

# THE FORM ANALYSIS OF 20TH CENTURY URBAN LANDSCAPE IN DALIAN CHINA

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## Abstract

This study investigates the urban landscape of Dalian, a major city in northeastern China, focusing on its historical evolution, cultural symbols, and residents' perceptions. The research aims to explore how Dalian's urban landscape reflects its historical development and cultural identity while analyzing residents' interactions with and attitudes toward the city's key cultural elements. By examining the balance between preserving Dalian's historical heritage and promoting its modernization, the study provides insights for sustainable urban planning and cultural preservation strategies. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to ensure a comprehensive analysis of Dalian's urban landscape. The research includes a systematic literature review to establish historical and cultural contexts, field investigations to document architectural styles and urban spaces, and in-depth interviews with residents, cultural scholars, and urban planners. Additionally, a structured questionnaire survey was conducted to gather quantitative data on residents' perceptions of the city's natural, historical, and modern landscapes. The data were analyzed using thematic, contextual, and statistical techniques to identify patterns in the formation and perception of Dalian's urban symbols. **Key findings highlight** the historical significance of Dalian's urban landscape, shaped by its Tsarist and Japanese colonial periods, socialist planning principles, and post-reform modernization. Residents' perceptions reveal strong emotional connections to historical landmarks like Zhongshan Square and natural features like Binhai Road, emphasizing the cultural and environmental value of these spaces. However, mixed responses to modern developments indicate the need for more balanced integration of historical preservation and contemporary architecture. The study underscores the importance of cultural symbols in shaping Dalian's identity, enhancing its appeal, and fostering a sense of belonging among

residents. These insights contribute to urban planning policies that prioritize cultural heritage, sustainability, and resident engagement.

**Keywords:** Urban Landscape; Historical Development; Modernization; Residents' Perceptions

## Introduction

The urban landscape of Dalian, a major city in northeastern China, is a testament to the city's rich historical tapestry and its ongoing transformation. Shaped by a series of historical events, cultural influences, economic developments, and natural features, Dalian's urban landscape has evolved from its early formation through colonial influences and modernization periods to the present day. The city's unique geographical position, coupled with its historical role as a gateway to Northeast Asia, has resulted in a distinctive urban environment that reflects a fusion of architectural styles, cultural practices, and natural beauty. In 20th century Dalian's development has been influenced by various factors, including its strategic importance during the colonial period, the industrialization push following the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the recent trends towards modernization and globalization. The city's landscape is marked by a blend of Russian and Japanese colonial-era architecture, Soviet-style functionalist planning, and contemporary architectural marvels that symbolize Dalian's ambitions as a modern metropolis.

Despite the extensive changes that have shaped Dalian's urban landscape, there is a growing interest in understanding how these transformations impact the city's cultural identity and residents' perceptions. This study of Dalian's urban landscape provides insights into the city's historical development and the legacy of its colonial past, which is still evident in the city's architecture and cultural practices. Understanding this history is essential for preserving Dalian's cultural heritage and ensuring that future development respects and incorporates these elements. This study examines the residents' perceptions of the urban landscape, which is vital for enhancing the liveability and attractiveness of the city. By understanding how residents interact with and perceive different aspects of the urban environment, urban planners and policymakers can make informed decisions that balance modernization with cultural preservation. As Dalian continues to grow and modernize, the study offers a critical analysis of the city's current urban forms, including its natural and scenic features, cultural and historical symbols, and modern architectural landmarks. This analysis is essential for guiding sustainable urban development that integrates environmental conservation with economic growth. The research contributes to the broader discourse on urban development in China and beyond. It provides a

case study that can inform urban planning and cultural preservation strategies in other cities facing similar challenges of balancing historical heritage with modern aspirations.

