

## The Period of the Timurid Renaissance: A Central Asian Renaissance as Prestigious as the Italian Renaissance

### Timur Dönemi Rönesansının, Orta Asya Rönesansı Olarak İtalyan Rönesansı ile Kıyaslanması

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**ABSTRACT:** The Renaissance, an era of artistic, cultural, scientific, literary renewal, etc., is extensively studied in history and literature courses in the West. The Timurid Renaissance, which took place in present-day Uzbekistan in the 16th century AD, shone brightly in architectural, linguistic, poetic, cultural, and scientific aspects. The precious Renaissance spread to the East, leaving its mark on Timurid architecture, which inspired not only the Persians, Turks but also the Russians. In order to cover all areas of the Timurid Renaissance, the present work is based on a review of scientific and historical articles on the subject.

**Key words:** Timurid, Renaissance, Emir Timur, Uzbekistan, Central Asia, Ulugh beg, Registan, Samarkand, Silk Road

**ÖZET:** Sanatsal, kültürel, bilimsel, edebi vb. bir yenilenme çağı olan Rönesans, Batı'da tarih ve edebiyat derslerinde kapsamlı bir şekilde incelenmektedir. MS 16. yüzyılda bugünkü Özbekistan'da gerçekleşen Timurlu Rönesansı, mimari, dilbilimsel, şiirsel, kültürel ve bilimsel yönlerden parlak bir şekilde parladı. Değerli Rönesans Doğu'ya yayıldı ve sadece Perslere, Türklere değil Ruslara da ilham veren Timurlu mimarisine damgasını vurdu. Timurlu Rönesansı'nın tüm alanlarını kapsamak amacıyla bu çalışma, konuyla ilgili bilimsel ve tarihi makalelerin gözden geçirilmesine dayanmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Timurlu, Rönesans, Emir Timur, Özbekistan, Orta Asya, Ulugh Bey, Registan, Semerkant, İpek Yolu

**Ахборотнома:** Renesans, san'at, madaniy, ilmiy va adabiy tiklanish davri va hokazo, g'arbiyda tarix va adabiyot kurslarida keng ko'lamli o'rganiladi. XVI asrda joriy O'zbekistonda yuz beruvchi Timurid Renesansi, binoning, til, she'rlar, madaniy va ilmiy tomonlarda juda rangli yorqin chiqdi. Qimmatbaho Renesans Sharqqa tarqalgan va uning ta'siri bilan Timurid uslubiyoti, undan faqat Forslar va Turklar emas, balki Ruslarni ham ilhomlantirdi. Timurid Renesansi barcha sohalarini qamrab olish uchun, joriy ish bu mavzuga bag'ishlangan ilmiy va tarixiy maqolalar tahliliga asoslangan.

**Asosiy so'zlar:** Timuridlar, Renessans, Emir Timur, O'zbekiston, Markaziy Osiyo, Ulug'bek, Registon, Samarqand, Ipak yo'li.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Renaissance sells dreams. However, few people are informed about another Renaissance, namely the Timurid Renaissance, which left its mark on the history of mankind as well. The Timurid Renaissance was a brilliant artistic, cultural and scientific era established in the 15th century by the Timurids. It is therefore contemporary to the Western Renaissance.

The Renaissance is an era that marks the end of obscurantism. History portrays the medieval period as obscure because the focus was on religion. The writings of ancient Greek and Roman scientists and philosophers were burned in the West because the Church claimed that science contradicted religion. Science was not at the center of attention until the Fall of the Eastern Roman Empire. With the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, Byzantine scholars, philosophers, and scientists fled to the West, to present-day Italy. They brought with them books and writings of the great ancient scholars. Thus, the West rediscovers science, poetry, theater, astronomy, etc., from Antiquity. The 15th and 16th centuries witness remnants of Antiquity coming back to life. In the West, architecture regains the prestige of Antiquity, and science, art, literature, etc., once again become the center of attention. Kim (2018)<sup>1</sup> writes that “*The Renaissance is said to be the rebirth of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations with Italy as the center. It is doubtful, however, whether the same conclusion can be reached if one moves beyond the prejudice inherent in a Eurocentric historical interpretation of the Renaissance*”. “Renaissance” literally means “rebirth” in French. As a term, its content is quite broad: in culture, science, art, education in general, and so on. Historians have used it to refer to the Western period that rediscovered ancient science and art.

