

**FROM THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT POTTERY CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THE
FERGANA VALLEY**

*Kokand State University
Associate Professor, Department of History, PhD
Esonov Ziyodbek Yuldashevich*

Abstract: This article analyzes the history of the development of pottery in the Fergana valley in ancient times. The main attention is paid to the study of information related to the historical period in which the pottery craft emerged in the region, which local centers and historical factors played an important role in this, and what role ethnic processes in the region played in the development of valley pottery.

Keywords: Ancient times, Fergana valley, pottery, Chust culture, flat-bottomed vessels, engobe painting, "south and west of the valley", pastoral tribes, wheelless pottery, local traditions.

The ancient centers of culture on the territory of Uzbekistan are also an integral part of world civilization, and it is no exaggeration to say that the Fergana valley is one of such ancient centers of development on the territory of our homeland. One of the crafts that has developed in the Fergana valley is pottery. The pottery craft in this region has gone through a long path of development, in which several stages of development can be distinguished. That is, it can be divided into ancient times, the middle ages and the stages of development in the modern era.

In this regard, it is important to analyze the history of the development of the valley pottery school in ancient times. Because such research leads to a broader study of the factors under which the foundation of pottery in the region arose, and on the basis of what historical processes subsequent innovations within the sector were determined. On the other hand, such research plays an important role in shedding more light on the transition of the ancient inhabitants of the valley to a sedentary lifestyle, the history of agricultural culture, the history of urban planning, and the history of ethnocultural ties.

Most importantly, information on ancient Fergana valley pottery has not yet been fully systematized, data in this area are poorly preserved, not fully defined, and the theoretical views of researchers on the topic are not sufficiently clearly formed. Nevertheless, we believe it is important to analyze some aspects of this topic based on the available information.

This article analyzes the problems of the "Ancient era" of the network. Academician A. Askarov, in his periodization of the history of the peoples of Central Asia, called its second period "The period of the formation of the primitive clan community and property ownership" [1:77]. It was during this period that the craft economy arose and its initial development took place. For this reason, attention is paid to the analysis of the problems of the Neolithic and Iron Ages of the network.

Various sources, namely archaeological, written sources and folklore, provide information to varying degrees about the pottery industry in the Fergana valley in ancient times. In particular, archaeological research conducted in this area plays an important role in studying this issue. In particular, the archaeological research conducted in the Fergana valley by V. Sprishevsky, Yu.A. Zadneprovsky, N.G. Gorbunova, A.N. Bernshtam, as well as Ya. G. Gulyamov and V.A.

Shishkin, and later by A. Askarov, A. Anorboev, B. Matboboev, is of great importance in this regard [2:84;16;29].

According to researchers, the first handicraft industry in human history was the pottery industry that emerged in the Neolithic era [3:51]. According to scientists, the settlement of humanity in the Neolithic era and the formation of a farming economy played an important role in the formation of the pottery industry. So how did this process unfold in the Fergana valley?

It is known that archaeological research has been conducted in the Fergana valley in places related to the Neolithic period. In particular, more than 80 Neolithic settlements have been studied in Central Fergana. An example of this is the findings of the Uzunkul and Tayloqkul Neolithic settlements, located 12 km northeast of the village of Yangikurgan. However, unfortunately, these studies do not provide information about the Neolithic valley pottery [4:78]

However, a number of settlements have been studied in other regions of our country, confirming the emergence of pottery craft in the Neolithic period. For example, it was found that the production of round-bottomed ceramic objects appeared in the Neolithic monuments of Darvozakir 1 and Darvozakir 2 in Zarafshan. There are different theoretical views on the fact that pottery craft did not develop in the Fergana valley during this period. However, we believe that the main reason for this is the later emergence of settled settlements and agricultural culture in the region, which played an important role in the development of pottery craft.

Because, according to researchers, the Fergana valley remained untouched by the cultural and economic influence of the Ancient Eastern civilization not only in the Neolithic period, but also in the Eneolithic period, and even in the early stages of the Bronze age. The region was mainly inhabited by pastoral tribes [5:175-176].

In the following, we found it necessary to provide general information about the Neolithic period, taking into account the unique style of making pottery, vessel shape, and decoration of each period, in order to clarify the development of the pottery industry. Although such information does not apply to the valley.