## Research Objectives

1. to investigate the evolution of Dalian's urban landscape over the 20th century, examining how its historical development, cultural influences, and modernization have collectively shaped the city's unique identity and physical environment.
2. to analyze the perceptions of Dalian's residents regarding the city's landscape, focusing on their cognition and emotional connections to the urban cultural symbols, and how these perceptions influence their sense of identity and belonging.
3. to explore the balance between preserving Dalian's historical and cultural heritage and promoting its modern urban development, in order to provide insights and recommendations for sustainable urban planning and cultural preservation strategies.

## Literature Reviews

The historical development of Dalian's urban landscape has been extensively documented, revealing the city's transformation under diverse cultural, political, and economic influences. Kou (2010) and Zhang (2013) provide foundational accounts of Dalian's evolution from a small fishing village to a modern metropolis shaped by colonial powers and industrialization. These works emphasize the impact of foreign architectural styles, urban planning concepts, and strategic geographic positioning in shaping the city's development. Lin (2020) and Liu & Peng (2019) delve further into the modernization of Dalian post-1949, examining how socialist planning principles focused on functionality, industrial growth, and housing provision transformed the urban form. These studies highlight the shift from consumption-oriented planning to more industrialized and pragmatic designs, reflecting broader economic policies of the time. Dalian's urban form also reflects its cultural and historical diversity, marked by Tsarist, Japanese, and modern Chinese influences. Ren & Hu (2008) emphasize the unique challenges faced by cities like Dalian in preserving historical elements while meeting modern urban needs. The authors discuss how urban planning methods from European, Japanese, and

Soviet periods have left a lasting imprint on Dalian's spatial organization and architectural landscape, creating a unique blend of styles and functionality.

The role of cultural symbols in defining Dalian's urban identity has been explored by numerous scholars. Zhang et al. (2018) and Li et al. (2019) investigate how architectural landmarks, public spaces, and historical artifacts contribute to the city's cultural narrative and residents' sense of belonging. These works highlight the importance of integrating cultural symbols into urban spaces to preserve collective memory and foster civic pride. Hou (2005) adds theoretical depth by analyzing the semiotics of urban symbols, showing how elements like architecture, public art, and landmarks communicate historical narratives and cultural values. Further, Liu & Peng (2019) propose that urban symbols in cities like Dalian serve as both functional and cultural elements, bridging historical significance with contemporary relevance. Their findings suggest that urban symbols not only shape the city's external image but also impact how residents and visitors perceive its identity, particularly in contexts of rapid urbanization and globalization.

Understanding residents' perceptions of the urban landscape is crucial for evaluating the livability and cultural vibrancy of a city. Chen (2018) highlights that residents' interactions with urban spaces often reflect a mix of nostalgia for historical elements and adaptability to modern developments. Xiang et al. (2023) further examine how natural landscapes, historical landmarks, and modern architecture influence residents' emotional connections to their urban environment. These studies underline the social value of urban spaces, emphasizing how historical preservation and sustainable urban planning can enhance quality of life. Residents' perceptions are also shaped by their daily interactions with spaces, such as Zhongshan Square, which combines historical significance with modern functionality. The findings of Zhang et al. (2018) suggest that residents value these spaces not only for their cultural heritage but also for their role in fostering community interactions and leisure activities. The integration of historical preservation with modern urban development is a recurring theme in studies on Dalian's urban landscape. Ren & Hu (2008) discuss the complexities of balancing conservation with the demands of modern urbanization, emphasizing the importance of adaptive reuse of historical sites. Their research highlights successful examples of such integration, where modern architectural techniques respect historical contexts without compromising functionality.

Hou (2005) and Lin (2020) argue that a balanced approach to urban development can enhance both aesthetic and practical aspects of city life. These studies advocate for policies that prioritize cultural heritage while promoting

sustainable development. For example, initiatives to repurpose industrial heritage sites into cultural hubs have been shown to preserve historical value while creating spaces for contemporary use. The literature underscores the multifaceted challenges of urban development in historically rich cities like Dalian. It highlights the need for strategies that respect historical continuity, foster cultural identity, and accommodate modern urban dynamics. By synthesizing historical development, cultural symbols, residents' perceptions, and integration strategies, this review establishes a comprehensive framework for understanding Dalian's urban landscape.

