



RESTORATION AND STUDY OF THE TIMURID HERITAGE DURING THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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Annotation: This article examines the architectural heritage of the Amir Temur and Timurid period and analyzes the historiography, sources, and scientific studies dedicated to these monuments. Particular attention is given to the significance of archival documents, museum collections, archaeological research, and written sources in the study of Timurid architecture. The paper highlights major architectural masterpieces, including the Bibi-Khanym Mosque, Oqsaroy Palace, Saroymlukxonim Madrasah, the Registan ensemble, and the Ulugh Beg Observatory, emphasizing their historical, cultural, and artistic value. The research also discusses restoration efforts carried out during the twentieth century and evaluates the contributions of Uzbek and foreign scholars to the investigation and preservation of Timurid architectural monuments. Furthermore, the study explores the influence of Persian, Central Asian, and Turkic architectural traditions on the development of Timurid architecture and assesses its place within the broader context of Islamic art and urban planning. The findings demonstrate the enduring importance of Timurid architectural heritage as a significant component of world cultural history and a valuable source for understanding the political, cultural, and scientific achievements of the Timurid era.

Keywords: Amir Temur and the Timurid period, architectural monuments, Bibi-Khanym, Turkic and Iranian architectural traditions, ethnographer, art historian, architectural heritage, Timurid architecture, Bibi-Khanym Mosque, Oqsaroy Palace, Registan Square, Ulugh Beg Observatory, cultural heritage, restoration, historiography, archaeological research, Islamic architecture, Central Asia, Shahrizabz.

INTRODUCTION. The study of historical monuments built during the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids has been one of the topical topics that has attracted the attention of specialists in various fields for centuries. They are still studied with great interest by historians, archaeologists, ethnographers, art historians, and architectural historians. Scientific works on the history of the topic can be divided into the following groups.



This miniature is also of great importance in illuminating the medieval aspects of Central Asian architecture. The source significance of archival documents and museum exhibits in the study of monuments from the Timurid period. Most of the archival documents created as a result of researching the architectural heritage of the peoples of Uzbekistan date back to the 20th century. In particular, documents from the personal collections of V.L. Vyatkin, M.E. Masson, G.A. Pugachenkova, B.N. Zasiipkin, Ya.G. Gulyamov, L.I. Rempel, S.N. Polupanov, L.Yu. Mankovskaya, and other researchers stored in the National Archives of Uzbekistan are of great importance for studying the architectural heritage of the peoples of Central Asia, including the history of architectural monuments from the era of Amir Temur and the Timurids. Among the archival documents that form the source base of the history of architectural monuments of the Timurid period, one can also include the documents of the "Archival Fund of the Cultural Heritage Agency" of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The relevant documents of this archive cover the period from the 1970s to the beginning of the 21st century. Most of them are dedicated to the direction and results of archaeological research conducted on the architectural monuments of the Amir Temur and Timurid periods in the last quarter of the 20th century ¹.

MATERIALS AND METHODS. Following the proclamation of Uzbekistan's independence, efforts to widely promote the cultural heritage of our people intensified. In particular, a vivid example of this is the significant increase in the number of samples of the republic's tangible and intangible cultural heritage included in the UNESCO World Heritage List as a result of the attention paid to cultural heritage. During this period, the history of Uzbekistan's architectural monuments and the traditions of national architectural schools, as well as the monuments built by Amir Temur and the Timurids in the historical cities of Uzbekistan, were studied by F. Glasebrook, K. Henkel, J. Goldenstein, P. Stronsky, F. Bressan, P. Judish, Ron Sela, J. Sakhadeo, S. Gorshenina, E. Paskaleva, and others.

The Saroymulkhanum Madrasah is one of the majestic structures with a high portal, built in the "double" style, i.e., the Bibi-Khanum mosque in the mausoleum complex built opposite it. This madrasah was built opposite the Bibi-Khanym mosque. According to sources, the portal of the Saray Mulk Khanum madrasah was much more majestic and beautiful than that of the Amir Temur mosque opposite it. Amir Temur, returning to Samarkand from a military campaign, was so angry that he ordered the gates of the mosque to be demolished and rebuilt. Regarding this mosque and madrasah, the following is mentioned in the "Zafarnama": "His Majesty himself built the Friday Mosque; we went and inspected it, and saw that the door was small." They ordered that the library of Saray Mulk Khanum, which contained rare manuscripts of her time and information, be demolished and built more magnificently. According to historical sources, Bustonsaroy, another of Amir Temur's palaces located in the Samarkand Ark, was primarily inhabited by court officials, the ruler's close associates, and their family members. This magnificent palace, rich in blue architectural ornaments, also hosted various events, including weddings, ceremonial meetings, and receptions for ambassadors and guests.

The location of these palaces, their structure, architectural decoration, and other unique features, which were reduced to ruins under the turmoil of centuries, were studied based on scientific research conducted in the first quarter of the 20th century (1923) under the leadership

¹ Muxabbat Xamidova "Evrika nashrioti matba uyi" Toshkent: 2024 B - 12.



of V.L. Vyatkin and M.E. Masson. According to the results of these studies, it was found that Kuksaroy, considered the main residence of Amir Temur, was located in the eastern part of the Samarkand arch, and Bustonsaroy was located in the northeastern part of the arch. Almost all architectural complexes and places of pilgrimage built in the medieval East had separate buildings for mosques.

