniel 1979, 87ff). This revolt was followed by a number of revolts, led by different alliances and different goals. The murder of Abu Muslim in 755 did not change the situation in Transoxania, and the most outstanding event was the revolt of Hashim b. Hakim al-Muqanna'. Between 776 and 779 the region of Bukhara was one of the arenas of this revolt (Daniel 1979, 137–147). Thirty years later, another revolt, led by Rafi' b. Laith, shook the city and its hinterland (Daniel 1979, 172–175).

This period of unrest lasted more or less until the coming into power of the Samanids in 865 (Barthold 1958, 195–209). The father of the Samanids was Saman Khudah, who got his name from a small settlement near Balkh, which he had founded. He had converted to Islam before 738 under the governorship of Asad b. 'Abdallah al-Qushairi. »Saman Khudah was one of the children of King Bahram Chubin. From the time (of Asad) the power of the Samanids increased every day till it attained what it did.« (NARTR, 59) The rise in prominence of the Samanids started in the time of the caliphate of al-Ma'mun (813–833). Starting at the time of al-Ma'mun, members of the Samanid family held posts of governors in different cities of Transoxania. The self-assessment this family developed over the years it controlled Transoxania is shown by the »genealogy« quoted above. The Samanids chose nobody less to be their ancestor than the romantic rebel and usurper of the Sasanian throne, Bahram Chubin.



2.02–2.08. The Samanid Mausoleum (end 10th century).





4.01. The walls.  
4.02. Orthogonal street pattern.

#### 4. Bukhara up to the 10th century

##### 4.1. Introduction

##### 4.1.1. Prologue

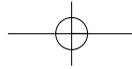
Al-Juwaini, the historian of the campaigns of Chingiz Khan, begins his chapter »Of the Capture of Bukhara« with the following lines, which recall the pre-Mongol splendour of the city: »In the Eastern countries it [Bukhara] is the cupola of Islam and is in those regions like unto Baghdad. Its environs are adorned with the brightness of the light of doctors and jurists and its surroundings embellished with the rarest of high attainments. Since ancient times it has in every age been the place of assembly of great savants on every region. Now the derivation of Bukhara is from bukhar, which, in the language of the Magians, signifies »centre of learning.« (JUTRA, 97f.)

Indeed, Bukhara in the tenth century was one of the most prominent cities in the Islamic world. It was the capital of the Samanids (874–999), a family of Persian origin, who gained quasi-independence from the caliphate of Baghdad in 874, and, in the heyday of their power, ruled over Transoxiana and eastern Iran down to Sistan in the south. Most of the Samanids seem to have been very capable rulers. They exercised justice, cared for the rural population as Narshakhi (NARTR, 33) points out. They were involved in trade – even with Europe, as the thousands of Samanid coins found in the Baltic and Scandinavian countries testify. However, the main source of the government's income and investments was the slave trade. The Samanid territory was located on the northern and the eastern borderland between the Dar al-Islam and the Dar al-Harb, that is, the Islamic countries and the non-Islamic countries. The latter were a bountiful source of human resources. Thousands of Turks were stolen or bought from the lands of the infidels by the Samanids, used in their own state, or transported to the court in Baghdad where Turkish slave soldiers already played an important political role.

