

Historical Development And Scientific-Cultural Activities Of The Bukhara State Museum-Reserve

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Аннотация: В данной статье научно анализируются этапы исторического формирования деятельности Бухарского государственного музея-заповедника, а также его роль в научно-исследовательской, духовно-просветительской и культурно-туристической сферах. В ходе исследования применяются историко-типологический, источниковедческий, сравнительный и статистический методы анализа. В статье освещается значение музея в сохранении культурного наследия Узбекистана, процессы цифровой трансформации, а также результаты международного сотрудничества.

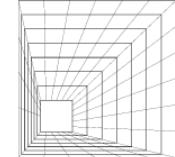
Ключевые слова: Бухарский государственный музей-заповедник, культурное наследие, музееведение, исторические памятники, научное исследование, цифровизация, культурный туризм, ЮНЕСКО, национальные ценности, духовно-просветительская деятельность.

Annotation: This article provides a scientific analysis of the historical development stages of the Bukhara State Museum-Reserve and its role in research, educational, and cultural-tourism activities. The study applies historical-typological, source-based, comparative, and statistical analysis methods. The article highlights the museum's contribution to preserving Uzbekistan's cultural heritage, its digital transformation processes, and the outcomes of international cooperation.

Keywords: Bukhara State Museum-Reserve, cultural heritage, museology, historical monuments, scientific research, digitalization, cultural tourism, UNESCO, national values, spiritual and educational activity.

Discussion and Results. The Bukhara State Museum-Reserve encompasses historical complexes, architectural monuments, archaeological finds, ethnographic objects, and artworks [2:12].

Notable examples include: Ark Regional Museum (located in the Ark citadel), with departments of nature, history, numismatics, epigraphy, a travel bureau, and a Scientific Center for the Study of Written Monuments. Its branches include the "Carpet Weaving Museum" in Magoki Attori, the Sadriddin Ayni and Jalol Ikromi museum cells in Kukaldosh Madrasa, the "History of Preservation and Restoration of Bukhara Monuments" exhibition in Ulugbek Madrasa, and the "Ancient Varakhsha" Memorial Museum in Ibrohim Okhun Madrasa [2:2]. Sitorai Mokhi Khosa Museum of Folk Applied Art, located in the Sitorai Mokhi Khosa Palace, includes exhibits of embroidery and household items from the late 19th – early 20th centuries, palace furniture, Bukhara national clothing, a "Wood Carving" branch in Abdullazizkhan Madrasa, and a "Bukhara Metalwork Art" branch opened in 1995 at the Oybinok Mosque [3:2]. Bukhara Museum of Fine Arts named after Kamoliddin Behzod, housed in the former State Bank building, includes a painting gallery, an exhibition of ancient jewelry art, and a sales branch at the Nodir Devonbegi Khonako [4:3]. Abu Ali ibn Sina Museum — established in 1980 in the Afshona village of Peshku District to commemorate the 1000th anniversary of Avicenna; partially renovated and re-exhibited in 2005 under the Ministry of Culture and Sports [5:3].



Romitan Regional Museum — founded in 1960, consisting of seven halls with a total area of 624 m² [6:3]. Fayzulla Khojaev House Museum — built in 1990 in the former residence of a famous Bukhara merchant, Ubaydullo Khoja; that same year, a new exhibition titled “The House of a Wealthy Bukhara Merchant (late 19th – early 20th centuries)” was organized [7:3]. Naqshbandiyya Order Museum — established in 1993 within the Numismatics and Epigraphy Department [8:4]. Museum of Ancient Poykent Settlement History — founded as an independent branch at the end of 2002 in Karakul District [9:4]. Museum of Water History and Supply — separated as a branch from the Ark Regional Museum in April 2004 [10:4]. Zindon Prison Museum (17th–20th centuries) — also separated as a branch in April 2004 [11:4]. Museum Workshop of Blacksmithing History — became an independent branch in April 2004 [12:4]. Imam al-Bukhari Memorial Complex — transferred to the museum-reserve on August 28, 2001, by city decree; separated as an independent branch in 2002. By January 1, 2006, the museum-reserve had 12 branches [13:3].

