

# Evaluation Of The Cultural Heritage Of The Seljuk Civilization In The Historical City Center Of Tokat

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**Abstract-** The traces of the cultural layers unearthed by the civilizations settled in Anatolia throughout history constitute the cultural heritage of our country. Historical Tokat City Center is an example of lesser-known areas with important cultural heritage in our country. All countries in the world are doing an important work for the protection of cultural and natural heritage. There are national and international, official or non-governmental organizations established to carry these out. In this study, with the aim of determining and evaluating the historical Tokat City Center cultural heritage sites, it has been shown that the architectural works, which are one of the most important parts of the Seljuk civilization culture in the area, can be contributed to the protection by recognizing and introducing them. It is possible to make many determinations for the Seljuk culture. In this study, the title of "Seljuk Architecture" has been chosen for the Anatolian Seljuk culture, with an integrative view over buildings or works of art.

**Keywords** Tokat, Historical City Center, Cultural Heritage, Monument, Seljuk Civilization

## 1. Introduction

Tokat, with the advantage of being established on the fertile lands of the Yeşilirmak basin, has been an important trade and cultural center throughout its 6000-year history, and is an important Anatolian city that has hosted 14 states and many principalities. It is possible to find artifacts belonging to every period of history in every region of Tokat, in the process that developed until the Hatti, Hittite, Phrygian, Roman, Byzantine, Danishmend, İlhanlı, Seljuk and Ottoman periods. In this respect, Tokat is an open-air museum. Architectural theorist Alois Riegl described monuments and historical monuments and their differences. While monuments are designed to take place in memory and leave a trace, he associated historical monuments with social memory and stated that they acquired this quality as a result of a complex cultural process over time, and defined this as "historical value" [1]. It is observed that the complex texture formed due to the multi-layered structure of Tokat Historical City Center cannot be preserved as a whole with its values, and the cultural heritage management is insufficient.

Our country is one of the countries with high responsibilities in protecting its rich cultural heritage and

cultural assets as a whole. Architectural heritage, common memory and historical details should be considered together with the intangible cultural heritage and environment that form the basis of common belonging, cultural identity and architectural texture. Similarly, characterizing cultural heritage as traces and witnesses of past and ancient societies and isolating them in this way excludes people, who are an important factor in preserving these values. Cultural heritage is the sum of values and their interaction with each other, which has continuity and reaffirms the identity of the society in which it is located, and its place today is also important in continuity [2]. It should be aimed to protect the cultural heritage, where stratification comes to life in the city center, as a whole with all its values, and to convey the spirit of the place to future generations together with its original features.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Cities have been shaped as a result of a certain historical process and cultural development. What makes cities different from each other is the physical data formed in the process and the elements that give character to the city. In the research conducted among the cities in our country, it is noteworthy that many of our cities have a rich historical

background and multilayered cultural structure, but the past of these cities and the historical and cultural texture of the past have not been adequately examined. Due to the fact that Tokat has been an important city throughout history and has preserved this feature, it has been determined that the city contains a multi-layered structure and enough physical and literary elements to be able to carry out historical studies. In this context, it is aimed to research, analyze and evaluate the historical development and complex texture of the city of Tokat and to develop new strategies for using the city's future by taking its historical development as a reference.

### 3. Seljuk Civilization

With the establishment of the Anatolian Seljuk and the beginning of Turkish migrations, sociocultural, religious, ethnic and architectural changes were experienced in the region. Turks have built many monumental structures such as mosques, madrasas, baths, tombs, cupolas in the regions they settled in Anatolia in line with their religious and socio-cultural identities [3]. Defining the Seljuk civilization and the Seljuk cultural heritage is not as easy as it seems. Anatolian lands can be shown as a part of the Great Seljuk civilization. In the Seljuk civilization, art emerges as a product of culture. The coexistence of art and cultural history studies can be evaluated as an analytical examination of these symbols. Anatolian Seljuk culture stands before us as a culture that blends three different geographies such as Asia, Iran and Anatolia. Artworks, on the other hand, are the main guides in the field of complex research such as Seljuk culture. It is possible to make many determinations for the Anatolian Seljuk culture based on the works of art [4].

