



The Stages of Urbanization Development and Their Historical-Philosophical Analysis

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Abstract: This article discusses the stages of urban development that have occurred throughout our country's history and their unique characteristics. The stages of development are examined from a historical perspective, with insights provided on their advantages and potential applications in the present day. Additionally, the urbanization stages are analyzed from a philosophical and historical viewpoint, with new stages being proposed.

Keywords: Urbanization, "Tent" City-Settlements, Proto-City, Dual City, Urban Culture, Agglomerations, Gers, Rabat, Berun, Darun, Hellenism, Radial Streets.



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Introduction

In recent years, greater attention has been given to the issues of peace in our country, national prosperity, and the well-being of the people. This can be seen through the wide-ranging reforms implemented in various sectors. In particular, many were pleased with the president's directive to develop important documents aimed at advancing urbanization processes by 2030. Accelerating urbanization processes in the country is very important for changing people's worldview and increasing social activity. Many people might have a question: How important is urbanization in our country? What are the beneficial aspects of urbanization, and what opportunities does it create for us?

Methodology

In the early stages of the emergence of cities in Central Asian regions, most of the cities initially began as encampments and settlements. Some of them were formed in front of temples, as well as in the form of fortresses or palaces. In the first cities, craftsmanship was established, and later, as trade developed, trading cities emerged (Po'latov X, 2008).

However, in the available encyclopedic literature on the history of architecture, the earliest urban planning history in the Central Asian region is dated to the 4th century BC, exemplified by the city of Jonbaz Qala (Всеобщая история архитектуры (ВИА)). In the ancient period, we can observe the emergence of "tent" cities and settlements, where all the buildings were constructed from tents (Niu, 2024). These dual cities were rectangular in shape with a single gate, featuring an administrative, commercial, and public building network at the core, and the city's main street cutting through its center (Jurayeva, 2021). In his 2018 book "Geography of Cities", geographer A.S. Soliyev studied the stages of urbanization in our country by dividing them into five phases: the first phase spans from the 3rd-2nd millennia BC to 1917, and the remaining periods are divided into four phases starting from 1917 (Soliyev et al, 2018).

The article employs scientific methods of knowledge such as comprehensive analysis, examination, synthesis, critical approach, and comparison (Yu, 2024).

Result and Discussion

The formation of urban culture, like the development of society, has progressed through a continuous path of advancement. According to this principle, the development of urban planning culture has passed through long, gradual stages. Recent research has discovered proto-urban cultures dating back to the 2nd millennium BC. Therefore, it is more rational to consider this period as the era of the emergence of the earliest cities (Q. Ma, 2023).

The following factors played an important role in the formation and development of early urban planning culture in the land of Turon:

- The transition of the population to a settled agricultural lifestyle and their expansion across vast oases;
- The development of craftsmanship and specialization in certain fields;
- The advancement of economic and cultural relations, as well as trade, due to the growth of ancient trade routes;
- Natural-geographical and military-strategic conditions.

Urban culture first developed in the south of Uzbekistan, in the Surkhandarya region, and later spread northward to Sogdiana, Khorezm, Shosh, and eastward to the Fergana region. Over time, these settlements expanded into agglomerations, which led to the emergence of the first urban cultures (proto-urban cultures). A distinctive feature of these cities was that temples and palaces were located at their centers (Fang, 2023).

The type of proto-cities that formed around citadels led to the growth of early cities. In ancient times, two- or three-part cities developed in this way around the citadel. The stages of urbanization can be explained in four different ways:

1. Dividing into stages according to historical periods;
2. Dividing into stages based on the population's distribution across urban areas;
3. Dividing into stages according to economic development;
4. Dividing into stages based on the spread of a distinct urban lifestyle among the population.

Thus, historians and architects have defined the history and stages of urbanization based on changes in architectural styles. We searched for the works of researchers who studied and proposed the stages of urbanization in Uzbekistan, but they only contain materials related to their respective periods to a certain extent (Shangguan, 2024).

