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Arts and Heritage Development Articles

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# Reviving Ancient Splendor: Graphic Restoration of the Mosque of Odina in Uzbekistan

# Menghidupkan Kembali Kemegahan Kuno: Restorasi Grafis Masjid Odina di Uzbekistan

#### Elvira Jurayeva, elvira8790@mail.ru, (0)

Samarkand State University of Architecture and Construction, Uzbekistan

#### Luqmonov Dilshod, d.luqmonov@samdaqu.edu.uz, (0)

Department of Reconstruction and Restoration of Architectural Monuments, Samarkand State University of Architecture and Construction , Uzbekistan

#### Odina Olimova, o.odina@samdaqu.edu.uz, (0)

Samarkand State University of Architecture and Construction, Uzbekistan

(1) Corresponding author

#### **Abstract**

This study delves into the graphic restoration of the historic mosque of Odina in Karshi, Uzbekistan, as part of broader efforts to preserve and repair architectural treasures in post-independence Uzbekistan. Utilizing archival data, historical sources, and scientific research, the study aims to recreate the original appearance and architectural elements of this significant monument. Through meticulous analysis and reconstruction, the project yields detailed insights into the early aesthetics; and construction techniques of the mosque, contributing valuable knowledge to the global discourse on heritage conservation and historical architecture.

#### **Higlights:**

- Graphic restoration techniques employed archival data, historical sources, and scientific research for authenticity.
- The study focuses on recreating the original appearance and architectural elements of the historic mosque of Odina in Karshi, Uzbekistan.
- Insights gained contribute to global discussions on heritage conservation and historical architecture.

Keywords: Mosque Restoration, Historical Preservation, Architectural Heritage

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## Introduction

The most developed period of the cities of Karshi and Shahrisabz corresponds to the period of the Timurids. During this period, the cities were strengthened and many magnificent buildings were built. In particular, the Aksaroy, Dorus Saodat, and Dor-ut Tilovat complexes, Chorsu trade building, and others, which have been partially preserved in the historical part of Shahrisabz city, are considered the dominant structures of this city. The city was rectangular in shape during the Timurid period and was surrounded by a fortified wall. There are four entrance gates to the city, and at the intersection of the main roads leading from them, there is a shopping mall. This building is still preserved today [1].

In 2014-2016, major construction works were carried out in the historical area of Shahrisabz City, several historical monuments were repaired and beautified.

The city of Karshi is also considered one of the ancient cities, and according to historical data, it is known to everyone that Amir Temur built many buildings there. The city was formed in the form of a square, and the city was entered through four gates.

Many scientists have conducted research on the city of Karshi, including M.E. Masson, M.Q. Ahmedov, Q. Nasriddinov, P. Ravshanov, and others are examples. These researchers directly left valuable information about the Karshi fortress and the Odina Jame Mosque located in it [2].

In the article, we will dwell in detail on the research and valuable information about the Karshi fortress and the Odina Jame Mosque located in its center.

# **Methods**

The methodology for the graphic restoration project proposal of the Odina Jome Mosque in the Kashkadarya Region involves the following detailed steps: [3]

- 1. Condition Assessment: We have conducted a detailed assessment of the mosque's current condition, including structural stability, material analysis, and conservation needs.
- 2. Historical Analysis: We have analyzed historical photographs, documents, and records to understand the original design and architectural features of the mosque.
- 3. Conservation Plan: We have developed a conservation plan outlining the methodology for preserving, repairing, and restoring the mosque's architectural elements, decorative motifs, and structural components.
- 4. Material Selection: Identify appropriate materials for the restoration work, ensuring compatibility with the original construction techniques and aesthetics of the mosque.
- 5. Conservation Ethics: Adhere to ethical principles of heritage conservation, including minimal intervention, reversibility of treatments, and respect for the mosque's cultural significance.
- 6. Community Involvement: W have engaged local communities in the restoration process, providing opportunities for skills training, employment, and fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the mosque's preservation.
- 7. Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, assess outcomes, and ensure the quality and sustainability of the restoration work.

By following a systematic method and methodology, the graphic restoration project proposal for the Odina Jome Mosque in the Kashkadarya Region can be effectively planned, executed, and completed to preserve this cultural heritage site for future generations.

