The Turco-Mongol beginnings of Brunelleschi’s dome
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Abstract
After Italy’s archbishopric to Sultanıya and consulate to Tabriz, Arnolfo di Cambio changed his columns for the pylons – as in Sultanıya’s Oljaytu mausoleum. Filippo Brunelleschi borrowed the silhouette and the two shells of the mausoleum’s dome, and repeated its peripheral chambers as the apses to resist his dome’s load. The Italian tamburo – as well as the Provençal tambourin dance and the Italian army’s tamburino drummer boy – were coined from the Turkic dombira. Central Asia’s cultural and military advance brought the tile facades and the high domes on the lofty dombiras (drums) – to Venice and Florence, and spread the Turkism dombira-tamburo to European languages. From the XI-th century Isfahan domes via the Veneto region the spinapesce brickwork came into Brunelleschi’s caissons. Antonio Sangallo’s drawing of spinapesce “built in Florence with no armature” is closer to Turkey’s XIII-th century dome spirals. Brunelleschi’s dome of the Turko-Mongol beginnings inspired Europe’s great cathedrals.

Keywords pylon, composition, tile facades, dombira-tamburo, ribs, spinapesce