



# History of Tashkent

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Tashkent's history can be observed from late III century B.C. – time from which the written sources and ancient city inside the contemporary city were preserved. This is the ancient city of Ming Urik situated on the Salar canal. Based on their excavations, the archeologists concluded that the first fortifications of the city were built at the end of I century B.C. - early I century A.D., i.e. the city is already 20 centuries old. Chinese chronicles that were based on the memoirs of the Chinese Ambassador Chjan Tsan with whom the concept of the first caravan route along the Great Silk Road is related can be named among the first written sources.





Starting from IV century A.D. Chach was in the center of many confrontations. In 550 the Turkic Kaganate was established and it included also the conquered Chach. Large groups of nomadic Turkic population intruded it. After fall of the Turkic Kaganate, Chach was governed by local rulers. In VII-VIII Centuries the population was mixed. Ruling elite consisted of Sogdian aristocracy mixed with Turkic one.

In 713 Kuteiba's troops made a destructive campaign to Chach where later the Caliph's rule was established. At the same time the network of 4 cities and 20 castles with Madinat-ash-Shash holding the central role among them had been formed during the early medieval era. Thus called the Arab sources the city, the ruin of which were studied in the ancient city of Ming Urik.

One more name is mentioned in the written sources of IX-X centuries - Binket. It was divided to citadel (arch), internal city (shahristan or madina) and two suburbs - internal (rabad-dekhil) and external (rabad-kharidj). Citadel was surrounded by two gates and contained the ruler's place, treasury and prison. IX-XII centuries are the era of prospering industry, trade and culture. This period is called the «golden age», «Muslim Renaissance» in the history of economic and cultural development of Movaro-un-Nahr, where Tashkent played one of the key roles.

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In 1503 Tashkent was conquered by Sheibani-Khan. Tashkent's role as economic and cultural center had grown significantly under the rule of Suyunij-Khodja-Sultan, one of the most powerful khans. Struggle between the Sheibanids and Kazakh sultans for owning the capital continued for many decades.



In XVI century the grand campaign of civil construction was started in Tashkent. Part of buildings were preserved to our days. In 1554 Nauruz Akhmed became the supreme ruler of the Sheibanids' state, and cities of Fergana were subjected to him. However, siege of Bukhara was failure and in Samarkand khan was killed in his own camp.



In XVI century Bukhara's ruler made marches on Tashkent. In 1582 Abdulla-khan finally subjected Tashkent to his rule. During the rule of the first Ashtarkhanids (early XVII century) Kazakh sultans consolidated their position in Tashkent. By that time Tashkent finally acquired its contemporary name.

**In April, 1918 the Turkestan Autonomous Republic with capital in Tashkent was established. In 1924 the national demarcation took place, as a result of which the Uzbek SSR with capital in Samarkand was established. In 1930 Tashkent became the capital city again.**

**In 1991, after collapsion of Soviet Union, Uzbekistan declared itself as an independent state with its capital in Tashkent.**



As one walks around the city, there are remnants of the Soviet past all around. Some of the emblems and statues were changed, the Soviet ones now in museum archives, replaced with ones that represent the new nation. For example, near the President's 'White House', is a former Soviet pillar that had an emblem of the USSR with a statue of Lenin on top. Lenin has been replaced with a beautiful bronze globe with a relief of Uzbekistan in the center, indicating that no one from the outside should interfere with Uzbekistan. (A lesson I sincerely wish our politicians would learn – no country, whether it is Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan or the U.S. wants anyone to interfere in their business. We are not the world's policemen!) In place of the emblem is a statue of 'The Happy Mother' with a baby in her lap.





This Madonna-like image has nothing to do with Christianity, it actually comes from a VI C BCE amulet that is in the History museum. (Yep, the goddess does survive!!!) There is also the emblem that is on the flag with its wheat and cotton shafts indicating the wealth of the nation, the 8 pointed star for the 8 heavens in Islam, the crescent moon and 5 pointed star for the 5 Pillars of Islam, the sun, and valley between two rivers representing the geography of the country between the Amudarya and Srydaria Rivers, a rising Phoenix with the text in Cyrillic that states “Uzbekistan. ‘The Happy Mother’ represents the culmination of the new country with its new beginnings, whereas ‘The Sorrowful Mother’ is the main figure by the Commemorative Walls dedicated to those who fought and died in wars ordered by the Soviets.





**The Sorrowful Mother looks down thinking about her lost children whose names are engraved on hundreds of bronze tablets lining two terraced walls. The contrast between ‘The Sorrowful Mother’ whose children had no freedom and ‘The Happy Mother’ is a continuation of Soviet art propaganda, but an effective one. The Commemorative Walls are impressive and I was stunned to find a number of Rodins on the Tashkent panels, until reminded that people from all over the Soviet Republic were sent here during the war. My distant Croatian relatives would have been part of this mix. The imagery and symbolism doesn’t stop there though. Perhaps the largest square in the city is Mustakillik and it is graced with an open entrance with three storks, peace, happiness, and rebirth, in the center flying to the sky.**

**Tashkent was destroyed by an earthquake so there are not too many ancient buildings left standing. In the rebuilt Hasti Imom Complex, which has a number of new and older mosques, medrasahs, minarets and the Islamic University, is a small building that was constructed to house a very special book.**





**Tashkent is a modern city and while historically it was separate from the Central Uzbekistan metropolises, it truly is the capital city today. The historical museum is very nicely laid out and provides a wonderful introduction to the different eras. I would sincerely recommend starting one's journey through the country here in the museum, before venturing into the overwhelming richness of Uzbeki monuments as otherwise it is very very easy to be completely confused with strange names and unfamiliar historical events.**

# Museum of History of Timurids

The State Museum of Timurids was opened in Tashkent on October 18, 1996 after the 660th anniversary of the birth of a great statesman and commander Amir Temur.

The museum, as an unusual form of construction of a luxury dome is a masterpiece of architecture, which blends with modern and ancient traditions. The decor of the building presented graceful white columns and carved wooden doors, a huge mural. The interiors of the museum in marble, domed ceiling is painted and covered with gold leaf in the best traditions of Uzbek ornamental art on the walls and halls are made murals in the style of oriental miniature painting, depicting the life of Amir Temur and the stages of the country's history from antiquity to the present day. All of this brings the visitor into the world created by the great Amir Temir, which develops science, arts and crafts, erected magnificent buildings, thriving state.



Since its inception, the museum became a center of scientific thought and education. It stores jewelry, arms, clothing, military commanders and ordinary soldiers, musical instruments, manuscripts of Amir Temur, Babur, astronomical instruments of Ulugbek. The museum also contains valuable documents such as letters of Amir Temur and his descendants with the monarchs of Europe, skilled miniature copies of paintings by Amir Temur, written by European masters of the time. The originals of these paintings are in the National Library of France. These and many other cultural treasures dating back to the Timurid era, and reflecting the history of Uzbekistan from the XIV century. Have great historical value.

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**Today Tashkent is a large industrial center with about 300 companies producing almost everything which contemporary person needs: from aircraft and tractors to TV sets and toys for children. Here the images of old times join the modern skyscrapers made of glass and metal, multilevel overbridges, parks, museums, fountains. Tashkent is rapidly becoming a modern developed international megapolis.**



# *After 1991 year*



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