The Renaissance certainly captivates the imagination as it brought science back to the forefront after the medieval period dominated by obscurantism. However, in the West and globally, history courses focus on the Western Renaissance, particularly the Italian Renaissance. Yet, during the same period, a contemporary Renaissance was flourishing in various fields, reviving the East. The Renaissance is not only a European phenomenon, since Eastern peoples experienced it earlier, notably in present-day Uzbekistan. Indeed, the Timurid Renaissance, which took place in present-day Uzbekistan in the 16th century AD. The Renaissance is a glorious era, but at the same time, this light shone thousands of kilometers to the East. Indeed, in a strategically located area on the Silk Road in present-day Uzbekistan, science, art, literature, astronomy, mathematics, etc., were developed as gloriously as in the West. In fact, the Timurid dynasty gave birth to a prestigious Renaissance whose traces are still visible today. This Renaissance spread across Asia, from present-day Russia in the North to India in the South, from present-day Turkiye in the West to the Chinese borders in the East. This prestigious era fascinated the West and continues to captivate those who visit the country, witnessing the architectural grandeur of the Timurid era. Indeed, the Timurids created the renaissance in the Muslim world, and the oriental scholars Temur and under the Timurids contributed greatly to the development of science in its politics. It is described as equivalent in terms of glory to the Quadrocenten of Italia. Salimovna (2023) said that “*U shon-sharaf nuqtayi-nazaridan Itaiyaning Kvadrosentosiga teng deya ta’riflanadi Temuriylar uyg’onish davri XV asrda, mo’g’ul bosqinlari va istilolari yakunlangach o’z cho’qqisiga erishadi*” which means that “The Timurid Renaissance reached its peak in the 15th century, when the Mongol invasions and conquests ended and it is described as equal in prestige to the Quattrocento of Italia”. Salimovna (2023) writes also that “*Buni biz fanda temuriylar renessansi deb atasak ham bo`ladi*” and it means that “We might call this the Timurid renaissance in science”.

Although the Fall of the Byzantine Empire gave rise to the Italian Renaissance, according to Kim (2018), it was the development of the sea route and means of transport that also contributed to the Italian Renaissance

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<sup>1</sup> Kim, T. S. (2018). The renaissance revisited: from a silk road perspective. *Acta Via Serica*, 3(1), 11-25. [Acta Via Serica\(2018-1\)-Articles-1\(KIM Tschung-Sun\).pdf](#)

as the Timurid Renaissance. Kim (2018) writes that “*it was with this momentum of exchange that the Renaissance was made possible. In the end, the fact that the Italian Renaissance came into being in the 14th century can be attributed to the largescale economic exchange and development facilitated by the Mongol Empire*”.

According to Kim (2018), “*The Renaissance, therefore, was a crystallization of a complex of civilizations created by the crossing of various cultures along the Silk Road and should be referred to as the ‘Global Renaissance’ instead of the ‘Western Renaissance.’*”

The Timurid dynasty was famous for the military successes of the great Emir Timur. Certainly, the great emperor was a great warrior who terrified his adversaries and greatly expanded the frontiers of his empire. However, this same dynasty also gave rise to an artistic and scientific renaissance that is little known in the West and deserves attention.

### **1. The Timurids and the founder of the great dynasty, the conqueror Emir Timur**

The Timurids are the descendants of Timur (Tamerlane) who was the emperor of the Timurid Empire (today's Uzbekistan) in the 14th century. The empire bequeathed by Timur gave birth to a century-long renaissance of culture and arts, of which Samarkand was the jewel.

The Timurids play a key role in the history of Central Asia, as they were the last great dynasty to emerge from the steppes of Turkestan.

Emir Timur, like Genghis Khan, is a great military figure who left his mark on history. He was born in 1336 and achieved military success in 1369. Sure enough, at the age of 33, he succeeded in unifying the nomadic tribes of Central Asia, and greatly extended his empire to the gates of Europe by waging war in Anatolia.

Emir Timur was an incredible conqueror who accumulated victories until his death in 1405. This great conqueror of the 14th century. In 1398, at the age of 60, he conquered part of India and took Delhi. He later completed his conquests by facing down the Ottoman sultan, Bayazid I. He defeated his Ottoman adversary in 1402 and captured the sultan.

Timur, a significant historical figure, single-handedly established an empire from scratch and ruled between 1370 and 1405. Every moment of his life was marked by struggle. His personal struggle, beginning with himself, continued to establish unity in the region, create an empire where justice prevailed, and institutionalize governance principles through the structures he built (Delen, 2017)<sup>2</sup>.

### **2. The birth of the Timurid renaissance**

Although the Timurid Renaissance was initiated by his descendants, Timur is the one who enabled its development. He was known for his military victories, but today it is more possible to observe the remnants of his artistic triumphs. After each victory, he would return to Samarkand, bringing artisans from various conquered lands to the capital.

In fact, the Timurid Renaissance was a historical period in the history of Central Asia and Islam that spanned the period from the end of the 14th century to the beginning of the 16th century. It's worth remembering that the Western Renaissance also began in the 14th century.. After the gradual decline of the Islamic Golden Age, the Timurid Empire in Central Asia, ruled by the Timurid dynasty, spurred a revival of the arts and sciences. In other words, the Turkish emperor Emir Temur gave birth to a Turkish renaissance in Central Asia at the same time as the Italian renaissance. This movement spread widely throughout the Muslim

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<sup>2</sup> Delen, M. (2017). Emir Timur ve yönetim ilkeleri. In *Journal of Social Policy Conferences* (No. 73, pp. 144-161). Istanbul University [456083 \(dergipark.org.tr\)](http://456083.dergipark.org.tr).

world according to Salimovna (2023).

It was Shah Rukh (Shahrokh Mirza), son of Emir Timur, and his wife Goharshad begim (Gavharshodbegim) who initiated the Timurid Renaissance. In Samarkand, he developed a brilliant artistic, cultural and scientific policy that spanned the entire 15th century.