# **Result and Discussion**

According to archaeological findings, there were several brick buildings in Karshi in the first half of the 14th century. In the second half of the 14th century, the city was surrounded by a wall and the Odina Mosque was built. As observed in other cities, a 2.5-3.0 m deep trench was dug around the wall. Four drawbridges were built over the moat at the entrance gates to the city. In the Registan complex, the priority of the Jame Mosque was established through architectural and artistic means. The level of the mosque was raised seven steps higher than the level of the square, and in front of it was established the entrance of the "kovush pattab" (where the prayer boxes are left). The place was like a porch, the pillars were decorated with carvings and their seats were made of marble [4].

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#### A. Jame' mosque of Odina

On the right side of the Registan, i.e. in the west, there is a magnificent four-towered mosque of Odina with a high blue dome and 12 tovadoni (windows).

Historians B.A. Ahmedov and M.E. Masson write about the construction of the Odina Mosque in their works and connect it with the name of Amir Temir. For example, academician B. A. Ahmedov in his historical novel Amir Temur, when he heard that his beloved wife Bibi Khanim decided to build a high mosque between the market and the caravanserai in Karshi, Amir Temur's face was filled with joy and pride, and his wife accepted this good initiative. described his approval separately. Amir Temur said: "Many great things have happened, my lady. A person is left with either a building, a garden, or a child. We are sitting with you, my lady, leaving behind our children, gardens, and tall buildings."[5]

M.E. Masson writes the following about the Odina mosque: Amir Temur focuses on it because he is from Shahrisabz. He was in Karshi in 1385-1386 and wintered in Karshi for the second time on his way from Samarkand. Although it is not mentioned in written sources, according to local legends, Amir Temur built a large mosque in the center of the fortress. The remains of this mosque have been preserved to this day. Also, historian Oktam Mavlanov wrote that Amir Temur wintered in Karshi in 1385-1386 and built a large Jummah(Friday) mosque in its center.

As can be seen from the above, the mosque of Odina Jame' was built by Amir Temur. B.A. Akhmedov wrote that "the mosque was built between the Karshi market and the caravanserai", and M.E.Masson clearly indicated its location, saying that the mosque was built in the center of the Karshi fortress. Also, M.E. Masson revealed the appearance, dimensions, and other noteworthy aspects of the Odina mosque. In particular, this building located in Registon together with Abdullakhan Madrasa forms a "double" architectural complex, its size is approximately - 50 meters wide - 40 meters, the most noticeable part is the lock of the entrance door, it is noted that the two rings of the door are made in the shape of a fish [6].

M. E. Masson's book contains a photo of the Odina Jame Mosque taken by V. A. Shishkin. The undated photo shows the Odina Mosque without its main dome and minaret. These domes and towers were destroyed by the invaders in the 60s of the XIX century.

The dome and minarets of the Odina Mosque, as well as the Chorsu building, were damaged when the castle was fired by the invaders. "Amir" bathhouse was not spared from this destruction. Balls destroyed the building of the bathhouse and its corridors [7].

After coming through the gate of ODINA Tutak and passing through the gate on the left side of Chorsu, the main square of the Karshi fortress was brought to Registon. On the right side of the registan, i.e. in the west, a magnificent building with four minarets with 12 tovadoni (windows) with a high blue dome and a gabled front stood tall. It was the Odina Jame Mosque, the place of faith of the residents of this city.

Historians academician B.A. Ahmedov and professor M.E. Massonar pay attention to the construction of the Odina Mosque in their works and connect it with the name of the founder Amir Temur, including academician B.A. Ahmedov in his historical novel "Amir Temur", against his beloved wife Bibikhanimdan Karshi Amir Temur's face filled with joy and pride when he heard that he had decided to build a great mosque between the market and the caravanserai in the city, describes a special affection that he approved this good initiative of his wife. Sohibqiran said: "Many great things have happened, my lady. A person is left with either a building, a garden, or a child. We are sitting with you, begum, leaving behind children, gardens, and tall buildings." It was the mosque of Odina Jame', built between the market and the caravanserai of Karshi [8].