## Research Methodology

**Documentary Research Approach:** Literature review is a critical component of this research. It involves systematically analyzing existing academic papers, government reports, news articles, and books related to Dalian's urban development, cultural symbols, and residents' perceptions. **Field Investigation and Observation:** Field research is conducted to gather empirical data on the current state of Dalian's urban landscape. This includes on-site observations of key landmarks, architectural styles, public spaces, and natural features. **In-depth Interviews:** These interviews are designed to gain insights into residents' perceptions, attitudes, and emotional connections to the city's landscape and cultural symbols. In this study, in-depth interviews serve to complement the documentary research and field observations by providing personal narratives and perspectives on the city's cultural identity and landscape experience. **Questionnaire Survey:** To gather quantitative data on residents' perceptions, a structured questionnaire is distributed to a representative sample of Dalian's population. The questionnaire elicits responses on residents' familiarity with, and emotional attachment to, various cultural symbols and landscape features. **Data Analysis:** The data collected through these methods are analyzed using a combination of thematic, contextual, and statistical techniques. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts and observational notes is conducted to identify common themes and patterns in residents' perceptions. Descriptive statistics are applied to the questionnaire data to summarize residents' attitudes and behaviors regarding the city's landscape. Comparative analysis is used to examine the differences in perceptions across different demographic groups.

## Results

### **The Development History of Dalian Urban Landscape**

The urban landscape of Dalian has been shaped by a series of transformative periods, each contributing to the city's unique character and identity. This chapter outlines the historical development of Dalian's urban landscape through four distinct periods: the Tsarist Lend-Lease Period, Japanese Occupation, the Early stage of urban development, and the era of China's Reform and opening up.

**The Tsarist Lend-Lease Period (1898-1904)** During this period, Dalian was under the influence of Tsarist Russia, which initiated the city's modernization. The Russian colonial administration laid the groundwork for Dalian's urban infrastructure, introducing European architectural styles and planning concepts. Key developments included the construction of administrative buildings, residential areas, and public spaces, which were designed to reflect the colonial power and cultural influence of Russia.

The architecture of Dalian during the period of Russian lease was deeply influenced by the Renaissance and the wave of European classicism and eclecticism that was popular at the end of the 19th century. Unlike the ancient Greek, Roman or Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic architecture, the architecture in the Renaissance period had a fixed and exact form, which advocated the application of ancient Greek and Roman forms. But it didn't create a form by itself; And the Renaissance emphasizes not what "style", but the ideological and conceptual nature of architectural form, and emphasizes the real meaning of architecture with its rational spirit, that is, the emphasis on function. The representative building of this period is Dalian Municipal Government of Tsarist Russia (now the old Museum of Dalian Natural History), which is a typical classicist administrative building. The building is a two-storey mixed structure, the overall composition adopts the classical technique of horizontal division and vertical composition, with stable shape, rigorous proportion and prominent center. The wall color of the building is warm yellow as the main color of the facade, and the wall is decorated with format structure. Building corner with white corner stone corner; The four-slope roof with tiger Windows protrudes high above the center and corners of the building facade, which is the green tile roof of traditional Russian architecture.

Referring to the planning methods of Paris, St. Petersburg and other cities, Tsarist Russia took Nikolaevkaya Square as a circular square in the center of the city, from which ten avenues lead in all directions. The modern architectural complexes around the square are the epitome of Dalian's modern

history and urban culture. Most of these buildings were built in the early 20th century. Both Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance style and other European architecture. This is the most representative urban landscape in Dalian for the next 100 years.

**Japanese Occupation (1905-1945)** Following the Russo-Japanese War, Dalian was transferred to Japanese control, marking a significant shift in the city's development. The Japanese period saw an expansion of urban planning and construction, with a focus on industrial growth and modernization. Architectural styles evolved to incorporate Japanese influences, and the city's infrastructure was expanded to support the growing industrial sector. This period also saw the establishment of many of the city's lasting landmarks and the development of its transportation network.

