

# Features of the Development of Architectural Decoration in the Timurid Era

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**Abstract**— The article deals with the issues of setting and solving the problem of Timurid architectural decoration as an independent scientific topic. The article reveals the position that it is the most important mechanism and driving force of the development of Central Asian Islamic art and a feature of architecture of that era.

**Keywords**— Timurid architecture, khanaka, monumental facade, glazed bricks, geometric (giri) and plant-flower ornaments, polychrome decorations.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study of the history of Timurid art in Central Asia began long ago. For many centuries, we have been separated from the time of the creation of a large number of written sources to the appearance of scientific literature about this great period of history. Among them, the primary sources created by contemporaries of Amir Timur during his lifetime or shortly after his death are of special value, written by them in the wake of events taking into account the heritage of their predecessors. The following authors can be mentioned as an example: Nizam al-Din Shami (1409) and Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi (1454), known as "Zafar-Name" (Book of Victories), historian and geographer Shihab ad-Din Abdallah ibn Lutfallah ibn Abd ar-Rashid al-Kharavi, known as Hafiz and Abra, Kamal ad-Din Abd ar-Razzak al-Samarkand (1413-1482) and others.

According to historical periodization in the development of Islamic art in Central Asia, there are several stages. One of the important stages in the history of Muslim architecture – is called the period of the Timurids. In the dialogue of cultures and civilizations is necessary, study and research, and knowledge from each other. It is important for the study of art history.

Of particular relevance at the present stage of development of historical criticism becomes the problem of cultural interactions. Currently, in Central Asia there is a lot of architectural monuments of the Timurid era. The architecture of this period in Central Asia is one of the most important components of the rich Islamic art.

Timurid architecture is the result of the interaction of different cultures, which form the basis of the dynamics of the artistic process. A generalized study of the problem of interactions will allow us to trace the ways of forming art, to determine the natural and specific features of its development, the role of different cultures in his addition. Relevance of the topic is also neochimiki research works theoretical plan, is devoted to the Genesis and evolution of Timurid architectural decoration.

Although it is proposed to reject dynastic names for the eras, the term Timurids justified in this case because the ruling dynasty played a major role in shaping the arts. In a great state, the base of which was engaged in Timur, and in the

following century, and his successors, were created fertile ground necessary for the formation and development of various arts, and especially architecture in the main areas of Timurid possessions, covering the field of modern Central Asian republics.

Since the formation of the Timurid architecture of Central Asia there are important qualitative changes reflecting the development of a completely new stage in its development. It includes a chronological period starting from the last cetveli XIV century and all the XV century. From the end of XIV century, as Mawarannahr became the center of the creative forces of the Middle East, there is a new direction in art. It is clearly realized that even his contemporaries: Ibn Arabshah, for example, telling them about the country palaces of Timur, clearly indicates that they erected was "a new style".

All sources indicate that the architecture of the Timurid era embodied a holistic style, which, inherent in the architecture of figurative means, expresses the leading features of the social worldview and artistic ideas of its time. Khondamir, describing the architectural construction of Herat and other cities of Khorasan of the first half of the 15th century, whose patroness was Gavhar-Shod, speaks of an entire architectural school: "The Gavhar-Shod school is solemn and brilliant, full of radiance and beauty, it is magnificent, its creations surpass all others Herat's buildings are refined and harmonious. Nowadays [t. e. in the second half of the XV century] four of the most famous masters are engaged in its study. The heritage of this school continues, as before, to nourish its stocks in the name of a great public good."

How did the new style come about? What is Timurid architecture, and what makes up its greatness?

Timur gathered masters of all arts in his new imperial capital Samarkand. Although Timur died before any other school of art arose in Samarkand, Timur himself left a noticeable mark on the architecture of his time. It was he who dictated the scale of his colossal mosque in Samarkand, the gate of his palace in Shakhrisabz, and the shrine of his spiritual mentor in Turkestan.

After Amir Timur, his son Shokhrub became emperor, who converted Herat into an imperial city. In the literary information of that era there is little mention of the names of sculptors and architects who were engaged in the construction of buildings. A rare exception is Kawam ad-Din Shirazi, one

of the most famous architects of the Shohruh era. He created many structures in the city of Herat and other cities of Khorasan, and his name is often mentioned in the writings of historians.

Based on modern texts, you can build a picture of great urban prosperity. This picture is supported by the observations of Clavijo, the ambassador from the King of Castile and Leon to Timur. The world created by Timur, and continued by his dynasty, stimulated economic prosperity, which, in turn, inspired the construction of countless structures throughout Central Asia.

The shrines were the focus of royal and other exquisite patronage: the existing shrines were restored and decorated, and many new ones were installed. Many were richly decorated. Also during this period, true urban planning begins.

In the Timurid period, examples of urban ensembles based on an open area abound. Many monuments are designed as free-standing and tiled on all sides. A classic example is the famous Registan Square in Samarkand, which was originally limited to the madrasah and khanaka of Ulugbek, and several other religious and commercial structures.