On this subject, Salimovna (2023) writes that it was the reign of Shahrukh Mirza and his wife Gavhar Shodbegim in Herat (known as the rival of Florence, center of the Italian cultural renaissance) and the era of astronomer and mathematician Mirzo Ulugbek that are the major key moments of the Timurid Renaissance. They left a great legacy for future generations.

The Timurid dynasty in Central Asia led to a revival of art and science. Some said that it had the same splendor as the Italian Renaissance. *"Combining military activity with artistic patronage to suck great effect that the fifteenth century came to be known as the era of the Timurid renaissance, a match in glory for the Italian Quattrocento"* Ruggiero (2007), as was said above.

According to Kim (2016), *"The path to the Renaissance began with the rise of the Mongol Empire at the core of Eurasia. At the end of the 13th century, the Yam system, which was a communication network that allowed information to travel from 200 to 300 miles per day, was largely activated with the expansion of the Mongol Empire"*. Of course, the development of communication routes is crucial to trade. Not to mention the fact that it's through exchange that art and science spread. The development of transportation by the Mongols was a key factor in the spread of the Renaissance in Asia.

The Silk Road enabled trade in printing, the compass and firearms. These three inventions were the driving force behind the Renaissance, as they enabled the transmission of science and advanced technologies. For example, printing facilitated the dissemination of knowledge to the common people and broke the monopoly of knowledge that priests had enjoyed for centuries.

Kim (2018) writes that *"The Timurids and their contemporaries followed the same pattern of kingship as the Mongols, combining military activity with artistic patronage. This led to the fifteenth century being known as the era of the Timurid Renaissance, matching the glory of the Italian Quattrocento"*.

Omonullo (2023) writes that it was really Ibrahim Sultan, who reigned after 1415 until the end of his life, who developed the economy, science, especially spiritual culture, and made a significant contribution to the region's economy in the Timurid era.

### **3. The characteristics of the Timurid Renaissance**

#### **3.1. The architectural Renaissance**

The reconstruction of Samarkand, Herat (equivalent to the Florence of the Italian Renaissance), the schools built by Ulug Beg (grandson of Emir Timur), the development of poetry and literature can summarize the Timurid Renaissance.

Large-scale building projects were created and implemented, and mausoleums, madrasas were built. Mathematical and astronomical studies were revived, and firearms began to be mastered in the early 16th century. After the golden age of Islam in the Middle Ages, this is the first time we've seen a renaissance of science and the development of science. It seems appropriate to speak of the Renaissance of science in the Muslim world, and especially in Turkic world. The city of Samarkand became an important stop on the Silk Road linking China to the West according to Dickens (1999).

Timur was not only a great conqueror, he was also a great builder. He may have been known as an invincible warrior, but today, world architecture has inherited the works he ordered in his cities. What is most striking about Timur's monuments is their grandeur. Timur built both secular, religious monuments, and gardens in his capital, with elaborately patterned stone walls and floors and palaces decorated with gold, silk and carpets. During the reign of Amir Temur, interest in classical art was revived. Major construction projects

such as mausoleums, madrasas and libraries were built. Amir Temur turned his attention to cities, and was first involved in the construction of magnificent Aksaray and fine mosques in his native Shahrīsabz, magnificent and luxurious buildings in the capital Samarkand, mosques and madrasas in Turkestan, Damascus and Tabriz... . During this period, in addition to Samarkand and Herat, there were numerous cultural centers such as Bukhara, Khiva, Shahrīsabz, Balkh, Mashhad, Shiraz and many world scientists gathered in these centers (Salimovna, 2023).

The city of Herat became an important center of intellectual and artistic life in the Muslim world during this period. Samarkand was a center of scientific research and became the center of the Timurid Renaissance due to their construction during the period. During this period, the city of Herat became an important center of scientific and artistic life in the Muslim world. Samarkand became a center of Renaissance and culture as a result of the reconstruction and high attention carried out in the city (Salimovna, 2023).

The main works of the Timurid period are the construction of the Summer Palace, the Bibi- Khanym Mosque and the Registan. Not to mention that the Taj Mahal, one of the wonders of the world, was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahn, a descendant of Emir Timur.

The Registan is the ancient heart of the city of Samarkand and was described by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, in 1888 as "*the noblest public square in the world*". "*I know of nothing in the East which approaches it in its massive simplicity and grandeur*," he wrote. "No European spectacle can indeed be adequately compared with it, for we are unable to point to any open space in a Western city which is commanded on three of its four sides by Gothic cathedrals of the finest order" (Blunt, 1973)<sup>3</sup>.

Ulugh Beg, grandson of Emir Timur, astronomer and mathematician, more scholar than military or religious leader, left an educational institution as his main contribution to the architecture of Samarkand. Ulugh Beg adorned Samarkand with splendid monuments, madrasas and parks.

