

# Architectural and Urban-planning Process in the Russian Province in the Last Third of the 19th – Early 20th Century: the General Model and Kazan Specificity\*

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**Abstract**—The Empire is the field for a single civilization, distributed from its center. In the spatial dimension, the “imperial” concept brings architecture as its visual image to the forefront. Hence, the strict, enforced by the central government unification policy in architectural and urban-planning activity, escalating cultural opposition of the local and the global, where the elements of another culture and civilization were present.

The article focuses on the architectural and urban-planning process in the last third of the 19th-early 20th century in Kazan. Annexed to the Russian state in 1552, due to the Kazan Khanate conquering, the city played a significant role in the Russian Empire history and structure, and became the center of academic, military and judicial districts in the 19th century. In the second half of the century, with the expansion of the imperial borders, Kazan turned out to be in the center of the empire. Its incorporation into the metropolis made the problem of cultural unification in the region more acute; and as the regional population was predominantly foreign, it remained the “inner outskirts” of the empire. The anti-Islamic turn in the imperial policy, which threatened the confessional identity of Tatars, led to the consolidation of the Tatar population and the reformation of their traditional way of life. In the conditions of coexistence of imperial and Tatar-Muslim cultural components, the architectural and urban-planning process in Kazan proceeded. The article reveals the common, characteristic to Russian space, in general, and the specific, peculiar to this local case, in particular.

**Keywords**—*architectural and urban-planning process; Russian province; Kazan; the imperial city; the Kazan Tatars*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This article aims at comprehending the architectural and urban-planning process in Kazan in the period of the last third of the 19th-early 20th century, and revealing the common and peculiar to this local case features.

Kazan was annexed to the Russian state in 1552, as a result of a military victory over a powerful neighbour—the Kazan Khanate. The official Petersburg referred to Kazan as the centre of the conquered Tatar state and Russia’s “window to the East” [1]. This perception resulted in empowering the city with special imperial functions. Thus, in the 19th century the capital of Kazan province became the centre of academic, military and judicial districts. In the second half of the 19th century, conditioned with the expansion of the imperial borders to the East and South, Kazan appeared to be in the centre of the empire. Its incorporation into the metropolis made the problem of cultural unification in the region more acute, and as the region population was predominantly foreign, it remained the “inner outskirts” of the empire. The anti-Islamic turn in the imperial policy, which potentially threatened the confessional identity of Tatars, led to the consolidation of the Tatar population and the reformation of their traditional way of life. In the conditions of coexistence of imperial and Tatar-Muslim cultural components, the architectural and urban-planning process in Kazan proceeded. The way the process manifested itself will be consistently shown in the paper.

## II. THE IMPERIAL CITY

The architectural and urban-planning appearance of all Russian cities in the last third of the 19th - early 20th century was determined by their economic welfare, the main source of which was trade. The development of railways and shipping critically changed the existing direction of trade routes and many Russian cities’ economy [2]. For Kazan,

joining the central Russia with Siberia and the East, the laying of the Siberian road through Samara came unexpected. This transport problem was aggravated by the remoteness of the city from the Volga River, so the city authorities tried to solve it by connecting the city and the river with a canal. Kazan was connected to the Russian railway network in 1893 with a private Moscow-Ryazan railway. Its appearance stimulated the development of one of the most socially deprived parts of the city, whose architectural and urban-planning centre was the square with the grand railway station building. The design of its facade with a dome and tall turrets, which provoked direct associations with mosque minarets, was to visualize the Tatar-Muslim origin of Kazan [3].

As elsewhere, the growth of the urban territory was due to suburban areas, where large industrial clusters emerged. Alongside with the giant enterprises of the Krestovnikovs and I.I. Alafuzov, there appeared large manufactures owned by the Tatars: M.I. Utyamyshev and Co., Azimov brothers, I.A. Arslanov, etc. The industry developed in the lower part of the city, while the outskirts of the upper part accumulated large and modern educational complexes typically in brick and classical styles. They included new, university-owned hospitals, a bacteriological institute, a students' dormitory, and the Commercial, Technical and Women's Diocesan School.

