

FIVE STANS 21- UZBEKISTAN AGAIN

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Dear Reader (2024-03-18)

Welcome to Uzbekistan for the second time. Of the Five Stans, Uzbekistan has the most well established tourism industry. The cities of Samarkand and Bukhara are easily accessible from Tashkent. There are direct flight to Samarkand from Istanbul, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Russian and Chinese cities, plus others. Not only are there tourists from the eastern and western worlds, there also appear to be Uzbeks that can afford to see their own country. So, just because a place is foreign to most of us, that does not mean it is foreign to millions of others.

One of my joys of travelling is that in a world that is becoming increasingly uglier, fragmented, and polarized, it is soul saving to be reminded of our commonality, the good in most people, and the beauty that abounds.

Just as there was a series of Tajik posts, there will be a quartet (I think) of Uzbek posts. There will be a couple of Out and About posts plus one for Bukhara, and one for The Registan. Shouldn't that be a Registan (public square)? As you and I will see, I believe "the" is a better article than "a".

Let's begin with an Out and About collection centered around the city of Samarkand where we will visit a museum, a necropolis, and a palace.

Museum

The museum is one devoted to Mirzo Ulugh Bek. "Ulugh Beg was notable for his work in astronomy-related mathematics, such as trigonometry and spherical geometry, as well as his general interests in the arts and intellectual activities. It is thought that he spoke five languages: Arabic, Persian, Chaghatai Turkic, Mongolian, and a small amount of Chinese. [1]

"He built the great Ulugh Beg Observatory in Samarkand between 1424 and 1429. It was considered by scholars to have been one of the finest observatories in the Islamic world at the time and the largest in Central Asia.[1] Ulugh Beg was subsequently recognized as the most important observational astronomer from the 15th century by many scholars. He also built the Ulugh Beg Madrasah (1417–1420) in Samarkand and Bukhara, transforming the cities into cultural centers of learning in Central Asia. [1]

Necropolis

Shah-I-Zinda is a necropolis in Samarkand, which as the name suggests is an avenue of mausoleums. Shah-I-Zinda contains some of the richest tilework in the Muslim world. The name, which means 'Tomb of the Living King', refers to its original, innermost and holiest shrine – a complex of cool, quiet rooms around what is probably the grave of Qusam ibn-Abbas, who is said to have brought Islam to this area in the 7th century. The most stunning Timurid-era tilework dates from 14th and 15th centuries. [2]

Palace

The last stop in today's post is the Ak Saroy Palace, which is on the road from Samarkand to Bukhara. Ak Saroy Palace is a ruined palace and historic site in Shahrisabz, Uzbekistan. The palace was built at the beginning of the Timurid period, between 1380 and 1404, under the reign of Timur or Tamarlane, who is a great Uzbek hero. In 2000, the palace was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. [3]

Timur or Tamerlane (1336/7 to 1405) was a Turco-Mongol conqueror who founded the Timurid Empire in and around modern-day Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia, becoming the first ruler of the Timurid dynasty. An undefeated commander, he is widely regarded as one of the greatest military leaders and tacticians in history, as well as one of the most brutal and deadly. Timur is also considered a great patron of art and architecture, and his reign introduced the Timurid Renaissance. [4]

As you may have noticed so far in this Five Stans Series, people of note are celebrated with large monuments. The Amir Timur monument is of established Five Stans Size.

Notes on Photos

~ 01 to 03 – Museum of Mirzo Ulug Bek

~ 02 – All that remains of Ulug Bek's observatory

~ 04 to 15 – Shah-I-Zinda

As I mentioned earlier, people in tourist locations who become part of the theatre of the street can also be photography subjects. This is especially true for those who dress and pose for their Instagram pages.