The decoration of the madrasa, like everywhere else in Samarkand, emphasizes blue, with light and dark blue tiles. Indeed, blue is ubiquitous in Samarkand. The faience mosaic above the entrance in a star-shaped design pays tribute to astronomy (Dickens, 1999). The gardens of Timurids were fascinating (Golombek, 2008).<sup>4</sup>

Kim (2018) writes that "*Trademarks of the Timurid style were monumental scale, multiple minarets, polychromic tilework, and large bulbous double domes. However, the most important achievement was the large-scale construction conducted in Samarkand and Shahrīsabz (historically known as Kesh or Kish). Along with their immediate successors, Timurid cultural traditions were also partly carried on by the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires*".

The construction of a number of educational centers by art patron Husayn Boygaro are crucial points in the Timurid Renaissance. In this great place founded by Sultan Husayn Boygaro, young scientists received an education, conducted scientific research, engaged in various trades and practiced calligraphy with the support of the sultan and his minister (Salimovna, 2023). According to this author, the Summer Palace, the Bibi Khanim Mosque and the Ahmed Yassavi Mausoleum in Shahrīsabz can be mentioned as the main construction works of Amir Temur's life, since she writes that "*Amir Temur hayotligidagi asosiy qurilish ishlari sifatida Shahrīsabzdagi Yozgi saroy, BibiXonim masjidi va Ahmad Yassaviy maqbarasini ko'rsatish mumkin*".

In precis, it is above all the construction of libraries that should be mentioned and which contributed to the Timurid renaissance. Ismailovich (2023) writes that "*The contribution of libraries to the development of education, literature and art, to the development of science in the Timurid state is great. Libraries and*

<sup>3</sup> Blunt, W. (1973). The golden road to Samarkand. (No Title). [The golden road to Samarkand | CiNii Research](#)

<sup>4</sup> Golombek, L. (2008). From Timur to Tivoli: Reflections on il giardino all'italiana. In *Muqarnas, Volume 25* (pp. 243-254). Brill. [muq25.indb](#)

*madrassas were closely connected with each other and served as a center for the transfer of knowledge to the people. Mirzo Ulugbek built a very large library in Samarkand for the efficient creation of scholars. This library was founded during the reign of Amir Temur, and Mirza Shahrukh made a great contribution to its enrichment. Mirzo Ulugbek himself paid constant attention to replenishing his library with new books. This library is part of the scientific school of Mirzo Ulugbek in Samarkand. At one time, Badi az-Zaman donated valuable books to the large Shahrukh library in Herat”.*

In sum, during the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurid dynasty, great creative works were carried out in the central cities of Movarunnahr and Khorasan. The creative work begun during this period rose to the level of state politics, which was reflected in the majestic appearance of the buildings created during this period, with luxurious and magnificent architectural decorations. The power of the Timurid state was particularly evident in architecture, and the architecture of this period has been analyzed to some extent in architectural history. The inscription “If you want to see our power, look at the buildings we have built” written on the facade of Aksaray also signified the political mission of the state of Temur. During Timur's period, the towns of Movarounnahr were built with fortifications, main streets and large-scale memorial complexes. Temur paid special attention to the decoration of the kingdom's capital, Samarkand. He began his work by restoring the city's defensive walls, destroyed and neglected for 150 years after the Mongol invasion. Water will be delivered from the Zarafshan River to the neighborhoods of Samarkand that have been deprived of water due to the completion of the suspended waterway (“Juyi Arziz”). During the Ulugbek era, new types of domed structures were developed. Achievements in concrete sciences are clearly visible in architectural monuments (Shahizinda, Ahmed Yassavi, Gori Amir mausoleums, Bibikhanim mosque, Ulugbek madrasah). It is the geometry which determines the general harmony of the architectural forms in the layout of their facade and their interior (Jaxongirovna, 2024).

In summary, the 15th century was the period of the rise of architectural art, which in turn paved the way for the development of volumetric-spatial structures in a new form. During the time of Timur, the increase in the scale of constructions depended to a large extent on the will of the individual ruler, for whom the majestic form was a means of glorifying the power and authority of Timur (Rasulovna & Mirkomilovich, 2023).

### **3.2. The scientific Renaissance**

During the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids, attention to education and patronage of science became a state policy in the Empire, especially in Movarunnahr and Khorasan (Shahloxon, 2024).

The ruler Ulugh Beg, great symbol of the Timurid Renaissance, contributed to science and it is to the quality of his trigonometric tables that he owes his place in the history of mathematics. Therefore, to pay tribute to him, in 1961, the International Astronomical Union named a lunar crater after him and an asteroid (2439) Ulugbek (Minor Planet Center, the International Astronomical Union) (Space.reference)<sup>5</sup>.

He was the grandson of Turan ruler Amir Temur and the son of Shahrukh Mirza. His mother was Gavharshad Begum, a noblewoman, member of the Turkic tribe. He was born in Sultaniya during his grandfather's campaign to Iran. He was named Mirza Muhammad Taragai. Ulugbek was not a real name, but a nickname meaning “Great ruler (bek)”. As a child, he traveled through much of the Middle East and India as his grandfather expanded his conquests in those regions. After the death of Timur, Shah Rukh moved the capital of the empire to Herat (in modern Afghanistan). Later, in 1409, sixteen-year-old Ulugbek became the governor of Samarkand (Masharif, 2023).