DISCUSSION. The largest mosque built during the Timurid era is the Bibi-Khanym mosque. The Bibi-Khanym mosque is the largest in Central Asia and one of the largest in the Muslim world; according to archaeological research, its dimensions were 100x140 meters. To compare its majestic appearance and dimensions, experts cited the dimensions of the Sultan Hasan Mosque in Cairo, built in the 14th century (60x120 m). Also, Western European architectural monuments, in particular, the Milan Cathedral, the construction of which coincides with approximately the same time, are equal to the Bibi-Khanym Mosque according to the plan. The mosque was built in 1399-1404 as a Friday mosque by the decree of Amir Temur after his return from victorious campaigns to India. According to historical sources, Amir Temur wanted this mosque to be of such grandeur and splendor that it would amaze those who saw it. For this reason, he personally supervised the construction of the mosque. For the construction of the mosque in Samarkand, craftsmen were brought from many countries of the world, particularly from Persia, Azerbaijan, and India. According to sources, 200 masters-architects were involved in the construction of this mosque ².

The Mirzo Ulugbek khanqah and caravanserai on Samarkand's Registan Square were the main buildings of the architectural complex, consisting of two buildings. Due to its cultural and educational prestige and high status in religious and secular education, the madrasah in this complex has been at the center of the people's attention for centuries and has been preserved to this day. However, the buildings of the khanqah, caravanserai, mosque, and bathhouse built by Mirzo Ulugbek on Registan Square were destroyed. In later times, other majestic structures were erected in their place. That is, in the 17th century, the ruler of Samarkand, Yalangtoshbiy Bahodir, built the Sherdor madrasah on the site of the foundation of the Mirzo Ulugbek khanqah, and the Tillakori mosque-madrasah on the site of the caravanserai surrounding the complex from the north. In place of the old portal of the caravanserai, a majestic portal arch has been erected, consisting of two-story wings that cover the entire width of the square. A mosque was built in the western part of the building, and a blue dome was erected over its central part, where the mihrab is located. With the construction of these structures, the integrity of the majestic Registan architectural complex was restored. The observatory of Mirzo Ulugbek, located on the Kuhak hill in the north of Samarkand along the Obirahmat canal, was built in 1424–1428. According to Abdurazzak Samarkandi, "Mirzo Ulugbek, who possessed sufficient knowledge and full capital in the sciences... wanted to manifest the rays of his knowledge to the whole world like the rays of the sun, to convey the light of understanding from the depths of the earth to the highest dome of the heavens, to spread the sound of the stars along the dome of the heavens, and to make the triumph of this great work sound on earth... In that year, the Sultan's son, who had reached perfection in the varieties of acceptable and acceptable sciences, resolved to create an observatory and, gathering people capable of such work, began to organize it.

²Muxabbat Xamidova "Evriska nashrioti matba uyi" Toshkent: 2024 B - 42.



Having achieved maturity in this field and equipped himself with the necessary tools, Ulugh Beg began to compose *rasad* and *zij*, and despite the fact that the projects on this matter were originally drawn up in 1916, the in-depth study of the madrasah, the restoration and repair of the minarets were carried out during the Soviet period. In 1918, a group of specialists led by V.L. Vyatkin, who were not indifferent to the fate of Samarkand's architectural monuments, invited architect M.F. Mauer to work on the restoration of the northeastern tower of the Mirzo Ulugbek Madrasah, which had deviated 2 meters from the portal. Many experts, in particular architect B.N. Kastalski, believe that the tower cannot be restored in its entirety and that it must be rebuilt.

RESULTS. However, according to the firm word of the architect M.F. Mauer, who was a master of his craft, the idea of restoring this tower was implemented. According to the designs of M.F. Mauer and Professor N.A. Kuznetsov, restoration work on the northeastern minaret of the Ulugh Beg Madrasah began in 1919. For several years, the tower was thoroughly studied by specialist scientists, specifically archaeologists M.E. Masson and V.L. Vyatkin, architects B.N. Zasiplin, local master architect Abdukodir Bakiyev, and engineers V.G. Shukhov and M.E. Knorre.

In order to avoid causing serious damage to this architectural monument, specialists have carried out restoration work in stages. That is, in 1926, new anchors were installed instead of the old ones, which were temporarily installed to support it. In 1927, a reinforced concrete ring was installed around the tower's cleaned foundation, and a screw structure was placed in the middle part based on a proposal by V.G. Shukhov. Double rails are placed on the artificial foundation installed in the upper and middle parts of the tower. In January 1932, the tower was restored and repairs to its exterior began. The restoration of the southeastern minaret of the Ulughbek Madrasah, which deviated 1.78 m from its vertical position, began in January 1965 and was completed in March of the same year after long-term research. As archival documents testify, B.N. Zasiplin also took an active part in the restoration of the interior and exterior decorations of the Mirzo Ulughbek and Tillakori madrasahs located on Registan Square, as well as the facade of the madrasa and the mosque. Islamic architecture, particularly Iranian architecture and its development during the Timurid period, attracted the attention of European researchers as early as the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Evidence of the high assessment of Iranian art can be cited as scientific developments published by Y. Strzhigovsky, which sparked intense scientific debates surrounding the author's concepts. Strzhigovsky emphasized that the Iranian influence played an important role in the development of European art. In the following period, scholars abandoned the comparison of European and Iranian cultures and focused on the in-depth study of each separately.

