



MEDIEVAL CERAMICS OF THE KYAT -KALA LEFT BANK (9th – EARLY 13th CENTURIES)

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ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the study and analysis of medieval ceramics from the Kyat-kala left-bank of the 9th – early 13th centuries. From the second half of the 20th century to the present, as a result of the archaeological research conducted in the Kyat-kala left-bank, ceramics belonging of the 9th - early 13th centuries were analyzed and described. Ceramics were divided into glazed and unglazed vessels, the vessels were classified according to shape, purpose and method of processing, and a statistical analysis was carried out. Based on the study of ceramics, the medieval material culture of the city, its place in the Khorezm oasis, trade and cultural connections with neighboring regions are illuminated. Pottery, as the most common find, is of great importance in the study of the history of the city.

KEY WORDS: *Khorezm, M. Mabetullaev, Kyat-kala left-bank, glazed and unglazed vessels, carvings, range of colors, ceramic lids.*

INTRODUCTION

As we know, after the Arab conquest, Khorezm became a component of the Arab caliphate, and was drawn into deep socio-economic relations of the great kingdom, and the integration in the fields of science increased. Trade and crafts also developed. In addition, urbanization processes rose to a new level. By this time, life revived in some of the old cities and new cities were created.

The influence of these processes is also noticeable in the life of the Kyat-kala left-bank, which is the object of our study. The strata of this period were recorded mainly in the central and eastern part of the city and partially in the northwestern part during the excavations. However, there are no remains of architectural structures belonging to this period. However, in the course of the excavations, the remains of various material objects belonging to the period known as the period of Khorezmshahs (9th – early 13th centuries) were found from the cultural layers. Ceramics are especially important in studying the culture of this period.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

In the second half of the 20th century - the first quarter of the 21st century, the archaeological research conducted in the Kyat-kala left-bank showed that it is very important in the study of the material culture of the city related to the history of the 9th - early 13th centuries. Among them, the many ceramic objects found in the history of the Kyat-kala left-bank of this period serve as the main sources for illuminating the life of the city.

In the research carried out by M. Mambetullaev in the north-western part of the monument (Shurf No. 1, 1974) II-III layers are represented by the 9th-11th centuries of city life (Мамбетуллаев, 1981, С. 71, рис.3. 6,8; Вактурская, 1959, с. 275, рис. 2, 2, 4).

In the excavations in the northeastern corner of the fortress (Excavation No. 4; No. 5) developed medieval cultural layers were identified (Матрасулов, 2002, б. 19-21; Матрасулов ва б., 2003, б. 9-13; Садуллаев, 2016, с. 31-39.). The stratigraphic data of the excavations (Excavations No. 4; No. 5), as well as a large number of expressive ceramics, remains of glass and bone and iron objects found in the pit and cultural layers show that the monument continued to have an active lifestyle in the 9th-11th centuries. These data can prove that there were settlements in this place in the 9th-11th centuries.

Traces of cultural layers from the period of Khorezmshahs were also found in excavations in the south-eastern part of the city (Excavation No. 2 and Shurf No. 2) (Чунихин, 1987, с. 6-7). Many expressive vessels of the 11th-

12th centuries have been identified from the shurf 2 (Fig. 1-2). However, there are no remains of buildings or other stratigraphic layers belonging to this period. At the same time, during the study of structures in the 2nd excavation (excavation of the 2nd season of 1987) and the south-eastern corner defensive tower, the remains of ceramics from this period are observed in the upper layers and thin layers (Чунихин, 1987, с. 17-18, 24-25).

On the other hand, in the central and western parts of the city, remains of gray ceramics of the 11th-12th centuries were also found (Матрасулов, 2011, с. 55-59).

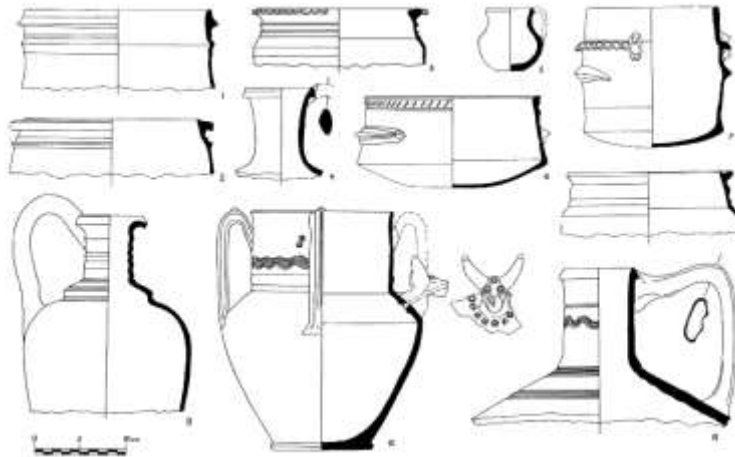


Figure 1. Ceramic items belonging to the end of XI-XII century (Shurf No. 2, Section No.1 and No.2). (D. Chunikhin. 1987 first season, February-March)

Information about the 11th-12th centuries is also revealed in the excavations in the city center (Excavation No. 6). There is no doubt that there was a congregational mosque in the center of the fortress during this period. During the excavations carried out in the territory of the mosque (Excavation No. 6), it is also observed that there were baked bricks that were used for the second time in its construction. Miniature baked bricks (9x5.5-4 cm, 8x5-4 cm) found in excavation No. 5 in the northeast of the city indicate the existence of public buildings here (Садуллаев, 2016, с. 38). The discovery of a silver coin with a Kufic script inside the mosque (Excavation No. 6) is the basis for the flourishing of life in the city during the advanced medieval period before the Mongols.

