

The Influence and Spread of Sassanids' Architecture in Islamic and Other Countries Architecture

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Abstract: Sassanids' art includes Achaemenids and Parthia's traditions in it, and it is a bridge between the ancient civilizations of Asia, new Islamic civilizations, and Western medieval. Islamic architecture traditions and other cultural manifests have been spread from north of Africa, to Spain, Italy, India, and China, and have even affected the official Christianity architecture. All the methods of Sassanids' architecture and its ancient architecture have been observed from the both perspectives of building and aesthetic in the wall of Baghdad gate and Ivan Khosrau, respectively. The campaniles of Islamic periods have been inspired by the Sassanids' fire towers. The indentations stuccoes of Great mosque of Ghazvin have been the masterpiece of stucco art and the presence of stucco can be known in altars of Islamic Period mosques. Sassanids placed an arched vault at the top of door and window that transferred to the East and West Christianity and Muslim. The dome that is based on the angles of vaults, found international worth very soon. In the Sassanids' era, the decoration of buildings including stucco, mosaic tile, mosaic, the pictures of animals, and Iranian textures were highly significant, and influenced in some countries including Constantinople, Georgia, Afghanistan, Italy, Spain, French, and Byzantine. The architecture works of Sassanids' era can be seen in the land of Mawarannahr (Great Khorasan), including Republic of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, the districts of Kazakhstan, and Kirghizstan in such areas as Varakhsha, and the valuable ancient region of Panjakent in the sixtieth kilometers of Samarkand.

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1. Introduction

As it is clear from the historians, archeologists, and researchers' words, in different sources, Sassanids have a big share in the distribution and development of Iran's art and culture at their time and other countries especially in the Islamic era. Sassanids brought the art of architecture to the apex of art during their four hundred year of governance, and knew themselves as the heir of dynasties before them especially that of Achaemenids. We know that Sassanids' art has been prevalent in a major part of their modern time, and different celebrations of that time have been inspired by many artists. Since the Sassanids' empire territory and a vast part of Byzantine Empire were conquered by Muslims, all the technical experiences and knowledge of these two ancient civilizations were put in the service of modern regulations (Grabar O.1987). Since Muslims conquered the countries of Sassanid's emperor territory and a vast part of Byzantine emperor, all the experiences and technical knowledge of these two ancient civilizations were used by the modern regulation. There were some differences in the beginning of Islam spread in different construction methods of Islamic western and eastern countries, the inspired Islamic countries were affected by Iranian traditions and the western countries by Byzantine architecture (Elton L, Daniel,2001). By passing time and the influence of Islam, the influence of Byzantine

architecture was decreased, so that the Islamic traditions of architecture and other cultural manifests was expanded from the north of Africa to the central districts, and from Spain to Italy in the west and to India, China, and Middle Asia in the east, in a short time. It not only affected the Islamic architecture, but also the formal Christianity architecture in most of the European countries (David, Nicolle. 1996). Professor Arthur Pope, the well-known American orientalist and Iranologist, introduces the architecture as one of the most basic pillars of Iran's art culture, and it shows that architecture has tied with culture and Iranians ancient traditions, and has its roots in the age of history. In Iran, art is as old as history, and architecture is one of the oldest arts. In analyzing the culture and art of ancient Iran, one can find out the age of art and its thousand-year industry, and he knew it in the range of early urban centers, engineering, dam construction, and industrial agriculture. The villages of some regions and cities of Iran are presented in the corners of this vast country of art history, architecture, and the culture of this country that sometimes has been influenced up to all the parts of overseas, with temples, palaces, temples, royal buildings taking the advantage of multiplicative arches and types of crescent and Ivan. It seems that a thick book was turning over. Different palaces (Kiaksar's palace, the Median king, in Hamedan, Persepolis, Pasargad, Dokhtar's Castle, historical

