

Architectural Transfer Between Two Non-Concurrent Styles: Investigation The Routes Of Timurid Architectural Influence (1370-1524ad) In Mughal Buildings (1526-1707ad)

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Abstract: Before and after the advent of Islam, Persian architecture is heavily influential towards the structures of the Indian subcontinent. The Persian style of architecture, which includes Ilkhanid, Timurid and Safavid traditions, forms the basis of Indian architecture. The most universal of the Indo-Muslim styles is the Mughal mode of the Muslim architecture, which prevails in the subcontinent, forming a pan-Indian style. It has been proven that Mughal architecture was influenced by Iranian architecture, based on the studies of many art historians. The Mughal period in India (1526-1707) was a contemporary of the Safavid dynasty in Iran (1524-1729), while the Timurid period (1370-1524) came before both. Based on several scholars, the Mughal style has been influenced by Timurid dynasty more than the Safavid's. In addition, Timurid architecture forms the prototype for both the Safavid and Mughal styles. Based on the secondary study and through the adoption of historical interpretation, this paper tries to define the possible routes for the influence from Timurid to Mughal architecture, and verify each of them. Three possible propositions are assumed. The first is via Indian styles preceding the Mughal period (Delhi sultanate, Deccan sultanate). The second route is direct influence from Timurid architecture, while the third is via Iranian style-Safavid that was in concurrent existence with Mughal's. The research adopts a historical perspective as its main strategy when reviewing secondary data.

Key words: Mughal architecture, Timurid architecture, Safavid architecture, Delhi sultanate architecture, influence

INTRODUCTION

The history of international relations indicates that from the many elements strengthening reciprocal relation among countries and nations, socio-cultural relation has always been more effective and sustainable compared to economic and political factors. The former has roots in the beliefs, traditions and values of the respective societies, while the latter may be altered by a change in governance. Art, as one of the strongest elements of cultural relations, can play a very effective role in linking nations to each another (Pourjafar & Taghvae, 2004).

India is a nation that is culturally diverse, and the differences in climatic conditions, along with the extent of exposure to other cultures, have influenced the traditions of the different cultures to a great extent. The Mughal style is the most universal of the Indo-Muslim styles.

In the Mughal era, bilateral relations between Iran and India reached the highest level in all aspects of life: so much so that it is called the "Golden Era" of the development of socio-cultural and political ties and close relations between the two countries (Pourjafar & Taghvae, 2004).

Numerous articles and books have been written about the effect of Persian elements and models. The finest instance of the synthesis of Indo-Iranian style can be seen in the TajMahal ("the soul of Iran incarnate in the body of India", according to M. Grousset, the French savant), Fatehpur Sikri complex, and the Humayun Tomb.

In this paper, the authors attempt to study and indicate how Persian architecture influences the Mughal buildings. Based on the idea of several scholars, the Mughal style has been affected by Timurid architecture. The main point is that Timurid & Mughal dynasties were not contemporaneous (Timurid, 1370-1524 & Mughal 1526-1709). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is defining the routes of architectural influence from the Timurid era on Mughal's, and also investigating the validity of each proposition. The route comprises of firstly, direct transfer from Timurid to Mughal, or, the indirect transfer via Iranian (concurrent with Mughal) and Indian (concurrent with Timurid) architectural styles.

Methodology:

Interpretative approach is a model that provides a process for consulting the meaning from the data that goes beyond analytical emphasis (Hatch, 2002). The research adopts the historical interpretation as the main strategy from the secondary data that includes firstly, defining the propositions of routes and channels for architectural transfer from Timurid style to Mughal buildings must be assumed, and by reviewing the historical references as secondary data, the relation of each proposition with Mughal architecture must also be studied based on two periodical phases (early & high), and finally, the validity of each proposition can be realized.

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Persia (Iran) & India:

Iranian culture significantly affected the culture of the Indian subcontinent in various aspects, since time immemorial. Indian architecture both before and after Islam is proof of this (Pourjafar & Taghvaei, 2004). In the 16th century, Iran witnessed the rise of the Safavid Empire, while India was contending with the corresponding rise of the Mughal dynasty. Both India and Iran were formidable powers under these respective dynasties. The relations between Iran and India were made up of multiple facets, which include, among others, politics, diplomacy, culture, literature, trade and religion. The Mughal patronage of culture constantly attracted Persian scholars; which resulted in talented Persians being absorbed in the ever-expanding services of the Mughal Empire. (Islam, 1970).

