



"THE THEORY OF XX CENTURY ARCHITECTURE IN UZBEKISTAN"

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Abstract: This study examines the theory of architecture in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century, focusing on the development of architectural thought, design principles, and urban planning concepts under changing social, political, and cultural conditions. The research analyzes the interaction between traditional Uzbek architectural heritage and modern architectural trends introduced throughout the Soviet period and after. Special attention is given to the transformation of architectural theory in response to modernization, industrialization, and the search for national identity in the built environment. The study explores the contributions of architects, planners, and theorists who shaped the architectural landscape of Uzbekistan and investigates how local traditions were integrated into contemporary architectural practices. The findings demonstrate that twentieth-century Uzbek architectural theory evolved through a dynamic synthesis of historical heritage and modern innovation, creating a distinctive architectural identity that continues to influence contemporary architecture in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Uzbekistan; twentieth-century architecture; architectural theory; architectural heritage; urban planning; Soviet architecture; national identity; modernization; traditional architecture; architectural development.

Introduction

Architecture serves as a reflection of the cultural, social, political, and technological transformations that occur within a society. In Uzbekistan, the twentieth century was a period of significant change that deeply influenced



architectural theory and practice. The region experienced dramatic political shifts, including the establishment of Soviet rule, rapid industrialization, urban development, and eventually the achievement of independence in 1991. These historical processes shaped the evolution of architectural thought and contributed to the formation of a unique architectural identity that combined traditional heritage with modern design principles.

The architectural history of Uzbekistan is rooted in a rich cultural legacy that dates back centuries. Historic cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva demonstrate the achievements of Islamic architecture through their monumental structures, intricate ornamentation, and sophisticated urban planning traditions. However, the twentieth century introduced new challenges and opportunities for architects and urban planners. The modernization policies implemented during the Soviet era encouraged the adoption of contemporary construction technologies, standardized building methods, and new approaches to urban development. As a result, architectural theory in Uzbekistan underwent substantial transformation while attempting to preserve elements of national and cultural identity. During the early Soviet period, architecture became an important instrument for expressing political ideology and social progress. Architectural theorists and practitioners were encouraged to develop designs that reflected socialist values while meeting the practical demands of growing urban populations. This period witnessed the emergence of new residential districts, public buildings, industrial complexes, and cultural institutions. At the same time, architects sought ways to integrate traditional Uzbek decorative motifs, spatial concepts, and climatic adaptations into modern architectural forms. The interaction between local traditions and international architectural movements became a defining feature of twentieth-century Uzbek architecture.



The second half of the century saw further developments in architectural theory, particularly in relation to urban planning, environmental adaptation, and regional identity. Rapid urbanization required innovative solutions to housing shortages and infrastructure expansion. Architects increasingly focused on creating buildings that responded to the climatic conditions of Central Asia while maintaining aesthetic and cultural relevance. Theoretical discussions centered on balancing functionality, technological advancement, and historical continuity. These debates contributed to the emergence of architectural approaches that distinguished Uzbekistan from other Soviet republics. Following independence, the reassessment of national heritage gained renewed importance. Architectural theory began to emphasize the preservation and revival of historical traditions alongside contemporary development. Scholars and architects revisited the architectural achievements of the twentieth century to better understand the relationship between modernization and cultural identity. This process highlighted the significance of theoretical concepts that had guided architectural practice throughout the century.

This study examines the theory of architecture in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century, analyzing its historical development, major influences, and theoretical foundations. By exploring the interaction between traditional architectural heritage and modern architectural trends, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how architectural theory evolved in response to changing political, social, and cultural circumstances. The study contributes to a deeper appreciation of Uzbekistan's architectural legacy and its continuing impact on contemporary architectural discourse.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative historical and analytical research methodology to investigate the development of architectural theory in Uzbekistan



during the twentieth century. The research is based on the examination of historical documents, academic literature, architectural projects, urban planning materials, and scholarly studies related to the evolution of architecture in Uzbekistan. The chosen methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations, historical transformations, and cultural influences that shaped architectural thought throughout the century. The primary research approach is historical analysis. This method allows for the investigation of architectural developments within their specific political, social, and cultural contexts. The twentieth century in Uzbekistan was characterized by major political changes, including the establishment of Soviet governance, extensive modernization programs, and the emergence of an independent national state. These historical events significantly influenced architectural theory and practice. Therefore, examining architecture through a historical perspective provides valuable insights into the relationship between political ideology and architectural development. A literature review constitutes an important component of the methodology. Academic publications, architectural journals, monographs, and research papers addressing Central Asian and Uzbek architecture were analyzed to identify dominant theoretical concepts and scholarly interpretations. Special attention was given to studies discussing the interaction between traditional architectural heritage and modern architectural movements. The review of literature also helped establish a theoretical framework for understanding the transformation of architectural ideas throughout different periods of the twentieth century. Comparative analysis was used to examine similarities and differences between traditional Uzbek architectural principles and modern architectural approaches introduced during the Soviet era. This method enabled the identification of key elements that were preserved, modified, or transformed in response to modernization. Architectural characteristics such as spatial organization, decorative design, climatic adaptation, construction materials, and urban planning principles were compared across different historical periods.