Nowadays, it is customary to count the history of the study of Timurid architecture in Central Asia from the second half of the nineteenth century. By the early decades of the twentieth century, Central Asia had become the center of orientologists, archaeologists, and art historians. V.V. Bartold's research on the history of Central Asia laid a solid foundation for archaeological work. At the beginning of the first quarter of the 20th century, special expeditions were formed to record the monuments, and consisting of teams of engineers and archaeologists to restore them. Archaeological research and preservation of monuments was further supported by the state. The period before the Second World War was extremely productive in this matter. At that time, people like M.E. Masson and B.N. Zasyukin, and in the postwar years - L. I. Rempel, V.A. Shishkin, G.A. Pugachenkova, L.Yu. Mankovskaya and many others.

The study of Timurid architecture at the modern theoretical level is possible only at the junction of various humanitarian disciplines. There is a need to study the history of art from the standpoint of theoretical justification of the logic of development of the artistic process, its laws; in this regard, attracting written sources in the form of works by archaeologists, art historians, in particular, B.P. Dennik, L.I. Rempel, V.A. Shishkin, G.A. Pugachenkova, L.Yu. Mankovskaya and others.

Although there is no published catalog of Timurid architecture in Central Asia, the information available to date shows that now in various parts of Central Asia there are about 50-60 important historical buildings and structures of the Timurid era. Each of them is a significant work of art, the most beautiful and most valuable cultural monument. The main group of buildings preserved in Uzbekistan are the structures of the last quarter of the 14th century. -first half of the 15th century.

The decor of such structures is not only an element of embellishment, but also carries a functional load, all its parts seem to complement each other. A Muslim artist or architect

does nothing for the sake of pure adornment, he seeks to solve the task assigned to him, and he does it beautifully, with taste. The architect or artist is guided in his work by both the desire to use elements of decoration (decor) to make the building beautiful, and the intention to give it a worthy appearance and to observe the proportionality and proportionality of forms, that is, to reproduce what we observe in nature.

The tasks considered in the article are:

- The main stages of development of Timurid architectural decor in Central Asia
- identification of the contribution of historians and architects to the development of architectural decoration in Central Asia during the Timurids
- identification of the characteristic features of local traditions that were used to decorate architectural monuments.
- determining the role of influences of various cultures of the country on the architectural decor of the Timurids and on the addition of architectural monuments.

The artistic heritage of the Timurid era is one of the brightest pages in the history of art in Central Asia and Iran. Of course, the activities of the emir of Timur and the Timurids made a huge contribution to the development of architecture of the era.

The Timurid era was the development of the technique of architectural decoration. Motive now serve not only the needs of the art, but also political activity of Amir Timur, who sought to create a centralized state.

Since 1379 Timur gathered the craftsmen and architects of the defeated countries, first of Khorezm, then from Tabriz and Shiraz, and finally from India and Syria. Monuments on which appear the signatures are features of the early Timurid style. This style, characterized by monumental, was developed under the patronage of Timur between 1390 and 1405.

Timurid architecture was also a means of conveying ideas. Studied architectural monuments of the Timurid period show that the height of buildings was one of the goals of the order is confirmed by written sources. Ibn Arabshah recorded on the anger of Timur, when he found that the madrasah Sarai Mulk Khanum higher of its Cathedral mosque. And about this mosque Sharaf ad-Dinali Yazdi wrote, "the highest order was made on the construction of the building, which is opposite of heaven." Shami said about the AK Saray Palace in Shakhrisabz that "monumental building and its avian visible at a distance of seven farces (42 km)".

The aspirations and goals of the cultural and creative activities of Timur were embodied in the motto written in gigantic letters at the Shahrizabz palace of Ak-Saray: "If you doubt our power, take a look at our buildings!"

It seems that in earlier periods, the height of the buildings did not attach such importance. Scale and luxury were the main features of Timurid architecture, as they were intended to emphasize customer excellence. Various pieces of architecture could reinforce this concept, add value. For example, a minaret is a double symbol connecting a structure with a specific function. Its extreme height conveys the location of the official religious center - a mosque or madrasah. At the same time, its height is one of the main criteria to measure the magnificence of a building. In a

broader sense, the minaret conveys not only the power of the ruler, but also the omnipresent presence of Islam. The monumental facade was the same means of communication power of the ruler. Structural elements could also carry a message. The symbolic meaning of the dome has been discussed by many scholars. Timur, directly as a customer insisting on monumentality, also contributed to this formula. A style would never have developed without his personal influence. Foreign architects hired by Timur played a significant role in shaping the Timurid style.

Foreign architects hired by Timur played a significant role in shaping the foundation of the Timurid style. Timur, as a persistent customer, also contributed to the formation of this style, which would never have developed without his personal influence. It is clear that the creators of these new products were mainly a group of architects brought by Timur from Iran. All technical achievements identified with the Timurid style existed already in the second half of the fourteenth century in the monuments erected by the Muzaffarids, rulers of Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd.

There are three main stages that differ in their attitude to the perception of the tradition of architectural decoration. The first stage includes the earliest monuments of the Timur era (1370-1405). The second stage of the first half of the XV century. - the era of Shahrukh and Ulugbek. (In the era of Shahrukh in Central Asia, monuments of architecture were not built, since the capital was in Herat). The third stage includes monuments of the second half of the XV century. Each stage is distinguished by its political situation, social and economic status, and, of course, the nature of the customer. For example, in the second half of the 15th century, the activity of the religious group Naqshbandiya in Maverannahr interrupted the development of monumental painting in Central Asia.