The process of urbanization in Uzbekistan has its own historical development stages. Its growth is linked to the country's socio-economic development and demographic characteristics. Alongside the oldest cities, Uzbekistan also has cities that emerged in the second half of the 20th century (S. Ma, 2023). From 1913 to 1980, the number of cities and the urban population in Uzbekistan increased. There are 120 cities in Uzbekistan, with a population of 8,249,300 (as of 2003). Of these, 38 are smaller cities with populations of up to 20,000, 65 are medium-sized cities with populations between 20,000 and 100,000, 16 are large cities with populations between 100,000 and 500,000, and Tashkent is a million-plus city. Since the late 19th century, the urbanization process has been developing in Uzbekistan [4]. However, based on the information we studied, we have not observed a complete explanation of the stages of urbanization development across our country (Ching-Chih, 2024).

Taking this into consideration, we propose the historical stages of urbanization development based on a socio-philosophical approach. These stages are as follows:

1. From the 3rd-2nd millennia BC until the era of early city-states;
2. The period of the Greek-Macedonian conquest;
3. From the Yuezhi period until the Turkic Khaganate (the Yuezhi period could be considered separately);
4. The period of the Arab conquest;
5. The Mongol period;
6. The era of Amir Timur and the Timurids;
7. The period of the Khanates;
8. The period before and during Russian colonization;
9. The Soviet era;
10. The early years of independence;
11. The New Uzbekistan period.

As we noted above, it is possible to study the cities in our country by dividing them into different periods based on changes in construction styles and their functions. For instance, the earliest period or phase dates back to the 3rd-2nd millennia BC. According to our archaeologists, the remains of the earliest cities – proto-cities – dating to this period have been found in the present-day Surkhandarya region. The settlements of Sopollitepa and Jarqoton located in Surkhandarya serve as examples of this. Such cities are characterized by the presence of temples and urban administration at their centers. According to scholars, they were used for defensive purposes (Qin, 2023). These cities served only cultural, educational, and communication functions. We have not encountered the advantages of utilizing the appearance or experiences of such cities today (Liu, 2024).

The next stage in the urban development of our country, in our opinion, is the Hellenistic period. During this period, which began with the conquest of the ancient Turon

region by the Macedonians, the construction of cities and the lifestyle of their inhabitants changed. The urban planning of Greek cities influenced the cities that were formed during this time. For example, we can cite that our cities from that era were divided into four sections by two main roads, with a marketplace located at the intersection, and residential areas arranged in a rectangular grid. This indicates that the aesthetic taste and architectural skills of the urban planners of that time were quite advanced (Harvey, 2023).

In the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD, nomadic Yuezhi and Turkic tribes began to enter the territory of our country, and the influence of nomadic traditions could be felt in the cities. During this period, fortified walls – rabbats – started to be constructed around the cities for defensive purposes against the nomads. When they arrived, the local population lived in 2- and 3-story residences – palaces – and had cultivated areas in front of their homes. The establishment of the city in this manner supports the notion that it was used for defense purposes; however, the presence of cultivated areas in front of the houses also aligns with today's green space policies. This suggests that our ancestors' relationship with nature was not formed yesterday or today, but rather has roots that extend far back into history.

After the arrival of Islam (in the 8th century), merchants lived in the cities while farmers resided in the surrounding areas. Cities were built in the form of a rabat, a berun, and a shahriston. Islamic culture transformed the construction of cities, increasing the number of cultural centers. The cities became centers for cultural, educational, military, and commercial activities. Creating favorable conditions for the population became a primary task. The cities took on the main responsibility for facilitating their activities, education, and cultural recreation.

