



## ABOUT THE TSAR COLUMN TOWER OF OLD TERMEZ

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### Annotation

The article provides information about the construction of the Tsar Column Tower, one of the medieval architectural structures of Old Termez, the foundations of which are preserved only today, its peculiarities and similarities, parts related to the mosque, the location of epigraphic ornaments and their scientific analogies.

**Keywords:** Old Termez, medieval, city, castle, shahristan, rabod, architecture, mosque, minaret, Tsar Column, construction style, baked brick, writing, epigraphic ornaments.

### Introduction

The old city of Termez is located 8 km west of the present city, and in the Middle Ages its total area was 500 hectares. The city consists of arches (castles), shahristans and rabod parts.

In the rabot part of the city, on the right side of the present-day Termez Sherabad highway, the foundations of the Chor Ustun mosque and minaret have been preserved. The Tsar Column Mosque and Minaret were built in 1032. The sides of the tower are made of baked bricks measuring 22.5x23 cm and 3.5 cm thick, with a gypsum mixture between the bricks. The wall of the minaret remained inside the wall of the mosque. Half of it was visible outside the wall. In this respect, it is similar to the construction of the Marv Mosque. (Pugachenkova G.A.

The tower was used as a target when Russian troops invaded Termez and destroyed it with a cannon (Figure 1). Pictures, drawings and drawings from the perfect construction of the tower testify to it (B.Denike. Expedition Museum of Oriental Culture in Termez.. Preliminary report. Culture of the East.Sbornik Museum of Oriental Culture.Moscow, 1927.str.16, fig.5. Zasyipkin. Architectural monuments of Sredney Azii.Moscow, 1928.str.72. Z.A.Arshavskaya, E.V.Rtveladze, Z.A.Xakimov. Srednevekovye monuments of Surkhandari.T., 1982.str.56).

The axis of the tower is located above the five-sided octagon-isopha, which is visible from the south, and its base has a rectangular shape. Part of the octagon was also left





inside the mosque wall. In 1927, the height of the surviving part of the tower was 13.3 meters. But even then, the bricks on top of this unique monument were savagely demolished. The diameter of the tower is 305-310 cm, inside there is a spiral staircase. The width of the stairs is 60 cm. The staircase tower was narrowed between a 50 cm diameter bullet and a 70 cm thick wall. The entrance to the minaret was on the north side, equal to the mosque stage.

As can be seen in the photo, the axis of the tower did not narrow upwards. The upper part of the tower is decorated with Arabic kofi inscriptions on four belts, dialed with terracotta details (Fig. 2). The inscriptions on the first belt of the minaret surround the minaret as a semicircle, as it is located below the top of the mosque wall. The second belt inscriptions are located in the same way, although there is no wall in this section. This situation can be assessed as a peculiar appearance of the front facade of the building. However, it was not possible to see the inscriptions on these two belts of the minaret from the inside of the mosque.

Although the inscriptions on the two belts at the top of the tower are much longer, it appears that most of them remained behind the tower (Fig. 3). An earlier photograph of the tower by B. Denike shows the condition of the upper belt, which has not yet been broken. In the following pictures, however, we see that only the edge of the belt remains. The banks of the Belbog are made of small bricks, as in the towers of Bukhara, Vobkent and Uzgen. It was a peculiar tradition of the period. This "ring" or belt inscription, which has become an integral part of the tower, decorates a two-meter part of the structure, as well as a chain of bricks, the appearance of seams between the bricks in a vertical position shows the integrity of the ornaments and inscriptions. The breadth and depth of the space between the inscriptions and the letters indicate the classic tradition of carving decoration at the top of the tower. Here, according to the tradition of the appearance of the front facade of the building, the circle of inscriptions is not fully continued. The bricks are stacked in pairs and vertically in the part of the isophage and in the part of the minaret adjoining the mosque wall. Currently, the height of the castle in some places is more than 20 meters. Due to its location on a natural hill, the fortress is called "Kohandiz" in historical sources, and the impregnable fortress is known as "Madinat ul rjal" ("city of the brave"). The scientific confirmation of the 2,500-year-old city of Termez has also been confirmed by archeological finds from the fortress. Of course, the scientific research of archeologist Sh.R.Pidaev inside the fortress in 1971-1986 is very important. During excavations in 2011, a 60x10 meter section of the wall was excavated. The height of the excavation is 8-10 meters. There are defensive towers every 20-25 meters of the castle wall. One of the towers and its interior room were opened and explored. When



the upper part of the castle wall was cleaned, the remains of a semicircular minaret of the XVI-XVII centuries were found here. Although this tower is built of baked brick, it is built on a very soft layer. The radius of the late medieval semicircular constellation is 3.5 m. The remains of the surviving tower range from 1 to 1.20 meters. It is built of baked brick measuring 27x27x5 cm. When the inside of the tower was cleared, a recent interior room appeared. Its wall thickness is 1x1.10 meters, the length of the room is 3.5 m and the width is about 1.90 m. The last period defense tower was built on the surface and foundation of a defensive structure and room of the X-XII centuries. The developed medieval room is built of bricks measuring 30x30x6 cm and is 4x4 m, built for easy defense, although it is not fully open, the outer sides and thickness of the wall are very clear. The wall is 1 m thick and the north side of the room is rhombic. This wall also penetrated into the last period tower at a depth of 1.50-1.70 m and is very well preserved. To the east of the tower, recorded at a depth of 2.5 m above the excavation relief: a wall and interior of a brick building of the X-XII centuries were discovered. The thickness of this wall is 3 x 1.5 m. The interior of the room and the stage are made of baked bricks measuring 30x30x5 cm. Only one corner of this room has been studied, so its scale will be studied in future studies. Between the tower of the last period and the wall of the X-XII centuries there is a pit with a flange d-36 and a height of 75 cm and a porch column (d-20 cm) with various finds. There is a cultural layer between the tower and the defensive wall, which is 2 m thick and 6 m long. There is a second wall at a depth of 2.10 m from the rapper. Hum and pit are located 3.20 m below the rapper. The radius of the late medieval watchtower is 3.5 m, d -7 m. Fragments of dark-green, dark-blue thick-walled pottery were found in the late medieval watchtower and its interior. The bases of the pottery have mainly ring-shaped, flat shapes, which were widespread in the late Middle Ages. The top of the inside and outside of the dishes are glazed. Their interior is decorated in dark brown, dark green, and the ornaments consist of plant flowers, geometric and zoomorphic pieces. During this period, the quality of both technological and decorative methods of ceramics decreases.

The Termez tower is rare and interesting in its construction and decoration. Unfortunately, the destruction of the tower made it impossible to study it thoroughly. Its unique cylindrical appearance is a form rare until the Mongol period. In short, the Tsar Ustun Tower in Old Termez is located in the Rabod part of the city and is an architectural structure built in the IX-XII centuries in the classical style of the Orient for the monastery of a large commercial and handicraft center.



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БИЛАН ИЖТИМОЙИ-ИҚТИСОДИЙ ВА МАДАНИЙ СОҲАЛАРДАГИ ҲАМКОРЛИГИ. БАРҚАРОРЛИК ВА ЕТАКЧИ ТАДҚИҚОТЛАР ОНЛАЙН ИЛМИЙ ЖУРНАЛИ, 176-186.

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