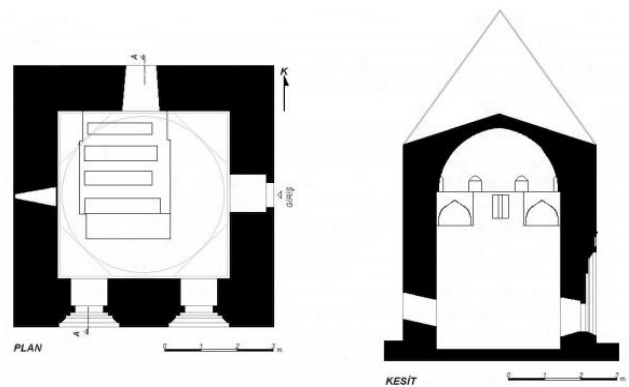
In analysis of the characteristics of Anatolian Seljuk architecture the following points were emphasized:

- a- In Anatolian Seljuk structures, four-cornered legs were generally used instead of columns as bearings, and the arches and vaults forming the top cover were carried by these legs. Columns are generally used on the edges of crown doors, windows and chambers for decoration purposes in the front facade.
- b- In Anatolian Seljuk structures, unlike Byzantine architecture, pointed shapes such as cones were used instead of circular forms in domes and arches, and these domes, columns and legs were not too high.
- c- The main materials of Seljuk structures are stone and brick
- d- To the importance of the front facade in Anatolian Seljuk buildings, to build the building with thick and high walls and to make the entrance door of the building high and monumental.
- e- Geometric, plant and animal motifs were used in the decoration of Seljuk Architecture [3].

#### Ali Tusi (Abu'l-Kasim) Tomb

Located in the historical Tokat city center, Kabe-i Mescit Mahallesi, Sulu Sokak, the tomb has a two-line inscription made of blue relief tiles on its two ornate windows. According to its inscription, it was built in 1233 by Ebu'l-Kasim Ali Tusi, the father of Pervane Seyfeddin Hamid, who had the Yeşilirmak Bridge built during the reign of Alaeddin

Keykubat I [5]. The building was taken in very modest dimensions and the inner side length of the upper floor is 4.87 m. x 4.71 m. In dimensions, the outer edge length of the upper floor is 7.43 m and the outer height is 16.50 m. in size. The internal area of the upper floor is 22.93 m<sup>2</sup> and the external area of the upper floor has an area of 55.20 m<sup>2</sup>. The building was built entirely of brick. The cubic body of the building, with its high octagonal drum, sets an example for the surrounding tombs. The tomb of Nureddin Ibn Sentimur and the tomb of Mehmet Dede in Turhal have a great similarity with Ebu'l Kasım in terms of form. In this tomb, only the windows on the street were given importance. The plan and architectural form applied to this tomb appear in Meraga Künbed-i Surh (1147-1148), which was built before. It is possible to see this architectural form in buildings such as Amasya Torumtay (1266) and Sivas İzzeddin Keykavus Tomb (1217) in Anatolia [6].



**Fig. 1.** Plan and Section of Ali Tusi (Abu'l Kasim) Tomb[7], (Embroidered)

While the building was surrounded by houses and shops on three sides and its cone was destroyed, it was restored in 1934, its plaster was renewed and its top was covered with a tile roof. The lower parts of the window tile decorations were destroyed, and the damage could not be removed in the repair. The window on the lower floor, located in the north of the building, and the grating windows on the upper are closed today [6].

