

## URBAN CRAFTSMANSHIP IN CENTRAL ASIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE XVI-XIX CENTURIES: SOME INFORMATION ON THE HISTORY OF PAINTING AND PAINTS

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### ABSTRACT

In the article is analyzed some information about the history of urban handicrafts in Central Asia in the 16th-19th centuries, in particular, the history of painting and paints, with the help of historical sources and information from scientific literature.

**Keywords:** Central Asia, Bukhara, Khiva, city, crafts, khans, craftsman, merchant, political reality.

### INTRODUCTION

During the first half of the 16th-19th centuries, the urbanization processes accelerated here in proportion to the political reality in the territory of the Central Asian khanates. Many large and small cities were located in the Khanate region, which were centers of various handicraft industries. Craftsmen who lived in cities made an important contribution to the development of these centers with their work. They have created their unique products with taste, based on the requirements and customs of their country.

### RESEARCH METHODS

Local sources and documents contain a lot of information about many types of crafts and artisans. Some information in this regard may have been left by persons who visited Central Asia. For example, F. Skibin, who was in Bukhara and Khiva in 1697, said about Bukhara that “people are artisans and merchants”, and about Khiva, “people are craftsmen, not fighters” [1], M. Pospelov and T. Burnashev, who were in Tashkent in 1800, said that its people were not only war it was not for nothing that they showed that they were inclined to lead, but also to “engage in handicrafts” [2]. In fact, in this ancient country, various crafts were widely developed. In particular, more than 60 types of crafts are named in the judicial documents compiled in Samarkand of the 16th century [3].

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

One of the most developed main branches of crafts in the cities of Central Asia was painting. Many crafts in the cities of the khanates were organically connected with this type of craft. They include textile, tanning, clothing, household goods, food, paper production, decoration of manuscript books, and ink production. Artisans engaged in dyeing in cities are mentioned in many documents under the name “sabbags”. In particular, the names of “Dost Sabbagh”, “Ibn Ali Sabbagh”, “Mirak Sabbagh”, “Sayyid Islam Sabbaghlar” are mentioned in the documents written in Bukhara of the 16th century [4].

Dyeing, a separate type of craft, was widely developed in almost all cities of Central Asia, and in some of them, it held a leading position. About Gurlan alone, one of the authors of the 19th

century notes that “painting took an important place among the production industries” in the city [5]. The leading craft that developed in close connection with dyeing was textile. Fabric dyeing was usually done in special workshops or in the homes of artisans. In many cities, dyeing workshops were mainly located near the market or in the market area [6]. The following document of the 16th century, drawn up by the sheikhs of Dzhoybor, who played an important role in the political, socio-economic and cultural-spiritual life of the Bukhara Khanate, is characteristic in this regard. It contains information about the sale of the “painting shop in the Darvozai nou bazaar located on Masjid-i Mavlano Rakhmatulla Street” by a Master named Kasim [7]. It can be observed from the 19th century data that the dye workshops kept the tradition of being located in the city center or in the bazaars in the following centuries. The author who lived in this century noted the following on the example of Kattakorgon. He wrote that the street of the city, which started from the mosque and went to the Thursday Gate, “on the right and left sides of the shops of Jewish painters stretched; under the thresholds sit their owners... All of them have bright blue arms up to their elbows. The reason for this unusual color of the skin is that the dyers often worked with indigo (nil - G.A)” [8]. Also, the painters could practice their craft mainly in the city center or in the area of the bazaars, on its edges and usually on the banks of running water - ditches. In particular, one of the sources of the 19th century about Tashkent stated that “you can see people washing freshly painted fabrics in the ditches” [9]. One of the main occupations of the inhabitants of Sebzor district of this city was “dyeing yarn” [10].

The dyers specialized in dyeing not only the finished product - gauze types, but also silk. They mainly dyed raw silk and cooked silk in different colors. In most cases, the representatives of this industry were engaged in the order of weavers or local merchants engaged in trade in silk [11]. There was a specific division of labor among artisan-painters. According to I.M. Krauze (XIX century), a scientist who researched this field, some fabrics were first dyed blue. This was done by individual craftsmen. Dyeing the fabric in other colors was done by other dyers-masters [12].

Dyers used different colors to dye fabrics, thread and silk. The pots they use are placed on the ground, and during the painting process, E.K. Meyendorff, who was in Central Asia in the 20s of the 19th century, showed that “some paints had to be boiled, and others only heated” [13].

In the preparation of paints, they mainly used local natural means that give different colors. In particular, they used royan to give a red color. In this place, the information of the 16th century about the sale of “a plot of land on which the royan sprouted” in the Kom-i Abu Muslim district to Khoja Saad from the sheikhs of Dzhoybar by a certain person is noteworthy [14].