RESEARCH MATERIAL

Pottery plays a very important role in the study of the material culture of the Kyat-kala left bank. Statistical analysis during the research showed that ceramics of the advanced medieval period make up 7.5% of the total ceramics in the monument. The complex of ceramics belonging to the developed middle ages (9th - early 13th centuries) mainly consists of unglazed and glazed vessels.

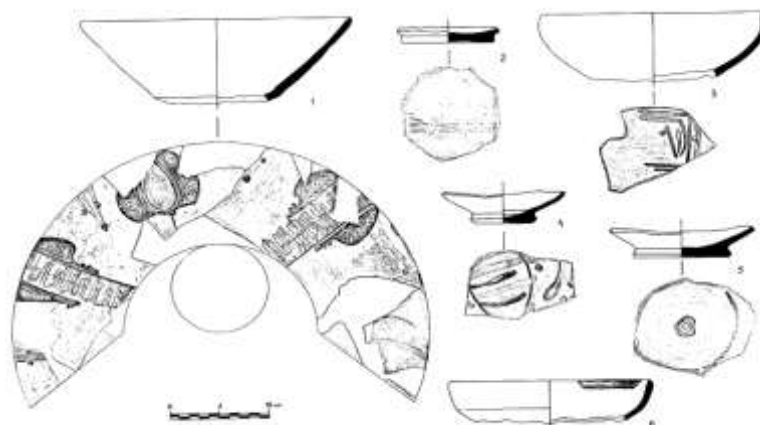


Figure 2. Ceramic items belonging to the end of the 11th-12th century (Badrab. Shurf No.2). (D. Chunikhin. 1987 first season, February-March)

According to the shape and decoration, the unglazed pottery consists of various vessels, mainly jugs, big bowl, kitchen vessels, and fragments of vessel lids. Household utensils dominate among them. Most of the dishes were made on the pottery wheel.

Jugs are distinguished by flanges, vessel walls and bottom (Fig. 1, 4,9-11; Fig. 3, 1; Fig. 4, 1-3). Their thickness is 0,5-0,7 cm. The diameter is 13 cm. The bottom part of the jugs was also found, its diameter is 9-19 cm. Two types of jugs can be distinguished. Among these, you can find jugs made of gray clay with a wide neck and a swollen shoulder part of the body. A large kitchen jug is characterized by a wide and high neck, four bean-shaped handles and a bull's-head pourer (Fig. 1, 10) (Чунихин, 1987, с. 28, табл.8,10). The jug's neck is decorated with a wave-like scratched pattern, as well as convex circles. Similar jugs can be found in most of the monuments of the 10th-12th centuries in Central Asia (Пилипко, 1984, с.162, рис.3, 10; Шишкина, 1979, табл. X, 8, 10, 11). In Central Asian monuments, the image of a bull, representing a pouring jug, is often found and goes back to the traditions of Zoroastrianism. It is considered a magical amulet with very old and developed semantics (Шишкина, 1979, табл. XL; Беленицкий и др., 1973, с. 57-58, рис. 27).

Another type of large water-carrying jug is equipped with a handle almost oval in cross-section (Fig. 1, 9; Fig. 4, 2, 3), with a groove in the middle. The high neck ends in a triangular rim and is decorated with wavy and horizontal scratched lines. Similar lines were also noted on the jugs' shoulders. The cross-section of the ceramic shard is yellowish-pink in color and is well-baked (Чунихин, 1987, табл.8, 4, 9).

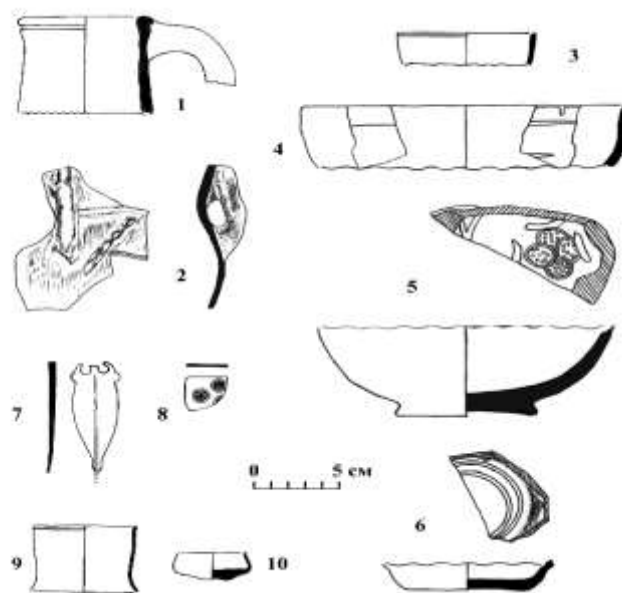


Figure 3. Ceramic, glass and bone products. IX-XI centuries. Pit No.1. (1-3 unglazed vessels; 4-6 glazed vessels; 7-8 bone objects; 9-10 glass objects) Northeast corner (Excavation No.4, 2002-2003)