In the era of the Timurids construction equipment has not changed significantly, except for the appearance of some new types of dome systems. For example, the use of the thyroid sails entailed the adaptation of the size and shape of single flap. The architectural decoration of the substantial achievements associated with the implementation and application of coloured ceramic wall. Color increasingly captivated by the architectural surfaces of monumental buildings. At first it's blue, blue, white glazed bricks, then cloisonne majolica and carved terracotta with partial or whole coating with glazes of the same color. Then there are multicoloured majolica tiles, which are selected in the solid pattern and, finally, carved and inlaid mosaics on the Koshin (silicate shard), in which the depth of the glazes and the purity of the colors compete with the sapphires, turquoise and amber. Art artists ornamentalist is combined with the skill of the potters who have achieved a century of striking success in the manufacture of such a different technology and type of multi-color tiles.

In the field of decorative arts and crafts, which in the medieval East were at high altitude, XV century, outlines a new way. One of the principal features here, as before, is a synthesis of decorative art are not in themselves, but in the symbiotic relationship with the architecture, painting, art, household items. For example, shades of blue accentuate the

perspective removal. Carving wood and stone, tiles and wall paintings were subordinated to the demands of the architecture; while all the ornamental wealth of artistic motifs, they should first of all the nature of architectural articulation, to the laws of rhythm and scale.

The idea of harmony, proportionality, proportionality, balance is associated not only with the structure of the universe, but more likely with specific Sciences - mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, music, medicine. Actually, this idea of aesthetics in the Muslim middle ages are more attracted Orientalists in recent years.

By decoration, Timurids' monuments in Central Asia can be divided into two groups. The first group consists of structures whose polychrome decoration contributes to the expressiveness of the architectural forms of the building, while the monuments of the second group have an almost completely absorbed polychrome ornamentation, where, with the dynamic flickering of various motifs, the very walls of the building seem to lose their materiality. Ak-Saray Palace and Bibi Khanum Mosque can be assigned to the first group. The monument in its original form was adorned with magnificent and rich, but with a great sense of proportion and taste, which, of course, should be attributed to the great skill of architects and craftsmen who worked on its creation. The mausoleum of Tuman-aka and Shirin-Bek-aka can be assigned to the second group.

Epigraphic, geometric (giri) and floral-vegetable ornament was the basis of the architectural decoration of all the monuments. The aim of the painter was not only the decoration of the building, but also the glorification of the customer.

## II. CONCLUSION

When he (Timur) founded a large city, he built palaces in all the gardens, and in some of these palaces the scenes of victories were depicted on the walls. He (Timur) intended them for those who did not know about his exploits." A contemporary also mentions Timur's statement: "If you doubt our power, take a look at our buildings!"

The artistic traditions of neighboring countries played an important role in the formation and development of architectural decor. Architectural monuments show that the greatest contribution to the development of architecture and decor was made by Iranian masters. The influence of China also manifested itself in the art of ornamentation, for example, in the painting adorning the Shirinbek Ak mausoleum in Shahi Zinda.

The end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is one of the peaks of Central Asian art. Its heyday was due to a number of general historical reasons, and one of them was what the son of his age, the last Timurid Zakhiriddin Bobur, felt and formulated this way, according to which, in this era, "the goal and aspiration of everyone involved in one or another business was one "bring this matter to perfection." At the end of the XIV century. during the reign of Emir Timur, new features in architectural decoration appeared, which were developed in the architecture of the XV-XVI centuries in Central Asia.

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In the Timurid era, there was a certain departure of culture from strict submission to the religious idea and asceticism of the early Islamic period towards the manifestation of features of a secular nature. This process is clearly reflected in architecture and crafts.

The artistic traditions of neighboring countries played an important role in the formation and development of architectural decor. The greatest contribution to the development of architecture and decor was made by Iranian masters. The influence of China also manifested itself in the art of ornamentation. Foreign architects hired by Timur played a significant role in shaping the foundation of the Timurid style. Timur, as a persistent customer, also contributed to the formation of this style, which would never have developed without his personal influence. For example: Timur personally observed the construction of Bibi Khanum Mosque, but so-called “seven-year” campaign distracted him from the construction of the Cathedral Mosque. The construction of the mosque was led by Bibi-Khanum during his absence. Emir Timur arrived in Samarkand in August 1404, he had defeated the Sultan Bayezed. The construction of the mosque was coming to an end at that time. When Temur examined the mosque, he was very angry that the entrance portal (peshtak) was low. The architects Mahmoud Daoud and Muhammad Gild were executed for the failure. Timur ordered to recompose the portal, to make it higher and more luxurious. The lord daily appeared on a stretcher, throwing money and meat into the pit of the diggers.

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The Timurid era was the time of the intensification of the process of development of architectural decoration techniques. The motivation now is not only the needs of art, but also the political activities of the emir Timur, who sought to create a centralized state.

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