

To the Study of Studged Painted Ceramics of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age in Central Asia (New Materials)

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of archaeological monuments of stucco painted ceramics of Central Asia in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. At present, ten centers of this culture have been identified in different parts of the Central Asian Mesopotamia. Based on the study of material culture, archaeologists combine them into one ethno-cultural community during the period of the spread of late hand-made painted ceramics. These are the Yazov ethno-cultural community (YAECC) according to V.N. Pilipko, the Chust ethno-cultural community (CHECC) according to Yu.A. Zadneprovsky and B. Kh. Matbabaev, Bactrian ethno-cultural community (BECC) according to O.N. Lushpenko, Tarim ethno-cultural community (TECC). It should be added that cultures close, but not identical to Chust, are known mainly in zones of long-term development of agriculture. It is possible that the Chust culture arises on the basis of more ancient local, but still unknown agricultural cultures, about which we have little information.

KEYWORDS: *hand-painted pottery, Yaz Depe, agricultural oasis, Tarim, Chust, Bactria, community, Ferghana Valley, Burgulyuk, Kyzyltepa, Tillatepa, Anau, Maidatepa, Koktepa.*

For more than a hundred years, monuments of the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age - the so-called. cultures of late stucco painted ceramics or sites of the Yaz I (mid II - early I millennium BC). Since then, the discussion regarding the territory of the genesis of this complex has continued. Currently, more than 10 centers of cultures have been identified in Central Asia, containing painted ceramics in their material complexes and located in the main agricultural oases of the Central Asian Interfluve. In Eastern Turkestan, French archaeologists also discovered a new similar center with 40 monuments (Debaine-Francfort C., 1989). The extensive distribution area of these cultures made it possible for researchers to identify the so-called. ethno-cultural (?) community in the era of the spread of stucco painted ceramics in Central Asia. These are the Yazov ethno-cultural community (YAECC) according to V.N. Pilipko, the Bactrian ethno-cultural community (BECC) according to O.N. Lushpenko (Matbabaev B.Kh., 1999. p.94-96), Thus, "... the listed centers of the agricultural culture of the late painted ceramics are close chronologically and geographically, and also to a certain extent in terms of the appearance of the economy and culture. Consequently, already at the present level of study, in the order of posing the question, one can consider them as a set of close and kindred cultures that make up a single community as a whole. This community, according to the most studied Chust culture of Ferghana, is called the Chust cultural community "(Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1988. p.130). Given the new materials of French archaeologists from East Turkestan, the sites of the Tarym oasis can also be included here (L.M. Sverchkov, N. Boroffka, 2009, p.34).

The above complexes are characterized by the existence of common elements of culture: relative

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geographical and chronological proximity, the presence of stucco and sometimes stucco painted ceramics, bronze or stone sickles, as well as other categories of finds (Sagdullaev A.S., 1989. p. 49-65). The dating of the monuments is debatable: XV - VII centuries. BC. There are at least four hypotheses on their origin (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1986. p.27-29; Zadneprovsky Yu.A., Markov Yu.N., 1989. p.66-69).

The vast area, the presence of similarities in material culture and the presence of specific features gives us the opportunity, following Yu.A. Zadneprovsky, to express the opinion that there was no single center of origin for cultures of stucco painted ceramics (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1986, p. 27). Given the dating and distribution area of the considered complexes, we can speak of two groups of cultures. The first is conventionally named - **northern** (Chust, Burgulyuk, Tarim depression in Xinjiang), and the second is - **southern** (Yaz-depe, Anau, Etek, Kuchuktepa, Maidatepa, Kyzyltepa, Koktepa, Tillatepa, etc.). For the northern group, one can assume a version about the transition of local tribes to agriculture, accompanied by a transformation of culture (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1986. p. 23-29), where for this territory the spread of hand-painted pottery is considered a new stage in the development of ancient agricultural cultures. Recently, the Sogdian hearth of stucco and stucco painted ceramics from Koktepa as a possible center has been often discussed in the literature. The early layers of this monument date back to the 11th-7th centuries. BC. However, the lack of detection of the so-called. "pre-Koktepe" complexes and the so far unobserved succession to the Sarazm complexes leave the question of a definite early date for Koktepa open.

One important circumstance connected with the origin of the ancient agricultural Chust culture should be emphasized. The monuments of the Chust culture are the earliest among the monuments of the Yaz I type, and this circumstance was noted by a number of researchers (Yu.F. Buryakov, S.R. Baratov, B.Kh. Matbabaev, L.M. Sverchkov). We note the presence of stone sickles with a straight blade, which is typical for the second (middle (?), late) stage of the Chust culture monuments. So far, no pronounced complexes of stucco, and even more so of stucco painted ceramics, have been found in Sogd, and therefore, in a number of ways, these complexes can be compared with early Eilatan.