The Ark Fortress, Ismail Samani Mausoleum, and Chor-Bakr Complex are also part of the reserve, each reflecting the scientific, religious, and spiritual life of its time. The museum's collection includes thousands of artifacts — documents from the Bukhara Emirate era, weapons, jewelry, carpets, manuscripts, and miniatures.

Currently, the museum plays a vital role in research, education, and tourism. Scientific conferences, thematic exhibitions, and excursions contribute to fostering patriotism and respect for national values among the youth. Thus, the museum-reserve serves as a key institution preserving the heritage of ancestors, promoting it to the public, and strengthening international cultural relations.

The Bukhara State Museum-Reserve is a priceless treasury of Uzbekistan's cultural heritage. Its formation, stages of development, and modern activities constitute an integral part of national museology. Studies show that this institution functions not only as a repository of historical artifacts but also as a comprehensive system of research, education, and cultural enlightenment [14:45].

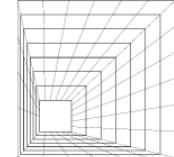
Founded in 1922 during the Bukhara People's Republic, its first exhibits consisted of artifacts, manuscripts, and artworks from the Bukhara Emirate. By the late 1930s, it was reorganized into the Bukhara Regional Historical Museum, and in 1985 it received the status of a “state museum-reserve” [15:45].

During the Soviet era, its primary mission was the ideological interpretation of heritage, but after independence it became a center for the preservation of national values and historical memory. A major milestone was reached in 1993 when the historical center of Bukhara was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List [16:118].

Today, the museum's collection includes over 100,000 exhibits — archaeological finds, ethnographic items, historical documents, and unique samples of applied art. Artifacts such as ceramics from the Ismail Samani Mausoleum and 16th-century Bukhara jewelry are highly regarded internationally [17:29].

In recent years, the museum has initiated a large-scale digitization project. Between 2019 and 2024, over 12,000 exhibits were entered into an electronic catalog under the “Digitization of Cultural Heritage” program, expanding opportunities for research and education [18:61].

The museum's activities extend beyond preservation; it has become a powerful tool for promoting respect for history and national identity. Educational initiatives like “Lesson at the Museum” and “Dialogue with History” have been recognized as effective forms of museum pedagogy [19:31]. Researchers emphasize that such programs expand students' historical knowledge and strengthen their sense of national identity [20:75]. Interactive lessons, quizzes, and live history sessions enhance engagement.



The museum-reserve actively collaborates internationally. Since 2000, it has implemented projects with UNESCO, ICOM, and the European Museum Association. Between 2017–2020, the UNESCO Paris office and the Bukhara Museum carried out the program “Preserving Cultural Heritage in Central Asia,” including digitization, restoration, and 3D modeling of monuments [21:118]. Exhibitions organized jointly with cultural centers of Germany, Japan, and Italy have promoted Bukhara’s art and crafts globally [22:59].

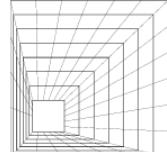
Modern technologies are now widely used. The “Virtual Tour” project allows foreign visitors to explore the historical center of Bukhara online. In 2022, the “3D Museum” platform was launched, offering digital versions of over 500 exhibits with descriptions in Uzbek, Russian, and English [23:61].

The museum-reserve is also a major component of Uzbekistan’s tourism industry. Excursion programs such as “Pilgrimage Tourism,” “Classical Bukhara,” and “Pearls of the East” have significantly increased tourist flow. In 2023, the museum welcomed more than one million visitors — triple the 2015 figure [24:60]. The growth of cultural tourism not only brings economic benefits but also fosters intercultural dialogue. Events such as “Uzbek Culture Week” and “The Great Silk Road Art Festival” further enhance Bukhara’s international prestige [25:83].

Conclusion. Museums in Uzbekistan play a crucial role in shaping national identity, reviving historical memory, and strengthening the country’s global standing. At the same time, efforts continue to expand financial resources, modernize technical infrastructure, and improve human capacity to ensure sustainable museum development.

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