Peculiar to Kazan was the state establishment of special educational institutions, which was caused by the new confessional and russification policies in teacher training for local and ministerial schools in foreign, non-native settlements. Kazan teacher (inorodcheskaya) seminary and Tatar teacher school corresponded to the state's two different approaches in terms of "connecting non-ethnic communities with the native Russian people". The seminary aimed at cultural assimilation through Christian education. The monumental four-storey building, being constructed in 1872 in the Old Tatar sloboda settlement (Staraya sloboda), symbolized a certain consistency of these educational institutions. It was located in the site of Novokreshchensk office, which was famous for the persecution of non-native population and was further liquidated by Catherine the Great. There, in the sloboda settlement, in the former Apakovs' mansion of mid-19th century, the Tatar teacher school appeared in 1876. The futility of the efforts to Christianize Muslim Tatars encouraged the state authorities to focus on their integration through the introduction of the Russian language and secular education.

Outside the historical centre, new churches in the Russian style appeared. Among them were the churches of Cyril and Methodius (1889), Makaryevskaya (1895), Smolensk-Sedmiozernaya (1900), in the name of Kazan saints Guriy, Varsonofy and German (1909). The rise in church construction in order to add more features of the Russian city, influenced the whole country in the second half of the 19th century. Kazan was subjected to church construction while repairing the fire damage of 1842, when the ancient churches were restored in Russian-Byzantine style by the model projects of K.A. Thon.

Kazan developed according to the 1884 plan, based on the city plan of 1842 and its local changes of 1845, 1848 and 1868. Like all the cities, the capital of the Kazan province experienced the intense urbanization of the city environment. The prevalence of apartment blocks over traditional mansions was accompanied by the density of urban areas with tenement buildings, shops, banks, offices of trading houses and joint-stock companies. The disappearance of the mansion gardens was compensated by the spread of public squares, gardens and parks, both municipal and private. The construction boom also led to the appearance of hospital, charity, educational and public entertainment buildings, for instance, a theatre and a museum were created at the expense of the city.

The emergence of commercial districts was typical of all rapidly developing cities. However, Kazan, where such business activity centres concentrated near Prolomnaya Street and Sennaya Square in the Old Tatar sloboda, had become, apparently, the only city in the country where these important public spaces developed on ethnic grounds, corresponding to the city's two-part structure that had a clear spatial dimension and predominantly Russian-Tatar population. These centres were an alternative to the city centre.

Meanwhile, it was exactly the main centre that represented the imperial image of a Russian city. In Kazan, the ensembles of Bogoroditsky (the Mother of God) Monastery and Voskresenskaya Street with the buildings of the City Duma, Gostiny Dvor and Kazan University contributed to the city's classical image formed in the first half of the 19th century. The images of classical Rome were created in the key places of the city. The semantic role of Bogoroditsky Monastery was associated with the acquisition of the icon of the Mother-of-God of Kazan, which became the protectrix of the Romanov dynasty. Conceived in 1809, the ensemble with the oval square surrounded by a colonnade was a direct reference to the most famous monument of the Christian world — St. Peter's Square in Rome, was implemented only to some extent [4]. Voskresenskaya Street started at Ivanovsky Monastery in the square, which the buildings of the City Duma and Gostiny Dvor were facing. There was no regular plan, outlining the square, and the ditch separating it from the Kremlin was filled only in the 1860s. Constructed in the 1820-1830s, the ensemble of Kazan University produced a great impression on Nicholas I, who recognized it as "the best of its kind he had ever seen" [5].

In the second half of the 19th century, the relevance of the aesthetics of regular urban-planning in Russia was mainly expressed through the conservation and maintenance of the existing planning structures. In Kazan, however, the concept of regularity *gained a new impetus* in completing the already initiated and creating new ensembles in the conditions of sustainable classicism traditions. Thus, in 1878, while constructing the new Voskresensky Cathedral near the university, in the place of the old one, the focus on classical forms was clearly observed in the design specifications, though it contradicted the general direction of the Russian style in church construction.

