

The Alexander Nevsky Church in Termez

Xidirov Muhiddin

Lecturer at the Faculty of History, Termez State University

After the Russian military brigade was settled in the Pattakesar area, great attention was paid to the construction of a church. However, during the construction of the Tuproqo'rg'on military garrison, it was not possible to build a new church, so the first temporary brigade church, built in 1897 and named after the man of God Alexis, was put into use. In Termez, on the allocated territory, a border brigade and a Russian Orthodox church were built and put into operation in 1897. Shortly after, it was decided to build a second church building. At the beginning of the 20th century, a decision was made to construct a new church according to the design sent from St. Petersburg to demonstrate Russia's ideological and political power on its southernmost borders. Traditionally, a central square was allocated for the temple throughout the city, which served as an artistic and dominant feature. The final garrison church was built in 1905. Its bell tower could be seen from the nearest area of the Afghan border. The history of the Termez church project, associated with major historical figures, is very interesting and has been the subject of discussion. In 1900, the Minister of War of the Russian Empire, A.N. Kuropatkin, reported to the Tsar that it was necessary to find funds for building churches in all army units where a priest was appointed to the headquarters, and to develop the process of building spacious and inexpensive military churches. This was followed by Emperor Nicholas II's reply: "May God soon grant that the religious needs of the troops be satisfied, which I consider a very important matter."¹ In January 1900, by order of the Tsar, a special commission on these matters was created at the General Staff, headed by Infantry General Count Tatishchev. This church was initially established in a temporary building, which caused discontent among the Russian population. Several years later, the military administration allocated funds for the construction of a permanent building based on a standard design for military chapels, utility rooms, and sacristies, using light gray bricks produced in Turkestan.

The cathedral was built in 1890 based on a model design of a military church, developed by architects Fyodor Verzhbitsky and Fyodor Smirnov. This project, characteristic of Turkestan military cemeteries, was approved by the government for the construction of a church for the 1st Turkestan Rifle Brigade, located in Tashkent. In Turkestan, it was planned to build two general urban structures according to this project.

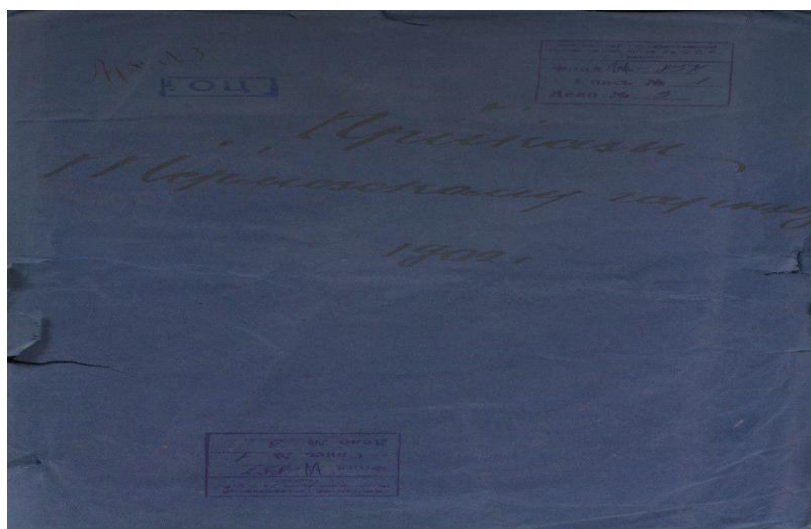
The Alexander Nevsky Church was constructed by the Russian Empire in the city of Termez between 1901 and 1904, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. This Orthodox church functioned as a religious center for the Russian military garrison in Termez and served as a practical example of Russia's policy of implementing its religious agenda in colonial territories.

Some Orthodox churches in Osh and Termez were built "in honor of the man of God Alexey" with the participation of staff officers from the border brigade of the 9th Turkestan Rifle Regiment's Termez church. These churches were constructed in the city center on a "large wide square," surrounded by trees that branched off from the streets in all directions. The rectangular plan of the building featured designs of an Orthodox cross, with protrusions along its axes - apses in the east - located at the center of the remaining three facades. The church's geometrically precise internal structure was reflected in the