By the mid-20th century, interest in Iranian art reached its peak. As a result of the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the 1979–1989 Soviet military operation in Afghanistan, access to Iranian territory for foreign researchers was severely restricted. Visits to Afghanistan remain difficult to date due to political instability. This situation had a negative impact on the systematic study of the region's cultural heritage. G.A. Pugachenkova, a specialist in the architecture and art of Central Asia and the Middle East, created a work dedicated to the art of Afghanistan, in which the monuments of the Timurid period were also studied. This study analyzes cultural and historical roots, construction materials, and structural methods, and compiles a catalog of monuments. At the next stage, scientists began an in-depth study of individual monuments, relying on existing systematized materials.



However, in Russian-language historiography, the Timurid period of Iranian architecture is not sufficiently widely covered, which is observed both in works on the history of Iranian art in general and in the volumes of the "History of General Architecture." To date, there are a number of scientific studies in Western and Russian historiography dedicated to the culture and art of the territory called "Great Khorasan" in the Middle Ages, including the 14th-15th centuries. This creates a solid scientific basis for studying the cultural heritage of the Timurid era³. Especially Sh.M.Shukurov's works are of particular importance, as they provide a profound analysis of the philosophical and cultural interpretation of Iranian art, the concept of "Islamic Iran," the abstract thinking of Peripatetic artists, and the metaphysical foundations of Iranian culture.

There are also monographs and dissertations dedicated to the architecture of Khorasan during the Timurid period, which study the architectural development of cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Tabriz, and Isfahan. Issues of urban planning, architectural space principles, decorative art, and ornamentation are also considered objects of scientific research. In foreign literature, Timurid architecture is often analyzed within the framework of the influence of the Ilkhanid era. However, Russian researchers do not fully support this view and emphasize that ancient Persian traditions, particularly Sassanid architecture and the Chortak type of temple with a four-sided open dome, played an important role in the formation of Timurid architecture.

In recent years, research conducted by E. I. Kononenko has demonstrated the need for a new scientific approach to the development of Turkic and Iranian architectural traditions under conditions of state order and creative freedom⁴. The Oqsaroy was located in the city of Shahrisabz in the Kashkadarya oasis. This structure was built in 1380-1403 by the decree of Amir Temur. Sources describe this palace as follows: "In the year seven hundred and eighty-one (1380, March), he ordered the construction of a fortress in that city (Kesh) and completed it with zeal." "And there was such a city that the engineer of the gardens, having traveled the world in his youth, never saw such a city or palace anywhere." Only the columns of the main arch have survived from this palace. Along with local masters, masters captured during Amir Temur's campaigns to Urgench and Azerbaijan also participated in the construction of the structure. The exterior decoration of the building, in particular, the columns of the main arch, the corner towers are decorated with colorful glazed bricks, carved tiles, ceramic tiles with islami decoration.

CONCLUSION. Rui González de Clavijo described the Oqsaroy in Shahrisabz as ..."a unique structure decorated with gold, lace, and other colorful ornaments." This author also provides interesting information about the planning structure of the Oqsaroy, in particular, he wrote that the palace consisted of three parts, that is, the administrative management part, the palace with residential rooms and the garden alley. According to specialists who conducted in-depth research on the monument, the palace was traditionally built in a courtyard surrounded by rectangular terraces. The width of the courtyard was 120–125 m, and the length was 240–245 m⁵. Shahrisabz: Amir Temur's native city, Shahrisabz, has experienced periods of growth and decline over the centuries. In the Middle Ages, it was known as Kesh. At the end of the

³ Даруди Айсан „ДИССЕРТАЦИЯ” Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет В-14- 15.

⁴ Даруди Айсан „ДИССЕРТАЦИЯ” Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет В-16 - 17.

⁵ Muxabbat Xamidova "Evrika nashrioti matba uyi" Toshkent: 2024 В - 79.



14th century, the city of Kesh, which was inherited by Amir Timur, was surrounded by a defensive wall.

According to sources, the construction of the wall of the Kesh fortress began in 780/1378 and was completed in one year. The rectangular wall had gates on all four sides. According to historical sources, when Amir Temur conquered Herat, he ordered its iron gates to be brought to Shahrizabz and installed on the city wall. The attention paid to main streets, which became a tradition in medieval cities, is also observed here. As in other central cities, the main roads, starting from the gates of the defensive walls, intersected in the center. During the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids, a flat area was primarily chosen for the construction of gardens and palaces. For gardens created on mountain slopes and hills, small platforms in the form of steps were used.