In the 13th-14th centuries, the Mongols invaded Movarounnahr. Various cities were destroyed, some were burned down, and others were submerged. As if that were not enough, the population was completely wiped out. As a result, cities began to be built based on the plans of nomadic encampments. The initial nomadic dwellings were called "ger" by the Mongols and "uy" by the Turks. It became customary to place the "ger" in relation to the cardinal directions and according to the status of family members. Overall, during this period, there was a sense of despair in the life of the cities for a certain time. However, our hardworking and enterprising people did not stop developing the places where they lived, that is, the cities.

By the time of Amir Timur, the layout of the city's "rabat" and "berun" (outer parts) had changed, and Amir Timur adopted a radial street plan in the city. It is worth noting that each period has its own distinct ideas, ideologies, and styles that are characteristic of that time. As time passes, these elements may no longer align with the spirit of the era. Once he became the ruler of Movarounnahr, he divided the city of Balkh into eight parts using radial streets, with the city center located at their intersection. The urban planning style of Balkh influenced Western urban planning. Similarly, traces of Florentine urban planning can be seen in the construction of Samarkand.

In the 16th-17th centuries, the Shaybanids ruled the land of Turan, and during this period, Bukhara flourished. During the reign of Abdullahan II, the Turks introduced artillery to Central Asia, which influenced urban planning. The defensive walls of Bukhara

were thickened to accommodate artillery, the tops were widened for the movement of artillery carts, and towers were erected at certain distances.

Starting from the 18th century, due to trade relations with Russia, Tashkent became the center of Central Asia. Tashkent was formed on the basis of a clear planning structure. The city was divided into four districts, and the outer walls were preserved. Each district contained smaller streets, which in turn contained smaller neighborhoods.

Each district was considered an administrative part of the city, governed independently and even having its own military forces. This indicates that in the construction of Tashkent, not only national traditions were applied but also modern solutions began to be utilized.

The city's population increased slowly from 1865 to 1917. In the early 20th century, the population grew unevenly due to the stabilization of the political situation. The administrative-territorial reorganization of Central Asia implemented in 1924 also had its impact.

From 1926 to 1940, there were significant changes in the urban network and the population of cities. Activities conducted under the banner of industrialization led to the addition of new towns to the existing 12 cities, resulting in rapid population growth. During this period, Fergana was established, built on unique scientific solutions and designs. The fact that a larger European population lived in this city played an important role.

During the Soviet era, the onset of World War II resulted in the relocation of over 1 million Europeans to the cities of Uzbekistan from the west. This also influenced urban planning. Many churches and monasteries were constructed, and European styles began to emerge in city construction. Protection zones were established, and specific figures were referenced in planning. Multi-story buildings were constructed, with the local population also actively participating in these construction efforts. However, it is worth noting that the pursuit of numbers in city development became prominent. This can be explained by the reduction in the ratio of population numbers when granting city status.

A new era of urbanization development began in Uzbekistan in 1991. This period is primarily remembered for its relative stagnation. During this time, the focus shifted more towards the territorial expansion of cities rather than their construction. At the same time, it marked an era of artificial urbanization through changes in urbanization standards. Mixed styles were mainly used in their construction.

It is worth noting that starting from 2017, a new historical period began in our country's history. By this time, shortcomings began to be openly acknowledged. Addressing the deficiencies in urban planning and ensuring that all modern factors are taken into account in its construction and development was established. During this period, construction works that were clearly designed and had scientific solutions began to be prioritized. Various illegal constructions decreased. Conditions were created to ensure equal participation for everyone in the establishment of cities. Various social projects emerged on the agenda. The construction of houses began to be based on scientific solutions that harmonized modernity and national identity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that forecasting such factors that may be observed in the development of the urbanization process during the new phase of our country's progress, promoting the achievements attained in historical development stages, and timely managing it properly will ensure sustainable economic development. At the same time, this will play a crucial role in the reasonable resolution of potential social issues. Overall, the classification of the development stages of cities is based on historical sources as well as the author's personal observations, and it may differ from or resemble the opinions of other scholars in this field.

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