~ 16 to 24 – AK Saroy Palace

~ 22 – captured with permission



01



02



03



04



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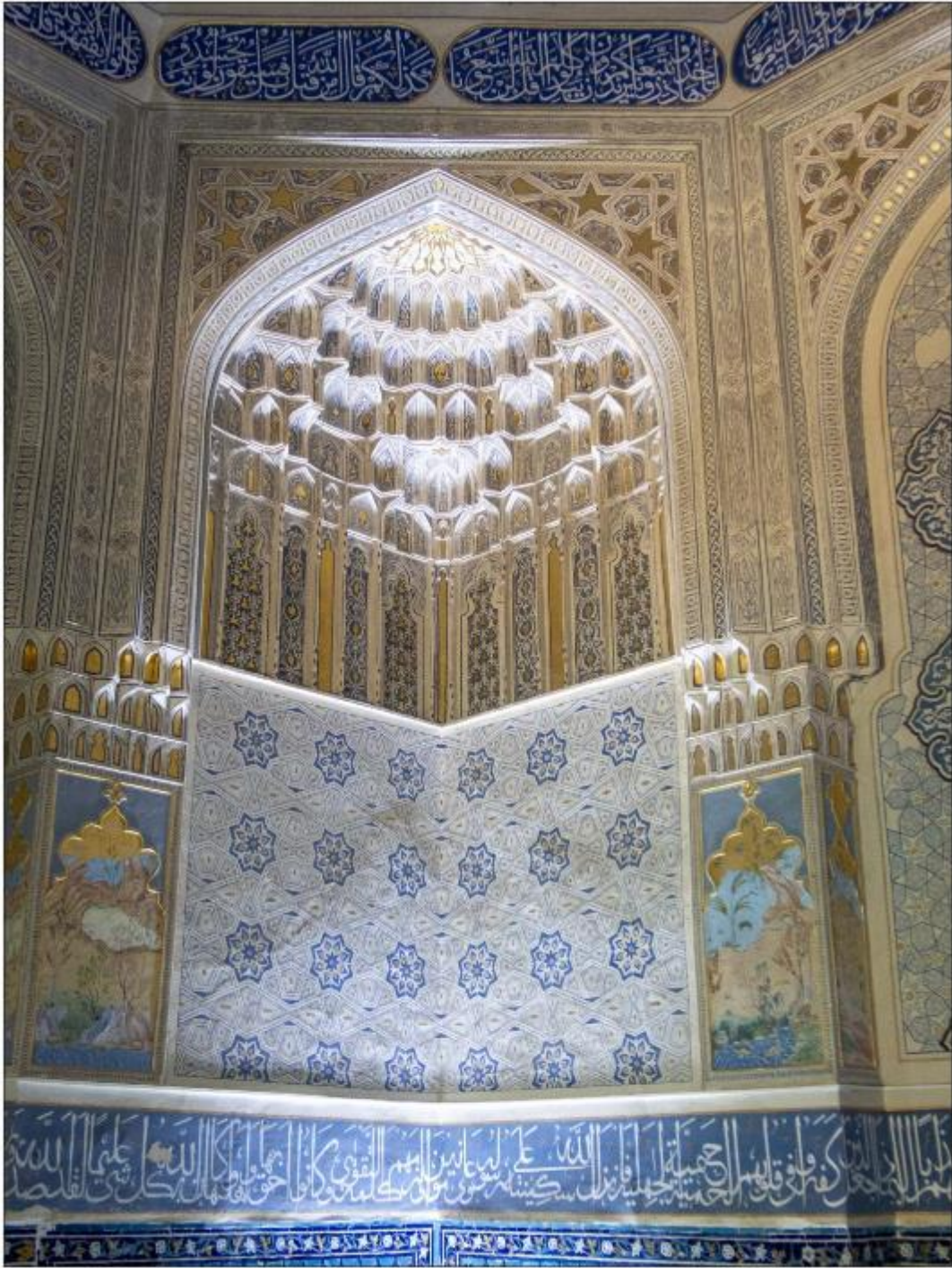


