

ULUGBEK'S LEGACY IN GIJDUVAN

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Abstract: This article discusses the Ulugbek Madrasah in Gijduvan, which is considered the legacy of the great thinker and scholar Mirzo Ulugbek. Through this madrasah, we can learn about the architecture of the Timurid era, as well as about the research conducted in the madrasah, the Timurids' respect for Islamic scholars and their contribution to science.

Keywords: mausoleum, Khoja Ubaydullah Khizr, Pirmast, Miyonsaroy, Abdullakhan II, teacher.

Introduction. The fact that Mirzo Ulug'bek (Mirzā Ulugh Beg) erected a madrasa in front of the mausoleum of Abdulxoliq G'ijduvoni significantly elevates the importance of this institution. At this madrasa thousands of students of knowledge attended lessons. Even today the madrasa attracts thousands of tourists. For more than six centuries, this madrasa has retained its value.

Literature review:

The analysis of this subject uses the following sources:

Literature published during the Soviet era;

Literature published in the years of independence;

Literature published abroad.

Methodology:In this article I employ methods of historical-comparative analysis, historicity, impartiality, and data systematisation.

Analysis and results. During the reign of the Timurid Dynasty, represented by Mirzo Ulug'bek, both religious sciences and secular sciences flourished. In particular, during his rule, madrasas were built in Samarkand, Bukhara and Gijduvan. The fact that Ulug'bek precisely built a new madrasa beside the mausoleum of Abdulxoliq G'ijduvoni indicates his respect for this venerable figure and his self-understanding of G'ijduvoni as his spiritual guide (pir). To immortalise that figure's name the site itself was selected. This madrasa became known under two names: one being "Ulug'bek Madrasa", the other "Fayziya Madrasa". According to Mahdumu A'zam Dahbediy in his Risolai ilmiya, he wrote: "At the foot of Qutb-i-Jahon (Abdulxoliq G'ijduvoni) the extremely gracious one, whoever asks of him will surely receive, under his feet Mirzo Ulug'bek erected a madrasa, they called it 'Fazliya'." This event shows how complex and multi-faceted was Ulug'bek's personality. He was not only a ruler supporting science and learning, but a statesman who also paid attention to spirituality. His deep respect and reverence for Abdulxoliq G'ijduvoni indicates his striving to harmonise secular and religious sciences. This remains relevant today: if knowledge and spirituality complement one another, society will be more stable and advanced. The madrasa was built in 1432-1433 CE. Located on the lower bank of the Pirmast canal, the building's corners reflect Bukhara-style architecture: rather than tall minarets, three or four flower-cluster minarets were used. The influence of Samarkand appears in the main façade with strong fortress-like walls and, along

the primary façade, parallel belts enclosing rectangular halls. In the construction of the madrasa large use was made of baked brick and a mixture of “qir” (clay). The central portal (miyonsaroy) rises, and adjacent are a single-storey square mosque (33×30 m), a classroom (8×4.6 m) and a khanqah; in the corners are cluster-minarets. From the door of the portal one enters the courtyard (15×13 m). On its two sides are 5 chambers (hujras), four of which are square and topped with domes. This madrasa is important not only as a centre of learning but also as an architectural monument of its era. Its construction shows the convergence of Bukhara and Samarkand styles—reflective of cultural harmonisation during the Timurid period. This institution served not just science but also Sufism and spiritual life. This building is significant not just as an educational centre of its day but as an architectural monument reflecting the cultural synthesis of the Timurid era. Its fusion of the Bukhara and Samarkand architectural idioms shows how various regional traditions were coming together under the Timurids. Moreover, the personal dimension of Ulug‘bek’s initiative — honouring his spiritual teacher in building the madrasa — tells us much about his character: he was not merely a patron of learning but a politician aware of spiritual authority and the integration of secular and religious knowledge. Today the lesson remains pertinent: when science and spirituality complement each other, society becomes more stable and advanced. In sum: this madrasa is a powerful symbol of the Timurid era’s commitment to both *ilm* (knowledge) and *ma‘nāviyat* (spirituality). The architectural features — corner guldasta turrets, flat strong façades, the vaulting of the portal, the combination of teaching-room, mosque and Sufi lodge — all speak of a building that is more than just a school. By erecting it in honour of Abdulkhaliq Gijduvani, Mirzo Ulug‘bek positioned himself not solely as a ruler but as a builder of minds and souls. That dual role is as relevant today as it was in the 15th century.