Even though the Mughal period (1526-1707AD) was a contemporary of Safavid (1524_ 1736), several scholars (Asher, 1991; Dale, 2004; Golombek, 1981; Habib, 2002; Hoag, 1968; Koch, 1991; Pereira, 1994; Stierlin & Stierlin, 2002) indicated that Mughal architecture is mostly influenced by the Timurid dynasty (1370-1526?) more than Safavid architecture, for example, Koch, in his book (*Mughal Architecture: An Outline of Its History and Development, 1526-1858*) cited that “Since the Mughals were direct heirs to the Timurids , the sustaining elements of their architecture, especially during the initial phase, was Timurid, as such as perfect symmetry of plan reflected consistently in the elevations ,as well as complex vaults patterns”.

The main question is what are the routes and channels of Timurid's influence vis-à-vis Mughal Architecture?

The concurrence of both the Timurid&Mughal period gave way to three assumptions with regards to the influence of Timurid architecture on Mughal buildings (refer to Fig. 1).

- I. The first proposition was via Indian dynasties that were contemporary of Timurid, including the Delhi Sultanate (1193-1554AD) and the Deccan sultanate (1347-1678AD).
- II. The second was direct influence from both the Timurid dynasty in Mughal buildings.
- III. while the third was via Iranian contemporary period with Mughal building.

In the first and third route,Timurid elements and principles have entered and influenced Mughal buildings indirectly, via other dynasties in Iran & India.

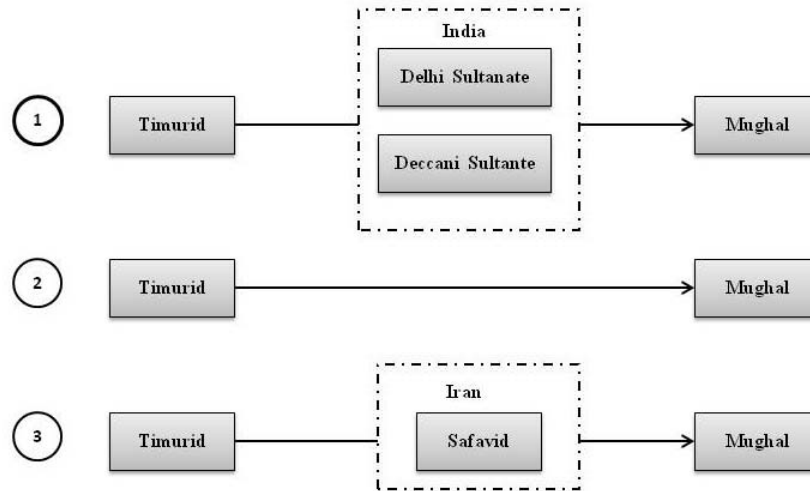


Fig. 1: propositions for Timurid architectural influence to Mughal buildings (authors)

Persian Architecture:

Iran is a nation that is considered extraordinary by the standards of the Middle East. It formed the crossroad of civilization among the Middle East, Far East, Europe, and North Africa, and for this reason, many evidences indicated great extent of cultural, political, architectural exchange and relation between Iran and other countries and nations in its history (refinement). After the arrival of Islam, Persian historical periods were divided into: Seljuk (pirnia, 2001), Ilkhanid (1256_1353 AD), Timurid (1370_1506 AD), Safavid (1501_1732 AD) (pirnia, 2001).

Timurid Architecture:

Among these period, the Timurid dynasty (1370_1506 AD) was vastly influential, and due to the vastness and spread of Timurid territory (Iran, Central Asia), this particular style influences other countries, such as India and Pakistan with novel and new architectural innovation (none fold, double dome ...)(pirnia, 2001).

Safavid Architecture:

The best successor of Timurid architecture is the Safavid style (1525-1736AD), which replaced earlier tendencies of boldness of conception and vastness of size, via the refinement of finish and intricacies of designs (Kuban, 1985). Frishman & Khan (2007) mentioned that "Numerous Timurid features continued in the Safavid period such as: False upper galleries, Formal incorporation of teaching with mosque, paired minarets".

Indian architecture:

All the Muslim traditions in the Indian subcontinent display both the greatest complexity and the greatest independence. Its complexity is evidenced by five traditions, which are the Delhi sultanate (1190-1545) in the north, with satellites of Delhi sultanate being the kingdoms of Jaipur and Malwa. The Gujarat sultanate (1391-1583) in the west, the Bengal sultanate (1339-1576) in the east, Deccani sultanate (1347-1687) in the south, and finally, the Mughal sultanate (1526-1858) (Pereira, 1994).

