

RITUALS AND RITUALS RELATED TO CERAMICS, TEACHER- APPRENTICE TRADITIONS

(On the Example of the Fergana Valley)

Bahodir Shamsiddinov Mirzaaxmad o'g'li

Namangan davlat universiteti o'qituvchisi

E:mail: shamsiddinobahodir23@gmail.com

Telefon: +998-99-323-66-83

Abstract

The article notes the traditions of ceramics and traditions that have been going on for centuries, as well as the traditions of the teacher and apprentice. The main attention is paid to the aspects of the traditional material culture of the people of the Valley, various rituals in the daily work of the master potters of the Fergana Valley, the processes of mastery of the khalas.

Keywords: Fergana valley, Rishton, Margelon, Uzbek people, handicraft culture, ceramics, heritage, teacher-apprentice, ceremonial, kalontar, white fotiha, khalalfa, dedication oshi, kamarbasta.

Introduction

The potters of Fergana attempted to preserve the customs, rituals, and traditions associated with pottery from the beginning of the last century, until 1917. At the beginning of the 20th century, the craft regions of the Fergana Valley, including Rishton, Margilan, Kokand, and Gurumsaray, were considered important centers for pottery production, with more than 100 skilled potters working in their workshops.

Another characteristic feature of 20th-century valley pottery is the master-apprentice tradition. Initially, artisans sent their children for apprenticeships, i.e., apprenticeships, to learn the pottery craft. The children admitted to the apprenticeship were individually examined, and special attention was paid to their age, with particular attention given to young children. Initially, the children helped the masters with household chores, but shortly afterwards, they were also involved in the workshop work. This is how the tradition of passing on a skill from generation to generation developed.

The following traditions were observed during pottery training in the valley: Bringing the child to the master was considered a special ceremonial event. The child's parents and relatives would prepare a "bo'y" and a "holwaitar" (a type of meat dish), come to the master, and hand it over to him with statements such as "The child's flesh is yours, the bones are ours." The child's future depended entirely on the master, and he would learn the secrets of the craft for 10 years, in some cases even 15. The baked goods brought along were immediately consumed together. The master not only taught the boy a craft but also provided him with food throughout his apprenticeship, and the vocational training was free of charge.

According to workshop customs, the master was considered a second father to the apprentice. The apprentice learned the craft from the master for many years but received no payment for

his services. On holidays or weekends, the master would distribute one thing or another. If the master's work was not finished on time, he would scold his apprentice and sometimes even slap him. These regulations are essentially reflected in the workshop regulations. The apprentice was not considered a full member of the workshop; only after a special event (more precisely, after receiving the master's blessing) could he become a true member.

The teacher was strict and placed high demands on the student. Each craft had to be learned with great sensitivity and patience. Masters developed special etiquette requirements for their students. For example, they strictly required students not to allow themselves to be distracted while working, not to engage in improper or undesirable activities, and not to attempt any work without the teacher's permission. The master not only taught his apprentice the secrets of his craft but also prepared him for household chores.

After the student had learned the secrets of the art, he received a white blessing. During the ceremony, the student presented the teacher with a sarpa from head to toe and a knot. Sometimes the teacher provides the tools and templates used in the craft so that their student has no difficulty starting independent work. If a particular student who has received the white blessing does not wish to work independently, they can stay and work with their teacher.

When parents gave their children as apprentices to masters, they would say (in the local dialect): "The flesh is yours, the bones are ours," because the child's future depended entirely on the master. In the Khanate of Kokand, the status of "master" was traditionally passed down from generation to generation among artisans, but the "master apprenticeship" school was of particular importance for the training of master craftsmen. Sources on the history of Central Asia indicate that the ceremony of conferring the title of "master" on apprentices usually took place on Fridays at artisan gatherings. The ceremony, in which a master bestowed his blessing on his student, was a form of gratitude to the spirits of the ancestors. After the apprentice had studied the craft for years and reached a certain level, the master blessed him. He also provided him with tools and raw materials for the learned craft, enough to produce one item at a time. According to the valley's pottery tradition, all invited members of the artisan guild left the mosque after Friday prayers and went to the home of the artisan who would receive the status of "master." At the ceremony, the student treated those present to tea, sweets, and the national dish, osh. This was followed by the "Kamarbasta" ceremony, presided over by the association's chairman, the "Kalontar," or one of the association's members. This was a formal expression of the granting of master status to the apprentice.

In the pottery of the Fergana Valley, this tradition was performed by the master himself, giving his blessing to the apprentice. In the Harrot Valley craft, the belt-making ceremony was performed as part of the "peykal" (festival) of unification. It should be noted here that the order and traditions of craft organization in the Central Asian region, including the Khanate of Kokand, were reflected in the "treatises" of the artisans. According to him, the greatest of all potters was Said the Potter, that is, Shamsiddin the Potter [1. – c. 320]. One of the unique features of the craft is that each craft has its own patron and guru, "pir" (Tajik: "old man, elder," "elder," "teacher"; Arabic: sheikh – meaning spiritual teacher, patron, "saint").