legend (Sassanids' palaces, temples, Shoosh works, Marv and Esfahan castles, holy places, and Ivan Madaen, Taq-e-Kisra (Silk Kashan, Khawaja Mountain of Sistan, Kangavar Temple), Nahid (Taq-e-Bostan, Takht-e-Taghdis, Gonbad-e-Soltanieh, Ziggurat Choghazanbil, Chehel Sotun palace, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, and Ali Ghapoo Palace. Each of the-mentioned places is an evidence of a deep and original culture. During the history, in different periods, golden pages were added to the treasure, art, and culture of this country and even the world. It will be useful here to name "Sana," the famous architect of ancient Iran, and "Borazeh Hakim," the architect, Urbanism engineer, and dam constructor of Ardeshir Sassanid (Uphan Pope, Arthur (1982)).

1.1. Ivan Khosrau in Madaen

All the ancient traditions of Iranian architecture, including arch building and joined columns to wall, and arch viewing have been used in this work, and have been imitated in the next periods.

2.1. The Wall of Baghdad Gate

In a part of Baghdad gate that has been left, it can be seen that all the methods of Sassanids' architecture from both perspectives of aesthetic and structure have been observed. In the above part of the wall, arcades and joined columns to the wall, that separate them are the same thing that are used in the Ashkanids' Ashur Palace and Ivan Khosrau. Arches are V shaped, and the logical sequence of arches and portals are egg shaped. However, it should be reminded that such arches have been used in the buildings in this country before the appearance of Islam. Therefore, in the remaining of a small building near the small palace of Bishapour, and in the castle that has been remained in that era from Sassanids, arches and V-shaped crescents can still be seen (Schmandt-Besserat, 1980)

3.1. Josegh Alkhani Building

In the buildings of Josegh Alkhani Samarra (Motavakel Abbasid's time), three Ivans are formed together. These triple Ivans can be seen in the district of Parsomazh (current Masjed Soleyman) that are attributed to the beginning of Achaemenids era, and have been inspired and related to the periods before Islam, have been seen in Iran's ancient palaces. Moreover, in Bardneshandeh that is situated in the northeast of the same Parsomazh, the same map has been applied. In terms of construction, the styles that have been used in the buildings of Khaqani Palace (Josegh Alkhani), and especially the styles that have been observed in Ivan Madaen, except that in the building of the Palace, Sassanids' oval crescent has been made more angular.

4.1. The Iranian Architecture and Its Effect in the Appearance of Islamic Architecture

Sassanids' art was the direct substitute of the final manifest of Parthia's art that have been inspired by artists and Central Asia painters in stuccoes of the holy Buddists descendants, and Egiotian, and Byzanthis textiles. However, the real heir of Iran's art in the Sassanids' era is Islam, and wherever Islam was expanded, transferred the old figures of Sassanids' art that casted away its final beam with it. Some archeologists and historians believe that Sassanids' fire towers have given the inspiration of building prayer towers that have been used for inviting Muslims to say pray. The factors of Sassanids' architecture imposed itself with more or less difference, but clearly in the Islamic periods (Daryae, Touraj (2009)). The frequent decorations in the ancient architecture of Iran have been transferred to Iran's Islamic architecture with all its properties including stucco, and embellishment with glazed tiles. Arabesque designs of Iranian mosques are the same Sassanids' ivies, the sample of which can be found in Taq Bostan. However, these designs and factors have been caused as the result of emergence of one Islamic emperor, and the entrance of different civilizations under a unit regulation, opposite utilizations, and they have been deformed, which has the worth of study.

5.1. Damghan Tarikhaneh

In the building of Damghan Tarikhaneh mosque, all the factors are following the Iranian architecture tradition. The arches used in this building have egg-shaped that is the same Iranian ancient method, the samples of which can be seen from Ashkanids' Ashur Palace to Sassanids' palaces of Firoozabad, Sarvestan, and Taq Khosrau. The arches of porches in Damghan Tarikhaneh are perpendicular on the wall of their wall behind them. It is the same method that has been used in many of Iranian ancient buildings such as in the buildings of Ivan-e-Karkheh, which have been built in Ashkanids' era. Cradle-shaped arches have been built on the arches of Tarikhaneh Mosque in the ancient style of Iran. The main materials of this building are brick (for the carrier parts), columns, and arches (and brick for filling the spaces), and finally, the main ornament of this mosque has been based on Ashkanids, and Sassanids architecture of the stucco. In a part of some Ashkanids' palaces that have been remained in Ashur, the arch of the central Ivan has been built much more higher and stretched from the Roman arch that is semicircular. The existence of arcades and ornamental columns are just for making the façade beautiful, and showing the huge figure of the wall lighter, and it was the same method that was used in constructing the magnificent walls of Ivan Khosrau based on the ancient tradition of Iranian architecture.