In this stage Japan began to respect the internationalist architectural thought and advocated the economical, practical, simple and generous modernist style. Different from the early Western classical revival and imitating the complex and changeable decorative style of Europe and the United States, the architecture of this period showed a symmetrical layout form, simple geometric blocks, the roof form was dominated by a large flat roof and the eaves were not picked out, the parapet walls were adopted, and almost no decorative molding was needed. Due to the expansion plan of the western city street implemented in the middle of the Japanese colonial rule, the Grand Square (today's People's Square) became the central administrative square of Dalian, so the buildings of this period were mostly distributed around the Grand Square, such as the Guandong State Hall Building (today's Dalian Municipal Government), which was located on the north-south central axis of the north side of the square.

### 1.3 Urban Development Early stage (1945-1977)

Post-World War II, Dalian entered a new phase of development under Chinese governance. The early years were characterized by a focus on industrialization and the establishment of planned economic systems. Urban planning was influenced by socialist principles, with an emphasis on functionality and the provision of housing and services for the growing urban population. This period saw the construction of many industrial plants and residential areas, as well as the development of cultural and educational institutions.

due to the lack of financial and material resources for urban construction in the early years of the regime, there were no large-scale new office buildings in the central area of the city, but the priority was to meet the urgent needs. The

construction types were mostly new villages for workers, simple residences, hospitals and schools, and other types were office buildings, auditoriums for gatherings and performances. In order to improve the construction speed and save capital cost, the building mainly aims to meet the basic use function, mostly adopts simple plane layout and roof form and the expression of facades without any decorative shapes, fully embodies the basic principles of modernist architecture, such as the People's Culture Club built in 1951. Designed by the Soviet design team led by the Soviet Belarusian Nayev, its appearance fully follows the modernist style of design, which is a two-story building with reinforced concrete structure, and the overall exterior wall is made of rectangular bluestone.

**China Reform and opening up** (1977-2000) The reform and opening up period marked a transformative era for Dalian. With the shift towards a market economy, the city experienced rapid economic growth and a surge in urban development. This period was characterized by the construction of modern commercial centers, high-rise buildings, and the expansion of the city's transportation infrastructure, including the introduction of the metro system. The city's landscape also evolved to include contemporary architectural styles, reflecting the influence of global trends and the city's ambition to become a regional economic hub.

Influenced by the architectural trend of postmodernism, people began to pay attention to the inheritance and development of regional context on urban culture, and strengthened the shaping of the overall image of the city. In this stage, high-rise buildings turned to the architectural practice of multiple development, and conventional elements such as glass curtain wall and strip Windows were replaced by "neoclassical" architectural language and style, and three-stage architectural composition was adopted. The symbolic and superficial features of the facade are obvious, and the design methods are relatively simple and lack of change; Later "neoclassical" buildings made great breakthroughs in form, shape and expression methods. Taking the Zhongshan Road Branch Building of the People's Bank of China and the Hope Building as examples, the symmetrical composition principle was adopted, the shape was simple and bright, and there was a strong sense of integrity. The facade was composed of vertical lines with a strong sense of rhythm as the main form element, solid base treatment, and unique top design. The Hope Building adds a layer of symbolic meaning as a landmark building in Dalian.

**Historical Narrative and Cultural Continuity:** The cultural symbols of Dalian, including its architecture and public spaces, convey a unique historical narrative that has evolved through different eras, providing a sense of continuity

and identity for its residents. Notable among these are the architectural remnants from the Russian and Japanese colonial periods, such as the Dalian Train Station and the former Manchurian Railway Company buildings. These structures, with their distinctive architectural styles, are not merely functional spaces but also symbols of the city's complex historical narratives. Urban squares in Dalian serve as central gathering points and play a pivotal role in the city's social and cultural life. They are spaces where historical narratives, community activities, and modern urban planning converge. Zhongshan Square is one of Dalian's most iconic urban spaces, originally built by the Russians and later expanded by the Japanese. The square is surrounded by early 20th-century buildings that exhibit Western architectural styles, creating a unique blend of historical and cultural influences. It is not only a historical landmark but also a vibrant public space where residents gather for events, leisure, and social interaction.