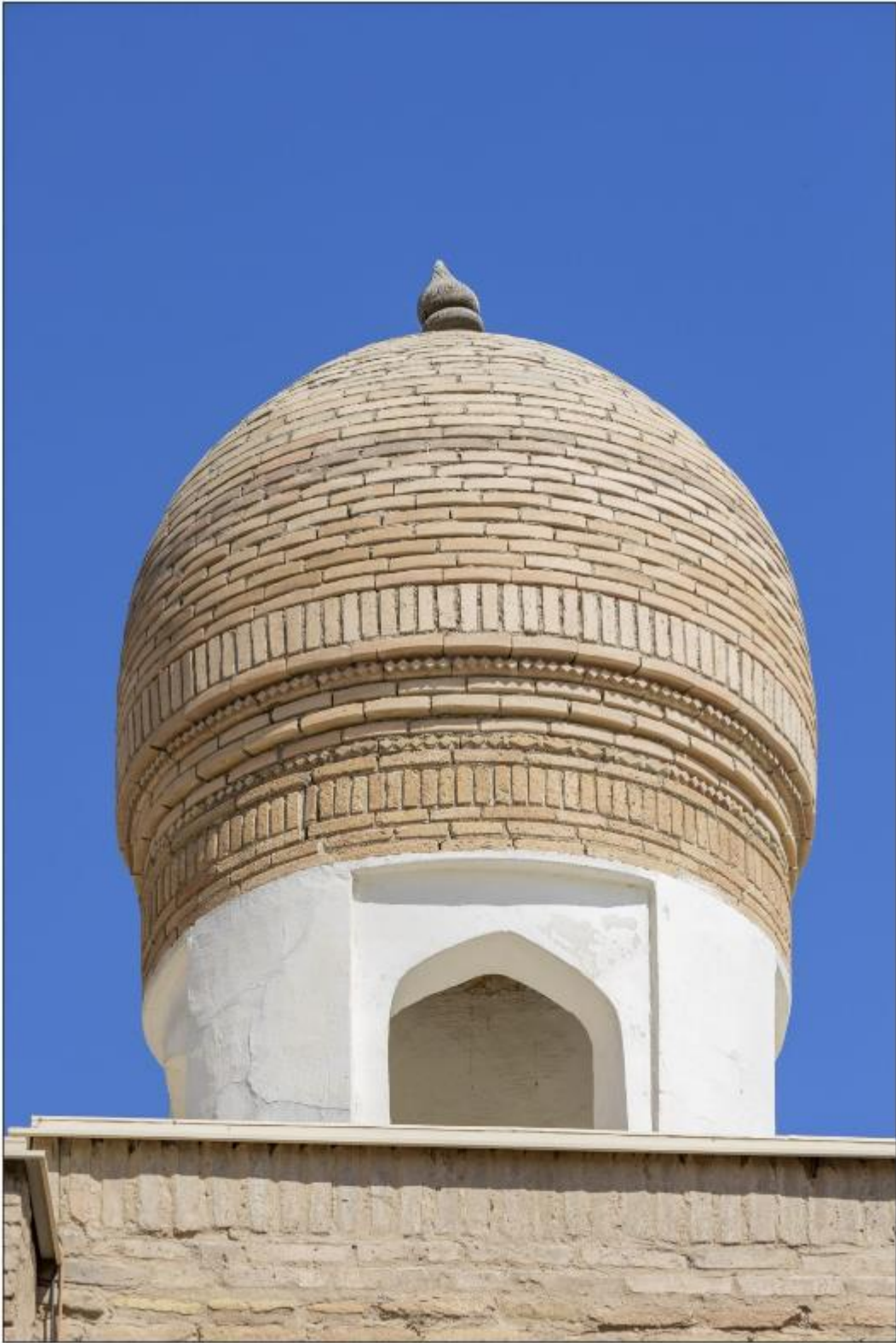
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