

# Architectural, Planning, and Structural Solutions of Architectural Monuments in Historic City Centers (A Case Study of Kokand City)

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**Abstract:** *This article presents a systematic analysis of the historic core and traditional mahalla residential structures of Kokand, one of the oldest urban planning centers in the Fergana Valley. Specifically, using the examples of European architecture from the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the city - namely the Vadyaev and Potelyakov houses, and the Russo-Asiatic Bank buildings - the study scientifically substantiates the issues of adaptive reuse of historic architectural heritage for modern life (functional adaptation), preserving their historical-artistic value, and maintaining the intactness of the quiet internal ecosystem of adjacent traditional mahallas.*

**Keywords:** *Kokand urban planning, historic core, traditional mahalla, European architecture, Art Nouveau, Neoclassicism, Vadyaev house, Potelyakov house, Russo-Asiatic Bank, functional adaptation, quiet ecosystem, historical-artistic value*

## Introduction

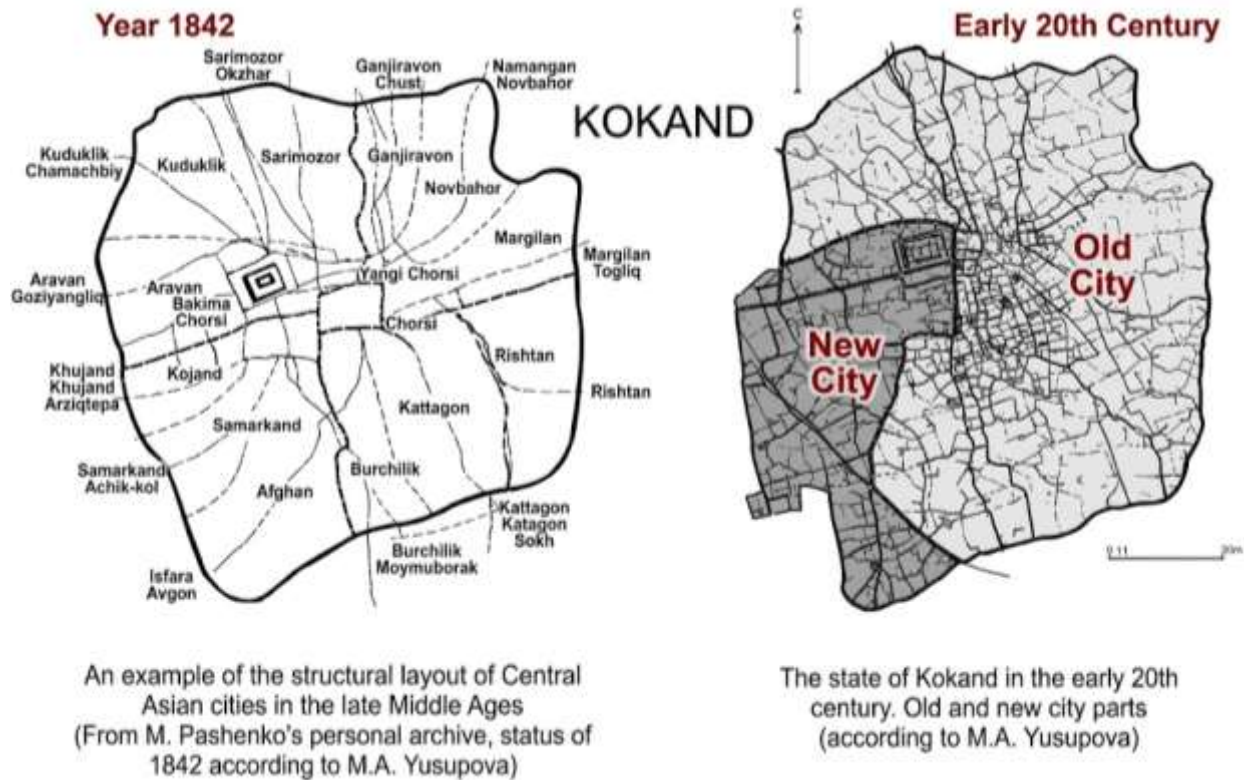
According to the data provided by the Main Scientific and Production Centre for the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Sites of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage, established pursuant to Decree No. PF-6199 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, dated 6 April 2021, “On Measures to Further Improve the Public Administration System in the Fields of Tourism, Sports and Cultural Heritage,” the city of Kokand has 9 architectural monuments of national significance, 55 architectural monuments of local significance, as well as 6 monumental sculptural sites under state protection.

The city of Kokand is a city with rich historical traditions, in which mahallas occupy a particularly important place in the social and cultural life of the city. There are 61 mahallas in the city, each of which has an active body of citizens’ self-government. Today, the mahallas have become centres for the restoration and development of historical traditions. During the years of independence, the city has undergone significant transformation. Numerous industrial, cultural and public-service facilities have been constructed, while parks and public gardens have been established. Recreational areas are also being developed along the riverbanks to provide residents with opportunities for leisure and recreation.