Delhi Sultanate:

In the 13th century, the longest Muslim empire was established by the Central Asian Turks named the Delhi Sultanate. This period continued the Persianization of the milieu, until the Mughal dynasty came about in 1526 (Yarshater, 1991). Because of its origin and long history, the sultanate provided a unique opportunity for continual relation between India and its western neighbor (Persia) in all aspects, including language and literature, manners and customs, government, music, architecture and religious organization. (BUKHARI, 1956; IRFAN, 2002).

Deccani sultanate:

The first notable Indian style in the south was the Bahmani (Deccani sultanate) dynasty. First at Gulbarga (1347AD), and afterwards at Bidar (1426AD) (Fergusson, 2007). The Deccani style was a peculiar harmonization between the Hindustani (Webb, Webb, & Webb) and Mussulmani modes. The Deccani rulers were mostly Shia Muslims, and were emotionally linked to Safavid Persia. There were extensive diplomatic relations between the Deccan kingdoms and the Safavid rulers. (Islam, 1970). The usage of vaults and domes are quite prominent, but the construction is frequently treacherous. The difference of the architectural style were essentially enumerated from those mentioned above, and was marked by a grandeur of conception and boldness in construction, unrivalled by any edifices erected in India (Pereira, 1994)

Mughal Architecture:

The most universal of the Indo-Muslim styles is the Mughal; the mode of the Muslim architecture prevailing in the subcontinent in the 16th and 17th centuries. This is a blend of Islamic, Persian and Indian architecture (Nath, 1982). According to Pereira (1994), the Mughal style can conveniently be divided into three phases:

5.3.1. The *early Mughal phase* (1526-1605), covering the reigns of three emperors; Babur, Humayun and Akbar, and reaching its apex during the reign of Akbar. All the styles that will go forth to form the Mughal synthesis interacted during this period.

5.3.2. The *high Mughal phase* (1605-1707), covering the reigns of the emperors Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, and attaining its zenith under Shah Jahan.

5.3.3. The *late Mughal phase* (1707-1858), the seeds of which were implanted under Aurangzeb. The Mughal synthesis is now truly a pan-Indian style, but the balance of its components is disharmonious, with some developing at the expense of others.

In this article, the authors focus on the early and high phases during the governor of the five Mughal emperors.

Evidences of Timurid influence in Mughal architecture via Indian architecture (first proposition):

After the advent of Islam, and with increased multiple relations between Persia and India, many Indian architectural styles were influenced by Persian architecture, such as the Ghaznavid, Delhi Sultanate, and the Deccani Sultanate (Ziauddin, 2007). The Timurid Empire (1370-1526AD) was a contemporary of the late of Delhi Sultanate (1193-1554AD), and Deccani Sultanate (1347-1687 AD). Many historical evidence explained Timurid's impact on the Indian styles (see Fig. 2, A) such as:

Timurid's impact in Delhi Sultanate architecture:

➤ In the latter part of the Sultanate's period that was a contemporary of the Timurid Empire, Timur; the founder of Timurid dynasty-conquered Delhi due to the weakness of the Empire. After this time, some octagonal tombs were constructed based on the Timurid tradition by Firuz Shah (king of sultanate) (Brown, 1942).

➤ After Buber Shah (founder of Mughal empire), the Afghan Shir Shah Sur, who temporarily deported the Mughals from the Indian subcontinent, ruled in Delhi (1540-45), and he was ordered to build the Qal-ye

Kohna mosque. The internal and externalities of the mosque are richly covered with red and white stones, some of which are inlaid in complicated geometric patterns, reminiscent of Timurid tile patterns (Asher, 1988; Yarshater, 1991).

Timurid’s impact in Deccani Sultanate architecture:

➤ The Bahmani (Deccan Sultante) Shiite, with heavy leanings towards Persia, are clearly evident in the mosques. The earliest mosque in the Gulbarga (1358-1373) is one of the first in India to reflect contemporary Timurid interest in the multi-bay prayer halls of the Jami -Masjid of Isfahan. This approach was certainly being favored by the architects of Firozian Delhi, but its most original expression is the Jame-mosque of Golbarga (by Persian architect Rafi of Gazvin) (M. M. Hejazi, 1997; Mainstone, 2001; Pereira, 1994).

