

THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT KHOREZM CRAFTS

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT:

ARTICLE HISTORY:

Received: 11.10.2024

Revised: 12.10.2024

Accepted: 13.10.2024

KEY WORDS:

Khorezm, Pottery,
civilizations, craft,
textile production,
tradition, jewelry,
workshops, handicraft,
craftsmanship.

Khorezm was one of most important lands in Central Asia with its commercial, political, and cultural development. Pottery of Khorezm has a long history, beautiful traditions, form, content, creative process and unique style. Some things are simplified, but its appearance, the preservation of figures, the shape of the patterns and the unity of its content - led to the fact that the Khorezm monasteries. Ceramics produces and produces building materials, such as bowls, pans, plates, cakes, cisterns, bowls, tubes, sand and various kinds of toys. At the same time, when the special soil is heated, it is time to learn how to prepare a stone and prepare different bottles.

INTRODUCTION. The ancient civilization of Khorezm, nestled in the fertile oasis of Central Asia, left behind a rich legacy not only in its history and culture, but also in its diverse and intricate crafts. From the dawn of its existence, Khorezm has been a crossroads of cultures and civilizations, absorbing influences and developing unique traditions that are reflected in the objects crafted by its skilled artisans.

A Legacy of Clay and Skill: Khorezm's most iconic craft is undoubtedly its pottery. Archaeological evidence suggests that pottery making dates back to the 4th millennium BC, showcasing a remarkable skill in the use of the potter's wheel and various firing techniques. The earliest pottery pieces, often adorned with simple geometric patterns, gradually evolved into elaborate, polychrome designs. The famous "Khorezm painted pottery," found in abundance across the region, is a testament to the craftsmanship and artistic flair of its makers. These intricate designs, depicting flora and fauna, geometric patterns, and even scenes of everyday life, are considered a key element of Khorezm's artistic heritage.

Weaving Tales of Tradition: Alongside pottery, weaving was another vital craft that thrived in ancient Khorezm. Evidence points towards a rich tradition of textile production using wool, cotton, and silk, each with its own unique texture and color. Ancient Khorezm's weavers were known for their intricate patterns and use of natural dyes, producing stunning fabrics for clothing, tapestries, and carpets. The famous "Khorezm embroidery," featuring floral motifs and geometric patterns, is a testament to the skill and artistry of these weavers.

Beyond Clay and Thread: The ancient Khorezmians were also skilled in metalwork, jewelry making, and wood carving. They utilized techniques like casting, hammering, and engraving to create jewelry, tools, and even weapons. Their intricate designs often incorporated animal motifs, geometric patterns, and symbolic elements, reflecting the beliefs and values of the time.

A Crossroads of Influences: The craftsmanship of ancient Khorezm was not confined to its borders. Trade routes connecting the region with Persia, China, and India facilitated the exchange of knowledge and techniques, contributing to the evolution of its unique artistic traditions. The use of Chinese silk in Khorezmian textiles, the adoption of Persian decorative motifs in pottery, and the influence of Indian motifs in jewelry all speak to the vibrant and diverse artistic environment that flourished in ancient Khorezm.

A Legacy Restored: Although the ancient civilization of Khorezm faced challenges and eventual decline, its legacy in crafts continues to inspire and amaze. Today, contemporary artisans in the region carry on the traditions of their ancestors, utilizing modern techniques while maintaining the spirit of ancient Khorezmian craftsmanship. The preservation of these skills and traditions serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring beauty and ingenuity of ancient Khorezm.