These data indicate to me that Mirzo Ulug‘bek and the rulers of his era were not simply patrons of learning and enlightenment, but supported them through building institutions. That is why this madrasa continues to be valued today as a symbol of the science and architectural art of its time. When Ulug‘bek travelled to inspect the madrasa he passed via Karmana and Malik Cho‘l. During his inspections he conducted lectures on astronomy (falakiyot) principles and Islamic religion within this very madrasa. In the 15th century, the use of baked brick had developed significantly. Looking at the madrasa we are struck by the turquoise and azure polished tiles used as ornamentation. They are decorated with simple geometric patterns and short kufic inscriptions. According to the eastern builders’ tradition the madrasa was built in the “chor” (four-corner) style with two minarets, domes, and arches. According to the work by Abdusattor Jumanazar *Buxoro ta’lim tizimi tarixi*, the Gijduvan Ulug‘bek madrasa was considered a “higher level” institution. The portal was covered by a dome, leading into a four-arched (chortoq) hall. If one goes straight from the chortoq you enter the courtyard; to the right is the mosque, to the left the school-classroom. The portal is covered by a dome, leading into a four-arched (chortoq) hall. From the chortoq one enters directly into the courtyard; to the right is the mosque, to the left the classroom. The mosque’s domes atop four corner columns allowed both strong structural construction and elegant interior division. In the courtyard there was a summer classroom and on both sides eight hujras (student cells). The external corners are crowned with cluster-minarets. The decoration is quite restrained: the mosque and classroom walls of the madrasa were wholly covered with ganch (plaster-work). On the façade the smooth brick and distinctive step-patterns formed the main decorative element. The mosque’s domes atop four corner columns allowed both strong structural construction and elegant interior division. In the courtyard was a summer classroom and on both sides eight hujras. The external corners are

crowned with cluster-minarets. The decoration is quite restrained. The mosque and classroom walls of the madrasa were wholly covered with ganch (plasterwork). In the yard there were ten dormitory rooms. The main decorative element of the façade was smooth brick and distinctive step-patterns. In the Ulug'bek complex there was courtyard, a mosque, a classroom and dormitory. Within the Ulug'bek complex there existed a courtyard, a mosque, a classroom and dormitory. This layout underscores the integrated educational and spiritual functions of the institution. The fact that Ulug'bek chose to build the madrasa beside the mausoleum of Khoja Abdulkhalik Gijduvani signals his deep respect for the Sufi master—from whom he regarded guidance—and reinforces the building's role as a center not only of formal learning but also of moral and spiritual formation. On both sides of the courtyard were five hujras; four of those were square rooms topped by domes. In the 16th century several rulers led restorations. In particular, in 1541 'Abdulaziz Khan repaired the mausoleum of Abdulkholiq G'ijduvoni, rebuilt it in baked-brick and surrounded it by cast-iron railings. This shows that the Şaybānid dynasty honoured Islamic scholars and maintained a policy of supporting knowledge and spirituality. This in fact points to the rulers' intention to serve as moral examples for their people. The 'Abdullāh Khan II also built beside the madrasa a tall formal mosque fronted by portico and iwan. Although that mosque does not survive to today, its construction confirms the understanding that near a centre of learning an appropriate place of ritual must also exist. The reason that in the 20th century the Red regime established local markets for construction materials, livestock and built a bazaar near the shrine caused neglect and semi-ruination of the site. In 1929 the Russian historian V. Shishkin visited Gijduvan. Based on archival materials and waqf documents he described the madrasa's history. He recorded that on the portal of the madrasa there was the inscription: "This great place is like gardens of paradise... Defender of religion and the world Ulug'bek Ko'ragon... May Allah prolong his kingdom" and at the end the number "36" appears, which in Shishkin's view indicates the year of construction. In 1947-1952 the investigations by Nilsen and Notkin are also of significance: their results show that above the central domed-room there had been a library; the surviving wall-remains, roof stairway and various layers of baked bricks testify to successive construction phases. In 2003, on the occasion of the 890th anniversary of Abdulkholiq G'ijduvoni, the site was reconstructed in both modern and traditional style.

Conclusion. In conclusion we may say that this madrasa is not only the pride of the Gijduvan region but of Central Asia as a whole. The Ulug'bek complex is a symbol of the unity of historical, scientific and spiritual heritage. In its epoch it served students for knowledge, teachers for teaching, and the people for spiritual elevation. That the rulers maintained it through restoration is an expression of respect and honour for heritage. Today valuing such monuments is our national duty, and passing them on to future generations intact our spiritual responsibility. Preserving this site and ensuring that youth appreciate its power is essential. Many imams, scholars have graduated from this place. It draws many tourists. Thanks to Mirzo Ulug'bek and many scholars' labour, this building is a global gem.

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