Masharif(2023) writes “*Ulug’bek trigonometriya va sferik geometriya kabi astronomiya bilan bog’liq matematika sohasidagi ishlari, shuningdek, san’at va intellektual faoliyatga umumiy qiziqishlari bilan ajralib turardi*”. He said that Ulugbek was notable for his work in mathematics related to astronomy, such as

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[Asteroid Ulugbek | Space Reference](#)

trigonometry and spherical geometry, as well as for his general interest in art and intellectual pursuits. A polyglot, he spoke five languages fluently: Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Mongolian and a little Chinese. During his reign (first governor, then directly), thanks to his attention and patronage, the Timurids reached the cultural peak of the Renaissance period. The teenage ruler aimed to turn the city into the intellectual center of the empire. In 1417-1420, he built a madrasa ("university") in Registan Square in Samarkand and invited many Islamic astronomers and mathematicians to study there (Masharif, 2023).

The madrasa of Ulugh Beg was a scientific institution at that time. In fact, between 1424 and 1429, Ulugh Beg had the Samarkand Astronomical Observatory built, which was equipped with astronomical instruments that had no equivalent until then (Golombek, *and al.* 1988). According to scientists, this observatory was at the time the best in the Islamic world and the largest in Central Asia (Masharif, 2023). The Timurid Renaissance was also noteworthy in scientific terms. Indeed, the legacies of manuscripts bear witness to the greatness of Timurid scholars in the fields of mathematics, physics, and astronomy. Samarkand had a functional observatory. Ulugh Beg, a descendant of Emir Timur and a great astronomer, created a precise astronomical chart called the "Ulugh Beg Astronomical Chart." This chart was widely used in the Muslim world and translated into Latin for use in Europe. Ulugh Beg was later recognized by many scientists as the most important astronomer of the 15th century. He also built the Ulugh Beg madrasah in Samarkand and Bukhara (1417-1420) and transformed these cities into centers of culture and knowledge in Central Asia (Masharif, 2023).

Özcan (2022)<sup>6</sup> writes that *"The difference of Ulugh Begh from the other known Turk-Muslim rulers – and, probably, the all the known rulers in world history– is, in addition to patronize scientists, and science education, his being a scientist of mathematics-astronomy. Indeed, Ulugh Begh is the only known scientist-ruler who had founded the largest observatory, had seen until that era in Samarkand and prepared the most detailed Zīc (star catalog), for five centuries, from Ptolemy to Tycho Brahe"*.

Ismailovich (2023) writes that *"In the palaces of Amir Temur and his descendants there were rich libraries where unique works of the ancient world and the Middle Ages were preserved. Madrasah and khanaqakh students analyzed many books from various fields of science. In Samarkand there were rich libraries of Amir Temur and Mirza Ulughbek, in Herat of Mirza Boysunkur, Sultan Hussein Boygaro and Alisher Navoi"*.

In 1437, he organized the constellation of 1018 stars in the work "Zizhi Sultani", which is still considered one of the greatest works of the world in the field of star science. This work was reprinted in Oxford in 1665 by Thomas Hyde, in 1843 by France Bailly, and in 1917 by Edward Ball Knobel. After that, Ulugh Beg defined a year as 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes and 15 seconds. Ulugh Beg was only 25 seconds wrong in this calculation. Apart from him, Ulugh Beg defined the earth's central inclination as 23.52 degrees, and this was considered the most correct and accurate measurement for hundreds of years. In the knowledge of triangles, Ulugh Beg determined the values of shadow and tangent to eight decimal places and eight decimal places. During Ulugh Beg's time, many works were translated from Arabic and Persian into old Uzbek. He created a rich library with more than 15,000 books (Masharif, 2023). A more accurate analysis of Ulugh Beg's table based on the study of 8 manuscripts stored in British libraries was published in 1917 in the USA by E. B. Noble "Ulugh Beg's Catalog of Stars.

Sh, N Narzullayeva (2023) calls attention to the fact that among the works inherited from Ulugh Beg, there is also a number of geographical information. Geographic coordinates of 683 settlements in the world are given

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<sup>6</sup> Özcan, E. S. 2022. Ulugh Begh's Mathematics-Astronomy Climate in Samarkand.

in the work "Zizhi Jadidi Koragony". Ulugbek writes in his works that the observatory he built is located at 39037'28" geographical latitude. According to the results of current measurements, the territory of the observatory corresponds to 39049'37". The science of geography was studied with the help of maps created by Ulugbek.

The development of science was mainly due to the rapid development of manuscript production. Certainly, many calligraphers, miniaturists and bookbinders gathered in the same place to embark on the creation of copies and established the Herat copy workshop and other cities such as Samarkand.

### **3.3. The artistic and literary Renaissance**

The Renaissance was also made in terms of art. According to Alisher Navoi (Timurid Poet), serious attention was paid to the development of literature, especially in the Turkish language, during the Timurid period. Also, during this period, there was an increase in fine art - miniature art and monumental painting (Sugdiyona, 2024). In that period, the performance skills of singers, musicians and dancers rose to great heights.

