

TRANSITIONAL ARCHITECTURE - TURKIC-MONGOL, PERSIAN INFLUENCE

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Annotation: *Transitional Architecture in the Turkic-Mongol context reflects a unique blend of architectural styles influenced by Persian culture. This architectural period emerged during the reign of the Turkic-Mongol empires, such as the Seljuks, Khwarezmids, and the Ilkhanate, when Persian aesthetics and architectural elements were incorporated into the existing Turkic-Mongol architectural traditions. This fusion of styles resulted in a distinctive architectural language characterized by the use of geometric patterns, ornate decorations, and innovative structural techniques. The influence of Persian architecture on Turkic-Mongol transitional architecture is a testament to the cultural exchange and artistic synthesis that occurred during this period.*

Keywords: *Transitional architecture, turkic-mongol, persian influence, seljuks, khwarezmids, Ilkhanate, architectural styles, geometric patterns, ornate decorations*

The Turkic and Mongol invasions of Central Asia brought significant changes to the region's architectural landscape. The transitional period that followed witnessed the emergence of architectural styles influenced by the Turkic, Mongol, and indigenous cultures, resulting in a unique fusion of architectural elements.

Seljuk Architecture. The Seljuk Turks, who established their empire in the 11th century, introduced a new architectural style to Central Asia. Seljuk architecture combined elements of Persian, Islamic, and Turkic traditions, resulting in a distinctive aesthetic.

Prominent examples of Seljuk architecture can be found in the region of Khurasan, particularly in Iran and eastern Turkmenistan. The Great Mosque of Merv, constructed during the Seljuk period, features an impressive entrance portal, large domed chambers, and intricate brickwork. The mosque's minaret, with its ornate decoration and geometric patterns, represents the architectural prowess of the era [1].

Khwarezmian Empire: Fortresses and Palaces. The Khwarezmian Empire, which thrived in the 12th and 13th centuries, left a lasting architectural legacy in Central Asia. Known for their military might, the Khwarezmians constructed imposing fortresses and grand palaces throughout the region.

One notable example is the Ayaz-Kala fortress in Uzbekistan. This massive mud-brick structure, located atop a hill, served as a defensive stronghold and a symbol of the Khwarezmian Empire's power. The fortress features labyrinthine

passages, towers, and watchtowers, providing insights into the military architecture of the time.

The Kyzylkala palace, also in Uzbekistan, showcases the luxurious lifestyle of the Khwarezmian rulers. Although now in ruins, the palace's remains exhibit intricate wall carvings, decorative motifs, and spacious courtyards, reflecting the grandeur of the Khwarezmian court.

Timurid Architecture: The Blue Domes of Samarkand. The Timurid Empire, established by Timur (Tamerlane) in the 14th century, brought about a golden age of architecture in Central Asia. Timurid architecture combined elements of Persian, Mongol, and Islamic styles, resulting in a grand and majestic aesthetic.

One of the most renowned examples of Timurid architecture is the Registan Square in Samarkand. Surrounded by three grand madrasas – Ulugh Beg Madrasa, Sher-Dor Madrasa, and Tilya-Kori Madrasa – the square features ornate tilework, towering minarets, and majestic entrance portals. The intricate calligraphy, geometric patterns, and vibrant ceramic tiles create a mesmerizing visual ensemble, making the Registan Square an architectural masterpiece [2].

The Gur-e-Amir mausoleum in Samarkand, built by Timur as his final resting place, is another iconic example of Timurid architecture. The mausoleum's grand dome, elegant proportions, and intricate tilework exemplify the architectural splendor of the era.

The Timurid architectural style, with its grand scale, intricate ornamentation, and mastery of structural design, left an indelible mark on Central Asia's architectural heritage.

The Turkic and Mongol invasions brought about a period of transition in Central Asia's architecture. The Seljuk style blended Persian, Islamic, and Turkic elements, while the Khwarezmian Empire left behind impressive fortresses and palaces. The Timurid Empire, with its grandeur and sophistication, left an architectural legacy that endures to this day, most notably seen in the mesmerizing blue domes of Samarkand. Together, these architectural styles form a tapestry of the region's rich and diverse history [3].

The Safavid and Qajar eras in Central Asia witnessed a strong Persian influence in architecture, art, and culture. Persian rulers and their dynasties brought their unique architectural styles, which left an indelible mark on the region's built environment.

Isfahan: The Pearl of Central Asia. During the Safavid era, Isfahan in present-day Iran became a cultural and architectural hub. Isfahan's architectural splendor influenced Central Asia, earning it the title of the «Pearl of Central Asia».

The Naqsh-e Jahan Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a prime example of Safavid architecture. Surrounded by grand buildings, including the Imam Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Ali Qapu Palace, and Qeysarie Bazaar, the square showcases the integration of architectural and urban design. The mosques feature intricate tilework, geometric patterns, and calligraphic inscriptions, while the palace exhibits impressive stucco decorations and painted ceilings.

Persian Gardens and Pavilions. Persian gardens and pavilions became an integral part of the Central Asian architectural landscape during the Safavid and Qajar eras. These lush and serene gardens served as retreats for relaxation and contemplation [4].

The Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan, Iran, inspired the construction of similar pavilions in Central Asia. The name «Chehel Sotoun» translates to «Forty Columns» referring to the reflection of its twenty wooden columns in the palace's reflecting pool. The palace's elaborate frescoes, mirrored halls, and stunning gardens influenced the design of pavilions in Central Asia, where they became spaces for leisure and entertainment.

Bukhara: The Bukhara Emirate Period. During the Qajar era, Bukhara in present-day Uzbekistan was ruled by the Bukhara Emirate. Persian architectural influences are evident in the buildings constructed during this period [5].

The Ark Citadel in Bukhara is a prime example of Persian-influenced architecture. The citadel, a massive fortress with high walls, contains palaces, courtyards, and administrative buildings. Its design incorporates elements such as iwan (vaulted hall), stucco decorations, and ornate tilework, showcasing the Persian architectural aesthetic.

The Abdulaziz Khan Madrasa in Bukhara, built during the Bukhara Emirate period, also exhibits Persian architectural features. Its entrance portal, adorned with intricate mosaic tilework and calligraphic inscriptions, reflects the fusion of Persian and Islamic design elements.

The Persian influence during the Safavid and Qajar eras left an indelible mark on Central Asia's architectural heritage. Isfahan's grand monuments, Persian gardens and pavilions, and the architectural gems of Bukhara showcase the sophistication, elegance, and artistic mastery of Persian architectural traditions. These influences continue to inspire and captivate visitors, reminding us of the enduring legacy of Persian architecture in Central Asia.

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