According to scientific hypotheses, ancient people in the Neolithic period wove the first vessels in the form of baskets, then covered them with clay and dried them for use. By chance, people noticed that such a vessel would fall into a fire, the branches would burn, and as a result, the covered clay would harden, forming a relatively strong vessel. Such vessels were made with a round bottom, mainly in a sandy place. Because most of the settlements of the Neolithic period were located on sandbanks near rivers. Or, according to another hypothesis, in ancient times, primitive people used wild bird eggs as vessels. For this reason, they made objects imitating this shape. Because egg-shaped vessels are also common in some settlements of the Eneolithic period. The first patterns were carved on vessels. For example, the finds of the Kaltaminor culture (Jonboskal'a) in Khorezm, dating back to the Neolithic period, are an example of this [6:55]. Scientists emphasize that such patterns were generally in the form of "pits" and "kungura" (circles). The carved patterns were inlaid with belemnite, a mollusk (shell) residue [7:58]. Scientists also show that during this period there was a method of applying patterns to raw clay using a printing mold. Such printing molds were made of stone and bone.

Neolithic vessels were of three types according to their purpose: large for storing food, medium for cooking food, and small for straining food. Examples of medium-sized vessels include ceramic pots, the outer soot of which indicates that they were fired. Neolithic people also worked

on the strength of ceramics. For example, they mixed granite sand with clay to increase its strength. It prevented the clay from cracking.

If we stop at the manufacture of pottery, first strips of clay were prepared, and then they were combined with each other to make an item. In pottery, this method was preserved until the invention of the pottery wheel in the Bronze age. In the field of kilning, it has survived to this day. It has been determined that the first inventors of pottery were women. Because scientific research on fingerprints on early pottery samples leads to such a conclusion. For this reason, it can be said that Neolithic pottery was a simple form of "domestic craft" in the hands of women. Because each family member in this period made the necessary ceramic item for himself.

Another innovation in Eneolithic pottery is that pottery was now made with a flat bottom. Scholars attribute this to changes in pottery, namely the construction of flat-bottomed clay cooking pots. Other researchers attribute this to the population's use of various new household appliances, namely tables.

By the Bronze age, pottery was further developed. Because during this period, humanity discovered the pottery wheel. As a result, the industry developed in all respects. Pottery began to transition from a household craft to a commodity economy. That is, it no longer became a women's profession, but a male craftsman's profession. We know that patriarchal relations developed in society during the Bronze age. This could also be seen in the example of pottery. The findings of the Zamonboba settlement confirm that ceramic objects were made on the pottery wheel in Uzbekistan during the Bronze age. In addition, pottery kilns for firing ceramic objects were also found in this settlement. Of course, the kilns of this period were significantly different from the ceramic kilns of the Neolithic and Eneolithic periods. Such innovations in pottery were due to the socio-economic changes that occurred during this period [8:134].

It should be noted that the Bronze age is also important as it was the period when pottery was first formed in the Fergana valley. In particular, settlements belonging to the Bronze age irrigated farming culture have been found in more than 80 places in the Fergana valley, such as Buvanamozor, Dalvarzin, and Ashqoltepa near Chust. Academician A. Askarov noted that in the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BC, cattle-breeding Saka tribes settled in the eastern and northern parts of the Fergana valley and laid the foundation for the first farming culture [9:179]. These historical processes play an important role in the development of pottery in the region. The Chust and Dalvarzin monuments were first studied by archaeologists such as V.I. Sprishevsky and Yu.A. Zadneprovsky [10:69-76]. They put forward their theoretical views on this issue in their works. Also, this problem was covered more extensively in the works of later researchers [11:15]. Summarizing these opinions, the following observations can be made about the pottery of this culture.

The sites of the Chust culture can be considered the cradle of pottery craftsmanship in the valley. This stage can be considered the initial period of local pottery in the valley. Because pottery was still made by local craftsmen without a wheel. Pottery was mainly made by gluing strips of clay to a cloth mold. The population mainly made spheroidal ceramic bowls, half bowls, jar-shaped jars, buckets and bowls, kitchen ceramic pots, small dishes and other types of ceramic products. They can be divided into three groups according to their use. That is, undecorated ceramic pots used for cooking food, decorated dishes with a red glaze on the outer surface, and large buckets and jars intended for storing food.

The vessels varied in size, ranging from 2 cm to 1.2 meters in height. It has been established that there were certain standards in the manufacture of vessels of this period. 60% of the found vessels are conical vessels with a diameter of 14 cm to 20 cm. Such standards were also typical for bowls and half bowls.

Although the production was in the form of a household craft, the skill of skilled potters was also manifested in the decoration of ceramic vessels. For example, the vessels produced by the potters, whose shape reached perfection, their surface was covered with white and black glaze, and their rope-shaped printed patterns testify to their high skill. Such vessels were found in the Dalvarzintepa mound. The fact that more than 30 ceramic objects of this type were found in Dalvarzintepa once again confirms these ideas.

In conclusion, the first foundations of pottery craftsmanship were formed in the Fergana valley in ancient times. In particular, settlements based on the sites of the Bronze age Chust culture played an important role in this. The rise of the pottery industry in the Fergana valley in ancient times served as a worthy foundation for the subsequent development of regional pottery.

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