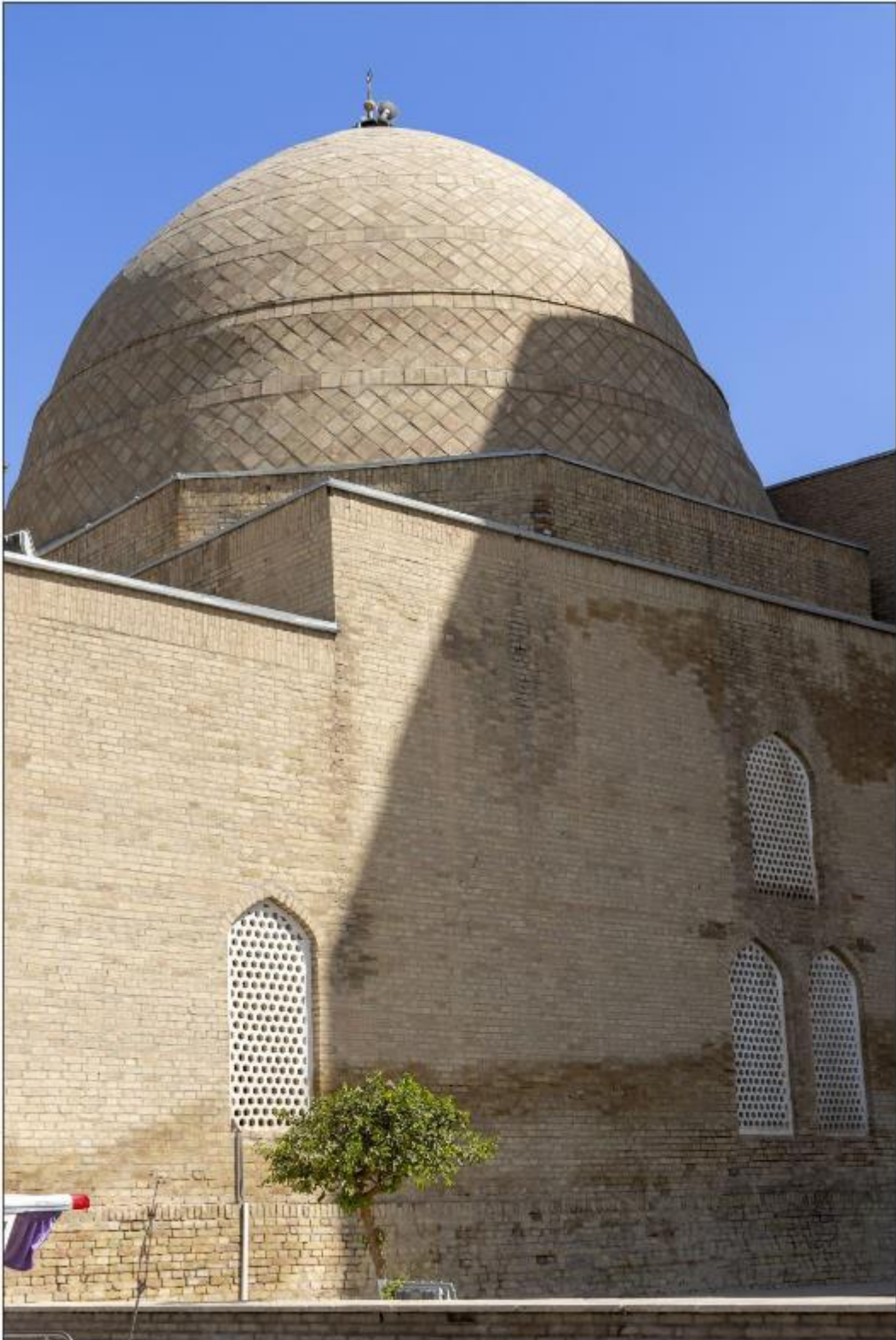


