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## **KOKAND AND ANDIJAN ARCHITECTURE: MADRASAS AND PALACES OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

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### **Abstract**

The architecture of Kokand and Andijan in the 19th century represents a crucial chapter in the development of Uzbek cultural and artistic heritage, reflecting both the continuity of Islamic and Central Asian traditions and the transformations brought about by political, social, and imperial contexts. As the Fergana Valley became a vibrant center of intellectual, spiritual, and political life, Kokand emerged as the capital of the Kokand Khanate, producing monumental architectural ensembles such as the Khudayar Khan Palace and numerous madrasas, while Andijan, a historically significant city, contributed with mosques, madrasas, and civic complexes that combined functionality with ornamentation. This study explores the architectural forms of these two cities in the 19th century, with a special focus on the madrasas and palaces that symbolized both religious devotion and political authority. Using historical-architectural methodology, the paper examines archival records, architectural surveys, and stylistic comparisons to contextualize these monuments within broader regional and imperial frameworks. Results indicate that Kokand and Andijan architecture of the period successfully synthesized Islamic ornamental vocabulary, Turkic spatial traditions, and, increasingly, Russian imperial influences, producing structures that remain significant as cultural heritage sites. The discussion emphasizes the dual role of these monuments as both religious and political symbols, while the conclusion stresses their enduring contribution to Uzbekistan's architectural identity and their importance for contemporary heritage preservation.



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**Keywords:** Kokand Architecture; Andijan Architecture; Khudayar Khan Palace; 19th Century Madrasas; Fergana Valley; Uzbek Cultural Heritage

## **Introduction**

The architecture of the Fergana Valley in the 19th century, particularly in Kokand and Andijan, reflects one of the most vibrant periods of cultural production in Central Asia, as the region stood at the crossroads of Islamic tradition, Turkic identity, and Russian imperial expansion. Kokand, the capital of the Kokand Khanate, rose to prominence as a political, religious, and cultural hub, where khans sought to legitimize their authority by commissioning monumental buildings that blended the architectural vocabulary of Islamic Central Asia with the aspirations of a modernizing polity. The Khudayar Khan Palace, known for its elaborate decoration, grand courtyards, and richly ornamented façades, epitomized the opulence of the Kokand court, while the numerous madrasas, such as the Norbutabiy Madrasa, served as centers of Islamic education and scholarship, embodying continuity with earlier Timurid and Shaybanid traditions. Andijan, though less politically dominant than Kokand, nonetheless played a significant role as a religious and commercial city, where mosques and madrasas were constructed to serve the needs of the local community, reflecting both aesthetic refinement and practical concerns. Together, the architectural heritage of these two cities illustrates how the Islamic ornamental canon, with its intricate tilework, geometric symmetry, and epigraphic design, was adapted to the local context of the Fergana Valley, while the growing presence of Russian imperial power at the end of the 19th century introduced new stylistic and structural influences. This paper aims to analyze these architectural developments through the lens of continuity and transformation, situating Kokand and Andijan within the broader trajectory of Uzbek architectural history and highlighting the role of 19th-century monuments in shaping both national identity and global heritage recognition.

## **Methods**

The methodological framework employed in this study combines historical analysis, architectural survey, and comparative stylistics to examine the



architectural forms of Kokand and Andijan in the 19th century, with particular emphasis on madrasas and palaces as central categories of religious and political architecture. Archival research included examination of Kokand Khanate chronicles, Russian imperial records, and travel accounts by explorers and diplomats who documented the Fergana Valley's built environment. Secondary literature from architectural historians and Central Asian scholars provided interpretive tools for situating these monuments within regional and global architectural traditions. Field observations, including existing photographic documentation and modern heritage reports, were used to analyze the construction techniques, materials, and decorative features of key monuments, such as the Khudayar Khan Palace, Norbutabiy Madrasa in Kokand, and the Jome Mosque complex in Andijan. Comparative analysis involved examining similarities and differences with other Central Asian monuments of the period, as well as assessing the influence of Russian imperial architecture on local styles. The methodology also integrated heritage studies perspectives, addressing issues of preservation, restoration, and authenticity in contemporary contexts. By employing this multi-disciplinary approach, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the architectural synthesis that defined Kokand and Andijan's built environment in the 19th century.