Professor M.E. Masson writes the following about the Odina mosque: "Since Temur is from Shahrisabz, he focuses on it. However, he did not forget the charming deserts of Lower Kashkadarya. Amir Temur spent the second winter in Karshi on his way from Samarkand during his campaign in 1385-1386. Although it is not mentioned in written sources, according to local legends, Amir Temur built a large mosque in the center of the fortress. The remains of this mosque are still preserved."[9]

Historian scientist Oktam Mavlanov also showed that Sahibgiron wintered in Karshi in 1385-1386 and built a large Friday mosque in its center.

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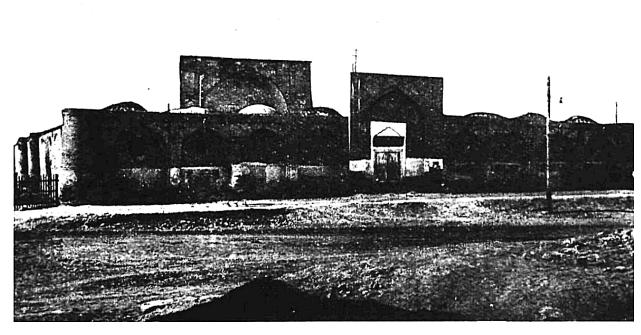


Figure 1. Jame' Mosque of Odina (photo by V. L. Shishkina)

It is understood from the writings of our historians that the mosque of Odina was built by the owner Amir Temur. B. A. Ahmedov wrote that the mosque was built between the Karshi market and the caravanserai, while M. E. Masson mosque was built in the center of the Karshi fortress. At the same time, M.E. Masson covered the appearance, dimensions, and other noteworthy aspects of the Odina mosque. In particular, this huge building located in Registan, together with the Abdullakhan Madrasa, forms the "Double" architectural complex, its size is approximately one meter in height and 40 meters in width. and it is noted that the cover of its keyhole and the two rings of the door are made in the shape of a fish [10].

M.E. Masson's book also includes a photograph of the Odina mosque taken by V.A. Shishkin (Fig.1). The image in the photo shows the main mosque of Odina, without the large dome and minarets. The time of the photograph is not indicated. Judging by the other pictures in the book (1929), the mosque lost its original dome and majestic minarets during this period (early 20th century), more precisely, they were destroyed by the invaders in the late 60s of the 19th century, pga was captured and destroyed.

The information they provided about the mosque of Odina is very valuable, they filled the thoughts of our historians and helped to create a broader picture of the mosque, especially their master architect who built the mosque, the main dome, minarets, and His comments about the interior structure of the mosque are priceless [11].

According to Jabbor Shamsiev, in ancient times, when a mosque was built, there was definitely a bathroom nearby, or a toilet. So, if we look at it, there is no doubt that the architect Abdukahhar Ali Nasafi was given the decree to build both the mosque and the bath next to it. If we take into account that Ulughbek Mirzo later built a madrasa in Samarkand and the "Mirzoi bathhouse" next to it, and Abdullah Khan II built a prayer hall (now Kokkumbaz mosque) and a bathhouse near it in Karshi, how reasonable are the comments made by our informant. it is not difficult for us to understand that it is appropriate [12].

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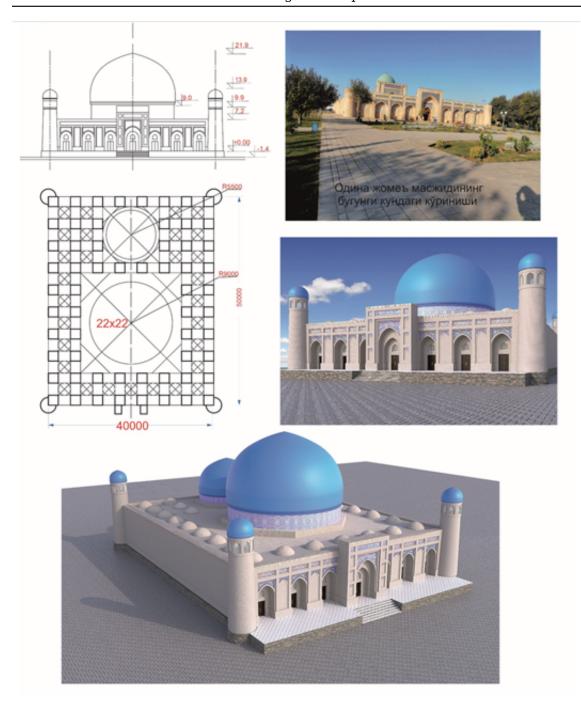


Figure 2. Today's Appearance of the Mosque of Odina

It can be seen that the construction of a bathhouse near the mosque was carried out based on the demand of that time.

