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THE HISTORICAL FORMATION AND ARTISTIC FEATURES OF RESIDENTIAL INTERIORS IN CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract: This article examines the historical development and distinctive characteristics of traditional residential interiors in the Central Asian countries of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. It highlights the main features of interior design, including colors, ornaments, materials, furnishings, and spatial organization, while emphasizing the influence of regional culture, climate, and traditional lifestyles on interior formation.

Keywords: Central Asia, interior design, residential housing, national interior, colors, patterns, ornament, lighting, materials, traditional house, yurt, architectural heritage.

Main Body

Central Asia has long been an important part of the Silk Road, serving as a region that connected Eastern and Western civilizations. The culture, traditions, religious beliefs, and lifestyles of the peoples living in this region have been reflected not only in architecture but also in the organization of residential interior spaces. According to historical sources, various types of dwellings existed in Central Asia from ancient times, including fortified houses, courtyard houses, settlements located near caravanserais, and yurts characteristic of nomadic peoples.

Factors Influencing the Formation of Central Asian Residential Interiors. Several factors have contributed to the formation of Central Asian interiors. First of all, the climatic conditions of the region played a significant role. The hot and dry summers and relatively cold winters required special solutions in the organization of interior spaces. Therefore, thick walls, inner courtyards, verandas, and natural ventilation systems were widely used.

The second important factor was the lifestyle of the people. In areas inhabited by settled populations, courtyard houses became common, while among nomadic peoples, portable yurts that could be easily assembled and relocated were widely used. In both cases, interiors were designed not only to meet daily functional needs but also to satisfy aesthetic and spiritual requirements.

A third factor was the development of traditional craftsmanship. Wood carving, stucco decoration (ganch carving), pottery, carpet weaving, and textile arts became integral components of interior design. As a result, ordinary living spaces were transformed into works of art.

Features of Residential Interior Design in Uzbekistan. The interiors of historical residential buildings in Uzbekistan developed under the influence of major architectural centers such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Shahrisabz, and Kokand. Courtyard houses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are particularly notable for their elegance and refined decorative qualities.

The central element of these houses was usually an inner courtyard, around which all rooms were arranged. This design solution provided natural lighting and ventilation. Reception rooms and guest rooms were considered the most richly decorated parts of the house.

The walls were adorned with ganch (stucco) carvings, colorful patterns, and floral ornaments known as *islimi* motifs. Ceilings were made of wood and decorated with intricate geometric compositions. Wood carving was also widely used on doors and window frames. Among the dominant

colors were light blue, blue, white, green, and golden shades. Blue symbolized the sky and purity, while green represented life and prosperity. Various shades of blue were especially common in the traditional houses of Bukhara and Samarkand.

The floors were covered with carpets, rugs, and traditional quilted mattresses (*kurpacha*). Raised platforms (*supa*) and floor cushions were commonly used for seating. Niches were built into the walls and used to display pottery, books, and decorative objects, contributing both to the functionality and aesthetic appeal of the interior.



Figure 2. Interior of a Traditional House in Bukhara or Samarkand House in the Region



Figure 3. Interior of a Traditional Pamir

Interior of a Traditional House in Kazakh and Kyrgyz. The traditional dwelling of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz peoples is the **yurt** (o'tov)**,** a portable circular tent that reflects the nomadic lifestyle of Central Asia. The interior of the yurt is organized according to a central spatial composition. At the center is the hearth**,** which serves not only as a source of heating but also as a symbol of family unity and domestic harmony.

The interior is divided into several functional zones. Separate areas are designated for men and guests, while household utensils, clothing, and other domestic items are stored in other sections of the yurt. This spatial organization ensures convenience while reflecting traditional social customs.

The main decorative elements of the interior are felt products**.** Items such as shyrdak**,** ala-kiyiz, and other woven textiles are adorned with intricate geometric patterns. These ornaments often symbolize nature, the animal world, and ancient beliefs, expressing the spiritual and cultural values of the nomadic peoples.

Among the nomadic communities, red was one of the most commonly used colors, symbolizing strength, courage, and protection, whereas white represented purity and prosperity. Natural lighting was provided through a circular opening at the top of the yurt, known as the crown. This architectural element simultaneously functioned as a source of daylight, a ventilation system, and an outlet for smoke, making it an essential component of the yurt's interior design.

Interior of Traditional Tajik Dwellings. The interiors of traditional houses in the mountainous regions of Tajikistan are distinguished by their functionality. These houses were typically constructed from stone, wood, and clay. The rooms were often multifunctional, allowing a single space to serve various purposes depending on the needs of the household.

Wood carving occupies a prominent place in traditional Tajik architecture. Intricate ornamental carvings decorate columns, doors, and ceiling structures. In particular, the interiors of houses in the Pamir region are well known for their symbolic spatial organization and distinctive architectural character.

The dominant colors include white, light yellow, brown, and the natural tones of wood. These colors harmonize with the surrounding mountainous landscape and create a warm, natural atmosphere.

Carpets and handwoven textiles serve as the principal decorative elements of the interior. Windows are positioned to maximize the amount of natural sunlight entering the rooms, ensuring a bright and comfortable living environment.

Carpet weaving occupies a central place in Turkmen culture, and this tradition is clearly reflected in the interior design of traditional Turkmen houses. Carpets were used not only as floor coverings but were also hung on the walls as important decorative and cultural elements.

Figure 5. Interior of a Traditional Turkmen House and Carpet Decorations

The interiors are characterized by the predominance of red, burgundy, brown, and white colors.



In particular, various shades of red are regarded as one of the national symbols of the Turkmen people. The dis tinctive **"gul"** motifs woven into the carpets represent the unique identity of different tribes and clans. These ornamental patterns possess not only aesthetic value but also significant historical and spiritual meaning, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Turkmen people.

Wooden chests, handcrafted furniture, and woven textile products were among the principal furnishings in traditional Turkmen houses. The interiors were predominantly characterized by the use of natural materials, reflecting the lifestyle and cultural traditions of the Turkmen people.

The Significance of Colors and Patterns in Central Asian Interiors. In the traditional interiors of Central Asian peoples, colors were never chosen at random. Each color carried a specific symbolic meaning. For example, blue represented the sky and eternity, green symbolized life and prosperity, red stood for strength and protection, while white signified purity and virtue.

Patterns and ornaments also played an important spiritual and cultural role. Geometric motifs symbolized the structure of the universe, whereas floral and plant-inspired designs represented nature, growth, and the continuity of life. Therefore, ornaments served not only as decorative elements but also as artistic expressions that conveyed symbolic meanings and reflected the cultural identity of Central Asian societies.

Figure 6. Traditional Patterns and Ornaments Used in Central Asian Interiors



The interiors of traditional dwellings in the countries of Central Asia constitute an important part of the region's rich cultural heritage, which has evolved over centuries. These interiors reflect the lifestyle, religious beliefs, aesthetic values, and craftsmanship traditions of the peoples of Central Asia. Although the courtyard houses of Uzbekistan, renowned for their intricate **ganch** (ornamental plaster) and wood carvings, the yurts of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the mountain-adapted houses of Tajikistan, and the carpet-adorned interiors of Turkmenistan share common historical roots, each possesses distinctive artistic and architectural characteristics.

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