

## 12.1 Islamic Realms in Central Asia :: Domes of Power & Gardens of Paradise

- 1) **Genghis Khan** (1162-1227)
  - Violent, brutal conquerer of most of Asia from China to Persia in the late 12th century.
  - **Did not establish permanent settlements but was nomadic**
  - **Did not convert to Islam**
  - Sought strategic control of the many Silk Roads across Asia
- 2) Dynasties
  - **Timurid Dynasty** (modern-day Uzbekistan) - capital city Samarkand
  - **Safavid Dynasty** (modern-day Iran) - capital city Isfahan
  - **Mughal Dynasty** (modern-day northern India) - focus city Agra
- 3) **Timur** a.k.a. **Tamerlane** a.k.a. **Timur the Lame - Timurid Dynasty**
  - Ruled **1370-1405**
  - Ruthless, violent, intimidating
  - Borrowed architectural ideas from Persia
  - Capital city **Samarkand**
  - **Registan in Samarkand** - Registan means *desert* or *sandy place*  
A forum consisting of three typical mosques all the typical mosque-like architectural features (began **1420**)
  - **Tomb of Timur** in Samarkand called **Gur-e-Amir (1404)**
- 4) Architectural elements of Islamic architecture and Hindu architecture
  - **muqarna** - Islamic vaulting sometimes used in the iwan arch that is a complex division of geometry which is projected in such a way as to suggest a honeycomb-like surface
  - **pishtaq** - Islamic arch as defined by the (sometimes) slender masonry thickness that is passed through to come to the interior arch called the iwan
  - **iwan** - deep volumetric entry arch - like a vaulted open room
  - **hasht bihisht** - nine square grid - central space surrounded by symbolic representation of *eight heavens* per Islam
  - **chahar bagh** - a quadrilateral symmetrical garden symbolizing the *four gardens of paradise* mentioned in Qur'an
  - **qibla** - The direction toward Mecca
  - **mihrab** - A niche in the wall indicating *qibla*
  - **Persian arch** - A wide, four-centered arch that distributes forces more laterally
  - **chhatris** - domed kiosks - like an umbrella or canopy. Placed on top of buildings
  - **zenana** - the women's palace or compound
  - **khanqah** - a religious memorial
  - **jali** - intricate carved wooden screen that allows women to see out
- 5) **Shah Abbas - Safavid Dynasty**
  - Ruled **1587-1629**
  - Capital city **Isfahan**
  - **Masjid-e-Jami** or **Great Friday Mosque** finished about 1100 (Old City)
  - **Quaisariya** - covered bazaar in the (Old City) two miles long
  - New Palace of Shah Abbas called **Naqsh-e Rostam**
  - **New Maydan** connected to quaisariya built **1598** by Abbas
  - **Shaykh Lutfallah Mosque (1603)** in Maydan directly across from **Ali Qapu** which was the six-story gateway into Abbas's new palace
  - **caravanserais** were connected to New Maydan - stopping place or hostel along the Silk Road
  - **Masjid-i-Shah (Mosque of the Shah)** the public mosque in the New Maydan (**1611**)
  - **chahar bagh** - (see definition above) - **specific to Isfahan**, it's the name of the main boulevard landscaped with plane trees and water features with Abbas's palace on the north

and his country palace on the south end. 6KM long connecting Abbas's palaces N-S.

- **chahar bagh** on axis and crossed **Si-o-e-Pol Bridge** built in **1602**. Summer palace of Abbas was on south end of Chahar Bagh across the bridge.

6) **Akbar the Great - Mughal Dynasty**

- Ruled **1556-1605** - descended from Timur
- Grandfather was Babur the Lion (1526-1530)
- **Tomb of Humayun** (father of Akbar) **1562** includes a **chahar bagh** garden. Capped with **chhatris** canopies
- **Red Fort in Agra** begun **1566**
- **Fatehpur Sikri** (meaning City of Victory) built about **1571** by Akbar - included:
  - > **Buland Darwaza** - main gate
  - > **Jama Mosque**
  - > **Tomb of Shaykh Salim Chishti** also called the **khanqah of Shaykh Salim** (pre-existed at this site)
- **Panch Mahal** - hypostyle tower structure so that women could look out onto the main court through jali screens without being seen
  - > **Diwan-i-Khas** - Hall of private audience - has **chhatris** (umbrella-like domes)
  - > **Diwan-i-Aam** - Hall of public audience (political space)
  - > **Anup Talao** - central pool with viewing platform
- **Itimad-ud-Daulah Tomb in Agra** - **1628** built by Nur Jahan (daughter-in-law of Akbar) and **Empress 1611-1627**, a very politically powerful person
- **Taj Mahal in Agra** - (**1632**) built by **Shah Jahan** grandson of Akbar and stepson of Nur Jahan. Shah Jahan ruled **1628-1658**. Taj Mahal built as a tomb for his favorite wife **Mumtaz Mahal**. Brick faced with white marble. Taj Mahal properly called **Rauz-i Munavvara** meaning *illuminated tomb*. Includes a **chahar bagh**.