In 1862, the abess of Bogoroditsky Monastery expressed the desire to complete the ensemble according to the project of 1810. The new project had reference to the copy of the original general arrangement; that testified the firm determination to follow it. The desire was so strong that it could not follow the direct instructions of the capital's officials. They encouraged implementing the project "taking into account the present needs of the monastery and the terrain conditions, with no confusion of the facade of 1810, approved by the highest authorities", as the facade no longer produced the same effect as 50 years ago, in the times of its approval. The Krestovozdvizhenskiy building, symmetrical to the existing Nikolsky Cathedral, was constructed in 1883-1887.

Unlike the other cities, which were equipped with City Duma buildings of Russian folk forms, the building of Kazan Public Self-Government, rebuilt in the 1830-1840s, retained its appearance of the classic image of Voskresenskaya Street. The Kazan City Duma enthusiastically joined the widely spread movement, aimed at memorialization of the author of the Great Reforms, and in 1881, initiated the construction of a monument to Emperor Alexander II in front of the Duma building.

In this respect, in 1885, the abbot of St. John the Baptist Monastery inspired the activity on demolition and rebuilding the 17th century cathedral opposite the Duma, which turned out to be surprisingly timely. Uncommon to Russian architecture, the three-temple cathedral was dismantled despite the strong objection from Moscow Archaeological Society, recognizing it as "a remarkable monument of Russian architecture". The local authorities had outstarted the scientific community, having obtained the imperial permission for demolition of the cathedral in the Governing Synod. The new cathedral, founded in 1887 and constructed in 1899, "preserving the old architecture, to the extent possible", was greatly brought forward and placed in parallel with the City Duma building, thus, architecturally shaping the southern side of the square [6]. In 1895, a monument to the Tsar Liberator was erected in its centre and was similar to many others monuments, but decorated with bronze figures of Zilant from the Kazan coat of arms [7], and the square itself was later named Aleksandrovskaya. In the same year, 1895, in the eastern part of Gostiny Dvor, facing the square, there appeared a city museum, which was marked by a corner turret [8].

The early appearance of the regular city plan, approved by Catherine the Great in 1768, contributed to the development of classicism traditions in Kazan, further flourishing in the first half of the 19th century. The stability of these traditions in the subsequent period of the second half of the 19th ~ early 20th centuries can apparently be explained by the vitality of the "empire" idea in the particularly important conquered region and the ongoing need to visualize it by means of architecture.

### III. THE TATAR CITY

The fate of Kazan is typical of many Russian cities of the analysed time period, with common architectural and urban-

planning processes. However, the growth of a close Tatar-Muslim community, led by the financially secure and ideologized Tatar bourgeoisie, having their active representatives in local authorities, critically changed the image of the Tatar neighbourhoods, turning them into a "city within a city".

The commercial and business life of Kazan Tatars was concentrated near the trade Sennaya Square, established in accordance with the regular plan of 1768 and fully renewed in the last third of the 19th – early 20th century. In the place of trade buildings with shops in the ground floor, the three-story tenement buildings with shops and hotel rooms were built; and the Usmanov's building, erected on the square replaced the long one-storey shops and warehouses. Beside specific products on the market (Tatar leather shoes, for instance), the image of the Tatar square, architecturally similar to other trade areas of the city, was distinguished by colourful signs with Tatar surnames, local toponyms and oriental establishments: "Apanaevskoe podvor'ye (farmstead)", "Gainutdin with Sons and Co Trade House", "Bulgar", "Karavan-Saray", etc. Another special feature of Sennaya Square was its special public purpose that exceeded the trade function and the idea of an architectural and urban-planning unit. The arisen need for public buildings in Tatar society, in the conditions of their absence, was satisfied by the tenement buildings, which had become the centre of the entire social and political activity of the Tatars [9].