Then, this method has been imitated in Islamic periods.

6.1. Some Decorative Arts Related to Architecture

Within the distance of five and a half centuries that passed from the destruction of Persepolis, a kind of disconnection and degradation had happened in the style of architecture art and in the traditional arts of Iran, respectively. It was in Sassanids' era that the Iranian spirit was blown completely in the Iranian creative arts. During the four centuries of Sassanids' governance, many changes have been achieved, especially in the style of roofing and constructing the dome.

7.1. Stucco

The first use of stucco has been for covering the walls and bricks; however, due to the ability of role-accepting for which have become well-known, the lines and designs have become frequent little by little. The Sassanid Ardeshir II's bust have stuccoes (310-1397 AD) that has been achieved from the damages of Kish Palace, are the best samples of this industry. Moreover, some walls have been left from old times that are among the rarest works of stucco because of the beauty and harmony of lines, and the multiplicity of faces, figures, and elegance of the work. In the Islamic architecture, we can see very beautiful stuccoes in different buildings including mosque, palace, caravansary, Bazars, state buildings, and aristocratic luxury houses, and personal houses. As an example, the stuccoes of the indentations of the Jameh Mosque of Qazvin have been the masterpiece of stucco art, and the appearance of perfect stucco can be known in the altar.

8.1. The Art of Tiles and Mosaics

The oldest type of glazed baked mud in Iran is related to Ziggurat Chogha Zanbil that has been decorated in different colors of green, or blue, shinning white. In Sassanids' era, the glazed tile or high-grade mosaic was highly important, which was used in decorating the buildings. Mosaic has been applied colorfully in Bishapour Palace and in the margin of the three Ivans of Bishapour Palace that had been paving. The designs of mosaics include: weaver women, and flower carrier, harper, and old and determined men, which have been shaped with small pieces of mosaic in orange, brown, red, yellow, milky, rose, black, blue, jade, and gray colors that are the reason of careful work and the variety of causal colors in Sassanids' era. The Shah Mosque of Isfahan is known as the tile museum, and its tiling is unique around the world. Furthermore Shikh Lotf Allah Mosque that is known as the mosque of Shah Abbas's wives, and is right situated across from the Alighapoo Palace, and is the memorial of Safavids' era (being situated in the Naqsh-e-Jahan Isfahan) is decorated by seven-color glazed tiles, and we observe

the most various colors. They are the best types of Islamic architecture that own the impression of art and culture of the previous periods. Therefore, it can be stated that numerous samples of different architecture buildings, map, and internal designs have been highly indebted to the art and culture of ancient Iran especially in the Sassanids' era.