## **Results**

The results of this study indicate that the 19th-century architecture of Kokand and Andijan represents both continuity with earlier Central Asian traditions and significant adaptation to the political and cultural conditions of the period. In Kokand, the Khudayar Khan Palace emerged as a symbol of khal authority, featuring monumental scale, richly decorated façades with polychrome tilework, intricate wood carvings, and spatial organization that combined ceremonial courtyards with private quarters, reflecting both Islamic traditions and the desire to project dynastic legitimacy. Madrasas such as the Norbutabiy Madrasa displayed typical features of Islamic educational architecture—rectangular courtyards, surrounding hujras (student cells), and central mosques—while incorporating regional Fergana stylistic elements such as wooden verandas and distinctive brick patterns. In Andijan, the Jome Mosque and associated madrasas



represented the city's religious centrality, characterized by modest scale but rich ornamentation, including stucco decoration, wooden pillars with fine carving, and the use of locally sourced materials that emphasized both functionality and aesthetic appeal. Across both cities, the architectural vocabulary relied heavily on traditional Islamic forms such as domes, arches, and muqarnas, while integrating local artistic crafts, including ceramic tilework and wood carving, that enriched the visual identity of the monuments. At the same time, Russian imperial expansion introduced new materials, construction techniques, and stylistic elements, particularly in administrative and military structures, which influenced the architectural environment and signaled the beginning of a hybridization process. Thus, the results demonstrate that Kokand and Andijan's 19th-century monuments embody a synthesis of Islamic tradition, regional identity, and external influences, producing a distinctive architectural heritage that remains integral to Uzbekistan's cultural landscape.

## **Discussion**

The discussion of Kokand and Andijan's 19th-century architecture highlights the ways in which local communities, political authorities, and external forces interacted to shape the built environment of the Fergana Valley. The Khudayar Khan Palace serves as an emblem of architectural diplomacy, expressing both continuity with Timurid and Shaybanid legacies and the Kokand Khanate's ambition to assert itself as a major regional power. Its combination of elaborate tilework, symmetrical courtyards, and wooden craftsmanship illustrates the depth of local artistry, while its monumental scale reflects political aspirations. Madrasas in Kokand and Andijan, by contrast, emphasize the educational and spiritual dimensions of architecture, preserving the Islamic tradition of learning while adapting to local needs and resources, such as the integration of verandas to suit the Fergana climate. The architectural forms of Andijan, though more modest than Kokand's palatial structures, reflect the city's role as a center of Islamic devotion and community life, where ornamentation served symbolic as well as aesthetic purposes. Russian imperial influence complicates the narrative, as colonial architecture introduced Western forms that coexisted with, and sometimes overshadowed, local traditions. Yet rather than erasing indigenous



forms, these encounters produced hybrid landscapes, where madrasas and mosques stood alongside Russian administrative buildings, reflecting the layered identity of the cities. This dynamic underscores the resilience of local traditions, which continued to thrive despite external pressures, and the creativity of local artisans, who adapted new influences without abandoning cultural continuity. From a heritage perspective, the preservation of these 19th-century monuments is vital not only for understanding Uzbekistan's architectural history but also for situating Kokand and Andijan within global discussions on cultural hybridity, resilience, and identity.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that the 19th-century architecture of Kokand and Andijan, particularly their madrasas and palaces, represents a remarkable synthesis of Islamic tradition, regional identity, and external influence, illustrating the dynamic cultural processes that shaped the Fergana Valley. Kokand's Khudayar Khan Palace stands as a symbol of political authority and artistic opulence, while the city's madrasas embody the continuity of Islamic educational traditions adapted to local contexts. Andijan's mosques and madrasas, though more modest, reveal the deep integration of artistry, spirituality, and community life in architectural expression. Together, these monuments highlight the persistence of Islamic ornamental vocabulary, the adaptation of local crafts, and the selective incorporation of Russian imperial elements, producing a hybrid architectural identity. The findings emphasize that the architecture of Kokand and Andijan in the 19th century was not static but dynamically responsive to cultural, political, and social contexts, ensuring both continuity and innovation. In the contemporary era, the preservation and study of these monuments are essential not only for safeguarding Uzbekistan's cultural heritage but also for contributing to global understanding of how architecture embodies cultural dialogue and resilience. By situating Kokand and Andijan within the broader narrative of Uzbek and Central Asian architecture, this research affirms their enduring role as sites of memory, identity, and creativity in the world architectural heritage.



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