The analysis of Dalian's historical landscape, urban squares reveal a city that harmoniously integrates its rich cultural heritage with modern development and natural beauty. In the interview, 5 interviewees believe that historical buildings and monuments provide a sense of continuity and identity, urban squares serve as vibrant public spaces for community engagement, and coastal landscapes offer a vital connection to nature. The urban landscape during the Japanese and Russian occupation is combined with the original elements create a multifaceted urban landscape that reflects Dalian's unique history, ongoing transformation, and natural charm. This intricate interplay of historical, modern, and natural elements underscores the city's dynamic evolution and its enduring appeal to residents and visitors alike.

**Heritage and Identity:** The preservation of cultural heritage sites and the incorporation of historical elements in modern developments have fostered a strong sense of identity among the residents, connecting them to the city's past and their collective memory. Dalian has accumulated a large amount of industrial heritage after experiencing the westernization movement, the occupation period of Tsarist Russia, the colonial period of Japan and the early liberation period. Since 1995, Dalian Khan began to speed up the process of relocation and transformation of industrial enterprises, making industrial sites gradually disappear, many were cleaned up before excavation, and only a few enterprises made protective use of them. Location, size and existing remains are shown in Table 1. Through the investigation of the existing industrial heritage status in the core area of Dalian, the following characteristics can be summarized:

**Table 1:** Dalian main industrial heritage inventory

Name	Founding time	Types of industrial heritage	Existing heritage
Dalian port	1899-1939	Transportation	Four jetties. Three waterfront jetties and Nagamachi Jetties, breakwater, No.15 Warehouse, No.22 warehouse, material warehouse, office building, passenger station, etc.
The old site of Manchu Railway	1903	Heavy industry	South Manchurian Railway Co., LTD
Dalian Shipyard	1898-1960	Heavy industry	Central substation, South dock, North dock, hull building, fire brigade building, etc.
Dalian rolling stock factory	1908-1915	Heavy industry	Locomotive workshop, union office building
Dalian Bingshan Corporation	1930	Heavy industry	Caption foundry
Shahekou water purification plant	1917-1932	Public utility	Rapid filtration chamber, pumping station
Taishan water purification plant	1920	Public utility	Filter chamber, sedimentation tank, original well, distribution tank
Ganjingzi coal Wharf	1926-1930	Transportation	Trestle, electric locomotive, coal storage yard
Dalian No. 1 Cement factory	1907-1909	Heavy industry	Office building, cement mill, limestone mine, clinker storage
Dalian Chemical Group Co., LTD	1933	Heavy industry	Synthesis workshop, coking workshop, gas workshop, etc.
State-owned 523 factory	1947	Military industry	Cannonball workshop, assembly workshop, martyrs' tomb, etc
Sandaogou water purification plant	1939-1945	Public utility	Filtration chamber, sedimentation tank, reaction tank, pumping station, crane

**City Branding and Appeal:** The cultural symbols of Dalian have significantly impacted the city's branding, making it a destination that appeals to both locals and visitors. The city's rich cultural narrative and the blend of historical and modern elements contribute to its distinctive character and attractiveness.

The most unique urban style of Dalian is the organic integration of its profound sports culture and urban landscape, forming a new symbol of urban culture. The hometown of track and field, football city is another dazzling business card of this city. Dalian is located in the southernmost part of northeast China, warm in winter and cool in summer, with a pleasant climate. Yellow and Bohai Sea seafood prawns, sea cucumbers, abalone, high-quality sweet and crisp fruits, raised the Shandong immigrant Dalian people. It has created a large number of athletic talents with strong physique.