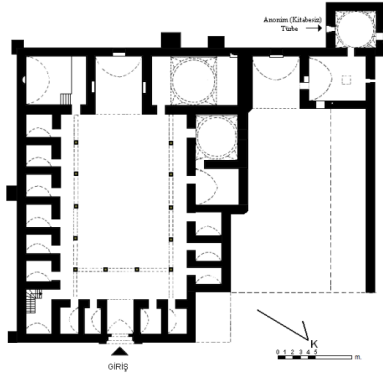


**Fig. 2.** Ali Tusi (Abu'l-Kasim) Tomb, Ali Sami Ülgen Archive, Ali Tusi (Abu'l-Kasim) Tomb (2021)

#### Gök madrasah (Propeller)

The building, located on Gazi Osman Paşa Street in Tokat Meydan Mahallesi, was built by Muiniddin Süleyman Pervane and the exact date of construction of the building is

not known, since there is a flat rectangular stone where the inscription should be located. Although the Hijri 647 [1275] date determined by Gabriel has been accepted by most researchers, there have been different datings related to the building. The building, known as Tokat Medicine Madrasa and Hospital and built as a two-storey building, is an example of an Anatolian Seljuk madrasah with three iwans, with an iwan in which a Seljuk crown door opens, the main iwan opposite and the passage iwans on the right side of the axis [8].



**Fig. 3.** Sky Madrasa Plan Drawing [8], (Embroidered)

With this scheme in which a large single iwan dominates the interior space in the courtyard volume surrounded by the ground floor portico and the upper floor gallery, it is the only twostorey madrasah surviving in Central Anatolia and is an example showing the spatial character of several madrasahs like itself. However, the two-storey structure of the building has led to the addition of two windows, which disrupts the integrity of the traditional design of the portal [7].



**Fig. 4.** Gök Madrasa, Ali Sami Ülgen Archive [9].

The main walls of the two-storey madrasah are built of rubble stone, the crown door is cut stone. Gökmedrese has been used as a museum for many years, and it has been forgotten that it is a madrasah among the people and has started to be called a museum. The museum, which did not have enough space in the madrasah, was moved to the Arastalı Bedesten in 2012. The building, which was used as a museum until 2012, is known as an external view by the citizens since it is on the edge of Gaziosmanpaşa Boulevard. However, the building, which is known more as a museum rather than a madrasah, is a building that is usually visited by tourists [8].



**Fig. 5.** Gök Madrasa [10], Gök Madrasa (2021)



**Fig. 6.** General View of Gök Madrasah (2020)

### Pervane Bath

It is in the south-west of Taş Han in the Kabe-i Mescid District in the center of Tokat. It is owned by the General Directorate of Foundations and is in a solid and active condition. According to the available records, it is understood that the bath was the foundation of the Seljuk vizier Süleyman Pervane. It turns out that it was a part of the kulliye, which was built by Pervane Muinüddin Süleyman in Tokat, around 1275, and consisted of a mosque, a madrasah, a hospital and a lodge [7].

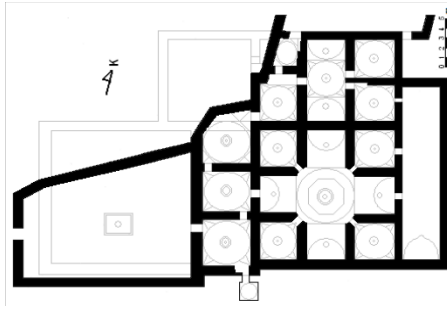
The ground floor of the building, which was built as a double bath in 1275, is approximately 3 m below the current street level. The building underwent its biggest renovation after the earthquake in the late 16th or early 17th century. The bath, which is a structure of the Anatolian Seljuk Period, is still used as a bath today. Although the building is located in a busy commercial area, it is hardly perceived as it is below the road level [11].



**Fig. 7.** Pervane Bath 1970 [10],Pervane Bath (2021)

The bath, which consists of women's and men's sections, is a double baths group and was built on a rectangular area extending in the east-west direction. There are dressing room, cold room, warmth and furnace sections in both the women's section on the north side and the men's section on the south side, respectively [8].

On the walls of the building, generally rubble stone; cut stone was used in arches, door and window jambs. All interior walls of the bath, in which marble is used in the flooring and fountains, were plastered with lime mortar and the roof was covered with soil [8].