➤ Bidar (the sub style of DeccaniSultante) chief claim to architectural distinction is neither tomb nor mosque, but the great Madrassa of Mahmud Gavan. The Persian minister of Muhammad Shah BahmaniIII(1463-1482) is totally represented by the Iranian form, which was not favored in India. The form is a symmetrical four-*iwan* plan, with colored tiles and cruciform chambers and satellite domes on reticular pendants, which are related to the contemporary Timurid work (M. M. Hejazi, 1997; Mainstone, 2001; Pereira, 1994).

Mughal and Indian Styles:

Based on the studies of Habib(2002), Pereira(1994)& Koch(1991), most of northern Indian styles influenced the Mughal architecture:

➤ Mughal architecture borrowed extensively from the Delhi sultanate, Sharqi, Gujarat, Malwa, Bengal and Rajestan styles, as well as from styles abroad, so much so that it has itself been defined as a synthesis of these foreign and indigenous styles (Habib, 2002; Koch, 1991) (refer to Fig. 2,B).

➤ The early phase of Mughal architecture can be divided into four types: Delhi Sultanate, Timurid , Jaunpur, Kashmiri (Pereira, 1994).

None of these historical evidences mentioned that Deccani architecture have any influence on Mughal buildings, so it is possible that Timurid architecture influenced and were transferred into Mughal architecture via only the Delhi Sultanate styles (Fig. 2, C).

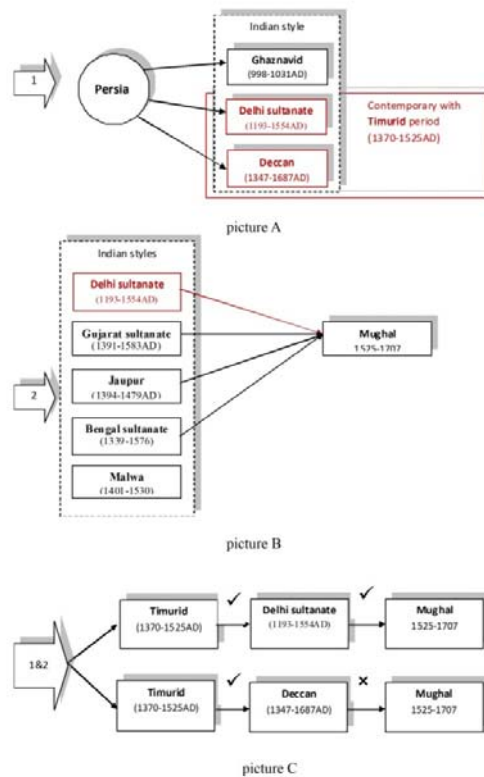


Fig. 2: indirect Timurid influence via Indian style (Delhi Sultanate architecture)(authors) A, Persian influence in India (before Mughal).B, Indian influence in Mughal period C, validity of Timurid influence in Mughal period via Delhi & Deccan sultanate

Evidences of Timurid influence in Mughal architecture (second proposition):

In the initial phase of Mughal architecture, the Mughals relied strongly on their already highly developed Timurid architecture heritage, but at the same time, they let it enter into creative dialogue with the local buildings' traditions and conditions (Koch, 1991). The founder of Mughal Empire -Babur-was originally a Timurid from the Uzbek region of Samarkand. He received help from the Safavid King Shah Ismail I, and established himself first in Kabul, and then in Delhi and Agra (M. Hejazi, 2003).

These historical manuscripts showed the direct Timurid influence on Mughal architecture:

➤ After coming to India, Baber ordered the construction of three mosques, and in 1530, during the reign of Humayun, ordered the construction of another. It was too short of a time for the Mughals to familiarize themselves with the regional architectural tradition of India, in addition, he brought along with him Iranian architects; Ustad Mir MirakGhiyas of Herat, and Ustad Shah Mohammad of Khorasan(Habib, 2002; Pugachenkova, 1963).

➤ In the Humayun era, Timurid elements were soon merged with local buildings, in particular, with regards to the facing of buildings and architectural decoration. The most important building of Humayun 's period is the mosque at Kachpura, which influences the NamazGah mosque -Timurid mosque at the Samarqand (Koch, 1991).