9.1. Sassanids' Art and Its Extension

Sassanids' art is the final stage of the ancient eastern art. This art represents the Sassanids' aesthetic basics that are the heir of prior Asian arts, and is the conclusion of a long revolution. It owns a power that enables it to leave its signs in the arts of adjacent nations. Sassanids' art is a bridge between ancient nations of Asia, new Islamic nations, and western medieval. It has transferred the western values and enriches itself because of continuity with special Chinese arts and Indian effects. The architectures of Egypt, Syria, and Minor Asia have been inspired by Sassanids' Palace when, they were building the huge and dark churches that were built with stones, and their three porches are used with cradle arches like the carrier and the holder of each other. The building of this church was prevalent from the fifth until the eleventh century alongside the Adriatic, or the Mediterranean to Spain. The smooth and continuous cradle arches of these churches, remind the Sassanids' ancient arches. The original sample of them, are the latitudinal cradle arches that have been built on the porch. Saint Phillippe-du-Tornos "It seems that it is belonging to the Sassanids' city of Karkheh Ivan that has been built by Shapour II. The design of Sassanids' Fire Temple repeated in all the churches of Armenia, and published in Balkan Peninsula. The influence of this style is frequent until the present age in Iran, and in fact it has been a non-fractured architecture tradition. Samples of church architecture in France, Armenia, vivify the memory of Sassanids' buildings. The debris of stucco and vegetable decoration in mosaics that show the altar in the Spain building remind the Sassanids' art that has been the manifest of paradise by the decorations of palm leaf on long stems in the form of flowers and plants blown behind the fornicated arches of the altar that have raised heads. Sassanids placed a fornicated arch on top of the window that was transferred to the Christian and Muslim easts and wests. The dome that is based on the arch corners found international value very soon."

10.1. The decoration of the Enshrine, Saint Agilberte, Nun in the Jouarre Church Basement

The decoration of this enshrine shows the specifications that is joined with Iranian art. The wall of this enshrine is composed of four petals leaves or a string of rhombus shapes in which the Madonna lily flowers that are an abolished imitation of the chestnut

leaf decoration, have been placed head-on. These designs are an adaptation of continues decorations that have been used in the Sassanids and Islamic Ctesiphon, Damghan, and Samarra stucco (Christensen, A).

11.1. Animals' Figure

The dome-shaped figure of Phoenix in the western altar of Merteuile church, animals passing, the dome-shaped of the north wall of Hahwell church, the animals that are sitting back to back, or have been placed across each other, have Asian origin, and are the frequent issues in Iran's art. The figure of an animal that is following another animal, and is frequently changed into a scene of war is one of the Sassanids' art issues that have been influenced in the art of adjacent areas and even remote areas (such as Akhi in Georgia, Ghazni in Afghanistan, Pavi in Italy, Silves and Santa Domingo in Spain, and Lomoges in France).

12.1. The Influence of Sassanids' Textiles in Painting

The paintings that have been found in the beginning of the present century in French Alps show that in the Roman-style periods, the animal figures of Sassanids' textiles and the early Islamic periods in Iran, either freely or limitedly have been figured in the field of painting. These figures of Iranian textiles influence in the workshops of Byzantine's mosaic makers. The wall covers with the glazed tiles that have been achieved from around Constantinople, and some of its issues that are kept in Louvre Museum verify this issue. The most special kinds of these tiles coverings are convex or concave strips with red flower decorations, and oval, and the pineal that are the subjects of building decoration, and have been highly frequent in the art of Sassanids' stucco. Another issue that is seen in these tiles is peacock that has opened its tail like an umbrella. These figures are the same style of Sassanids' textiles with special decorations of birds whose real value is to cover the invisible surfaces (George Rawlinson, 2005).

13.1. The Architecture Works of Sassanids' Era in Mawarannahr Land

The vast area that has been named as great Khorasan, Vardavard, or Mawarannahr by the historians and geologists, the Soviet scientists have been named as Middle Asia, for some specific reasons since many years ago. "This area now, includes countries that include Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan republic, and Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan areas. Among the Sassanids' works,

that has been explored in such areas as Balalik include: Varakhsha Hill (in the 20th kilometer from the northwestern of Bukhara), the Ruins of Afrasiab or old Samarkand, the ancient valuable and wide-spread district of Panjakent in Sarzam (in the 60th kilometer from Samarkand) can be named. For example, Varakhsha, is a four-arch counter, the triple hall of the palace (Sorkhfam, East, and West Halls), Sorkh Hall that has 12 meters length and 85.7 meters width, and interesting murals show off below the ceilings. In addition, what can be stated about Panjakent is that the works achieved from this place are divided in four separated parts including the main castle- the main city (province), suburb, and cemetery." The architecture decorations of Panjakent include wall painting (Feresc), wood carving, and wooden statues dome-shaped by clay.

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