In the labor park in the core area of Dalian city, there stands a huge circular building shaped like a football, which was built in 1995. The diameter of this spherical building is about 19.6 meters, and the height is about 21 meters. It is built to commemorate the Dalian football team won the first Chinese football championship in 1994, and today has become one of the most important landmark buildings in Dalian. In 2019, in order to further enhance the city's cultural image and visitor experience, Dalian Public Utilities Service Center carried out an overall upgrade of the "Big Football" sculpture and its surrounding environment, which began in July 2019 and lasted one year to be completed in July 2020, becoming today's Football Square. At the same time, there are many football-related landscape sculptures in other squares in Dalian. These buildings and sculptures shape the urban landscape of Dalian and represent Dalian's profound football culture.

The cultural value of Dalian's urban landscape is multifaceted, reflecting the city's historical journey and its ongoing transformation. The city's cultural symbols are not only significant in preserving its heritage but also in shaping its identity and enhancing its appeal in the contemporary world.

**The Thematic Analysis of Residents' Perceptions:** This Part provides a thematic analysis of residents' perceptions, focusing on their views regarding the historical development, current urban forms, and natural landscape of Dalian. It offers insights into the subjective experiences and interpretations of the city's inhabitants.

Understanding the perceptions of residents is crucial in appreciating how the urban landscape of Dalian is experienced and valued by those who live there. This analysis is based on qualitative data collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, offering insights into the subjective experiences and interpretations of the city's inhabitants.

In order to investigate the recognition degree of Dalian residents on natural landscape, historical landscape and modern landscape, the author selected the representative Zhongshan Square, Xinghai Square and the lines along Binhai Road, and conducted on-site questionnaire surveys of 84 people, 75 people and 100 people respectively. The statistical data are as follows:

**Table 2:** Representative space usage rate

Place		Zhongshan Square (Historical Landscape)	Xinghai Square (Modern Landscape)	Binhai Road (Natural Landscape)
Activity				
User principal	Dalian citizens	52.6%	35.3%	20%
	Alien workers	36.9%	23.4%	28%
	Tourist	10.5%	42.3%	52%
	Rest	17.8%	13.5%	8%
Main activity	Sports	24.2%	25.5%	26%
	Sightseeing tour	10.5%	49%	54%
	Communication	47.5%	12%	12%
Arrival pattern	Walk	30.4%	26%	34%
	public transport	48.1%	62%	8%
	self-driving	21.5%	12%	58%
Arrival time	Over 30mins	32%	38%	51%
	20-30mins	27%	17%	31%
	10-20mins	23%	21%	12%
	Less 10mins	18%	24%	6%
Stay time	Over 2 hours	29%	36%	55%
	1-2hours	35%	22%	33%
	0.5-1hours	12%	23%	10%
	Less 0.5hours	24%	9%	2%
Frequency	More than twice a week	35%	30%	20%
	Weekly	25%	35%	25%
	Every two weeks	12%	15%	24%
	Monthly	28%	20%	31%

In the selection of interview subjects, the principles of diversity, representation and relevance should be followed. In terms of diversity, residents from different ages, genders, occupations and educational backgrounds were selected to ensure that the data collected reflected the diversity of Dalian residents. Interviews should include urban planners, historians, cultural scholars, and ordinary residents to gain a comprehensive perspective on urban symbolism. The interviewees should also select individuals who have a deep understanding of Dalian's history and culture, including long-term residents and those who have worked for more than three years. 10-15 in-depth interviews are planned for this study. Among them, there are 3-5 historians and cultural researchers, 5-7 long-term residents, and 2-3 long-term workers. This number is based on the principle of data saturation in qualitative research, which is that after a certain number of interviews are reached, new data no longer significantly adds new information or insights. 10-15 interviews are usually enough to capture the main ideas and trends of the research topic. Through the above methods, we will focus on residents' cognition and use of natural, historical and modern landscapes in Dalian's urban landscape. In order to clearly present this information to the reader, we will focus on the following key points:

Residents' usage of different landscape types will reveal the extent to which residents interact with these landscapes in their daily lives, as well as their preferences for the use of urban space. This includes the main activities of Dalian citizens, migrant workers and tourists in these landscape areas, such as rest, sports, sightseeing and social activities. The modes of transport (walking, public transport, self-driving) and the time it takes for residents to get to these landscaped areas are analyzed, reflecting the ease and accessibility of urban transport. Knowing how long residents stay in these areas and how often they visit helps assess the social value of these Spaces and residents' sense of belonging. Through data collected from observations and interviews, residents' emotional responses to urban landscape, evaluations and suggestions for improvement are analyzed.