The special role of Sennaya Square in the life of the Tatars is related to the implementation of the regular plan of 1768, which made radical changes to the Old Tatar sloboda settlement of Kazan, which had appeared in the suburbs soon after the Kazan conquest. According to the plan, the square was to be located in the place of the old Muslim cemetery; with a ditch, separating the city from the suburbs was to go straight through the territory of the sloboda, dividing it into two parts. The first one, with the official market area was a part of the city, and was supposed to be developed by Russian residents. Tatars were to move to a new Old-Tatar sloboda located on the outskirts, which was to be built up with new regular quarters.

However, from the very beginning, the eastern side of Sennaya Square was formed by the Tatar merchants' shops, because contrary to the plan, the Tatar districts did not disappear from this part of the city. After the old sloboda division, the Tatars who lived there did not move to the designated area in the suburbs, but stayed, forming an independent Muslim congregation. The Tatar estates spread between the regular planned quarters, in one of which in 1798 a stone mosque with facades in the predominant early classicism style, appeared. In 1818, petitioning for the construction of another mosque there, a merchant's widow Gabida Kitaeva called this place "the old Tatar sloboda" [10].

The indication of a materially non-existent settlement in a fully transformed urban space is revealing. This territory remained the Old Tatar sloboda in the minds of the inhabitants, providing an example of the conservative collective consciousness, both in questions of toponymy and perception of living space, in general. The perception of the

place that had been passed along through generations and centuries was preserved in the mindset of the population. In the end of the 19th century, Sh. Marjani highlighted the vitality of the image of the ancient Muslim cemetery in people's memory, when they documented the location of their ancestors' burial sites, matching them to the modern redevelopment [11]. The consecrated nature of the place caused deliberate displacing of the Russian population and the spread of the Tatar quarters. After the fire of 1859, a great deal of property was bought by the merchant Zigansha Usmanov, who registered another Muslim congregation there. The construction of the mosque incited a conflict with the authorities. At the beginning of the 20th century, most of the buildings in Sennaya Square, belonged to Tatars. They also owned the property in the other parts of the city: the houses in Voskresenskaya, Prolomnaya, Voznesenskaya streets, and the shops in Gostiny Dvor and in Khlebnaya Square. But what is important, is that in the area of Sennaya Square the former Old Tatar sloboda was basically recreated. The square itself had an important role in the Tatar social movements of the late 19th – early 20th century, becoming the symbol of national recovery.

Almost a century of experience in public self-government and making collegial decisions on economic issues in the Tatar town hall (1781-1855) explains the increasing activity of the Muslim Tatars in the city council of 1870. For the first time, the Tatar bourgeoisie had the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on Russian authorities in their interests, by free discussion and making proposals. The issues of the economic life of the city, to which the powers of the City Duma in the Russian Empire were limited, became the area for something bigger, related to the rights of the Tatar people, and to be realized through the creation of the equal living conditions. The long-term isolated existence of the Tatar community, which had become customary for the Russian administration, was aggravated by the suburban location of the Tatar quarters. For this reason, the quarters were frequently not included in the city development and upgrading programs.

Thus, for many years there was a discussion around the problem of street lighting. The City Duma Member A.Ya. Saydashev raised the question of replacing kerosene lamps in the Old Tatar sloboda with the electric ones in 1895, concurrently with the commissioning of the first power station and the intentions of the city authorities to provide the public lighting in a number of central streets. However, the project of shifting from gas and kerosene lighting to electricity affected the Tatar population quarters only in 1909. It happened due to M. B. Abdrakhimov's persistence, but did not change the real state of affairs much. In 1911 and 1913, M. A. Saydashev complained about the fact that instead of illuminating Yekaterininskaya Street in the Old Tatar sloboda, which had been mentioned in the Duma resolution, the lamps were installed in Academicheskaya sloboda, in the Russian part of the city. Organizing tramway service was quite challenging, as well. Moreover, water supply was arranged at the expense of the city in the remote New Tatar sloboda, and in the Old Tatar sloboda Yunusovskaya Square

was planted and Evangelistovskaya and Ekaterininskaya streets were asphalted [12].

