

ТИПЫ СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ АРХИТЕКТУРНЫХ ПАМЯТНИКОВ СРЕДНЕЙ АЗИИ

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MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS OF CENTRAL ASIA AND THEIR TYPES

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Ключевые слова: архитектурный памятник, культурное наследие, Средняя Азия, средневековье, типология, классификация, медресе, мавзолей, караван-сарай, минарет, археологический объект.

A monument, understood within the framework of cultural heritage, covers a wide range of objects, each of which carries a unique historical and cultural value. Such objects may be architectural masterpieces or modest memorial signs, yet they are united by a common purpose — preserving the memory of the past for future generations. They serve not only as physical evidence of historical events but also as symbols of ideas, values and cultural traditions of the age in which they were created [6].

Architectural monuments occupy a special place within this system: they testify to historical epochs and civilisations and reflect the features of architectural style, urban planning and everyday life of different periods. Three properties make such monuments a full-fledged archaeological object. The first is sensory impact: visual perception creates the first and most immediate impression, tactile experience adds physical interaction with history, and acoustic properties shape the emotional perception of space. The second is the capacity to serve as a source of information about the past: style, form and the materials used encode data on social structures, economic conditions and the political situation of the epoch. The third is materiality — precisely the physical properties of the object allow scholars to identify and date architectural and cultural influences and to reconstruct construction methods and the technological level of the period [2].

Classification as a research method. Systematisation of the architectural heritage is carried out according to several criteria, each of which reveals a particular research perspective. Chronological classification, based on the time of construction, makes it possible to trace the evolution of styles, technologies and materials. Territorial classification reveals the geographical and cultural context, showing the influence of climatic conditions and the migration of styles. Historical-artistic classification focuses on aesthetic significance and often leads to inclusion in the World Heritage List. Classification by scale groups objects from reserve-cities to small architectural forms; classification by original function is essential for restoration and adaptation; classification by principal building material determines the specific conservation methods

required; and classification by the degree of preservation makes it possible to assess the condition of a monument and to define the necessary safeguarding measures. On the basis of these classifications, monument passports and consolidated registers are compiled.

Between the 6th and 17th centuries an extensive and valuable architectural heritage was formed in Central Asia. Its creators demonstrated high mastery in composition, structural solutions and decoration, striving not for the unique and the grandiose but for the widespread and the functionally appropriate. The tastes of the epoch were austere and demanding: monochrome matt tones of interiors and the resilient lines of exposed structures illustrating the work of static forces may serve as an example. The architects of the period consistently maintained proportional relations in plans, volumes and façades, keeping them within the simplest numerical ratios, and introduced innovative tendencies by transferring decorative techniques from the interior to the façade and vice versa [1; 3]. The principal types of monuments of this period are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Types of architectural monuments of Central Asia and their description

Type of monument	Description
Fortresses	Massive walls and towers designed for defence against enemy attacks
Madrasahs	Educational institutions, frequently combined with a mosque and an inner courtyard
Mausoleums	Significant burial structures with a dome and stone constructions, colourful frescoes and ornaments
Mosques	Buildings for Muslim worship, often with minarets and monumental domes
Caravanserais	Stopping points for caravans with an open courtyard, rooms for lodging and storage facilities
Group mausoleums	Large family-type mausoleums containing burials of respected persons, with distinctive architectural details and decoration

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of [1, p. 23].

The architectural heritage of Central Asia represents a unique fusion of diverse cultural and historical traditions, from ancient Eastern to Zoroastrian. The climatic and geographical conditions of the region exerted a decisive influence on architectural solutions, above all on the choice of materials and structural technologies. The use of natural materials emphasised harmony with the environment and at the same time ensured durability and resistance to unfavourable conditions. Domes, arches and minarets are not merely decorative elements: they also perform practical functions, providing coolness and protection from the intense sun, while khanaqahs reflect the importance of hospitality, trade and communication in the cultural life of the region [3; 5].

Religious influence, primarily Islamic, occupies a central position in the architecture of the region. Mosques and madrasahs are oriented towards Mecca and display characteristic elements of Islamic ornament, including Arabic inscriptions and geometric patterns. Religious rites and customs also determined the layout and functional purpose of buildings: mausoleums and mosques became centres of religious practice, madrasahs were places for teaching the Islamic sciences, while fortresses and defensive structures protected both faith and cultural values [4].

Conclusions

First, an architectural monument acquires the status of an archaeological object owing to three properties — sensory impact, informational capacity and materiality; it is the last of these that provides the basis for dating and for reconstructing construction technologies.

Second, the systematisation of the heritage requires the simultaneous application of several classification criteria, since each of them reveals only one dimension of the object; the practical result of such systematisation is the monument passport.

Third, the architecture of Central Asia of the 6th–17th centuries constitutes an integral and distinctive style that should be regarded as a progressive phenomenon in the architectural history of the region, and its typological variety — from fortresses to group mausoleums — reflects the interaction of religious, climatic and socio-economic factors.

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