The analysis of residents' perceptions reveals a deep connection to Dalian's historical development, a mixed response to modern urban forms, and a strong appreciation for the natural landscape. Historical buildings and monuments are seen as crucial to maintaining the city's unique identity, while modern developments are viewed with both optimism and concern. The natural landscape is highly valued for its contribution to residents' quality of life, emphasizing the need for sustainable urban planning. These insights into residents' perceptions provide a nuanced understanding of how Dalian's urban landscape is experienced and valued by its inhabitants, offering valuable perspectives for future urban development and preservation efforts.

### **The Modern and Contemporary Forms of Dalian Urban Landscape**

This part analyzes the current forms of Dalian's urban landscape, highlighting modern architectural landmarks and contemporary developments. It discusses the city's efforts to integrate modernization with its historical and cultural heritage.

From the in-depth analysis, the arrival of humanized form is the result and ultimate reflection of the diversified development of culture and art since the 1990s, while for urban landscape, it is just a reflection of artistic renewal and transformation. In essence, city is still the function and space that have an impact on people's life. Of course, it is not to say that forms and visual images do not play a role in human life, from this level, synthesis may be a universal phenomenon at present. With the development of urban landscape today, while focusing on functional technology, more and more attention has been paid to various factors related to future development. In addition to ecological architecture and sustainable architecture, various explorations of architecture have not been stopped. As the designer of Dalian International Conference, I am

also a representative of deconstruction and a pioneer of contemporary architecture exploration. On the one hand, "Blue Sky Group" insists on its own unique exploration in architectural art, and the philosophy of change between architecture and city; On the other hand, it also pays attention to the influence and role of technology in architecture. In the shape of the Dalian International Convention Center, the unique curves of the Dalian coastline and the unique Marine creatures are integrated. After these natural forms are extracted and summarized, abstract forms based on geometric modeling are formed. Combined with deconstruction thought and related theories, the elements are recombined to form a new form system representing the image of Dalian city.

## Discussions

**Unique Contributions of the Study:** The present study offers several unique contributions to the field of urban studies, particularly concerning Dalian. Unlike previous works that may have focused on specific periods or aspects of Dalian's development, this study provides a comprehensive historical analysis from the Tsarist Lend-Lease Period to the era of China's Reform and opening up. This extensive timeframe allows for a more nuanced understanding of the city's evolution. By examining the cultural value of Dalian's urban landscape through the lens of historical narrative, heritage, and identity, this study expands on the work of other scholars who have primarily focused on either the architectural or social aspects of urban culture. The inclusion of residents' perceptions adds a vital dimension to the study of the urban landscape. This approach is more holistic compared to studies that have concentrated solely on architectural or planning aspects.

**Addressing Research Gaps:** This study provides a continuous narrative of Dalian's urban development, which has been lacking in studies that jump between periods or focus on isolated aspects. Cultural Symbolism: It explores the cultural symbols in a more integrated manner, considering their role in shaping identity and providing a sense of continuity, which has not been thoroughly examined. By centering on residents' perceptions, this study fills the void left by research that often overlooks the human element in urban landscapes.

**Theoretical Implications:** The study enriches the theoretical understanding of how historical layers contribute to the formation of a city's identity and character. It provides a framework for assessing the cultural value of urban landscapes and the importance of integrating heritage in modern urban planning. It suggests that urban planning should consider not only the physical and economic aspects but also the cultural and perceptual experiences of

residents. This study offers a distinctive contribution to the field of urban studies by providing a comprehensive analysis of Dalian's urban landscape, its historical development, and the cultural value embedded within it. It addresses research gaps and offers new perspectives on the role of cultural symbols in urban landscapes, the importance of resident perceptions, and the balance between historical preservation and modern development.