Thus, the agricultural hearth with stucco painted ornament in the Ferghana Valley is more ancient than the Sogdian center (Chirakchi, Turtkultepa, Koktepa, etc.). Those researchers who unite these Sogdian monuments into one center are right.

In the study of these cultures, it is necessary to take into account similar Xinjiang complexes. The materials of the early metal epoch of Xinjiang are most fully collected and summarized by the French archaeologist K. Debain-Francfort. She marks 9 groups of Bronze Age sites (Debaine-Francfort p., 1988, p. 14-26). The materials of the complexes from Kermuka, Gumugou, Agersheng, Sintala are very interesting (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1993. p. 99-103).

At present, the following complexes can be distinguished here, belonging to two economic and cultural traditions: the first, steppe, known in Central Asia from the monuments of the Andronovo and Kairakkum cultures; the second, agricultural, is known from the monuments of late stucco painted ceramics. A similar picture of the stages of development of cultures was recorded in the territory adjacent to Xinjiang - the Fergana Valley (Bernshtam A.N., 1952. p. 186). The materials of the steppe circle in Xinjiang are represented by individual ceramic vessels and bronze objects of the above cultures, i.e. Afanasievskaya, Andronovskaya¹, Karasukskaya. These include fragments of ceramics and whole round-bottomed vessels with a stamped ornament, a bronze drooping axe, etc. Interesting vessels from the burial grounds of Yanbulak (Khami, excavations in 1986), Zhilintai (Nileta, excavations in 2003), Ksibandi (Tashkurgan, excavations in 2003), Zagunlik (excavations in 1985), which are dated to the XI-V centuries BC. They are important in a comparative study of the history of hand-painted pottery in Central Asia and the Ferghana Valley in particular. In terms of

¹ For the analysis of the Agershen hoard from Toguz-Toro, see Kuzmina E.E., 2000. P.3-5.

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time, they belong to two periods, all the vessels are molded and painted. The earlier ones are a two-handled jug, under the rim of which large triangles are applied with their tops down. The painting is applied on a light or white background with brown and purple paint. A figure of a goat is schematically depicted on a shoulder with brown paint. On another jug, a two-humped camel in a lying position is depicted in red paint. The above-mentioned vessels are very close to Chust ceramics in terms of textural, technological and morphological features (stucco, good polished finish, red background (of different shades) on which painting was applied with black (with different shades) paint, geometric patterns predominate in the ornamentation motif) (cf. Debaine -Francfort C., 1988, pp. 25-26; figs. 12, 14). But there are some distinctive features between them: in the ceramics of the Chust culture, painting is applied mainly on the upper part of the vessel, the set of ornamentation patterns is limited, anthropozoomorphic and complicated motifs are very rare. And in the Xinjiang complexes, the entire surface of the vessel is covered with a painted ornament, where such motifs as volute-shaped, curvilinear, concentric, zoomorphic are often used; one can feel the Chinese influence on certain forms of vessels (vessels with a handle and with a drain predominate). Identical ceramic materials are known from Sidaogou (Mulei) and Bangzhigou (Qitai) (Debaine-Francfort C., 1988, p. 25-26). Stone knife-shaped sickles from Aketala (Shufu, excavations 1972) are attributed to this period. Aketala stone sickles are 5-7 cm larger than the Ferghana (Chust) sickles, the blade and butt are straight (and both curved and straight are recorded in the Chust monuments), made of sandstone. The next - the Early Iron Age, includes ceramic vessels, which in shape (painted jugs, vase-shaped vessels on pallets, mugs with a handle) and in the plot of the paintings resemble the Eilatan-Shurabashat ceramic vessels of Ferghana (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1962. P. 130- 133; pl. XLV, XLVII). Indeed, certain forms and plots of painting of Ferghana pottery of the early Iron Age find direct analogies among Xinjiang materials. This was written back in the 60s of the last century (Zadneprovsky Yu.A. 1959, p. 156). Some motifs of the plot of the painted ceramics of the Shurabashat culture were not noted in Fergana before. These include complicated motifs, rosettes of various shapes, images of a circle, rings, etc. (see Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1962. Pl. LIV, 2.5; LVI, 2, 19; LVII, 8). Apparently, these motifs appear under the influence of the Xinjiang complexes and indicate the close ties of Fergana in the period preceding the famous journey of Zhan Jiang in the 2nd century BC. BC. Apparently in the ancient period, in the era of the ancient Ferghana kingdom of Davan, the Shurabashat complex was distributed not only in the Ferghana Valley, but also reached the regions of Kashgar, Yarkend, Ak-su. This is evidenced by samples of painted ceramics from these areas with the Eilatan-Shurabashat appearance, dated by Chinese archaeologists of the 7th-3rd centuries. BC. (Odil Muhammad Turon., 2006). In general, many of the available samples of painted ceramics from the above regions can be considered, if not Ferghana, then at least appeared on the territory of Xinjiang under the influence of Ferghana traditions in terms of the shape and color scheme of the surface of the vessels and the geometric figures in the ornamentation.