Dyes obtained yellow color from asparagus, yellowish color from mulberry pods, leaf color - egg dye from a tree growing in local gardens, color used for dyeing silk black from saffron [15]. Those who got pink dye from Guli-Makhsar [16]. At the same time, among the colors widely used by painters, red paint had a special place. Finding and preparing this type of paint was a very complicated and laborious process. It was obtained from an insect called “redhead”. Russian ambassador F. Beneveni, who was in the Bukhara Khanate in the 20s of the 18th century, testified that “a valuable dye called red is obtained from one of the insects in the desert”, and adds that “Jews crushed these insects and obtained this dye” [17].

Craftsmen of Central Asia also widely used paints imported from other countries. In particular, shamshid wood dye was brought to Bukhara through Orenburg, which was used to paint products in blue and brown colors. According to P.I. Demezov, a Russian who was in Central Asia in the 30s of the 19th century, along with other goods from India, shamshid tree – “chob-i sandal” was brought to Bukhara through Kabul [18]. Another type of dye imported from foreign countries is baqam, which was used in dyeing as dark purple and red. This raw material called “Chub-i baqam” is mentioned in one of the documents of the 16th century about Samarkand [19]. According to information from the 19th century, “red bakam” and “black bakam” were brought to Central Asia [20]. They also used the small yellow seeds of the pistachio tree to dye fabrics. Painters made extensive use of imported dye along with local dye. According to E.K. Meyendorff, in the 20s of the 19th century, a large amount of bulghur was brought to Bukhara from Mashhad.

The most common of the dyes brought to Central Asia was nil (indigo) dye, which was brought in large quantities from India. It was mainly used to dye cloth and other things black or dark blue. This type of paint was regularly brought to the cities of Central Asia. The fact that there were certain individuals who traded in Nile dye is a clear proof of this. In particular, the name “Mir Nilfurush” is mentioned in one of the documents of the 16th century concerning the farm of the sheikhs of Dzhoybor [21]. Import of Nile dye to the cities of Central Asia increased greatly in the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. Especially in the first half of the 19th century, the caravan palaces of Karshi, Shahrisabz, Bukhara, Tashkent, Khiva and other cities were full of this goods. This indicates that in this period the demand for this type of paint increased and, in turn, the dyeing and textile industry spread widely. More Jews were engaged in dyeing fabrics with nil dye and dyeing in general, and they could be found in almost all cities of Central Asia. For example, according to the testimony of one of the authors of the 19th century, even in Samarkand, “only local Jews were engaged in dyeing fabrics with nil dye” [22]. G. I. Danilevsky, who was in the Khiva Khanate in the 1940s, wrote that in Khiva “there were 8 Jewish families who immigrated from Bukhara 16 years ago and were engaged in dyeing, including the craft of dyeing fabrics with nil dye” [23].

Various dyes prepared by different methods are used in other branches of handicrafts - tanning, paper production, decoration of manuscript books, preparation of inks is also widely used. For example, the artisans used royan to dye the skin red, asparagus to dye it yellow, and serum from the bark to dye it green.

Paints produced in Central Asia were also exported to other countries, which indicates that the quality of this type of product is high and there is a great demand for it in other countries. For example, in 1585, the ambassador Muhammad-Ali, sent to Moscow by Bukhara Khan Abdullah Khan II, mentions “40 pounds of paint” among the goods he brought to the Russian tsar Fyodor Ivanovich [24]. In the same year, Khiva’s ambassador, Khoja Muhammad, who came to Kazan, among other goods, “10 bald paints” is recorded in the archival documents of this period [25]. The following example confirms that this situation continued in the following centuries, and that paints were taken from Central Asia to other countries. According to P. I. Demezov, whose name was mentioned above, the burgundy was also taken from Bukhara to Herat [26]. In some cases, the indigo dye brought from India was taken from the cities of Central Asia to other



countries. In particular, 1641 Muhammad Amin-Bahodir, Khiva's ambassador who went to Russia, took "Nile in 4 containers" with other goods [27].

### CONCLUSION

The analysis of historical sources from the first half of the 16th-19th centuries shows that the hardworking people of Central Asia were not only engaged in various crafts, but also tried to create their products with an elegant taste, and used various paints to decorate them in harmony with nature and existence. Masters engaged in this type of craft worked in close cooperation with craftsmen in other spheres of the economic life of the cities and made a worthy contribution to the development of the urbanization processes in the Bukhara Emirate, Khiva and Kokand khanates.

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