The Urban Environment and Society of Uzbekistan of XX Century

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This article presents the history of urban development in Uzbekistan. In the XX century urban development in Uzbekistan is undergoing some significant changes. Depending on social changes there are changes of tenor of life of society that finds reflection in town planning and architecture. The local architecture gets a variety of artistic styles. The Soviet period in Uzbekistan has been a difficult and controversial. City 1920-1980 biennium was under pressure from the Soviet doctrine. During the reconstruction after the earthquake in Tashkent used progressive methods of planning and development. During the period of independence of Uzbekistan to the 1990s to the present day there is a reassessment of values in the spiritual culture of the Uzbek people, when the problems of national identity become dominant in all spheres, including in urban planning.

Keywords: Urban environment, art, artistic design, stylistics, monumental sculpture, culture.

Introduction

In the twentieth century urban development in Uzbekistan is undergoing some significant changes. Depending on the social changes are changes in architecture and town planning. The aim of our research was to study the history of urban development in Uzbekistan for the period of the 20th century.

The Process of Europeanization of the Central Asia

In the twentieth century the process Europeanization of the Central Asia begins. Being recognized and adopted as a constitutional unit of the Russian Empire, the region was exposed to the number of significant changes in social life as well as suffused with contemporary introductions in the fields of culture, art and entire lifestyle. This matter is obviously reflected in some European parts of Uzbekistan, where there were erected particular establishments reminding the Russian air due to their architectural plan and design expressing architectural peculiarities of this country. All this innovations used to hand down the European character, to be more precise, the definite style of the Russian culture in the period of XIX-XX.

In 1970 s emerged the new style of municipal engineering reflecting the long searches of the Russian architecture of the given period. This style meant “new cities” with large, wide and flat streets, buildings with gable roofs and European ornamentation. The town obtained the clear floor-plan diagram, where regular designing combined with an annular net of streets.

The similar designing was laid as a solid foundation for “new cities” in Samarkand, Margilan and etc. In

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just very period of time we can observe the penetration of diverse Russian architectural features into the local style. Thus, for instance the church of Blagoveshehenskaya in Tashkent (1896) was constructed in Russian stone architecture style. Tashkent station-house (1898) was built in an accurate manner carefully maintaining the style of traditional classicism.

In XX century the traditional Uzbek architecture was encountering with the range of complexities. On the one hand, it was a stagnation and slowdown of traditional achievements; on the other hand, there were ceaseless attempts of architectures to retain their best traditions.

Cities of Uzbekistan have still maintained their uniqueness, particularly in their historical parts. In this very period of time in Turkistan we can observe the appearance of new conception “jadidism”—national democratic flow of group of people the basic and preliminary idea of which was to develop the nation into the contemporary and culturally different society. They were aiming for the Europeanization of all individuals and improve the knowledge of population. Apart from it, to create the favorable atmosphere so as to let the Eastern and Western cultures interflow and coexist. It is important to mention that this process in art was mutual.

“Jadidism” took much resemblance with Egyptian reformism which was later named as a “Naxda” (Renaissance).

The soviet period in the history of Uzbekistan was complex and ambiguous. The prominent revolution of 1917 caused a disruptive impact on not only the political, economical, social spheres and affairs, but also on the fields of art, culture, social consciousness and spiritual values. Bright and sharp changes in social composition, proclamation of identity and collective agriculture considerably contributed to all spheres of artistic design and specific peculiarities of urban environment.

In honor of the fifth anniversary there were erected the first labor towns. Dwellings were so primitive. Labor town “Tezikova dacha” was planned as a round garden-city.

In 1920s the paramount task was to implicate a complete rehabilitation of cities. Thus, for example, the second assembly of the soviets of the Uzbek SSR in March 1927 decreed, that “Concerns about the development in old cities were in the establishment of water pipes, sewer system, extension of the streets and introduction of the minimums of the cultural life conditions”1.

In the course of war too much attention was drawn to the prosperity of municipal engineering. Uzbekistan obtained significant help since the numbers of universities and other educational establishments were evacuated to this region. Such renowned architects as A. Shusev, A. Kuznecov, V. Lavrov and others left indelible mark toward the development of architecture in Uzbekistan.

In 1944 there was founded an Authority which was responsible for architectural and building issues. The urban environment of Uzbekistan started obtaining a definite decorative appearance, which could be clearly seen in many architectural features.

The specific feature of the postwar period was the disappearance of boundaries between “new” and “old” parts of the towns. In 1950 literally all cities were exposed to the reconstruction, particularly Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara.

According to a survey result, “There are few questions yet to be solved in Uzbekistan, but the main are complete consideration of the local particularities, improvement of the esthetic quality of cities and towns”2.