## Results

Kokand’s urban structure has preserved its historical layout and is divided into old and new parts. In the nineteenth century, the new part of the city developed with the construction of commercial enterprises, administrative buildings, banks and industrial facilities. The new part contains such historic buildings as the Bank of Asia, the Vodyaev House (now the City Administration building), the Potelyakhov House (now the International Telephone Exchange), the A. Simkhaev House (now the Oil College), the M. Simkhaev House, belonging to his brother (now the Pedagogical Institute), the Mandalaki Brothers’ Building (now a kindergarten), and the Knabe House (now Children’s Home No. 7).

In the old part of the city, the Khan’s Palace known as Urda, residential buildings dating mainly from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, architectural monuments, as well as historic mosques and madrasas have been preserved.



Examples of Russian and European Architecture in the City. Following the conquest of Kokand in 1876, the Kokand Khanate was abolished, and the Fergana Valley was incorporated into the Fergana Region of the Turkestan Governor-Generalship. Although Kokand initially served as the administrative centre of the region during the first years of the colonial period, the first Military Governor of the Fergana Region, Skobelev, formally appealed to Turkestan Governor-General Kaufman, requesting permission to establish an entirely new city near Asaka or Margilan to serve as the regional administrative centre. He argued that Kokand was unsuitable for this role because of its large urban area and high population density, the lack of sufficient space in the city centre for the construction of regional administrative buildings, frequent dust storms, waterlogged soil, insufficient iodine content in the water, and other unfavourable factors.

After permission was granted, construction began near Margilan. In 1877, the regional administration was transferred to the new administrative centre, the city of New Margilan. Kokand, having lost its status as the regional administrative centre, was reduced to the status of a district town. However, New Margilan achieved only the status of a military-administrative centre, while Kokand retained its position as the financial, commercial, industrial and cultural centre of the region.

This circumstance was reflected in the subsequent development of the city's new urban district. In its construction, the interests, preferences and tastes of financial and commercial-industrial entrepreneurs were taken into consideration. The colonial authorities were in no hurry to construct a new city district in Kokand. More precisely, for a long period no official directive was issued from the central administration regarding this matter. Initially, the colonial authorities adapted the former palace complex and the barracks surrounding it, the courtyards of officials of the khanate, and other existing buildings for residential and administrative purposes, making such modifications as installing windows, stoves and other facilities.

Taking into account the city's advantageous geographical location, its long-established role as a major trading centre, its industrial potential and other favourable factors, entrepreneurs began relocating to Kokand from various parts of the Russian Empire in order to invest their capital and obtain substantial

profits. Only after this, approximately ten years after the conquest of the city, did the administration of the Turkestan Governor-Generalship grant permission for the construction of a new urban district in Kokand.

While in several cities of Turkestan, including Tashkent and Samarkand, the new city was constructed on undeveloped land adjacent to the old city, in Kokand the new city was developed directly within the existing city fortification, replacing agricultural fields and gardens situated between the mahallas, as well as former cemeteries that had gradually been transformed into pastureland. In some locations, existing residential plots were purchased from their owners and replaced with new buildings.

The new city developed around two principal avenues: Rozenbakh Street, extending westward from the vicinity of the Urda Palace, and Skobelev Street, which connected Rozenbakh Street with the newly constructed railway station. A network of secondary streets branched off from these main thoroughfares.

In contrast to many examples of traditional national architecture, the majority of the architectural heritage of the new city has survived to the present day. These buildings mainly include residences of wealthy families, banks, various stock exchanges and commercial-industrial associations, company offices, retail shops and other structures. It is not possible to provide detailed information about all of them; therefore, the most noteworthy examples are discussed below.

**The Vodyaev House.** The Vodyaev family, consisting of Khaim Vodyaev and his sons, was among the leading cotton magnates of Turkestan. They owned one of the most technologically advanced cotton factories of the period, as well as a cotton-trading company. They supplied large quantities of raw cotton from Turkestan to manufacturing enterprises in Russia.

In 1907, Yakov Khaimovich Vodyaev commissioned the construction of a large and luxurious residence at the intersection of Rozenbakh and Skobelev Streets. The building was designed and supervised by the prominent architect G. M. Svarichevsky. At that time, Svarichevsky was a leading specialist in the design of buildings in the fashionable Art Nouveau style.

The building has a plan in the shape of the letter “P”, with a long corridor connecting all of the rooms. Two façades, one facing Rozenbakh Street and the other facing Skobelev Street, were designed in the form of semicircular arches, with doors and windows occupying the interior of the arches. The entrance from the façade led to the vestibule, which was covered by a metal dome. A veranda was constructed on three sides of the building facing the courtyard.