All this allows us to come to the following conclusions:

- In Fergana, there are the earliest archaeological layers with stucco, stucco painted ceramics of the Yaz I, where continuity between the Chust and Eilatan complexes is observed. This is confirmed by the discovery of a new, fairly large settlement on the territory of the old part of Andijan. Apparently, certain researchers (S. Baratov and G. Ivanov and others) are right, who dated the Eilatan culture of the 7th - 4th centuries. BC. If we take into account the continuation of the Chust traditions in ceramic production and the presence of a number of signs of the material culture of the Eilatan tribes of Fergana, then a comparison of the Sogdian and Bactrian sites with the second stage in the development of the Chust culture or early Eilatan is quite acceptable.
- this opinion is, as it were, confirmed by the presence of individual Chust-Eilatan elements in the material culture of Sogd, Xinjiang and the absence of their traces among the Ferghana complexes. To this we can add the limited distribution of painted ceramics in these areas, which

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also confirms this hypothesis. Today, more than 80 monuments of the Chust culture, about 40 monuments of the Eilatan culture, more than 40 monuments of the Shurabashat culture have been recorded in Fergana. It should be noted that the Fergana Valley is the only region where materials of the Achaemenid appearance have not yet been identified.

- It should be added that in East Turkestan there are no long-term agricultural settlements in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages, and no monuments comparable to early agricultural complexes of the Namazga I-III type have yet been found. However, recently there have been brief reports about the discovery of monuments of the Afanasiev culture (or its variants) in the territory of Eastern Turkestan. In particular, Yu.A. Zadneprovsky in his article cites materials from the Kermuki burial ground on the southern slopes of Altai. Burials were made in stone cists and ground graves. Egg-shaped, bomb-shaped, jar vessels, censers on a pallet, flint arrowheads are similar to the materials of the Afanasevo culture of Siberia at the end of III - early. II millennium BC We note the burial of a foundry worker with two molds and other tools (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1993. p. 99; Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1992. p. 115-127). Undoubtedly, these materials will increase with the expansion of research work in Xinjiang. Based on the foregoing, the mutual influence of neighboring regions in the emergence of agricultural culture in the western part of China is quite real. At this stage of the study, we can assume an acceptable, in our opinion, assumption about the significant role of the Chust tribes in the formation of the ancient agricultural culture of Xinjiang in the Late Bronze Age. This is evidenced by early settlements with multi-meter cultural layers in the south and a block of steppe cultures with numerous burial sites in the north of Central Asia. There are reference sites with a clear stratigraphic column, such as Namazga, Yaz, and others. Such sites have not yet been identified in the territory of the western part of China, and the existing ceramic complexes come from burials or recovered material. True, we also do not deny the possible role of the Chinese Yangshao and Mashan cultures in the formation of hand-painted ceramics in Ferghana and East Turkestan.

It should be added that cultures close, but not identical to Chust, are known mainly in zones of long-term development of agriculture (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1988. p. 120-133; Gorbunova N.G., 1995. p. 13-30). It is possible that the Chust culture arises on the basis of more ancient local agricultural cultures, about which we have little information. First of all, these are individual items (Sokh and stone weights, the Khak treasure), a small stone statue of a person, a fragment of a vessel made of steatite (Dalverzin), as well as materials from the recently discovered Shagim burial ground in the eastern part of the Ferghana Valley (Amanbayeva B.E., Rogozhinsky A. E., Murphy D., 2006; Baratov S., 2009). The complexes of the southern group were formed on the basis of a synthesis of local and newcomer tribes, but not without the participation of the population from the northern group of sites (perhaps the Chust culture). In both cases, one cannot discount the steppe pastoral tribes (Andronovo) (Zadneprovsky Yu.A., 1986. p. 28; Kuzmina E.E., 2000. p. 4), which, according to Yu.A. Zadneprovsky, the unifying principle in this process of integration of cultures.

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