



## Excerpts From the History of Uzbek Architecture, the Art of Wood Carving and the Work of Masters

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### Abstract

The article describes the history of Uzbek architecture, the art of wood carving and the work of masters. Wood carving is one of the most popular Uzbek folk arts and crafts. Kokand, Khiva, Samarkand and Tashkent schools of wood carving show their creativity and differences.

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### INTRODUCTION.

In addition to the recent growth of Uzbekistan's national economy, the future young will be strengthened by the nation's strong dedication to the advancement of the country's architecture, applied arts, and culture, as well as by its knowledge of its past. As the saying goes, "There is no future without history," therefore understanding our past lays a solid basis for the future.

We are aware of the significant role that timber materials have played in earlier architectural designs and building interiors. Studying them therefore requires careful consideration of our cultural background. Additionally, it is crucial for students to learn about the background of wood carving, a popular folk art form not just in Uzbekistan but also in the rest of Central Asia.

A popular kind of Uzbek traditional ornamental art is wood carving. This involves carving a picture

or pattern onto a piece of wood or a board. All of the nations in the globe have this form of creative expression, and in the old Eastern countries, wood carving developed and its unique artistic forms first appeared. Similar to this, wood carving has been practiced in Central Asia since antiquity and is frequently seen in household goods, interior design, and architecture. The wooden components of ancient architecture, including as doors, gates, pillars, various types of tables, seats, benches, boxes, frames, pencils, plates, and other objects, were made and decorated with this carving.

People are astounded by the intricacy, richness, and naturalness of the Uzbek people's creations. Sadly, despite the exquisite wooden sculptures' high-quality processing, most of them deteriorated and vanished throughout the years and centuries. The samples uncovered during archaeological digs provide evidence for them.

At the base of a spherical hill in the Surkhandarya oasis, wood carving pieces from the fifth and sixth century were discovered. Scientists claim that evidence of pattern carving from this location from around 1,500 years ago shows that the art of carving was well-established at that time. Archaeological excavations from Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Shakhrisabz, and other ancient towns have uncovered such uncommon artefacts.

Wooden carving patterns among the local Uzbek population grew quickly up to the end of the 7th century.

"...native people's idols were discovered in Central Asia before the Arabs colonized the region. Depending on the position and wealth of the society, each home had its own goddess (god). This goddess is typically positioned over the entrance. The home's owner was using his mavridi to exchange and purchase a new wood-carved goddess. Such a procedure suggests the history of wood carving.

The Arab conquest utterly devastated the manufacture of wooden figures as well as many other forms of visual arts. Islam was unable to entirely eradicate this art, nevertheless. Master woodcarvers showcased their talent by carving images of trees reflecting in wood and making intricate geometric designs out of simple lines. From father to son and generation to generation, the masters' art was transmitted.

In Central Asia and in our nation, the cultural legacy started to expand at a high level in the ninth and tenth centuries. In the ninth century, Samarkand gained its independence. Both the evolution of architecture and folk culture underwent modifications. Great scientists, philosophers, authors, and poets started to emerge during these ages. They include Al-Khorazmi, Rudaki, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Firdawsi, Beruni, and others. There were magnificent architectural monuments built. As an illustration, consider Bukhara's renowned Ismail Samoni Mausoleum.

It helped to spur the growth of culture. Wood carving was used to embellish doors, gates, building pediments, archways, and different khontakhts.

Folk art advanced more quickly between the 11th and 12th centuries. The most popular design in ornamentation was a sophisticated geometric pattern called a Gyrih pattern. Architectural and domestic wares were elegantly embellished with art. The Girih pattern is developed further. For instance, a piece of wood carving from the 12th century that was discovered in Samarkand during the Shahi-Zinda dynasty is impressive due to its aesthetic refinement and natural finish.

The reign of the Great Master Amir Timur started in Central Asia in the latter part of the fourteenth century. During the Timurids' and Amir Temur's rule, art and culture thrived. Among them,

woodcarving attained its pinnacles and applied art was swiftly integrated with paintings. With the most renowned craftsmen, the great commander Amir Temur not only improved the architecture and building in his own country of Samarkand in Central Asia, but also in neighboring nations like Khorasan (Afghanistan), Iran, and Mavarounnahr.

Craftsmen and engineers actively participated in the construction of mosques, madrasas, palaces, and other massive constructions in Samarkand throughout the 14th and 15th centuries. Our hearts are filled with joy when we view the gorgeous and exquisite historical and cultural landmarks that they labored so hard to create. The growth of tourism in Uzbekistan is greatly aided by this process.