**Fig. 8.** Pervane Bath Plan (7)

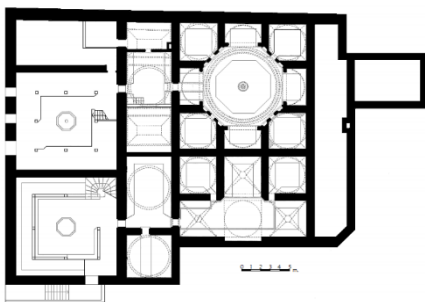
**Sultan Bath**

The plan typology of the bath has a plan type that is seen intensely in Anatolia starting from the 13th century. The exact construction date of the building, which has a double bath, is not known. The building, which is thought to be a 13th century structure, took its present appearance in the 19th century. The bath, which is an Anatolian Seljuk structure, has been repaired many times without complying with its originality. The privately owned building is still used as a bath [11].



**Fig. 9.** From Tokat General Directorate of Foundations 1926 Archive [12], Sultan Hamami South East View (2021)

Evliya Çelebi states that the Sultan Hamam belongs to the real sultans. In this case, it turns out that the bath was also before 1649. However, the bath took its present appearance in the 19th century due to the repairs it underwent later. Again, the building has completely lost its originality with its exterior cladding in its last repair [7]. In both the men's and women's parts of the building, there are dressing rooms, cold rooms, warmth, water tanks and furnace sections starting from the north. The dressing area of the men's section was renovated as reinforced concrete after the repair in 1960. In its current form, this dressing room has the appearance of a square-planned space covered with a pyramidal roof and with locker cells on all four sides. The standoff, which has a transverse rectangular plan, is arranged in three sections separated by two pointed arches.



**Fig. 10.** Sultan Bath Plan Drawing [8]

The transition to the dome of the middle part is provided by pendentives, and vault cover is used on the side parts. A toilet was added later to the area to the east of the vaulted parts. The warm part, on the other hand, has a dome with a pendentive transition and is covered with halfdomes over the iwans with squinches. There is an octagonal core stone right under the central dome, and the halvet cells with obliquely and low-arched entrances at the corners are covered with domes with pointed squinches.

The dressing section of the women's section has been renovated, just like the men's, and has not preserved its originality until today. Accessed through the door on the west side of the building, this changing area is covered with a pyramidal concrete roof in the middle. There are changing cabins around this area, which has a square plan. From the door in the south of the dressing area, you can go to the cold room. This section consists of a space with two domes arranged separately from each other. The hot part of the women's section was built in a corner plan with three iwans, the central dome with a pendentive transition is used in the middle of this section, and a star vault cover is used in the iwans. The private cells at the corners of this section were built with domes with squinches [8].

**Ebu Şems (Vizier Ahmet Pasha) Tomb and Zaviye**

Located in Tokat Ali Paşa Neighborhood, the building is also known as Ebu'ş-Şems Hanegahı Mosque today. According to the construction inscription, it was built by Hüseyinoğlu Ebu'şŞems as a house in 687 Hıjri [1288] during the reign of Sultan Mesud. Considering the plan of the building, the Zaviye consists of a domed hall on the entrance axis and a vaulted iwan opening to it, a tomb adjacent to the iwan in the west, and rooms on both sides of the hall. The low-arched entrance door to the north is a simple opening and its arches and jambs are made of stone. From the entrance door, the sofa covered with a dome is entered. The dome, which is understood to have been built from rubble stone from the ruins, is accessed by a triangular belt; Except for the edge on the iwan side, there are narrow and high blind windows with pointed arches between the triangular elements. Although it is not seen in the photographs before the 1939 earthquake, it can be assumed that there is a central opening in the sofa dome of the zawiya, as in similar contemporary buildings [7].



**Fig. 11.** Plan and Location of Ebu Şems (Vizier Ahmet Pasha) Tomb and Zaviye [7].

In its current form, the interior surfaces of the building were completely plastered, the floor was paved with concrete tiles, the roof was covered with tiles, and the window forms in the interior were changed during the restoration work. The domes of the building, which were originally built of rubble

stone, were covered with tiles called Turkish style during the renovation works [8].