Fig. 3: Humayon tomb,Delhi (authors)

➤ The principles trend in the first phase under Baber and Homayun were imported from Transoxania and Khurasan. Two trends were successfully merged in the great architectural synthesis under Akbar, together with the other Indian sources (Koch, 1991; Pereira, 1994). The best examples of the Timurid influence is the tomb of Humayun, which is a synthesis of creativity developed from Timurid ideas-*ChaharBagh*, *HashtBehesht*-and local traditions. This building was designed by Sayyid Muhammad and his father , MirakSayyidGhiyath – Timurid architects who were active in Herat (Koch, 1991).

Evidences of Timurid influence in Mughal architecture via Safavid architecture (third proposition):

The cordial relation between the Safavid and Mughal empires that was initiated from Babur -the first Mughal king- and Humayun; the king employed a great number of Iranian artist after returning from Iran (he defeated his enemies and stayed in Iran for eleven years). Moreover, many Persian politicians and administrators were employed by the Mughal court, and were vital to the day to day operation of the Mughal Empire. The influence of Safavid architecture in Mughal buildings can be found in the high phase, especially under Jahagir and Shah Jahan. For example:

➤ Jahangir followed a more introverted phase of revision, reflection and adaption. The main function was to test and further develop selected Akbari solutions, rather than explore new foreign sources. Iranian (Safavid) influence did, however, gain an importance such as using the Maryam al-Zamani mosque at Lahore, which was duly influenced by Timurid and Safavid components (Koch, 1991)

➤ Under Shah Jahan, Mughal architecture reached its apex and second climax. This region is marked by the heavy influence of indigenous styles (Habib, 2002), however, we also came across new and foreign types of buildings, such as the bazaar of the red fort of Shah Jahanabad, which is ultimately traced back to its Safavid roots. The earliest dome of this type is that of Gur_i_Amir. Its noble progeny includes the mosque of the Imam (Masjid_i_Shah) in Isfahan, and the TajMahal. The double shell dome seems to have been Timurid innovation (Stierlin & Stierlin, 2002).



Fig. 4: Gur_i_Amir tomb -Timuird building(archNet)



Fig. 5: TajMahal - Mughal building (authors)



Fig. 6: mosque of the Imam - Safavid building(archNet)

Conclusion:

In conclusion, despite the fact that the Timurid era was not a contemporary of the Mughal dynasty; the Timurid influence has become widespread and prevalent during the whole Mughal period.

9.1. In the early phases, despite the good relationship between Mughal kings with the Safavid court, Timurid architecture was applied greatly in the early Mughal buildings in a rather short time period and became familiarized with the indigenous Indian styles, which is duly enhanced by the migration of Persian craftsman and architects (from Khurasan –an important Timurid zone), leading the Mughal kings, that were originally Timurids from the Uzbek region of Samarkand, preferring to apply Timurid elements and principles, hand-in-hand with Indian models and elements. Furthermore, the direct influence of the Timurid style, and some Delhi sultanate architectural elements that were affected by Timurid architecture, also had great impact on early Mughal buildings.

9.2. In the high phase, the Mughal architecture reached the climax of development, and has been heavily influenced from indigenous styles, rather than foreign architecture. At the same time, Safavid architecture was in its climax of power and grandeur. The increase in the relations between Mughal and Safavid in all aspects such as politics, diplomacy, culture, literature, trade, and religion resulted in the use of Safavid architectural models in Mughal edifices. Regarding the point that Safavid architects continued Timurid principles in their buildings, the Timurid effect is correspondingly continued via the Safavid influence in the high Mughal buildings.

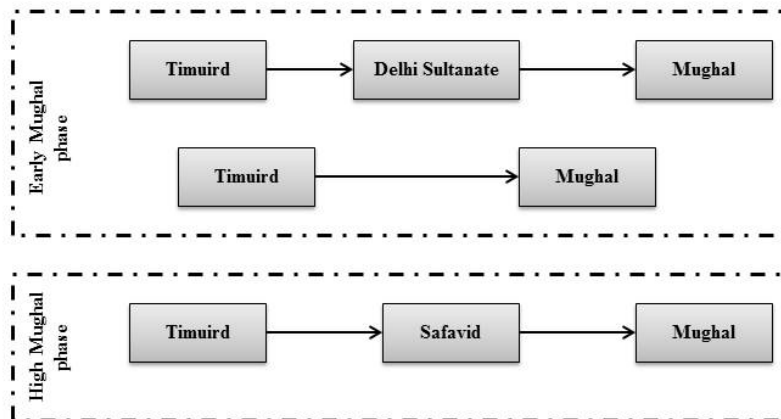


Fig. 7: distribution of Timurid influence directly and indirectly in Mughal architecture base on early and high phase

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