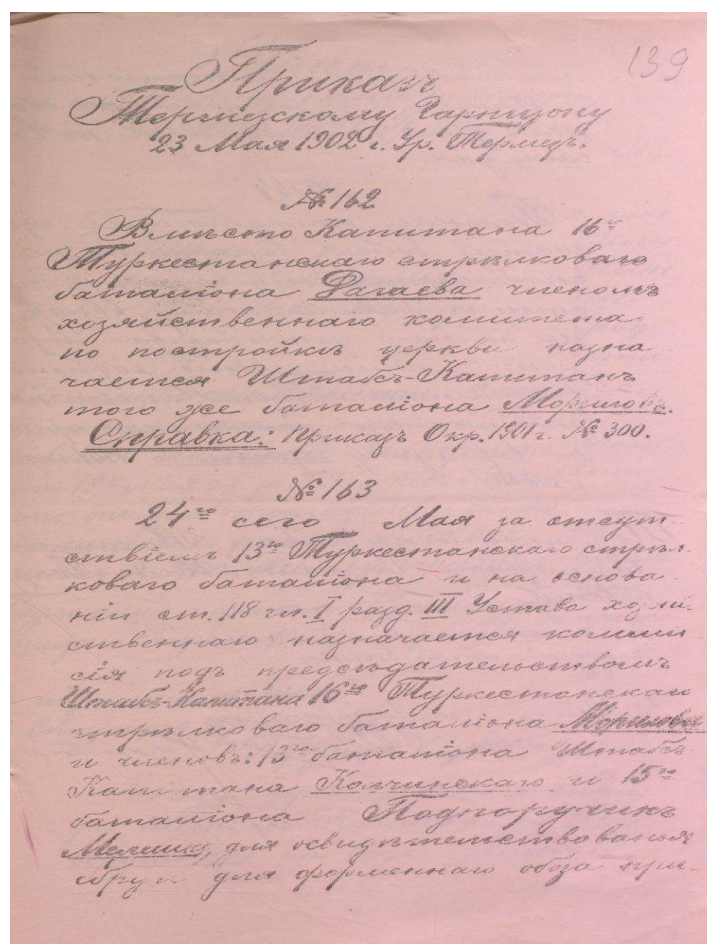
¹ G. Tsitovich. *Armiya va dengiz floti ibodatxonalari*. - Pyatigorsk, 1913, 14-bet

external volumetric-spatial composition of the building, consisting of a rectangular prayer hall with adjacent porches and terraces to the west, and an altar apse with vestries to the east.

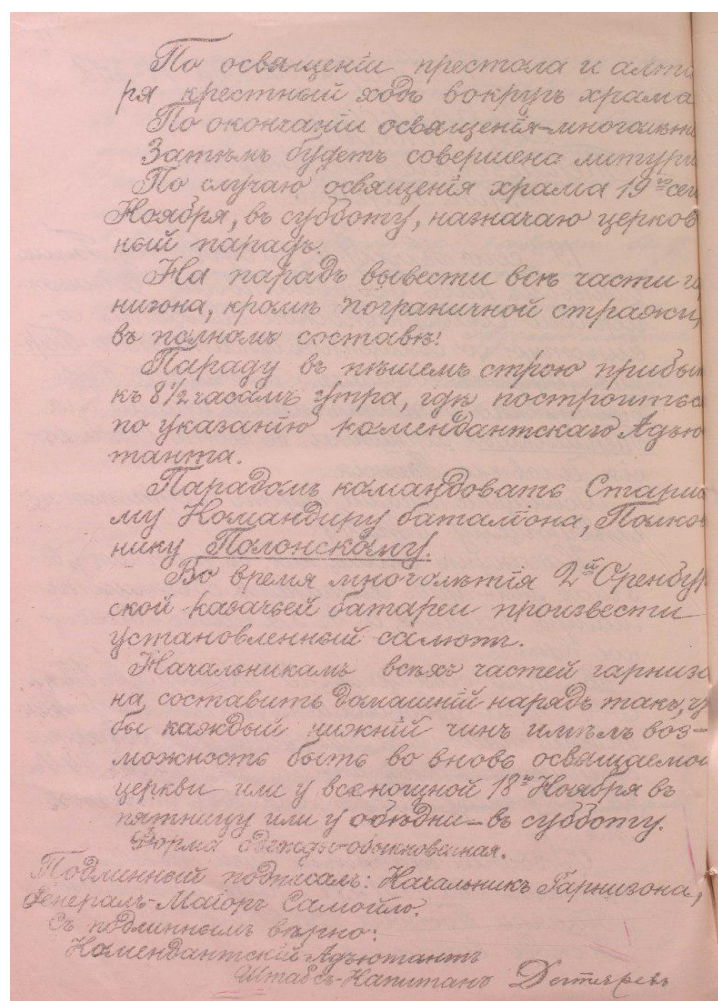
The architectural style of the church is based on elements of Orthodox ecclesiastical architecture, and it was constructed as a structure with domes and towers. The construction harmoniously combines Russian brickwork techniques with Central Asian architectural styles.



I.1. Nicholas II's decree of May 23, 1902 regarding church construction.



I.2. Decree of Nicholas II on church construction, dated May 23, 1902



I.3. Nicholas II's decree on church construction (23.05.1902)