Because the building was particularly large and luxurious, Vodyaev soon constructed a smaller residence for his family and subsequently leased the larger building to various banks. The Moscow Accounting Bank occupied the left wing, while the Siberian Commercial Bank occupied the right wing. In 1913, the building housed the Kokand Soviet of Workers’, Peasants’ and Soldiers’ Deputies. Since then, the building has continued to be used as an administrative centre.

**Russian-Asian Bank.** In 1912, a dedicated bank building was constructed according to a design by I.A.Markevich in a Neo-Classical style with Art Nouveau influences, with funding from the Moscow and Chinese banks.

At one time, sensationalist publications even circulated an inaccurate claim that the bricks used for the building had supposedly been manufactured in China and transported to Kokand by being tied to the bellies of sheep. The façade is richly ornamented and highly decorative. The interior surfaces of the domes were executed using a coffered (cassette) design. The façade is decorated with windows of rectangular, circular and other complex geometric forms, incorporating intricate latticework.

Overall, the building is considered one of the more architecturally distinguished structures constructed during this period. In February 1918, after the government of the Kokand Autonomy was crushed by the Bolsheviks, a peace agreement between the local population and the Bolshevik authorities was

signed in this building. Since its construction, the building has continued to serve as a banking institution. At present, it houses the Kokand branch of Agrobank.

**The Potelyakhov House.** The building was commissioned in 1907 by R.T.Potelyakhov, a prominent merchant and one of the cotton magnates of the period, for his young Greek wife. It was constructed at the intersection of Skobelev and Rozenbakh Streets, opposite the Vodyaev House. It was regarded as one of the most beautiful residences constructed in Kokand at that time.

Rafael Potelyakhov was known not only as an entrepreneur and investor but also as a public figure. He served as the Minister of Food in the government of the Kokand Autonomy.

A greenhouse was constructed in the courtyard of the building, reportedly the first of its kind in Kokand. Flowers brought from different parts of the world were cultivated there.

After the building was confiscated, it was converted into the Central Telegraph Office. Today, the building serves as a “Single Window” centre, providing services to entrepreneurs.

**The Mandalaki Brothers’ Houses.** This complex, consisting of two separate houses, was commissioned in 1904 by the Mandalaki brothers, who were among the leading figures in Turkestan's silk industry. The name of the architect has not been preserved.

The Mandalaki brothers were specialists in sericulture, primarily engaged in improving silkworm breeds and producing silkworm eggs. Their silkworm factory was located near these houses and continues to operate today.

The houses were constructed in the spirit of Ancient Greek architecture. The right wing contained luxurious reception rooms and dining rooms, while the left wing housed offices and bedrooms. These spaces were connected by a long corridor to the kitchen, bathrooms and servants’ rooms. At the end of the corridor, a modest staircase led to a gazebo located above the house.

Relief ornamentation featuring animal motifs (zoomorphic ornament) was widely used in the decoration of the buildings. Today, the premises house a kindergarten and a centre for young artists.

**The Kraft Brothers’ House.** In 1903, the Kraft brothers commissioned the construction of this building on Rozenbakh Street according to a design by the talented architect V. S. Geintselsman.

The Kraft brothers were prominent entrepreneurs who owned a trading company known as the Kraft Brothers Trading House, as well as cotton-fluff factories in Besharik.

The complex consists of two magnificent buildings positioned opposite each other and designed with a high degree of symmetry, creating a mirror-like correspondence between them. An arched passageway connects the two buildings. A tower was constructed at the entrance to the passageway, giving it the appearance of a monumental entrance façade.

The addition of oval decorative turrets to the main façade is a characteristic feature of this architect's work. The exterior walls were decorated with moulded ganch plaster ornamentation.

At present, the building houses the city's Defence Committee.

| No. | Name of the Monument  | Date (Century, Year) | Type     | District                                                                             | City   | Address            |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| 1   | Kraft Brothers’ House | 19th century         | Building |  | Kokand | 54 Istiqlol Street |

|   |                    |      |          |                                                                                    |        |                         |
|---|--------------------|------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|
| 2 | Mandalaki House    | 1911 | Building |  | Kokand | 26 Kokand Sadosi Street |
| 3 | Russian-Asian Bank | 1910 | Building |  | Kokand | 34 Istiqlol Street      |
| 5 | Vodyaev House      | 1911 | Building |  | Kokand | Turon Street            |
| 6 | Potelyakhov House  | 1907 | Building |  | Kokand | Turon Street            |

### Conclusion

The systematic table developed within the framework of this study reflects the chronology, spatial distribution characteristics, and functional status of cultural heritage sites in the Fergana Region. The analysis indicates that the architectural character of monuments that are currently unused and left vacant is approaching a critical stage of deterioration.

In order to preserve this rich cultural heritage and transmit it to future generations in its authentic condition, it is necessary to develop not only a programme of measures aimed at safeguarding the physical integrity of heritage sites, but also regulations for integrated protection zones that enable their digital monitoring and management within the urban planning system.

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