#### **3.3.1. The artistic Renaissance**

Shahrokh Mirza and his wife attracted to the Empire and to their court, artists, architects, philosophers and poets recognized today among the most famous in the world, including the poet Djami. Their eldest son, Ulugh Beg, governor of Samarkand, was an outstanding astronomer.

Rahmatov, *and al.* (2023) noticed that Some of the miniatures made during the reign of Khalil Sultan were made graphically and artistically in a unique "ink pen" style. During Timur's lifetime, kings and princes were depicted on the walls of his palace, and Kamoliddin Behzod created the real portrait genre. In general, many miniatures depicting the images of Timur and the Timurids are kept in various libraries around the world (Yodgorov & Nurullayeva, 2023).

Miniature paintings have a great place in Timurid art. Painting was not limited to papers, as many artists of the Timurid period painted complex murals. Timurid art was even reflected in Anatolia. Bernus-Taylor (1997) wrote *"The decoration of the "Green Complex" in Bursa, a reflection of Timurid art"*.

Kim (2018) writes that *"Unlike Italian Renaissance art, which used the human body as a metaphor and vehicle for everything it wanted to say about the universe, miniature painting focused on the depiction of human emotion as its primary metaphor and vehicle. The colors and gestures, the relationships and situations portrayed, the architecture and natural"*.

In fact, many well-known artists such as Zahiriddin Azhor, Bobonaqqosh created their works. A number of miniature works have been created. The monuments of fine art that have come down to us in Samarkand, Khivot and Bukhara show that the unique styles of this art were formed in the direction of true depiction of life (Sugdiyona, 2024).

In short, As Rustamova (2023) shows, the Timurid Empire saw the development of schools dedicated to learning to make miniatures. Calligraphy-handwriting was considered an integral part of literature. Miniature fine art was considered primarily as a pattern. The mural paintings restored during the Timurid period stopped again in the 16th century. In the palace residences of the Timurids in Samarkand, there were murals depicting reception ceremonies, battle scenes, hunting scenes, and public holidays. The images of Temur, his sons, grandsons, wives and concubines are depicted in these wall paintings. The mural paintings are thematically diverse and stylistically close to the genre of miniatures (Jaxongirovna, 2024). The miniature is indeed the characteristic of artistic development under the Timurids.

#### **3.3.2. The literary Renaissance**

The Timurid literary Renaissance was achieved through the development of the Chagatai Turkish



language and writings in this language. Great authors such as Alisher Navoi (1441-1501), leaving behind excellent works in Turkish such as "Khamasa" contributed to the Timurid literary Renaissance. This poet of Timurid literature left a mark on history and asserted that literature holds a crucial place and must be developed. According to Alisher Navoi, the word is one of the most precious things in the world, just like its guardian (Zokirov, & Ibragimova, 2021)<sup>7</sup>.

Literature was highlighted and we wanted it to be engraved in history. Skilled calligraphers were gathered to leave the books to subsequent generations. The Empire had several libraries, namely royal libraries, private libraries, madrassas and private libraries. At that time, in the famous madrassahs of Movarunnahr and Khorasan, including Samarkand, Bukhara, Herat and Balkh, special rooms were reserved for the library, where rare manuscripts were kept and protected by responsible employees. Among these rare manuscripts, classic works written in the 15th and 16th centuries and occupying a special place in the history of science and civilization have reached us; they are currently kept in Uzbekistan and in various libraries around the world according to Ismailovich (2023). The libraries were freely used by scientists, all madrassah teachers and students. In particular, Alisher Navoi's library was widely used first by Mirkhond, and then by his grandson Khondamir. Ismailovich (2023) notes that libraries actively contributed to the development of science, education, literature and art, which flourished in the Timurid Empire.

In the work "Risola", during this period, around a thousand poets from Herat and the surrounding area engaged in artistic creation - poetry (Salimovna, 2023).

Literature in this language grew so much that Chagatai Turkish was recognized and widely used in the Muslim world as one of the three literary languages, alongside Arabic and Persian. It was even the first time that Turkish literature had developed to such an extent. Navoi was a great poet of the Timurid era, arguably the greatest in Chagatai literature. Moreover, like literary salons existing in the West, he created a salon where poets, artists, and scholars gathered at his home and even conducted literary critiques.

This allowed Babur, descendant of Amir Timur and first of the Great Moguls, to write his life, the Baburnama, entirely in Chagatay Turkic language (Subtelny, 1994)<sup>8</sup>. Indeed, the Mughal Empire, founded by descendants of Emir Timur, continued to revive Timurid literature in the Chagatai language. In 1492, after the fall of the Timurid Empire, it conquered Northern India and New Delhi.

In sum, it must be said that all aspects of the art of music, composition, performance, science and special education reached the highest stages of development during the Timurid era.

### **3.4. The place of women in the Timurid Renaissance**

Women played a significant role in political and economic life under the Timurids. (Mukminova, 1997)<sup>9</sup> Mukminova wrote that women occupied a rather important place in the court of Amir Timur and the Timurids. They took part in the festivities where high dignitaries, ambassadors, ..., participated in the construction of mausoleums, madrassas, women became managers, etc. (Fajziev, 1994).