## Conclusions

The comprehensive analysis presented in this study has shed light on the multifaceted urban landscape of Dalian, China, and its evolution over the course of the 20th century. Through a meticulous examination of historical documents, field observations, in-depth interviews, and questionnaire surveys, this research has achieved several key outcomes that contribute to the existing discourse on urban development and cultural heritage.

**Summary of Research Findings:** The study has provided a detailed account of Dalian's urban landscape development, highlighting the significant periods of the Tsarist Lend-Lease, Japanese Occupation, early urban development, and the Reform and opening up era. It has revealed the city's unique character shaped by historical events, cultural influences, economic developments, and natural features. The research has also underscored the importance of cultural symbols in conveying the city's history and fostering a sense of identity among residents.

**Contributions to Urban Studies:** This research has contributed to urban studies by offering a holistic view of Dalian's urban landscape, which includes its natural and scenic features, cultural and historical symbols, and modern architectural landmarks. The findings have implications for urban planning, cultural promotion, and policy-making, suggesting a balanced approach to urban development that respects historical heritage while embracing modern aspirations.

**Implications for Cultural Preservation and Modernization:** The study has implications for the balance between cultural preservation and urban modernization. It suggests that sustainable urban planning should integrate green spaces and prioritize environmental conservation, ensuring the city's long-term viability and cultural continuity. The research also highlights the need for community engagement in the stewardship of cultural symbols and the importance of public awareness and appreciation of traditional values.

## New Knowledges

This study contributes new insights into the complex interplay between historical heritage and modern urban development in Dalian's urban landscape. By integrating residents' perceptions with historical and cultural analyses, it highlights the critical role of cultural symbols in shaping urban identity and fostering a sense of belonging. The findings reveal the significance of balancing historical preservation with modernization to create sustainable urban spaces that resonate with both cultural heritage and contemporary needs. This research also offers a framework for understanding how historical narratives and modern developments coexist in urban environments, providing valuable guidance for future urban planning and cultural preservation strategies.

## Recommendations

### 1. Theoretical Recommendations

Advocate for an integrated approach to urban planning that respects Dalian's historical roots while accommodating modern architectural expressions and urban functionalities. This approach should be informed by the city's unique history and cultural symbols. Promote research that further explores the theoretical dimensions of urban cultural symbols and their role in shaping residents' sense of belonging and identity. This includes the examination of how these symbols evolve with urban development and social changes. Encourage the development of urban planning theories that consider both the physical and cultural aspects of city landscapes. This should include the consideration of residents' perceptions and the integration of natural elements in urban environments.

### 2. Policy Recommendations

Formulate and implement policies that protect and preserve Dalian's historical and cultural heritage. These policies should support the adaptive reuse of heritage sites and encourage community involvement in conservation efforts. Develop and enforce policies that ensure sustainable urban growth, balancing economic development with environmental protection and cultural preservation. This includes regulations for green spaces, historical districts, and sustainable construction practices. Increase public awareness and education about the importance of Dalian's cultural symbols and heritage. This can be achieved through public campaigns, educational programs, and community engagement initiatives.

### **3. Application Recommendations**

Apply the findings to guide urban renewal projects that revitalize old industrial areas, such as the Dalian Shipyard and Iceberg Group, into cultural and artistic spaces that contribute to the city's identity and provide new economic opportunities. Leverage the city's cultural symbols and heritage in the development of cultural and creative industries. This includes the creation of cultural products, tourism development, and the promotion of Dalian as a destination for cultural experiences. Engage local communities in the planning and management of urban spaces, ensuring that their needs and aspirations are reflected in the city's development. This can be achieved through participatory planning processes and community-based initiatives. Utilize the city's cultural symbols and natural landscapes to enhance tourism. This includes the development of tourism products and services that showcase Dalian's unique history, culture, and natural beauty.

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