**Fig. 12.** Views of Ebu Şems (Vizier Ahmet Pasha) Tomb and Zaviye ( 2021 )

#### Yazmacılar Hanı

The inn, located in Kabe-i Mescit Mahallesi, Boyahane Street, does not have an inscription giving the exact construction date [13]. According to the documents known from the Han Cultural Directorate, this does not have an epitaph, and dates back to the 13th century. It is thought to be a Seljuk work. The renovation inscription from the Ottoman period is located at the entrance of the building. It is known that Merkuroğlu was written in this inscription written in Ottoman and Greek alphabet, dated 1880 [14]. The 2-storey building with a courtyard presents a rectangular plan.

Although there is no information anywhere about the repairs that the building went through, it can be understood from the differentiation of its architectural elements and the change of materials in recent years that the building was repaired by the tradesmen who used it from time to time, as a result of the examination of the Inn. The earthquake and the fires that the building has been exposed to since the date it was built constitute the reasons for these repairs [15]. Since the interiors of the inn, which was very dilapidated before the restoration, were used by the manuscript manufacturers until recently, they were arranged in accordance with the manufacture of manuscripts.



**Fig. 13.** Yazmacılar Han courtyard view (Before Restoration) [15].

There are five rooms on the first floor, south of the courtyard. There are no other rooms on the first floor other than these rooms. To the west of the courtyard, there are barrel-vaulted volumes that open to the courtyard with arches. The two doors inside these units probably constitute the entrance of the inn in this direction. The units on the second floor are reached by two stairs, one located in the east of the courtyard and the other in the north. On the second floor, cloisters that surround the courtyard from three directions were created, and behind these cloisters there are

units of different sizes. On the second floor, eight rooms are arranged opposite each other in the north and south directions. There are four rooms in the west direction and one room in the east direction [16].



**Fig. 14.** Courtyard view of Yazmacılar Han (2021)

This inn, which became privatized in the Republican period, is known as Gazioğlu Han. This inn, which was expropriated again in 2010, was restored by the General Directorate of Foundations between 2010 and 2019 and continues to function as a boutique hotel [14].

#### Halef Sultan Tomb and Zawiya

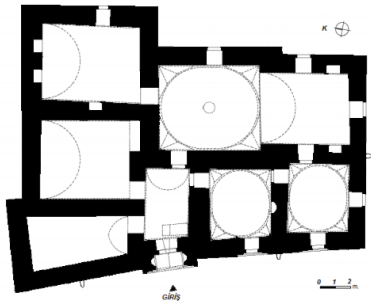
It was built between 1291-1292 during the Anatolian Seljuk Period. The lodge, which is entered through a crown gate, remained buried in the ground until 2004. The building, which is approximately 4-5 m below the road level, has been restored and given a new function and is used as a youth center-library. This function appears as a function suitable for both the architecture of the building and the structure of the city and has an intense use. On the other hand, the building is hardly perceived because it remains in high-rise buildings and dense residential texture [11].

The building is entered through a cut stone crown door on the western façade. The crown door opening is slightly pointed arched. The inner corners of the molded frame are softened with a column with a pyramidal cap. The main entrance door has a low arch and the construction epitaph of the building was placed on it the width of the crown door. Just above the inscription, there is a small window with a pointed arch in the middle [7]. On both sides of the entrance are two niches with a half-decagon plan. There is a four-line construction inscription on the entrance door of the zawiya on the west side. In addition, there are inscriptions on the mosque and tomb windows on the same façade [17].



**Fig. 15.** Western Front of Halef Sultan Tomb and Zawiye (2021), Ali Sami Ülgen Archive

The rectangular space to the north of the main space is vaulted and has wide niches on its walls.