Arbabzadah (2017) writes that "Timurid women from the ruling class patronized religious activities, set up buildings and developed architecture with their own private funds. The most important of these women was Queen Gawhar Shad, the wife and consort of the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (r. 1405-1447), who spent a

<sup>7</sup> Zokirov, M. T., & Ibragimova, M. S. N. (2021). Alisher Navoi about style problems. *ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science*, (12), 601-604. [ALISHER-NAVOI-ABOUT-STYLE-PROBLEMS.pdf \(researchgate.net\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> Subtelny, M. E. (2018). The symbiosis of Turk and Tajik. In *Central Asia in historical perspective* (pp. 45-61). Routledge. [The Symbiosis of Turk and Tajik | 4 | Central Asia In Historical Persp \(taylorfrancis.com\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> Mukminova, R. (1997). Le rôle de la femme dans la société de l'Asie centrale sous les Timourides et les Sheybanides. *Cahiers d'Asie centrale*, (3/4), 203-212. [Le rôle de la femme dans la société de l'Asie centrale sous les Timourides et les Sheybanides \(openedition.org\)](#)

decade as the de facto ruler of the Timurid empire after organizing the coronation of her young grandson. upon her husband's death in 1447. Not only did Gawhar Shad dare to break the long-standing custom of preventing women from attending mosques by building two mosques; she also ensured that the mosques in question became not just ordinary places of worship but prestigious Friday mosques, serving as influential institutions at the intersection of political and religious power. The author writes that “ *It can be safely assumed that Gawhar Shad was inspired by an earlier Turko-Mongol female aristocrat, Qutlugh Turkan Aqa (d. 1383), Timur’s older sister, who was known to have built a mosque in Samarqand*”. Spouse of the Shahrukh ruler in the first half of the fifteenth century and de facto ruler for a decade, Gawhar Shad distinguished herself by her disregard for an ancient tradition whereby only male rulers, the sultans, had the legitimacy to sponsor the construction of prestigious institutions such as mosques. Certainly, this woman, Gawhar Shad, financed the construction of two mosques in key Timurid cities, one in Herat and the other in Mashhad (in what is now Iran). This fact underlines the importance of women's role in shaping religious culture (Arbabzadah, 2017).

Arbabzadah (2017) writes that “*It is clear from the historical records of the time that Timurid women had an especially high status, and it was this status that in turn allowed them to commission the building of religious schools, khanaqahs and mausoleum shrines*”. This author adds that this high status was inherited from sedentary Turco-Mongolian societies, which were more egalitarian. He writes that “*Traditionally, women played a key role in Turco-Mongolian societies*”. In short, the Timurid dynasty gained its strength through Emir Timur's marriage to a descendant of Cengiz han.

To illustrate this point, Arbabzadah (2017) explains like that “*we have to recall that Timur was granted legitimacy to rule only after he married the Chinggisid princess, Saray Mulk Khanum. Before his marriage, the rules of the political system of the steppe excluded Timur, because he was not related to Chinggis Khan (ca. 1162–1227). This absence of kinship amounted to his lacking in legitimacy to rule. It is for this reason that it was only after his marriage to Saray Mulk Khanum, a daughter of Qazan Khan (r. 1343–46), that Timur was given legitimacy to rule. More important, the legitimacy to rule was transferred to Timur after he was conferred the title of gurigan (son-in-law)*”.

Historical sources from this period testify to Timur's close and special relationship with the women in his family. For example, the following passage from Mirkhwand's *Rawzat al-Safa* illustrates the powerful emotional impact that the death of his elder sister, Qutlugh Turkan Aqa, had on Timur. Such a deep attachment between the male ruler and the women in his family was typical of Turco-Mongolian societies. We find a later example of such strong attachment to female relatives in the figure of Timur's descendant, Babur, who, as founder of the Mughal empire, became ruler of northern India between 1526 and 1530 (Arbabzadah, 2017).

Shakirova & Tojiboyev (2023) focus also on the fact that a prominent female figure in the Timurid court in the 15th century was the wife of Shahrukh, who ruled the western part of the Timurid kingdom from Herat. She was the wife of Shah Rukh. They underlined that Gavharshadbegim played an important role in shaping the cultural life of Herat. They also add that, as the Timurid dynasty prospered through trade and tribute, Gavharshadbegim sponsored massive construction works in Herat from the royal treasury. One of his most famous works was the Musallah complex built between 1417-1438. This included a public mosque and a seminary madrasa decorated with Timurid-style mosaics. Gavharshad built more than 100 buildings and heralded a new era of royal female patronage that shaped Timurid aesthetics. Gavharshadbegim also awarded the scientists of astronomy, philosophy, mathematics and mysticism for their works dedicated to her.

In addition, Gavharshadbegim strongly supported educational work. Her greatest achievement was the establishment of the Gavharshad Mosque and Seminary Madrasa, considered among the best in the Islamic world, in 1417. It contains teachings on religion, philosophy and logic from renowned scientists. Gavharshadbegim also attended elementary schools where Arabic and Persian literature were taught. Places were reserved for girls in her madrassas and she personally sponsored orphanages (Shakirova & Tojiboyev, 2023).