The orderly arrangement of tools in craft workshops, the observance of community traditions and cleanliness were also directly related to the cult of craftsmen and ancestors.



Typically, artisans sold their products in shops near their workshops. Craftsmen who didn't have a shop in their workshops rented other people's shops and stalls in the market area to sell their products. Some artisans are known to have also served as mutawwali—people responsible for controlling and distributing income from waqf property.

Reportedly, three to four students received the blessing at a time, then all workshop participants were called, and at that moment, each student received a blessing from their teacher.

The master did not immediately allow his apprentice to set up his own workshop; according to tradition, the apprentice who received the "fatiha" had to stay in the workshop and assist his master with pottery for a certain period of time. According to the information, the apprentice worked (in the valley dialect) for free for a certain period as "respectful" payment to the master, "the right to eat salt." At the Rishton Pottery Center, things were a little different. The "halfa," or apprentice, shared his income equally with his master. He worked alongside him but was subordinate to him. He was a free worker and could work for another master at any time if he wished[2. – p. 102].

After the apprentice had learned his task (his trade), he received a blessing from his teacher. To do this, the apprentice first asked his teacher for a "“Bag’ishlov oshi” " a blessing given to the apprentice by a kalantar or other masters. If the master was willing to give his apprentice a blessing, he contacted the workshop's caretaker. Afterward, the masters were called and questioned one by one about the apprentice he was blessing, his behavior, his level of mastery in his craft, and his goals. The scoundrel also inquired about how many people were invited to the party, and of course, everything was prepared especially for him. He then invited other masters to the feast as part of a ceremony ("Bag’ishlov oshi"). If the apprentice's family was wealthy, other masters of the workshop were also invited.

The Russian researcher A. Kun reported that in the mid-19th century in Fergana, after the death of the father, the profession was passed on to the eldest son through a ritual [3. – p. 57]. Master and apprentice were asked for their consent to hold this ceremony in the valley. At the end of the ceremony, the apprentice put a robe on his master and a shirt on his apprentice. "Bag’ishlov oshi" (in oasis areas, "Patiya pilaf"), that is, the Fatiha soup ceremony, was usually held on Fridays. Such ceremonies were held after the Friday prayer. The Fatiha ceremony was mainly held by visiting the students' homes, and first of all, the masters were entertained with tea. If the student was from a wealthy family, then tea mixed with novvot and halva were served. If it was summer, various fruits were placed on the table. After drinking tea, the guests were served pilaf, which is considered a national dish. The student was not there, because at this time he was dressed in new clothes, that is, a "coat" and a "belt", and prepared for the ceremony. During the ceremony, two loaves of bread were placed on his chest and he was praised, saying, "May your profession be full of bread" and "May you be blessed by God from your profession." According to the master potter Alisher Narzullayev, the bread placed on the apprentice's chest was placed by the master himself and blessed with a blessing. Kalantar called the apprentice to the group and asked him and his master, "Master, you gave this apprentice bread, a coat, clothes, and money, are you satisfied with this?" I agree, you served your master, are you satisfied with these services?" - "I agree."



Then the traditional conversation between the master and the apprentice began., I ate a lot of salt, please agree, master”, to which the master replied: “we hit, cursed, tortured, you agree too”. After that, an exam was held between the apprentice and the master, who was given the blessing, on various issues. After the exam, the elders prayed for the apprentice to continue his mastership. First, the prayer was given by the kalantar, and then his master gave the blessing. After that, the apprentice came to the kalantar, sat on one leg in the traditional way, shook hands with him, and then shook hands with his master and all the other master potters gathered to get to know each other.

In pottery, this ceremony was held a little differently, and the master's apprentice sold the product he had prepared and collected the money for the "kamarbasta" ceremony. After the general banquet, the candidate for master appeared before the senior masters and read the workshop brochure aloud, and the workshop head tied a belt to the candidate. Then the master presented his apprentice with a pottery tool, gave him a white blessing, and distributed gifts to the guests.

The apprentice who received the fatiha in the ceremony became a full-fledged legal member of the workshop. At the end of the ceremony, the apprentice put a robe on his master, and gave a shirt to the kalantar. If the apprentice was from a wealthy family, then he distributed a handkerchief to each master, and in this way the “fatiha pilaf” ceremony was completed.

Since the workshop was a closed organization, no strangers were invited to the “fatiha pilaf”. Only masters and apprentices in the workshop were invited to the ceremony. The apprentice who received the “fatiha” could also invite his relatives and friends. The meal at the ceremony was also organized in a separate room, and women were not allowed to enter the hotel at all at that time.