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1 Khodzhaev I. Selected Works. V.2 T., 1972, p. 259.
Sh. Askarov: “Constructions were not traditionally simple ones anymore. On hand, it was heaviness, intensified by the stagnation of projective and architectural systems”.

It is ought to point out that the soviet municipal engineering was under the influence of ideological doctrine of the soviet government. Thus, for instance, the urban design was long under the pressure of monumental propaganda of Lenin.

Above all, the ruinous earthquake of 1966 played decisive role in drastic changing of initial principles of municipal engineering. Within the term of reconstruction all essential advanced technologies and techniques were undertaken and employed. Thus these factors were positively reflected in the modified urban environment.

One of the major and large-scale projects was the construction of the central part of the Tashkent city, namely the square of “Mustaqillik”. The square was arranged as a spatial composition, extending from south to north enabling the rest of establishments to be located reasonably and maintaining the strict contour. On the whole, artistic approach prevailed over the traditionally accepted methods.

The most interesting and sophisticated artistic design was applied in Samarkand in 1970-1980s. The main obstacle exacerbating the problem was the necessity to combine the history with modern and advanced features or, in other words, to embellish the entire contemporary composition due to the historic ensemble.

1970-1980 is the period of probes, trials and artistic experiments in the sphere of design of the urban environment. It is important to mention that there were various successful projects which managed to come up with the solution of the only concern about the ensemble of architectural installations. However, there were too many things to work on and complete.

Since the day of independence declared there has been a reevaluation of all values in the spiritual culture of the Uzbek nation. This time is also known as the process of self-identification and research, when the problems of national identity predominated in all spheres. For the last 25 years we have been observing the updates and renewals in all fields or areas of human life activities.

The problems of the municipal engineering and building itself have already turned out to be the crucial factors in cultural policy of the sovereign Uzbekistan.

Interestingly enough, the model of Khiva—one of the most ancient cities of Uzbekistan, was taken as a sample by Japanese specialists while constructing Astana. In this period of time the conception of regionalism was very popular and utilized by Japanese architects, one of them was Kisho Kurokava. He stated that the citizens perceive the city from the view of pedestrians and the shape or design of it is not so substantial. As the years go by, a city always tends to alter and modify so it would be unreasonable to give it an ultimate design. Therefore his method implies the unfinished composition which is adjustable and adoptive to any renovation. Such kind of city is able to develop in different directions so that the new regions will never serve as the alien areas.

The Japanese researchers have endowed considerably towards the analysis of the values and lifestyle of the Uzbek inhabitants. Interestingly, the Uzbek dwellers pointed out the notion of family, relatives, workplace and “mahalla” (neighborhood). According to the Japanese researchers, (Boontharm Davisi) “…local ideas, principles must become a priority, as to our task, we should protect and cherish them, since they entail to the
renewal of the city by the effort of the citizens themselves”.

Scientists concluded that in each historical city they ought to base upon its specificity. In addition, the conservation of the morphology was also known as a crucial point.

Thus, for instance, the Uzbek researchers highlighted the aspects, such as norms and law, projection, depopulation, transport, water, hotels, dwellings and raw materials.

Unconditionally, in Uzbekistan within the period of independence have emerged new principles of the modern urban design taking into account the previously applied historical experience.

The contemporary urban environment has already become the reflection of all changes that swept through the country. Now it is based on modern social idea, new advanced technologic adoption, opportunities and values of the new age. All these factors have determined the priorities of the artistic design of the contemporary cities.

Moreover, architectural appearance of the city must possess the esthetic value. Artistic design should always comply with all utilitarian and esthetic requirements of the society.

Elevation of the substantial image of property of city building could be achieved by the interaction of architectural art, which means active preparation of the monumental sculpturing, paintings and landscape into the town environment.

According to the scientists: “Architectural ensemble is a harmonic unity of the spatial combination of buildings, diverse installations, works of monumental art which are dependent on the initial idea itself”.

In the image of the up-to-date city magnificence merges and coexists with minority, real nature with artificial establishments and installations. The composition in the urban design implies the harmonic combination and compliance of all parts indicating its completeness and artistic solidarity.

**Conclusion**

The history of the individual countries and peoples of Urban Development shows that the criteria of artistic quality of urban development have evolved along with the history and culture of the country and people.

In the various stages of evaluation precedence received those new qualities of architecture and construction that meet the changing conditions of social life.

Improving the quality of content-shaped urban development can be achieved through the interaction of architecture and fine arts, i.e. the active inclusion of monumental sculpture and painting, arts and crafts, the landscape in the urban environment.

**References**