



On Some Issues of Chronology of Ancient Fergana and Sugd Cultures

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ABSTRACT

The article notes that the ruins of the ancient city in the Fergana Valley, the pottery found in the tombs, can provide many materials on social, economic and cultural relations with neighboring areas, in addition to identifying the period of Bronze, Early Iron and Ancient cultures.

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Most archaeologists dealing with the ancient history and culture of the Fergana Valley say that when it comes to the material culture of the valley, it is isolated from other regions, especially the pottery, which differs sharply in almost all historical processes. However, when we compare the pottery found in the monuments of the Fergana Valley with the material culture of other, neighboring regions, we see that there were great socio-economic and cultural ties between them, and this is often reflected in pottery.

Such a resemblance or, conversely, a radically different state of affairs will be a major source of help for archaeologists in making a positive or negative assessment of the subject during a historical reconstruction. It can be the most useful resource for the archaeologist in solving such problems and gives the main emphasis on the issue. On top of this, it is possible to clarify the archeological complexes of other neighboring historical and cultural areas and their sequence.

It should be noted that the material culture of many archeological monuments of Sugd, Bactria and Margiyana, one after the other, was obtained only by vertical stratigraphic excavations, in contrast, Yu.A. Zadneprovsky. received therefore, the main major periods of Fergana from the Bronze Age to

the end of antiquity were named after such archeological monuments as Chust, Eilaton, Shurabashot, Marhamat[4].

Of course, at that time Yu.A. Zadneprovsky had a very difficult task. He, too, at a time when the question of chronological chronology had not yet been carried out in Fergana, aimed to identify chronologically consecutive archeological complexes, albeit based on horizontal stratigraphy. At the same time, the "stratigraphic column" currently operating in the Fergana Valley was developed by Yu.A. Zadneprovsky. Although the chronological sequence of this "stratigraphic column" is correct, there are parts of each transition period that need to be identified.

What characters are blocking the created "stratigraphic column". If pottery belonging to the Elaton culture had been found at the top of the archeological monument of the Chust culture, it would have been no doubt accepted that the post-Chust culture, the Eilaton culture, should have come without any problems.

A similar problem is directly related to the lower and upper strata of the next Elaton culture. In particular, no pottery of the Chust culture was found in the lower layers of the Eilaton monument. At the same time, red angob pottery is found in the upper layers of the Eilaton monument, as well as in other archeological complexes in the valley.

B.A. Litvinsky, who studied the Mesolithic and Neolithic stratigraphically in the White Cave, was one of the first scientists to say that the Chust-type archeological complexes were synchronous due to their encounter with the materials of the Kayrakkum culture[4]. Yu.A. Zadneprovsky based the analysis of materials collected from more than 70 archeological monuments of the Chust period archeological monuments in the Fergana Valley on the end of the II millennium BC and the beginning of the I millennium BC. At the same time, A.S. Sagdullaev suggested that the age of the upper strata of the Chust culture was a little younger[9: p. 21 – 32].

A monument of the Early Iron Age was excavated in the foothills of Sulaymontog near Osh, and the opening of this monument helped to identify the ancient and recent layers of the Chust culture. The monument is built on a flat, terraced plain at the foot of Suleymantag, where excavations have brought many basements from the mainland (mother rock) to the lower layers. Numerous whole and broken horseshoes, handmade and colored pottery, bronze jewelery, and many necklaces were found[5: p. 103].

One of the most important results of the excavations at this monument is the new radiocarbon analysis taken from the layers of this monument, which is of great importance. This is because radiocarbon analysis from this place has shown that the general age of the Chust culture dates back to much earlier times than we thought. However, the periods determined by the radiocarbon method covered very large periods, ie from the XII-VII centuries BC to the XXII-XX centuries BC. However, Yu.A. Zadneprovsky, who studied these excavations, dates the average age of the ancient settlement of Osh to the XV / XIV-VIII / VII centuries BC. The period of the lower and upper layers of the Dalvarzin monument is determined by the same period. The total lifespan of the Chust culture, including the Dalvarzin monument, is estimated to be an average of 800 years.

The most characteristic feature of the lower layers of the Dalvarzin monument is the presence of hand-made and black-patterned vessels over the red angob. However, in the upper layers of the Dalvarzin monument, as well as the monuments of the Chust culture, there are also vessels with red patterns. A similar sequence is found in the monuments of Sugd and Bactria. The patterns drawn on the surface of

the pottery in the southern regions were more precise, and the drawing of more geometric patterns was a broad picture[6].

The culture of cattle-breeders of this period is given in the Fergana valley under the name of "Kayrakkum" culture and belongs to the Andronova culture which is mainly spread in wide steppe, mountainous and foothill areas[1].

The main confusion in solving the problem of chronology of the ceramic complexes of the Fergana Valley begins in the middle of the millennium BC, in the layers of Eilat culture. The complexity of the matter is that to this day, the question of when the Fergana Valley began to spread pottery is one of the most difficult. In particular, it is clear that the pottery wheel is not even in the Sufan cemetery, but in the Kungai cemetery, along with the handmade pottery, there are also pottery wheels[11: p. 14 – 15].

The earliest scholars of Eilat and Shurabashat cultures said that "Eilaton culture belongs to a later period than Shurabashat culture[12: p. 115 – 133]."N.G.Gorbunova came to the same conclusion after conducting a lot of comparative analysis.