**Fig.16.** Plan Drawing of Khalef Sultan Tekke and Zaviye[8], (Embroidered)

There are rectangular windows on the lower parts of all facades of this lodge and zawiya structure, and crenell window openings on the upper parts. Brick was preferred in the dome transitions, arches, and upper cover of the building, whose main walls were built with masonry rubble stone technique, and cut stone was preferred in the corners of the building, window jambs and crown door [8].



**Fig. 17.** Halef Sultan Tomb and Lodge (2021)

Alaca Masjid Located in Tokat Sulu Sokak Rüstem Çelebi Neighbourhood, the building, also known as Küçük Minareli Mosque today, was built in H. 700-AD 1300-1301 according to its inscription written in Ayyubid calligraphy. It was built during the reign of Alaeddin Keykubat [8]. After the Alaca Masjid was built during the Seljuk period, H.911-M. In 1505, the parts other than the minaret were repaired. Evliya Çelebi describes the minaret of the mosque as follows; “It is currently not important in terms of architecture, its minaret is made of bricks in a beautiful style” [7].



**Fig. 18.** Image of Pied Mecit, Ali Sami Ülgen Archive [9], Image of Pied Mecit (2021)

Alaca Mescit consists of a domed place of worship and an entrance to the north of this place, and has a minaret adjacent to its western façade. The square planned sanctuary part of the smallscale rectangular masjid is covered with a dome, which is provided with oyster grooved squinches [8].



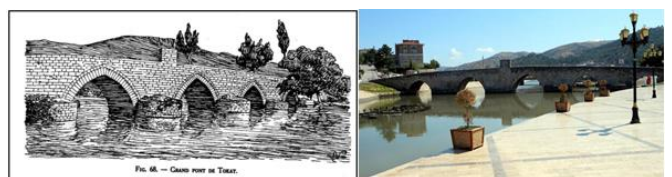
**Picture 19.** Alaca Masjid Plan [7], Northern Front of Alaca Masjid (2021)

During the renovation works in 1952, a narthex, which is described as a pavilion, was added to the masjid. Again, during the repair works in 1952, the lead-covered dome of the mosque, which was badly damaged due to the earthquake in 1939, was covered with a wooden roof in the form of a flat cone, and a wooden construction area was added to the north of the building. The pulpit is not original in terms of its simplicity [8].

**Yesilirmak (Hıdırlık) Bridge**

It is a typical Seljuk bridge made of cut stone with five sections. The bridge, which is 151 meters long and 7 meters wide, is very well preserved and is still in use today. The construction of the bridge and its inscription are interesting. According to the inscription, the foundation of the bridge was laid after 1249. In the inscription, which is very well preserved, the names of 3 princes who fought each other for 3 years are written together. Therefore, the bridge is important in terms of Seljuk history and inscriptions [18].

Albert Gabriel also mentioned this bridge in his work “Monuments Turcs D’Anatolie”. Referring to the location of the bridge, Gabriel also made a perspective drawing of the bridge by specifying the architectural features of the bridge [8].



**Fig. 20.** Albert Gabriel's perspective drawing of Yeşilirmak Bridge in 1934 [8], Yeşilirmak Bridge (Hıdırlık) Bridge (2021)

**4. Evaluation And Conclusion**

The effective and efficient preservation, survival, evaluation, and meeting the needs of change of the multi-layered Tokat Historical City Center is only possible with the creation of a public and social awareness in which the relevant and authorized individual, every institution and organization is included.

Unconsciousness towards cultural heritage is at the root of conservation problems. Patience, understanding and awareness are extremely important in conservation activities that cover a long process. For this reason, the first step should be to create conservation awareness in order to obtain the expected result from conservation studies and to ensure continuity. It is necessary to create a consciousness aiming to approach all civilizations from the past to the present with the same sensitivity, regardless of any ideology, sensitivity towards our cultural heritage, which unfortunately has not yet gained the necessary value. This is possible with a long-term education and training starting from an early age.

In the process of creating conservation awareness, trainings for the public should be carried out, supported by the academic studies of local governments and universities in the surrounding provinces, especially in Tokat.

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