



THE PRESERVED ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF TRADITIONAL HOMES OF 19TH-CENTURY SCHOLARS IN THE FERGANA VALLEY

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ABSTRACT

The Fergana Valley, located in eastern Uzbekistan, has long been a center of intellectual, cultural, and social development. During the 19th century, numerous scholars resided in the valley, and their homes reflect both the lifestyle and architectural ingenuity of the period. These traditional residences demonstrate adaptation to environmental conditions, social norms, and aesthetic values. This study examines the preserved architectural features of these homes, focusing on both exterior and interior design, spatial organization, and decorative elements. Additionally, the paper addresses cultural significance and challenges associated with the preservation of these historic structures. Understanding and safeguarding this heritage is essential for preserving the cultural identity of the region and inspiring future architectural practices..

The 19th century in the Fergana Valley was marked by considerable intellectual activity. Scholars contributed to education, science, literature, and the administration of the region[1]. The homes of these scholars offer a unique window into their daily lives, social structures, and the cultural context of the time. Built primarily from local materials such as adobe, baked bricks, and timber, these residences were designed to withstand extreme climatic conditions while offering functional and aesthetic spaces. Preserving these homes not only maintains physical structures but also safeguards intangible cultural heritage associated with the region's scholarly traditions.

Exterior Architecture: Traditional homes in the Fergana Valley are notable for their environmental adaptation and structural design. Thick walls and small windows helped maintain thermal comfort in hot summers and cold winters [2]. Roofs were often flat or slightly sloped to accommodate seasonal rainfall. Central courtyards were a common feature, providing private outdoor spaces for family gatherings, study, and social interaction. Decorative elements such as carved wooden doors, patterned brickwork, and ornamental balconies enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the homes while reflecting social status and cultural values. These features demonstrate the residents' connection to local

craftsmanship and architectural traditions. Courtyards were often landscaped with small gardens or water features to improve microclimate and comfort[3].



Interior Architecture and Decoration: The interior layout of these homes was carefully planned to accommodate family life and intellectual pursuits. Private spaces, particularly for women, were separated from public areas where guests and students could be received. Courtyards opened to living spaces, study rooms, and guest reception areas, supporting both domestic and scholarly activities. Interior decoration often featured intricately carved wooden beams, painted ceilings, patterned tiles, and ornamental niches. These decorative features conveyed artistic skill, cultural symbolism, and intellectual identity[4]. The arrangement of furniture and room functions emphasized both comfort and the educational needs of the household. The interior decoration of traditional Kokand houses demonstrates a harmonious blend of artistry, function, and cultural expression. These historic homes not only provided shelter but also reflected the aesthetic sensibilities and social status of their inhabitants. The use of wood carving, painted motifs, and handcrafted textiles showcases the rich heritage of Fergana Valley craftsmanship. Interior decoration often featured intricately carved wooden beams, painted ceilings, patterned tiles, and ornamental niches. These decorative features conveyed artistic skill, cultural symbolism, and intellectual identity (Khalid, 2015; Cambridge Press). The arrangement of furniture and room functions emphasized both comfort and the educational needs of the household.



The homes of 19th-century scholars were not merely living spaces; they served as centers of education and cultural transmission. These residences reflect social hierarchies,

scholarly life, and family traditions. They also provide insight into sustainable architectural practices, including climate-adaptive design, use of local materials, and integration of aesthetic elements (Petersen, 2010; UNESCO). Preserving these homes allows historians, architects, and the general public to study and appreciate Central Asia's rich cultural and intellectual heritage.

Preservation

Efforts:

Many of these historic homes face deterioration due to natural aging, urban development, and insufficient conservation policies. Effective preservation requires a combination of legal protection, community involvement, and technical restoration using traditional materials and methods. Restoring courtyards, wooden carvings, and decorative elements ensures the continuity of architectural and cultural knowledge. By protecting these homes, contemporary society maintains a tangible connection to the intellectual history of the Fergana Valley.

Conclusion: The preserved traditional homes of 19th-century scholars in the Fergana Valley represent an invaluable intersection of architecture, culture, and education. They provide a window into historical lifestyles, intellectual practices, and sustainable construction methods. Preserving these homes is essential for maintaining the cultural identity of the region and promoting appreciation for Central Asian architectural heritage. The continued study and conservation of these structures ensure that the legacy of the valley's scholars remains accessible to future generations.

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