The basic part of the craft industry of the khanate was concentrated in Khiva. However, the years of economic development very often were replaced by a decline period. Anthony Jenkinson, representative of the English Trade Company, who visited Khiva in 1558, noted that the city of Vazir «was damaged very much by the internecine wars. Especially during the last seven years, it was destroyed four times. That is why the number of merchants was so low and at the same time they were very

poor, so that I could sell only four pieces of fabric in the whole city. The petty producers comprised a considerable portion of population. The handicraft here was specialized. »

One of the developed handicrafts was weaving — making cloth out of cotton. The most important fabric was coarse calico (kirbas in Tadjik-Persian, boz, booz in Uzbek, byaz in Russian). The Khiva masters made various kinds of coarse calico: both cheap and expensive ones, including fine high-quality fabrics. This fine fabric was intended, mainly, for the richest feudal lords. As long ago as the Saalibi (961-1038), kirbas was exported from Khorezm to many cities of the East. Coarser and cheaper types of calico were made by the weavers, bought by the ordinary people, and taken to the nomadic steppes. The constant demand for the coarse calico by the nomadic population was one of the stimuli of further development of this branch of production both in Khiva and in the cities of the khanate. F. Efremov, who was in Khiva in the 1870s, noted: «Cotton fabrics were made in large amounts. They wove yashmaks, muslins, and flax; of which they made cotton print, printed cloth, muslins, pstryads, impressed cloth, bridal veils, burmets, coarse calicos and other different fabrics in Russia and in other states». However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many valuable textile items came to Khiva from Bukhara.

Silkworm breeding played an important role in the economic life of Khiva, Silk and half-silk (mixed silk) fabrics were produced there. Bukhara merchants came to Khiva to buy silk. In 1669 M. Fedotov wrote: «They make silk, coarse calico and plain zendens. The silk fabrics were often dyed in color».

The mastery of metal-goods production, including cast-iron goods, played a considerable role. Majority of the Khorezm coppersmiths and blacksmiths lived and worked in Khiva.

The people of Khiva produced firearms and side arms: arquebusses, saydaks and spears as well as bows and arrows. «They made arms and ammunition themselves, but they had never seen any cannons», until 1818, when artillery was used against the Akhal-teke campaign of Mukhammad Rakhim. The armament of the Khiva troops in 1885 consisted of sabres, guns, muskets, one eighteen-foot cannon, and sixteen falhonets.

Nineteenth century Khiva masters created gold and silver jewellery that was unique and beautiful. Carpet making was highly developed. The high quality carpets of the local masters, especially Tekin carpets and carpets of the Turkmen masters, which were delivered to Khiva, were famous, and in great demand. Many were exported to the other regions. The woodworking tradition goes back to ancient times as well. The carved pillars in the buildings of the grand scale; the carved doors of palaces, madrasas, and dwelling houses; chests; horse collars, and items necessary for everyday life, were produced by the highly specialized masters of wood-working. A fine wooden khan's throne, today a museum exhibit, reflects high skills of the Khivan wood-workers.

Many other handicrafts have flourished in Khiva. The ceramic vessels made in Khiva are unique in their expressiveness and elegance. Other handicrafts, including fur coat sewing, men's hat-making, plaster and stone carving, leather working, and shipbuilding were highly developed. Twenty-seven handicraft professions are mentioned in the Khiva khan's archives. In reality the number was far more.

Conclusion. The main part of the population of Khiva was craftsmen who sold their goods. To become a skilled master many years are required. A master mainly taught his elder son, instilling in him the professional skills, traditions, and secrets of his handicraft. In some cases, when additional assistance was required for work, apprentices were accepted from outside the family. In this case the conditions and terms of study were put in to written form. Before receiving the rank of the master and opening his own workshop, the craftsman had to show his skill and get the masters' permission for opening a workshop. The shop organized the work of craftsmen and represented their interests to the khanate's officials. Only small part of the Khiva craftsmen owned their own workshops. Many craftsmen worked at home, and many rented their workshops, which, as a rule, belonged to feudal rulers, including the khan. Some craftsmen worked to order, and some tried to set of more extensive enterprises, though feudal relations prevailing in the Khiva Khanate hampered them. Some combined handicraft with agriculture. Their ability to cultivate a good harvest impressed the foreigners who visited Khiva. «Even in Germany I have not seen such zeal in cultivating fields as exists in Khiva», one of them wrote in

1820. The feudal nobility that lived in Khiva and the Khan himself were big landowners. They had great income from their land. Many of them also had shops, workshops, caravanserais, bathhouses, and other profitable establishments in Khiva.

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