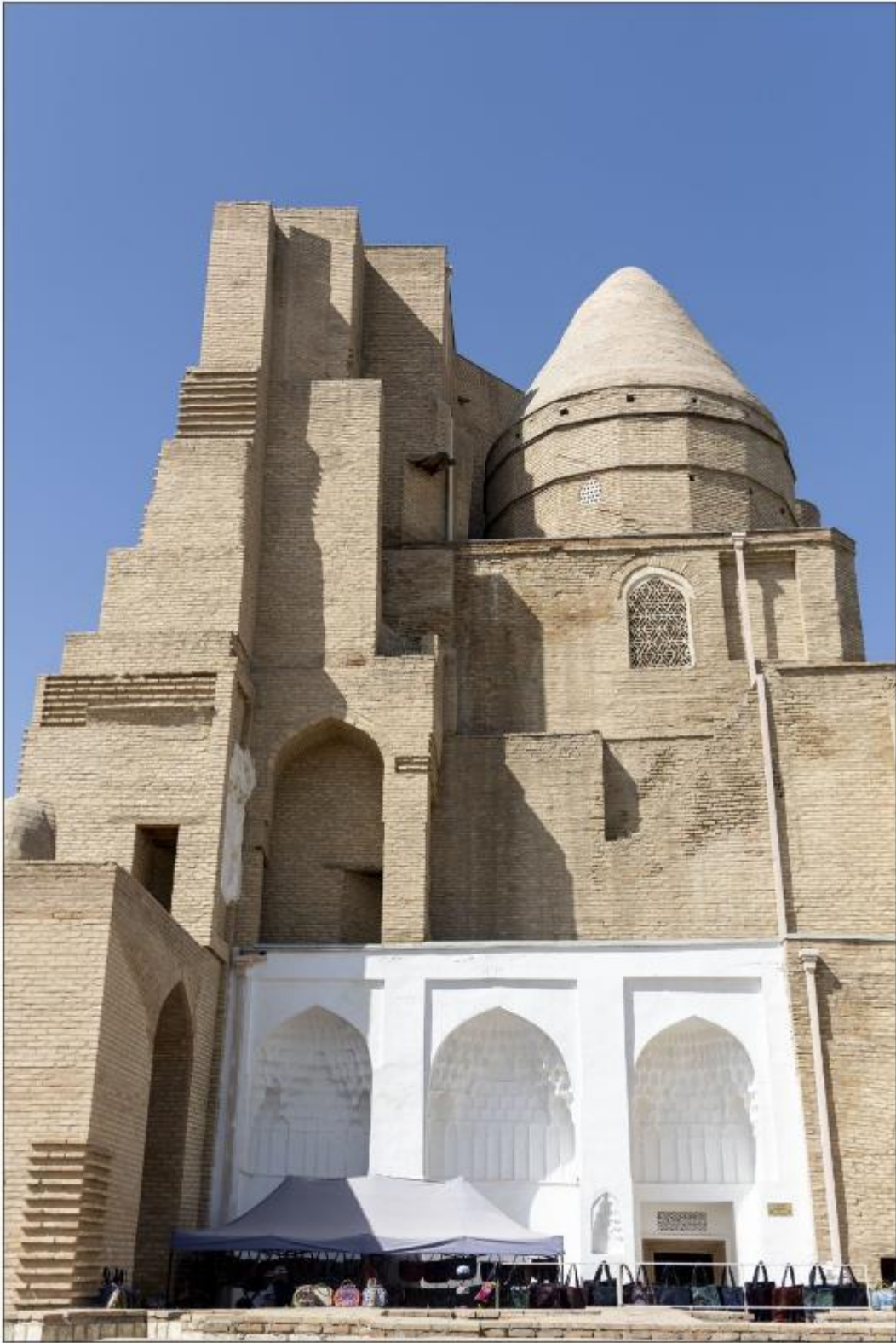














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Footnotes

- ~ [1] Quoted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulugh_Beg
- ~ [2] Adapted from <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/uzbekistan/central-uzbekistan/samarkand/attractions/shah-i-zinda/a/poi-sig/443621/357830>
- ~ [3] Adapted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ak-Saray_Palace
- ~ [4] Adapted from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timur>

You are welcome to share a link to this page with others.
As always, all comments are welcome and sought.
Cheers, Sean

One Reply to “Five Stans 21- Uzbekistan Again”

1. **Keith Cartmell** says:

2024-04-12 at 11:36 Edit

1. Nice to see recognition for something other than conquering your neighbor's lands.

5. I remain thoroughly impressed by the effort and skill needed to create such tiled artwork.

14. Whenever now I see someone carrying a real camera, I'm always looking to see what body it is, and what the choice of lens says about the person and the place.

24. Monumentalism at it's finest.