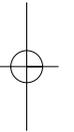
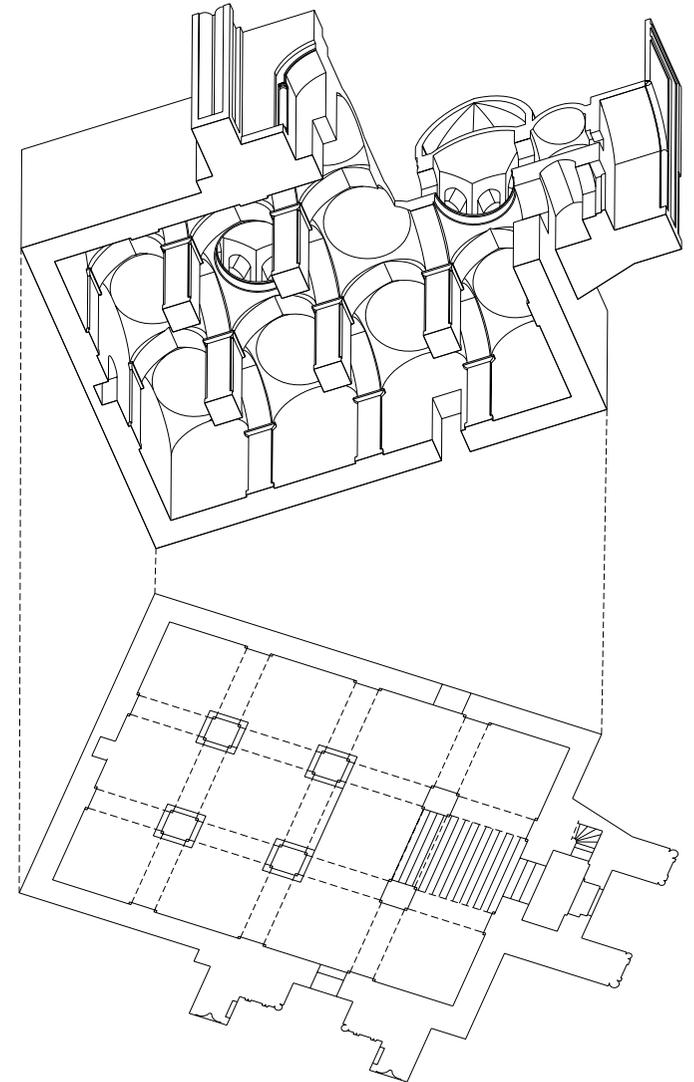
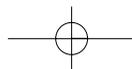
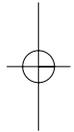
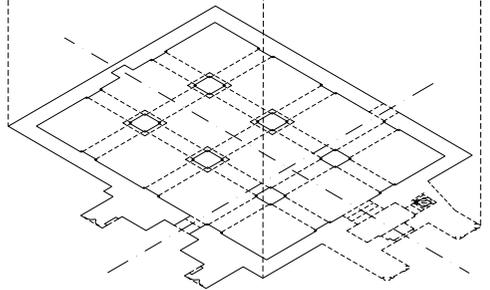
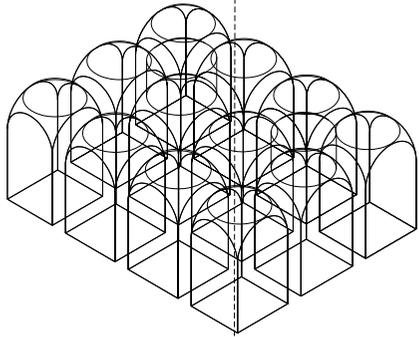
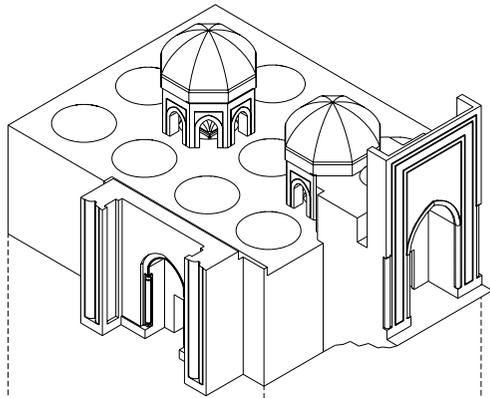
Trade, agriculture, and – most importantly – slaves were the economic basis of the Samanid state, and a healthy state creates or attracts creative minds. Thus, it is not surprising that the Samanid realm generated scholars and artists and that they flourished. Two examples are Ibn Sina (Avicenna, d. 1037), the most original philosopher of the Islamic world and teacher of medicine who surpassed Hippocrates and his successors and was more or less canonical for European medicine up to the eighteenth century, and al-Biruni (d. 1048), who can be considered the father of the study of comparative religions sciences and ethnology in Islam. Both of them wrote in Arabic (for Ibn Sina a few Persian lines are also preserved), which up to the time of the Samanids was the only acceptable language of the pen in the Islamic world. But this also changed under the Samanids: after more than two centuries of Islamic rule over Iran, Persian was reborn as a written language. One of the viziers of the Samanids, Bal'ami (d. 974), produced a Persian version of the Arabic chronicle of at-Tabari. Firdausi (d. 1020), the author of the *Shahnamah*, the *Book of the Kings*, the founder of New Persian literature, lived in Bukhara and was sponsored by the Samanids. Many more personalities, in both literature and the sciences, could be named to prove Bukhara's importance in the Islamic world at that time. Thus, it is not surprising that Bukhara in Samanid times was considered »the meeting-place of unique figures of the age, the rising-place of stars of the literary men of the world, and the forum for outstanding personages of the time.« (Cf. p. 5.)