There is another complex problem in solving this problem, which is the Kulunchak settlement in the eastern part of the Fergana Valley in eastern Kyrgyzstan, which was excavated by archaeologist P.P.Govryushenko, and this work is very brief in the abstract of his dissertation. Details of the excavations have not been extensively published in archaeological data[3]. If P.P.Govryushenko had published his materials in full, it would have been possible to clarify the question of the coexistence of Chust culture and Shurabashat culture. However, in the rest of the research, especially the issue of eilaton culture, the relationship of eilaton culture with shurabashat culture, the relationship between shurabashat and blessing cultures is one of the most problematic issues among archaeologists at present.

We found the first Iron Age pottery complex during the excavation of the lower part of the first medieval settlement in Yakkabag district of Kashkadarya region[2; 13: p. 30 – 37]. When we compared this find with a complex of pottery found in the Sufon, Kungai and Aktam cemeteries of Fergana, it was noted that they were very similar to each other[7: p. 159].

In the middle of the first millennium BC, the regions of Sugd, Bactria and Margiyana in Central Asia were included in the territory of the Achaemenid Empire up to the Syrdarya. But the Fergana Valley was not part of this empire. It was the Syrdarya that was on the border of different cultures. However, the main reason for the appearance of signs of ancient Sogdian culture in the Eilaton culture is the migration of a large group of Sugd people to the Fergana Valley during the occupation of Central Asia by Cyrus. At the same time, the surviving part of the first Iron Age pottery pineapples in the Fergana Valley has been preserved for a long time in the Eilaton culture. This is because during the excavation of the Mingtepa and Shurabashat monuments, archaeologists found many pottery items belonging to the Eilaton culture. This can be seen when hand-made pottery pineapples, painted on a pottery wheel and painted with red angob, are kept in parallel.

The combination of pottery painted with red angob and finely crafted on a ceramic wheel, hand-made and patterned in color, often leads archaeologists to draw the wrong conclusions.

During the excavation of the multi-layered monuments of Sugd, there are pottery items from archeological layers that came one after the other, which allows for a more precise chronology. For example, red pottery from the Erkurgan monument in Kashkadarya can be seen from the III-II centuries BC to the III, and sometimes to the IV century AD[8; 10]. At the same time, the above

archeological complex was covered with layers that appeared a little later, in the V-VI centuries AD, at a time when the inscriptions "Nakhshab coins" and "ancient Sogdian coins" appeared. Most of the Nakhchivan pottery with red angob dates back to the middle of the 4th century AD. This is because the older records of the Sogdians have not yet been found in other monuments. The red angobli vessels in the Samarkand-Sugdi region are also dated to the same period.

In our opinion, it should be noted that the time of the appearance of the vessels made in Fergana pottery wheel and covered with red angob was also quite incorrectly determined. At the same time, the layers that came out of the early Eilaton period only with hand-made vessels are also not clear. If there had been a similar layer, there would have been the first hand-carved vessels of the Eilaton culture, and in the higher layers, vessels made on wheels and covered with red angob.

The fact that hand-painted pottery from the early Eilaton period in the Fergana Valley was accompanied by red angob pottery made on a pottery wheel is associated with an ancient local tradition, and the origin of this angob is associated with the Chust culture. This is also a misconception, and there is a heavenly difference between the red angob of the Chust period and the red angob of the Eilaton culture. The red angob of this period was covered exactly on the vessels made of the wheel, and its distribution area also occupied the regions of Central Asia, the Middle East and the Caucasus. These pottery items are more associated with areas where Hellenistic culture was prevalent, as well as Kushan culture. The red angob in the Chust culture belongs to the Bronze Age and earlier centuries, and its range is also quite wide. At the Eilaton Archaeological Complex, initially painting with red angob was not at all customary. Although they had a habit of embroidering in color, the color of the pottery was gray, and in most cases the color of pure colorless pottery was light brown. So there was a "break" in painting the top of the pottery. The red angob in the Chust culture was stained with a dark red fuzzy spotted angob. The fact that the pottery is covered with such stains is of course due to the fact that the process of firing that pottery was carried out in a fireplace. But in parallel with the advent of pottery made on the pottery wheel, two-tiered pottery appeared, and in it were baked, pure red angob pottery. These are red ceramic vessels made on a ceramic wheel and are designed in large quantities for the market.

In the Sugd region, pottery made of red angob pottery began to appear in the III century BC, but from the II-I centuries BC, the number of pottery with red angob increased sharply. Similarly, the production of red angoba vessels continued until the III-IV centuries AD.

The distribution area of such red angoba-coated vessels is uniformly distributed in Sugd (as well as in Ustrushna), Bactria, and Margiana. Not only the angobigs of the vessels produced in particular, but their shape was almost the same in the regions mentioned above. But we can see that since the first centuries AD there have been some changes in the generality in the spread of such pottery complexes. By this time, each region had its own pottery schools. These pottery schools also had to take into account the demand of the local population for pottery, especially in what form the pottery was made.

Thus, it can be seen that the technique of production of pottery of antiquity of Fergana was developed synchronously with other pottery schools of Central Asia. Especially we can see that the traditions of Fergana pottery production changed dramatically at the beginning of AD. It was at this time that the pottery schools of each oasis itself emerged. That is why the products of pottery schools in Fergana differ sharply in form from this period. But there is no difference at all in the angob coating of these vessels.

The commonality in the production of pottery is reflected in the fact that the vessels are produced very

thin, light and high quality, the angob is coated in almost the same color, the angob is coated in the same way, almost the same ceramic jars are spread and many other technical features of production. It is these characteristics that are among the common characteristics in the production of ceramic products and determine the overall distribution area of such production. These are the Fergana Valley, Sugd, Bactria and Margiyana. Therefore, the red angob pottery of Fergana plays an important role in the chronology of archeological complexes.

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