Wood carving advanced quickly in the 14th and 15th centuries. Even sculptures of living things were visible. The Ruqabad Mausoleum in Samarkand has a fish-themed carving on its entryway. Internal conflicts had a detrimental effect on the growth of our culture, as well as folk and practical art, after the demise of the Timurid dynasty (in the 16th–18th century). The Bukhara, Khiva, and Koqan khanates prospered during the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, coupled with successful literary endeavors like wood carving. Wood sculptures may be seen in every city. Wonderful examples of woodcarving may be seen in places like the Khuzair Khan Palace in Kokon, Zaynuddin Bai's home in Kuva, the Madrasa of Saidahmad Khoja in Margilon, the Sitorai Mohihossa in Bukhara, and others. These rare pieces of Uzbek woodcarving art are also. The aforementioned masterpieces attest to the adept usage of wood in those times' interiors. The greatest masters of the Uzbek people, like Olimjon Kasimjanov (1878–1952), Sulaymon Khojayev (1866–1946), Maqsud Kasimov, and others, produced outstanding examples. They established distinctive woodcarving schools and educated top pupils in them. There are several styles and techniques used in wood carving. For instance, the preservation of the wood's natural hues is one way that Khiva wood carving stands out for its monumentality. The beauty of the carving pattern, the ornamentation of quiet patterns with gold and silver water, and the application of color on the pattern's backdrop are what set Bukhara woodcarving apart. Margilon woodcarving employed a deep ground and flat carving. Flat engraving and brief reliefs were utilized in kokan carving. Woodcarving with a flat surface covered in a pattern is common in Tashkent. After roughly 40–50 years, woodcarving schools started to arise. In our nation, there are schools in Kokan, Khiva, Samarkand, and Tashkent. The woodcarving from Tashkent deserves special mention among them. The masters of this art begin by carving designs in one or two layers before progressing to sculptures with three layers. In terms of composition, they engrave deeply in the centre and create geometric floral girix that resemble plants or even produce symbols. They utilize a variety of cosmetics. They utilize a lot of beech, walnut, and maple wood. The surface of the relief is lightly colored by Tashkent masters, and the work itself is lacquered. One of the exponents of the Tashkent style of woodcarving, Sulaymon Khojayev, solely used pargori designs. The pargori pattern was initially incorporated into the Islamic plain surface design by his pupil Maqsud Kasimov. Sulaymon Khojayev was born in Tashkent's Suzuk-ota area in 1866 into a family of a carpenter, a neighborhood where pattern designers and carpenters also reside. Sulaiman strove to acquire the great art's secrets and developed a passion in wood carving at an early age. While his father was attending the religious school, he assisted his father. He then begins working at the master Iskandar Mirzayakubov's studio at the age of 17. He began learning the techniques of woodcarving in 1891 as an apprentice to Tashpolat Ayubkhojayev, one of the masters of the period. A style of wood carving called pargori has carvings

that are no deeper than 1-1.5 mm. These designs are known as "Oymakor pargori" or "Oyma pargori," which is carving a circle-shaped pattern. Sulaiman, the young pupil, had a great deal of respect for his teacher, surmounted challenges with perseverance and diligence, and made a concerted effort to become a true master. He carried on with his craft after the passing of the previous teacher Toshpolat Ayubkhojayev. Sulayman created several windows, doors, and other carpentry projects on his own using the master's leftover equipment. Sulaymon Khojayev started obeying various commands gradually. He created doors, frames, skirting boards, and other things out of wood, which is a lot of carpentry. His wife Sharofat Otakhoyayeva greatly aided in the growth of his artistic endeavors. Due to the fact that her father was a skilled wood carver, Sharofat Otakhoyayeva developed a personal interest in the art. Production of 6-8 sided khontakhts was in high demand at the time, during the start of the 19th century. He expertly embellished the master's creations. S. Khojayev read a lot of books and was proficient in Tajik, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic. He enjoyed traveling. In 1909, the master traveled to Turkey and Arabia. Along with traveling to Mecca, he made an effort to learn about the culture and art of other countries and got various experiences. He met Russian carpenters in Tashkent in 1913, and on their recommendation, he entered his embroidered chair and sun cage in the international exhibition in St. Petersburg. For these outstanding achievements, he received a certificate and a bronze medal.

In order to pass on the knowledge of his trade to future generations, Master Sulaymon Khojayev spared no effort. Frames, boxes, tables, bookcases, closets, and all other wooden things were expertly crafted by the teacher and his pupils. Maple and walnut wood were utilized by several of them, because these timbers were tough and polished with a gorgeous shine. Surface carving involves the contrast between light and dark. The master's preferred technique for creating pargori patterns was quite challenging and demanded a lot of time and effort on his part. A composition is drawn on the paper using a pencil, a circle, and a ruler, then it is engraved along this line by the artisan. He carved the design using an engraving pencil. Depending on how big or little the designs are, a master has between 30 and 35 different woodcarving tools.

Participating in several exhibits of Uzbek folk ornamental art was Master Sulaymon Khojayev. At the Russian Agricultural Craftsmanship in 1923 and the Art Exhibition of the Former Soviet Union in 1927, he received first-class diplomas. He took part in the 1930 exhibition honoring the Republic of Uzbekistan's fifth anniversary. He took part in the art and technology show in Paris in 1937 and did well. Students of Sulaymon Khojayev Mukhamadvali Askarov (1904–1949) and Maqsud Kasimov imaginatively extended the pargori pattern and established distinctive schools of woodcarvers. Master Sulaymon Khojayev (1932), one of Uzbekistan's national masters, had the honor of being called a "Hero of Socialist Labor". At the age of 81, he passed away in 1947. In the Oriental Museum in Moscow, the Museum of Natural Arts of Uzbekistan, and the Museum of Folk Applied Arts, hundreds of his works are on display and available to the public.