The reform of Tatar education initiated by the state and supported by the Tatar community, who foresaw potential prospects in it, resulted in the establishment of educational buildings in Tatar quarters. Maktab and madrasah, which had previously been located in mosques, or in the residential style buildings, started to gain the image of public buildings, with expressive facades in the classicism or brick style.

The Russian-Tatar schools and Russian classes at the madrasah became the focus of special patronage of the Tatar bourgeoisie. Some claimed well-equipped facilities in the City Duma, thus, in 1913, the male and female Tatar schools acquired one of the best mansions [13]. Others built religious schools at the mosques for donations. In 1867, Z. Usmanov created the Usmania madrasah together with the mosque [14]. The oldest mosques of Kazan — Apanaevskaya and Yunusovskaya acquired their modern school buildings in 1877 and 1880.

Muhammadiya madrasah was an elaborate architectural complex. In 1883, the principal akhoond rejected the request of the second mullah of the mosque, his opponent, who carried out the reforms, to build a new three-story building in the place of the old one-story one. Therefore, created in 1883-1901, in four stages by different philanthropists, a new building appeared at the back of the site [15]. The provided "European" conditions, such as well-equipped classrooms (with desks, boards, chairs, paintings, visual aids), a well-maintained dormitory, workshops, a stadium (a skating rink in winter), had the same general atmosphere of freedom in the madrasah, with handwritten newspapers and magazines published and various performances staged. The mullah G. Barudi was convinced that the Muslim world development is impossible without its integration with the achievements of the European and world civilization and ensured the prime of the Tatar confessional school of 1913-1918. In 1916, the women's school established by Fatiha Aitova at her own expense received the status of a Muslim gymnasium.

The education reforms, the appearance of a generation of national intelligentsia, thinking afresh, contributed to the development of Tatar secular culture. Among the numerous printing houses with melodious names, some of which were located in rented buildings ("Баян эль-Хак"<sup>1</sup>), others — in houses built on purpose ("Миллят")<sup>2</sup>, a modern publishing and trade complex belonging to the Karimov brothers, stood out. It included a printing house, a bookshop and the "Китапхана Исламия"<sup>3</sup> library with a reading room for 150 people [16]. The Oriental Club established in 1907, was located in the rooms of "Bulgar", in the Sabitovs' house on the Kaban Lake, and only in 1910 moved to its own three-story building. In the rebuilt house of the merchant Karim Apanaev, which was equipped with a dressing room, an auditorium for 150 people, a Russian-Muslim library, leisure rooms, they played games, had lectures and debates,

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<sup>1</sup> "Truth-telling"

<sup>2</sup> "Nation"

<sup>3</sup> "Islamic library"

organized staged performances (in both languages) and holidays, and planned to create a national museum [17]. New public buildings demonstrated the reforming of the nation's traditional patriarchal way of life, its integration with the spiritual advantages of the world civilization.

The program on the development of Russian urban environment, adopted by the government of Catherine the Great constituted a part of the "internal colonization" project of the empire, which aimed at integrating and creating a single social space that would function according to the general "European" rules. The empress herself understood this task as a challenge of "creating, uniting, and preserving the whole world" [18]. The implementation of this program in Kazan demonstrated the Tatar homeowners' positive reaction, as they did not object the regular, linear urban-planning of the city districts, and adopted the internal layout of the classic noble residence. However, they firmly indicated their commitment of the traditional organization of the estate space, adjusted the housing layout to the division into male and female areas, and upheld the borders of the Tatar sloboda. It could be said that the "European ideology" was adapted to express their own traditional content, and was endowed with their own, unique meanings.