We will return to the description of the mosque of Odina Jame' again(Fig.3). The mosque had a high, blue dome and four minarets. The height of the minarets is 12 gaz (9.5 meters), and the call to prayer is called to them from the mezana on top of the minarets raised over the mosque's roof. There are four arched windows in the mezzanines, which are covered with a small dome. At the top of the dome is an image of the crescent moon made of gold [13].

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 $\begin{tabular}{ll} Figure 3. & \textit{Graphic Reconstruction of the History, Style} & \textit{, and General Appearance of the Jame Mosque of Odina} \\ \end{tabular}$ 

The mosque consists of two or small domed rooms, everywhere thick brick pillars are connected through arches. In this way, after passing through dozens of arched and domed rooms, he went to a large domed room, on the west side which was a huge, majestic mihrab. The prayer "Ayat ul-Kursi" from the Holy Qur'an is written in golden letters around the edge of the mihrab.

On the right side of the mihrab is a seven-tiered marble minbar, where sermons are delivered during Friday and Eid prayers. Prayers are specially woven from wool Arabi Iran)? (according to some of our informants, they performed prayers at the place of prayer. In the mosque of Odina, mainly on Fridays and the holy days of Ramadan and Eid al-Adha, the prayers were performed, and the rest (five times) prayers were performed in mosques in the neighborhoods [14].

It was not possible to restore the aforementioned dome and motors of the mosque, which were covered by cannonballs during the last renovation in 1914. Therefore, in the early years of the rule of the Rolars, mosques and madrasas were used for other purposes. After that, various offices were placed in the Odina mosque, and it was

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also made into a warehouse.

By 1938, the mosque was surrounded by a high wall and turned into a prison house (in Russian "dom zaklyuchennyx" for short - domzak). They called him "Domzakh" in the local dialect.

In 1996, during the celebration of the 660th anniversary of the great master Amir Temur, the author of these lines and doctor of history R.H. Together with Sulaymanov, we were able to visit this group (with the permission of the management) in order to determine how true the oral statements about the Odina mosque are. It turned out that the walls of the prison building were very thick and were made of rough bricks. When we entered, a thick plaster of sand was applied over the bricks, which are called "Muslim bricks" by our people, and only one part of the plaster was visible. When we examined the turma khans (cells), we saw that all sides of them were connected to the arched ceiling, and the top (roof) was covered with a dome.

Later, after the siege was broken, it became known that these were the prayer rooms of the pilgrims, who were supported by arch pillars 2 meters 25 centimeters wide. The span of the arches was 2.75 meters. Between them, baked bricks were placed in the shape of a wall and turned into cells where prisoners were kept. A concreted pool and others were built directly in place of the main hall with a high dome (now restored in the form of a courtyard - Q.N.).

The mosque was used as a prison for many years. In the fall of 1997, we tried to express our thoughts about Karshi Registan, its surrounding monuments, and the Odina mosque in a poem, with the goal that this problem would be solved in good time.

## Conclusion

It should be said that the goal of our research was to restore the Odina Jame Mosque to its original appearance by illuminating its past and present, and we successfully achieved this. Scientific recommendations were developed by graphically restoring the minarets of the big dome of the mosque and the tiling decoration of the Timurid period. In addition, we explained the purposes of the mosque in the past. The mosque of Odina Jame' is still being used as a museum of exiles. in our scientific works, we will cover this topic more widely and we will return to this topic again.

In the years of independence, the attitude towards historical monuments changed in a positive direction. Kashkadarya Region, Karshi City, Kashkadarya Region, conducted by the leadership of the city, the ancient part of the city, the castle, its main square, Registon, and the surrounding monuments, opening and studying, including proposals to move the prison located in the Odina Mosque, built by the master Amir Temur, to the outskirts of the city, and approved by our government. In December 2004, the prison was moved to the outskirts of Karshi. Nowadays, works are being carried out to restore this monument to its original state(Fig.2).

As first President Islam Karimov said: "We are restoring our history and culture for ourselves and the whole world!"

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