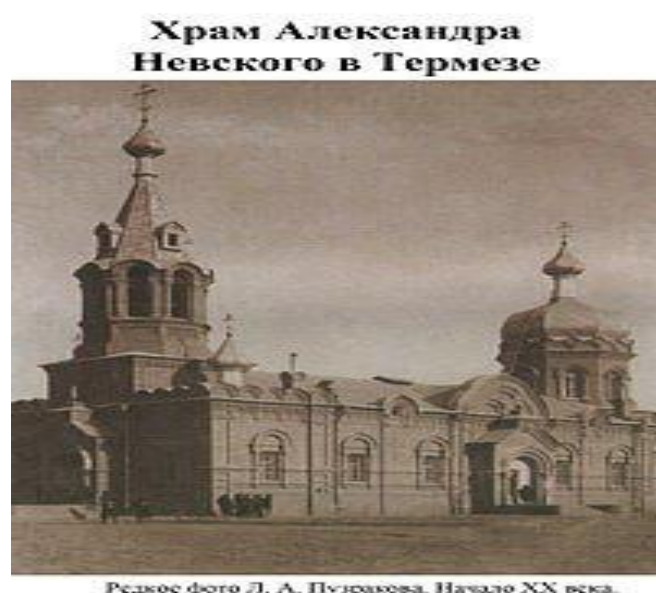
Unlike the fractional "secular" forms of city cathedrals, this church was distinguished by large expressive volumes and narrow facades. The beautiful spherical dome and pyramid-shaped tent of the bell tower, which once rose above the prism of the main volume of the Termez church, were demolished in 1930. On the facade, traditionally made of brick, the plane of the walls is still decorated with semicircular relief details - architraves with large Orthodox crosses on the panels. The decorative structure of the facades culminates in a series of kokoshniks above the multi-story cornices and vestibules. The large arch-shaped eastern dome above the altar previously rested on a square drum with semicircular openings in keeled architraves. Above the main entrance, on a rectangular base atop an octagonal hill, stands the bell tower. The bell chamber with arched openings on each side added lightness and elegance to its architecture. Currently, the interior of the Alexeievskaya Church has been destroyed - the decor and church attributes have been lost, the ceilings have been leveled and covered with planks. The expressive design of the altar section is recalled, where a high vault suddenly appears, illuminated by semicircular openings inside the drum, creating a sense of heavenly light and an abundance of light and air.

"On November 19, 1905, the church was solemnly consecrated and put into operation under the name of the Holy Prince Alexander Nevsky. It was the first exemplary military church built in Turkestan. The church was constructed of fired bricks, primarily by Russian military personnel and partly by the Russian civilian population. It featured a large bell tower and an iconostasis. The bell and iconostasis were brought from St. Petersburg. The interior of the church measured 24x16 meters. Inside the church, there were numerous icons and ecclesiastical items. Until 1910, the church belonged to the 9th Turkestan Sub-

Regiment and was dedicated to Saint Alexius, the Man of God (with a throne feast on March 17). Its priest was Vasily Pavlovich Blagoveshchensky"².

"In 1910, the church was renamed in honor of St. Alexander Nevsky. At that time, the priest was Vasily Nikiforovich Orlinsky. According to archival documents, the church first appeared at the beginning of the 20th century. In Termez, a temporary church was established for the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th Turkestan Rifle Regiments in the barracks building of the 2nd Company of the 15th Turkestan Rifle Regiment. This temporary church was consecrated on February 10, 1901, in the name of Prince Alexander Nevsky. Three years later, as this church became inadequate for the regiment's needs, the Ministry of War allocated funds for the construction of a new stone church according to a previously approved model"³.

The new church was constructed using light gray burnt bricks and was ceremoniously opened on November 19, 1905. The utensils and vestry items from the previous temporary church were transferred to the new church. Until 1910, the church was officially under the administration of the 4th Turkestan Rifle Brigade, with Vasily Pavlovich Blagoveshchensky serving as its priest.



I.4. The Church of Alexander Nevsky

"The great sign of the Savior, the icon of St. Alexis the Man of God, the icon "Prayer for the Chalice," the symbol of Christ's resurrection, as well as priestly vestments, a baptismal font, part of a large candlestick, and a portion of a seven-branched candlestick have been preserved. The icon of the Holy Great Martyr George the Victorious, brought from Mount Athos, has not survived to this day. The Saint's icon frame contains his holy relics and cotton particles, which are adorned with lamps in front of the miraculous signs"⁴. The church was closed after 1927, and soon afterward, the bell tower was demolished. However, the most joyful fact is that the second Orthodox church in Termez survived. Precise, concise, and simultaneously the most numerous and comprehensive information available on the history of Orthodoxy in this region, particularly regarding the charitable work of the Russian Orthodox Church in Turkestan, is abundant. These include financial reports, statements and

² Цитовичъ Г.А. Храмы Армии и Флота, Пятигорскъ, 1913, с. 464

³ РГИА, ф.806, оп.8, д.462. Клировая ведомость церкви за 1905 г., ф.806, оп.10, д.447 Клировая ведомость церкви за 1912 г.

⁴ www.sobor.ru

correspondence on collections and donations, as well as reports, typically published in periodicals or special publications.

List of References

1. Г. Тситович Армия ва денгиз флоти ибодатхоналари. - Пятигорск, 1913, 14-,бет
2. Цитовичъ Г.А. Храмы Армии и Флота, Пятигорскъ, 1913, с. 464
3. РГИА, ф.806, оп.8, д.462. Клировая ведомость церкви за 1905 г., ф.806, оп.10, д.447 Клировая ведомость церкви за 1912 г.
4. www.sobor.ru