The success of the imperial integration of the second half of the 18th ~ the first half of the 19th century led to the increasing need to emphasize the Tatar peculiarity by external means, because due to national self-consciousness growth, it had lost its remarkable character. The understanding that the national community is not a fact of life, and requires conscious political and cultural efforts, was becoming widespread at the end of the 19th~early 20th century, when the ideas of national revival possessed the minds of the Tatar bourgeoisie and the emerging intelligentsia. Conscious attitude to the "Tatar" concept manifested itself in architecture through national motifs, previously non-characteristic of the Tatar houses facades, reproducing the model projects of the capital. Among the fresh design details were Arabic script inscriptions on the gables, bay windows, multi-layered stalactite-like consoles, colour glass, and keel-shaped embrasures. It was the artistic language of European Orientalism, adapted by the Tatar community to express its own "oriental" particularity.

The so-called "house of Shamil", built in 1903 by Maryam Shamil-Apakova, the wife of the fourth son of the revered Imam Shamil, the Major General Muhammad-Shagi Shamil, is considered to be a classic example of Tatar romanticism architecture. Maryam Shamil-Apakova graduated from the women's gymnasium in Kazan. She spoke Russian to her husband, as he could not speak Tatar properly, and maintained the home lifestyle of cosmopolitan European elite. In winter, in the courtyard of their mansion in Tatar sloboda, the Shamils installed two fur-trees. The first one was chosen by Shamil himself and was to be taller than the governor's was, while the second was set "for the people". At that time, the decorated fur-tree was exclusively a symbol of the Christian Christmas, but even if the Shamils did not introduce any religious meaning to this holiday (for example, timed it for the New Year), it was an extremely "unconventional" gesture from the heiress of the Tatar murza

and the son of the leader of the Sharia movement in the North Caucasus.

Thus, the Tatar peculiarity of Maryam Shamil-Apakova was no longer determined by maintaining customs, but by informed choice. This choice was manifested in the desire to build a house in the old Tatar sloboda, but not in the noble "Russian" quarters of the city (where the number of Tatar homeowners was increasing). It was also their choice that the building designed in the European modern style was overburdened with the demonstratively orientalist motifs. Functionally, it was the very "Orientalism", which Edward Said later described as a fantastic idea of the essence of the "Oriental" as Europeans' object of imagination. Nevertheless, in fact, the ordering customers of the building consciously belonged to the "oriental" background: they were the famous Tatar philanthropist and a devoted son of Imam Shamil. Perceiving European culture as a universal and possessed by no one in particular, capable of "creating, uniting and preserving the whole world," Maryam Shamil-Apakov used it to express her national identity.

Probably, with time, the Tatar national trend in architecture could have been formed, but the social revolution of 1917 changed the direction of its development. By this time, even in the minds of the Tatar intelligentsia there was no clear understanding of the modern national style in architecture. Thus, the famous writer Fatih Amirkhan, who published a series of fantastic stories about the future of the Tatar people (1909-1910), described the design of the buildings in very general terms: "like European style, but decorated with the best, what oriental art could give" [19]. This phrase perfectly suits to describe "the house of Shamil" as an architectural expression of a certain period of mutual reflections of the imperial cultural metropolis and the province: when they started to describe the local identity through the language of the universalist culture, but had not yet developed their own original language to express this identity.

The regular space with a European image, which was originally interpreted, adjusted to the traditions and formed in the course of mutual compromises, marked the beginning of the new Tatar-Muslim architectural and urban-planning culture. The favourable position of the Tatar elite in the Age of Enlightenment promoted the perception of the European culture through Russian culture and developing the new tradition on its basis.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The empire is the field for a single civilization, distributed from its centre. In the spatial dimension, the "imperial" concept brings architecture as its visual image to the forefront. This indisputability escalated the cultural opposition of the local and the global, if the elements of another culture and civilization were present. It gives the researches of Russian provinces the grounds to analyse the case mostly in the context of state policy implementation. It is proved by the example of Kazan, in the times when, affected by the democratic changes, the state lost a significant part of its sphere of influence, and the new

participants of the architectural and urban-planning processes appeared on the stage.

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