Maqsud Kasimov was born in a family of artisans in the city of Tashkent in 1905. At the age of 10, he began attending school and continued for five years. Carpenter Mirsoat Isamuhammadov was Maqsud's uncle. While assisting his uncle at the time, he picked up a carpentry skill. At age 16, he began his own independent carpentry business. Kasimov encountered engravers, painters, and architects while working as a carpenter in the Museum of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 1933–1934. His life's artistic trajectory was defined by this contact.

The Tashkent Handicraft Educational Production Combine first opened its doors in 1935. At that time, the museum personnel assigned Maqsd Kasimov to the handicraft training and production combine to learn Uzbek folk art after seeing the young craftsman's aptitude and enthusiasm in this trade. Maqsd learnt to carve wood, stone, metal, and flowers in two years thanks to his diligence, activity, and desire for creativity. The current Uzbek folk art museum was situated in the structure that was demolished in 1902 together with an educational complex. You may observe some amazing wood carvings, tile carvings, and pillar sculptures in the edifice. I am reminded of a beautiful garden by its integrity, diversity of hues, and compositional precision of the patterns. Each pattern's elements embody soul, beauty, and art. People are never bored when they view these patterns repeatedly. Instead, they extend an invitation to see them again. Kasimov took pictures of the patterns, altered them, and loved viewing them. He created thousands of pattern compositions utilizing each replicated pattern, learning its secrets in the process. The decorations in the halls and the inside of the building gave the impression that they were conversing with the young master about history and art. The master's spirit was lifted by this circumstance, and he was motivated to write magnificent new works as a result. To this educational gathering, the masters of Uzbek applied folk art, including ganchkors, woodcarvers, coppersmiths, potters, and many more masters, were invited. The artist Olimjon Kasimjanov was one of them. He imparted knowledge on how to construct patterns, use paint, decorate wood, and other skills.

The wood surface of Kasimov's carving is smooth, the edges are acutely angular, and the carving depth ranges from 1.5 to 2 mm. An artisan first smooths the wood's surface before trying to carve a design into it. On the surface, a pattern composition is made, and its paste is made. With the aid of an ax, it is lowered to the wood's surface, and these spots are marked with a pencil to prevent fading. Masters usually saved this spent ash and found inventive ways to incorporate it in their later creations. With the use of specialized tools, the pattern's history is cut. Using a unique urzi (hammer), the surface of the carving is pounded.

He studied building wooden fences with Tashkent-based master fence builder Nasriddin Ziyagoriyev at the Kasimov educational facility. For a wooden fence, tiny boards (made of poplar or purple tree wood) are first cut, after which a frame is made, the boards are placed into the frame in accordance with the drawing. Naturally, building such barriers needs a great deal of precision and ability. The grill is made without the use of glue or nails. The sticks are strengthened after construction with a hardwood frame on their four sides. The Art Museum of the Republic of Uzbekistan has the fences created by Kasimov employing this method.

Depending on their composition and shape, the traditional fences made by Uzbek folk craftsmen over many generations go by different names. For instance, "chorchashma", "suvora", "toqi", "uzma", curved vosvos," and others.

He was given the opportunity to work at the craft educational production combine in the modern city of Beshkek in 1940 (Frunze), where he instructed young people in the beautiful skill of carving. Kyrgyz national patterns added components to build new pattern compositions. The existing folk art museum's doors and columns were among the architectural landmarks he restored.

During the Great Patriotic War, he actively contributed to the building's construction and decorating of the Muqimi theater. Usta Shirin Murodov, Yusufali Musayev, Abdulla Boltayev, Shamsiddin



Gafurov, Usman Ikramov, Maqsud Kasimov, and other masters from various areas of Uzbekistan were invited, and the theater was built in collaboration with the creators by architects D. Khazanov and S. Tikhanov.

M. Kasimov participated in the building of the Alisher Navoi opera and ballet theater from 1943 to 1946 and was primarily in charge of the construction work. M. Kasimov joined the Union of Artists of Uzbekistan in 1944.

M. Qasimov had a position as a professor at the Benkov Academy of Fine Arts in Tashkent up to the end of his life. He taught a lot of great woodcarvers. He made an immeasurable contribution to the growth of wood carving and applied art in Central Asia and Uzbekistan.

The old and sophisticated culture of the Uzbek people has earned them widespread renown. All of the buildings and other structures in Sarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent, Termiz, and other places are examples of folk art and wood carving and demonstrate the depth of Uzbek culture. It is a melody of life that breathes life into things like sand, wood, bone, and rocks. And all through time, people will hear the melody of life.

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