Her efforts in collecting rare books and manuscripts greatly expanded the royal library. She sponsored the historical chronicles about Timur's campaigns, authored by Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi and Nizamiddin Jami, who glorified the rule of the Timurids (Shakirova & Tojiboyev, 2023).

The importance of women's place is reflected everywhere. Surely, we must recall that the Masjid-i Bibi in Samarqand was named after Timur's wife, Saray Mulk, while Timur and his descendants also built gardens in honor of their wives, places that were used to welcome and entertain foreign visitors. Contemporary literary sources, such as poetry, historiography and biographies of poets and saints, also bear witness to the particularly high status enjoyed by Timurid women (Arbabzadah, 2017). All in all, this shows just how important a role women played in Timurid society. Timurid women were powerful and active agents in the cultural and political life of Timurid society, whether as political agents like Gawhar Shad or as enthusiastic patrons of music and poetry like the Mughal empress Ruqiyya Bigum (1542-1626).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Since then, the great kingdom established by Amir Temur has attracted the attention of the people not only in his own country, but also attracted neighboring countries and their kings, as well as rulers of distant countries. According to historical documents, since the 70s of the 14th century, representatives of European countries came to Movarounnahr and were seriously interested in the power and potential of the new independent state. They attempted to establish political and economic relations with the state of Amir Temur. This opinion is clearly confirmed by numerous historical and scientific works, which describe in detail that he sent ambassadors to his palace and in turn received ambassadors from Spain, France, England, China, more than 20 foreign countries in its capital Samarkand. Timur's personality is studied with great interest in Europe. This is why many works have been created on the biography, history and politics of Temur. Professor L. Keren is the author of numerous books and articles on Amir Temur and his relations with Europe. One of his most important books, "Temur or Sahibkiran Sultanate", was first published in 1978 for example. (Salimovna, 2023).

In short, the art and architecture of the Timurids, stemming from the Renaissance, were so prestigious that they inspired regions stretching from Anatolia to India. From Ottoman Sultans to the Mughal emperors of India, the Timurid Renaissance revived science and art in a significant part of Asia. While, in political terms, Timur's vast empire may have been relatively ephemeral, his descendants continued to rule over Transoxiana as great patrons of Islamic art. Thus, this empire lived on through science and art. Not to mention, their spectacular cultural activities were centered around Samarkand (Uzbekistan) and Herat (Afghanistan) but extended from Anatolia to India. Salimovna (2023) writes that had significant influence on other states during the Islamic Gunpowder Empire (Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Iran). "*Temuriylar Islomiy porox imperiyalari davridagi boshqa davlatlarga (Usmonlilar Turkiyasi va Safaviylar Eroni) sezilarli ta'sir ko'rsatgan*"<sup>10</sup>.

The Timurids testify to being great masters of architecture. Indeed, the Timurids were also immense builders. Consequently, Uzbekistan has become a center attracting tourists because the grandeur of buildings such as religious institutions and foundations like mosques, madrasas, and khanqahs (convents) attests to the greatness of the Timurid Renaissance.

The originality of the Timurid cultural movement is that it contributed to the development of Chagatay to such an extent that the language was even learned by some Ottoman sultans.

The 15th and 16th centuries were marked by a circulation of artists, manuscripts, and ideas that took place among political centers both inside and outside the Islamic world. Consequently, the Timurid Renaissance facilitated the exchange of knowledge as well as art.

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<sup>10</sup> Salimovna, S. M. (2023). RENAISSANCE OF TIMURID PERIOD AND ITS PLACE IN WORLD CIVILIZATION. *Galaxy International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 11(9), 89-92.

## CONCLUSION

The Timurids, or the Timurid dynasty, were a turco-Mongol dynasty founded by Timur (Emir Temur ) in the 14th century in Central Asia. Timur was a military conqueror who supported the arts and culture in some of his capitals. The Timurids revived science, art, and architecture in the Turkestan region of Central Asia. By bringing together artists, architects, scientists, and poets from various parts of the world, Samarkand and Herat became significant artistic and scientific centers of the Timurid Renaissance. Ulug Beg, a ruler of the Timurid dynasty, stood out for his interest in astronomy and the sciences. He constructed a renowned astronomical observatory in Samarkand where significant work was carried out. This observatory served as an advanced center of studies for its time. In terms of art and architecture, Samarkand and Herat in Afghanistan experienced cultural development under the Timurids, with notable monuments such as Ulugh Beg's madrasa in Samarkand and the Goharshad Mosque in Herat.

In summary, the Timurid Renaissance, established by the descendants of the great Emir Timur, allowed Asia to rise from its ashes. Like the Western Renaissance, the Timurid Renaissance developed through science, art, architecture, etc. There is no doubt that polymathy was commonplace in Central Asia during the Timurid Empire. In the end, this era left its mark on history, and anyone who has seen or will see these Timurid monuments in Samarkand can easily testify to the splendor they possess, even after years of decay, and imagine the grandeur of the old days, which many admirers of history are full of praise.

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