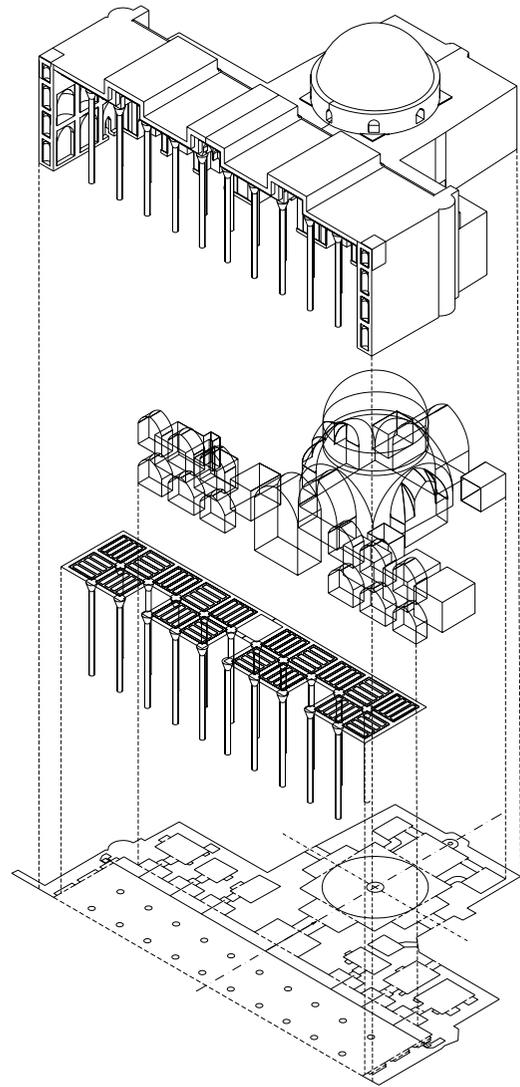
##### 4.1.2. Previous research

With W. Barthold's up to now unmatched book *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, (Barthold 1958) first published in 1900 in Russian and 1928/1958 published in English, modern research on the history and historical topography of Bukhara began. Barthold's erudition, meticulousness and scholarly imagination are unsurpassed. He used all the basic source material, the »classical« Arab and Persian geographers and historians. With his extraordinary philological competence, he condensed and organized the information these works provide. Only new material, be it archaeological, literary or maps which were not at his disposition as well as new methodological approaches can add to Barthold's basic results. With the exception of a few, it was scholars from the Soviet Union who advanced our knowledge of Bukhara since Barthold's time. A hasty summary of this work is given by Naymark (1999). The bibliographical notes to his article are most valuable.



8.06, 8.07. The Maghak 'Attari Mosque (12th century).





8.13, 8.14. The Bala Hauz Mosque (1712/1917).

