

Title: **The tower tombs of Palmyra: chronology, architecture and decoration**

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Abstract: The article deals with the tower tombs of Palmyra, a major group of architectural monuments in the ancient oasis town. About 180 towers, mainly from the 1st century AD, can still be traced. The Palmyrene tower tombs represented a local type of construction influenced by traditions and corresponding to a fixed canon. The contribution presents the chronological development of this tomb category and gives an overview of the broad variety of decoration. A distinct change of architecture, building techniques and furnishing can be observed in the second half of the 1st century AD, a time when the Palmyrenes formed an urban society, which they referred to as *polis*. Thus, the tower tombs illustrate the process of Palmyra's introduction to the world of Roman ideas and thinking, which had proceeded slowly at first and which accelerated significantly in the second half of the 1st century AD.

Keywords: Palmyra, architectural décor, funerary sculpture, loculi, necropolis, sarcophagus, tower tomb, wall painting