The study also incorporates case-study analysis of selected architectural landmarks and urban development projects in major Uzbek cities, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, and other urban centers. These examples provide practical evidence of how architectural theories were implemented in real projects. Public buildings, residential complexes, cultural institutions, and urban planning schemes were examined to evaluate the relationship between theoretical concepts and architectural practice. Data interpretation was conducted using thematic analysis. Architectural theories, design principles, and planning concepts were categorized into major themes, including modernization, national identity, regional adaptation, cultural heritage preservation, and Soviet ideological influence. This approach facilitated the identification of recurring patterns and trends within architectural discourse. The reliability of the research was enhanced through the use of multiple sources and cross-referencing of historical and academic materials. Secondary data from recognized scholars and architectural historians were critically evaluated to ensure objectivity and accuracy. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of the study, combining perspectives from architectural history, cultural studies, and urban planning, contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Overall, the methodology provides a structured framework for analyzing the evolution of architectural theory in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century. By integrating historical analysis, literature review, comparative methods, and case-study examination, the study aims to reveal the complex processes through which architectural thought developed under changing political, cultural, and technological conditions.

Results and Discussion



The findings of this study demonstrate that the development of architectural theory in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century was shaped by a continuous interaction between traditional architectural heritage and modern architectural influences. The analysis reveals that architectural thought evolved through several distinct stages corresponding to major political, social, and cultural transformations. Despite significant external influences, Uzbek architecture maintained a strong connection to local traditions, resulting in the emergence of a unique architectural identity. One of the most significant findings concerns the influence of Soviet modernization policies on architectural theory. During the early and middle decades of the twentieth century, architecture became closely associated with the objectives of industrialization, urbanization, and socialist development. Architectural theories emphasized functionality, efficiency, and the creation of public spaces that reflected collective social values. Large-scale urban planning projects and residential developments were implemented in response to rapid population growth and economic transformation. These projects introduced new construction technologies and standardized building practices that differed considerably from traditional architectural methods. However, the results indicate that complete adoption of international modernist principles did not occur. Instead, architects frequently sought to incorporate elements of traditional Uzbek architecture into contemporary designs. Decorative patterns, courtyard-based spatial organization, climatic adaptation strategies, and references to historical monuments remained important sources of inspiration. This synthesis of tradition and modernity became one of the defining characteristics of architectural theory in Uzbekistan. The integration of local cultural elements helped create buildings that were both modern in function and recognizable in their national character. The study also reveals the importance of environmental considerations in architectural discourse. Uzbekistan's hot and dry climate required architects to develop solutions that enhanced thermal comfort and energy efficiency. Traditional architectural features such as shaded courtyards,



natural ventilation systems, and carefully designed building orientations influenced theoretical discussions about sustainable design long before environmental sustainability became a global concern. The adaptation of modern architecture to regional climatic conditions emerged as a significant theme in architectural theory during the second half of the twentieth century. Case-study analysis further demonstrates the role of major urban centers in shaping architectural innovation. Tashkent, in particular, became a laboratory for new architectural ideas following reconstruction efforts after the 1966 earthquake. The rebuilding process encouraged experimentation with modern urban planning concepts while simultaneously promoting the incorporation of national architectural motifs. As a result, many public buildings constructed during this period reflected a balance between technological advancement and cultural continuity.

The discussion also highlights the growing emphasis on national identity during the late Soviet and post-independence periods. Architectural theorists increasingly advocated for the preservation of historical heritage and the revival of traditional forms. This shift reflected broader cultural movements aimed at strengthening national consciousness and redefining architectural values. Following independence, these ideas gained further significance as architects and scholars reassessed the architectural legacy of the twentieth century. Overall, the results confirm that architectural theory in Uzbekistan evolved through a dynamic process of adaptation and synthesis. Rather than replacing traditional architectural values, modernization generated new opportunities for their reinterpretation within contemporary contexts. The interaction between heritage, ideology, technology, and environmental conditions produced a distinctive theoretical framework that continues to influence architectural practice in modern Uzbekistan. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how architecture reflects broader social and cultural transformations while preserving historical continuity.



Conclusion

The study of architectural theory in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century demonstrates that architecture developed as a complex and dynamic field shaped by historical, political, cultural, and technological factors. Throughout the century, architectural thought evolved in response to major social transformations, including Soviet modernization, rapid urbanization, industrial development, and the formation of an independent national identity. These processes significantly influenced both theoretical approaches and practical architectural solutions. The research findings indicate that twentieth-century architectural theory in Uzbekistan cannot be understood solely through the lens of modernism or Soviet architectural policies. Instead, it emerged from the continuous interaction between traditional architectural heritage and contemporary design principles. Uzbek architects and theorists sought to preserve cultural values while adapting to new functional, technological, and ideological requirements. As a result, architectural development reflected a unique synthesis of local traditions and modern innovations. One of the most important characteristics of architectural theory during this period was the preservation of regional identity. Traditional architectural elements, including climatic adaptation techniques, ornamental decoration, spatial organization, and historical references, remained influential despite the widespread adoption of modern construction methods. These features contributed to the creation of an architectural language that was both modern and culturally distinctive. The study also highlights the significance of urban planning and environmental adaptation in shaping architectural discourse. The challenges of population growth, urban expansion, and regional climatic conditions encouraged architects to develop innovative solutions that balanced functionality with sustainability. Such approaches continue to influence contemporary architectural practice in Uzbekistan.



Furthermore, the research demonstrates that the late twentieth century witnessed a growing interest in cultural heritage preservation and national architectural expression. Following independence, architectural theory increasingly emphasized the importance of historical continuity and the revival of national traditions. This shift reinforced the role of architecture as a means of expressing cultural identity and collective memory. In conclusion, the theory of architecture in Uzbekistan during the twentieth century represents a valuable example of how architectural thought can evolve through the interaction of tradition and modernization. The architectural achievements of this period provide important lessons for contemporary architects, urban planners, and researchers seeking to balance technological progress with cultural preservation. Understanding the theoretical foundations of twentieth-century Uzbek architecture contributes to a deeper appreciation of the country's architectural heritage and its continuing relevance in the modern world.

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