



THE FIRST YEARS OF FINE ARTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

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Annotation: This article provides a detailed account of the early years of fine arts in Central Asia, the relationship between fine and applied arts in Central Asian architecture, the proportions during the period of harmony between calligraphy and architectural examples, as well as the notable aspects of 21st-century artists and those from previous periods in a general manner.

Key words: calligraphy, miniature, architecture, heritage, applied art, visual art.

Introduction:

Uzbekistan is an ancient cultural center of world civilization in Movarounnahr. The main part of the Great Silk Road passed through Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan held a central position among the countries stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. The geographical location of Central Asia provided a favorable opportunity for the exchange of civilization's achievements between the East and the West. Here, diverse cultures became closely intertwined; examples include not only the local Central Asian culture but also those of ancient Egypt, Iran, China, the Greco-Hellenistic world, Indo-Buddhism, the Roman-Byzantine sphere, Arab Muslims, and so on.

Literature analysis and methodology:

Ancient cities that have survived to this day, along with mural paintings and sculptures, pottery, metal and jewelry artifacts, and many other cultural monuments preserved in museums, all bear witness to this. Visual art does not merely depict things that are visible; rather, by reflecting the temporal evolution of events, their various components, free narrative, and dynamic movements, it broadens the possibilities for conceptually assimilating the world.

Visual art illuminates the human spiritual demeanor, its relationships with others, and the psychological and emotional content of the depicted state. Sometimes, it even brings forth images that do not exist in reality but are the products of the artist's imagination. It reflects various periods in human history. The content of visual art comprises not only the emotional atmosphere of an era but also its conceptual essence, as well as its political, philosophical, aesthetic, and ethnic ideas. The expressiveness of visual art enables the artist to convey their attitude toward particular life events in a profound way; consequently, as an active form of understanding life, it plays an important role in the social fabric of society and in shaping the collective consciousness of a given system.

As one of the forms of understanding the world, it shapes social consciousness and plays a significant role in expressing the hopes and dreams of the people. In modern times, it appears as part of the broad ideological struggle. In Central Asia—one of the important cradles of human civilization—and in its integral part, the territory of Uzbekistan, visual art holds a significant place in social life, reflecting the subtle changes of the era as well as shifts

in human thought. The Zarautsoy paintings, along with the passionate sculptures and paintings of Khorezm, Sogd, and Bactria, serve as evidence of this.

Results:

The visual art of the Middle Ages was colorful in style and remarkably diverse, and during this period, rare examples of passionate sculpture emerged. "The cultural heritage of the Uzbek people has been created over a thousand years. It embodies the spiritual and moral values generated by Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam, and other religions that were practiced in the territory of Uzbekistan during various periods. It encompasses the knowledge and capabilities of great thinkers such as Imam al-Bukhari, At-Termiziy, Al-Farabi, al-Biruni, Ibn Sina, Ahmad Yasavi, Baha-ud-Din Naqshband, Ulugh Beg, Alisher Navoi, and Mashrab, who are renowned throughout the world. This heritage unites the experiences of state-building and political construction of Amir Timur and Babur, as well as great architectural monuments, visual art, music, applied art works, and the customs and traditions of the people."

The typology of architectural ornaments—particularly those from ancient times and the early Middle Ages in Central Asia—spurred the development of fields such as architecture, calligraphy, and decoration under the early Islamic legal norms that prohibited the depiction of living beings. These art forms reject the physical form of the subject, instead focusing on its purpose and essence. Certainly, just as in mathematics, in the realm of geometric ornamentation, while Islamic development inherited ancient traditions, Islamic geometric decoration is virtually indistinguishable in its form and structure from the earliest, well-developed Italian and Persian patterns.

Discussion:

European scholars have come to know, through ancient treatises and Arabic translations, that in the Middle Ages in the West the works of ancient pagans were destroyed, yet because of them, Greek science was never lost forever. Islamic geometry is based on the natural laws of two-dimensional space. The discovery of these laws remained hidden for centuries, and even ancient engineers strove to minimize the set of geometric tools. In the course of their experiments, they concluded that only two instruments were needed to perform complex geometric operations—for example, constructing simple polygons, circles, and dividing angles and lines into equal parts: a compass and a straightedge. The types of architectural ornaments from the 9th to the 17th centuries left behind beautiful, priceless masterpieces of architectural art through girih, Islamic ornaments, and complex Islamic patterns.

Chinese (epigraphic) and three-dimensional ornaments; muqarnas and their types; architectural ornaments characteristic of the 18th–19th centuries and the geometric foundations underlying their creation; restoration practices for epigraphic decorations; and schools of architectural ornamentation—we are certainly witnesses to their masterful use of the architectural principles of proportion, framing, and artistic completeness. If we examine historical sources, the ancient ceramic artifacts discovered at Afrosiyob and other sites in Transoxiana attest to the fact that pottery reached its most advanced stage during the 8th–12th centuries.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, it can be said that in the 13th century, the Mongol invasions and the subsequent conquest of regions such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Urganch, Merv, and Balkh dealt a severe blow to the development of this art. Nevertheless, this craft did not disappear entirely; on the contrary, beginning in the 19th century, pottery flourished among the Uzbek and Tajik



peoples, leading to the emergence of pottery centers in Gijduvon, Panjakent, Samarkand, Shahrisabz, Tashkent, and Rishton. Gradually, pottery schools were established in Tashkent, Andijan, Fergana, Samarkand, Bukhara, and other cities, where the secrets of this art were passed down through the master-apprentice tradition. Even today, our country is home to many skilled potters who continue the traditions of their ancestors, achieving considerable success and contributing to the further development of pottery.

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