The master did not immediately allow his apprentice to build his own workshop. According to tradition, the apprentice who received the blessing had to stay in the workshop and help with the pottery work for a certain period of time. According to the information (in the dialects of the oasis and the valley), the apprentice worked for free, as a tribute to the master, as well as for the salt he ate. In the Rishton pottery center, it was a little different, the "halfa", that is, the apprentice, received the income he earned in cooperation with his master and was subordinate to the master. He was a free worker, and could go to work for another master at any time. Another such ritual was the custom of lighting candles, preparing a special "bo'g'irsoq" or "po'ssiq" (a type of incense) on Thursdays, dedicated to the souls of departed ancestors and those who had passed through the workshop. Usually, a meeting was held in the workshop every Friday, as it was considered a blessed day, and as mentioned above, only the workshop members participated in it. Women were not invited to this ceremony either. Ceremonies were also held on holidays in memory of deceased relatives. Among the ordinary population, pottery was considered sacred. According to the potters, the founder of the famous order that created the basis of pottery and laid the foundation for it was Bahovuddin Naqshbandi. His student in Fergana was Jalaluddin. According to the 70-year-old potter Muhammad Turopov from Gurumsaroy, Mir Kulol was the teacher of Hazrat Bahovuddin Naqshbandi. In addition to the words of the potters from Okha Ismail Yakubov and Muhammad Turopov, Mir Kulol lived in Bukhara and was considered a contemporary and a mentor of Amir Temur [4. – P. 36].

It should be noted that the role of rituals in the origin of pottery is also of particular importance. One of such traditional rituals was to light candles on Thursdays in honor of the spirits of ancestors and masters who had passed through the workshop, prepare a special “bo‘girsaq” or “possiq”, and emit an odor. Usually, meetings of craftsmen were held in the workshop every Friday, and only members participated in them. Women were not invited to these ceremonies. Only on holidays did the wife, daughter, and other relatives of the deceased master attend in order to commemorate their deceased relatives [5. – P. 118].

Such traditions in the crafts of the valley residents were preserved until the beginning of the 20th century. Later and to this day, traditions were used in educating apprentices, producing pottery products, teaching apprentices secrets. Such traditions existed not only in the valley, but also in other regions of Uzbekistan.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the existing procedures, specific customs, and positions in the pottery workshops of the Fergana Valley acquired significant importance. For a long time, the construction of a “hierarchical” workshop was preserved in the pottery of the valley, as well as the head of each workshop, called “kalantar”, under whose authority the master, worker (“halfa”) and apprentices worked together. The head of the workshop, or kalantar, was elected at the general workshop meetings, and this was a customary ceremony dedicated to the founder of the pottery workshop. At this time, the heads of the workshops were presented with a halpa and a candidate for the head master, who was given the name kalantar. According to the information of the elderly potters from Rishton, it is noted that the Kokand Khanate authorities even had a direct influence on the election of the kalantar and the nomination of his candidate in the elections. The head of the workshop, kalantar, was selected from the upper class of potters, from among strong masters and individuals with experience. He was required to have not only organizational issues, but also skills in judicial power. Because the assistants of the kalantar also performed certain tasks.

First of all, a “continuing” person was appointed by the kalantar (kalantar) on the issues of the meeting. He was appointed from among the young and poor craftsmen. If any mistakes were noticed in their behavior and conduct, they were re-elected. They were not specially rewarded, but for their service they were respected by the members of the workshop and were given gifts during events.

In the valley, the leadership of the artisans' association was considered to be two people, namely the head of the association, the kalantar, and his assistant, the chief (paykal). The artisans' association was called a “kasaba”. In this area, artisans belonging to the same craft were called “ulfatgars”. The term “ulfatgar” had two meanings, in Arabic “ulfat” meant friendship, brotherhood, and in Persian it meant a whole, engaged in one profession, in general, a whole, friendship in the profession. Potters organized separate ulfatgars and over the years respected practical programs, workshop customs and procedures. The kalantar acted as the most influential person in each field of the craft. In some types of crafts, in particular, in the construction sector, the kalantar was appointed by the local ruler and approved by the khan. The kalantari of the association protected the interests of the craftsmen and supervised their work. He also had the right to resolve any disputes and was responsible for controlling the

quality of the products produced by the craftsmen. In the Fergana Valley, there were also cases where the Kalantar craft was passed down from father to son.

References:

1. Peshchereva E. M. Gorodskoe potternoe proizvodstvo Srednei Azii [Urban pottery production of Central Asia]. Moscow, 1980. – P. 320.
2. Khudayberganov Kh. S. Ethnoterritorial features of traditional and modern ceramics of the Khorezm valley. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) diss. abstract in historical sciences. – Tashkent, 2022. – B. 102.
3. Kun A. Trip to the Khiva Khanate in 1873. T.Kh. – Vyp.I. – M., 1874. – P. 57.
4. Mirzaakhmedov D. K. Glazurovannaya keramika Bukhara XIX vv. [Glazed ceramics of Bukhara of the XIX centuries]. Tashkent, 1990. – P. 36.
5. Abdullaev N. History of Arts. – Tashkent: Ўқитувчи, 1986. – P. 118.