Single-handed jugs with a narrow neck with a convex line on the shoulder and neck, as well as such vessels with a monolithic conical base, inflated at the top and narrowing towards the bottom, were common in Khorezm in the 9th-11th centuries (Вактурская, 1959, с. 275, рис.2, 2, 4). Jugs similar in shape were found in the 9th-11th century layers in Jigarbant (Вишневская, 2001, с. 42, 55, рис.15/1, 2; рис.21/4), Elkharas (Древности..., 1991, с. 139, рис.51/3), Kerder (Гудкова, 1964, с. 133, рис.36/6) monuments, as well as in the 9th-10th century layers in Paykent (Мухаммеджанов и др., 1988, с. 166, рис.17, 10-12) outside Khorezm.

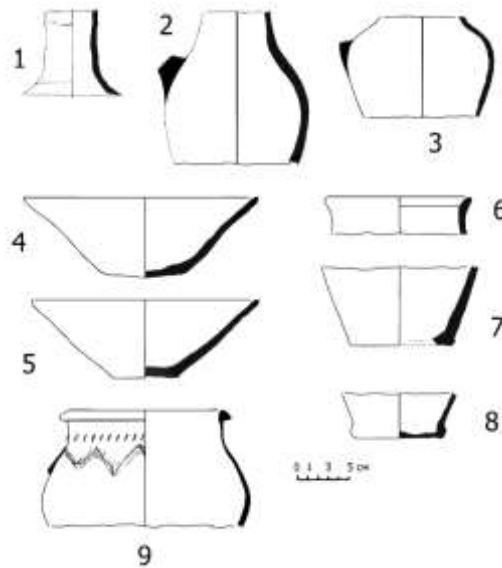


Figure 4. Unglazed vessels. IX-XI centuries (Sq. 6V. Pit No.1. Excavation No.5). 2004.

Kitchen ceramics is represented by a large number of thin-walled pots, sometimes with a complex fluted profile (Чунихин, 1987, табл.8, 1-3, 6-8). Their diameters are from 13 cm to 19 cm. The thickness of the walls is 0,4-0,7 cm. The rims are triangular in shape. There is a zig-zag embossed pattern on the shoulder, as well as nail incisions on the neck (Fig. 1, 1-3,6-8; Fig. 3, 2; Fig. 4, 9; Fig. 10, 1,2). The body of the cauldron is cylindrical, the lower part has a segmental shape, the walls are decorated with horizontal grooves and molded patterns of twisted knots. Some models have horizontal or moon-shaped handles. Clay is refractory, gray, with a large amount of small stones added. Such pots, made in imitation of metal vessels, are characteristics of 10th-12th centuries in Khorezm (Вактурская, 1959, с. 310; Вишневская, 2001, с. 34-36, рис.19/1-7).

Fragments of pot lids are also of great interest (Fig. 9). They have a flat disk shape and are represented by stamped patterns in the form of plant and tree branches. The edge of the cap is decorated with a wavy pattern created using finger pressure. The diameters of the lids are from 18 cm to 29 cm. Its walls are 1-1,2 cm thick. Such covers are common in Zamakhshar, Jigarbant and other 9th-11th century monuments of Khorezm (Вактурская, 1959, с. 280-282, рис.5; Вишневская, 2001, с. 36-37, рис.20).

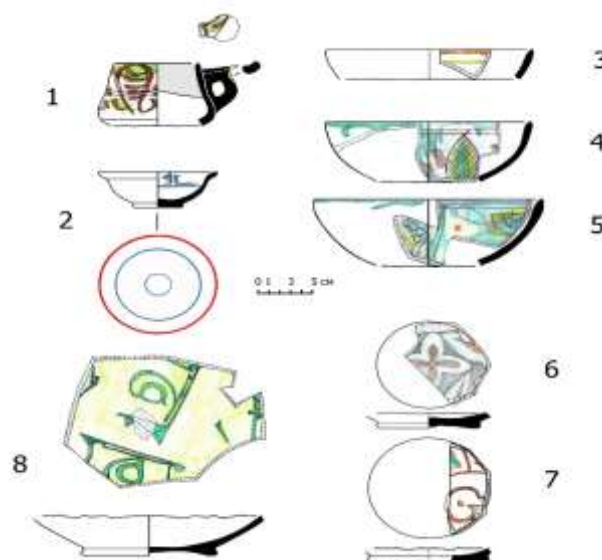


Figure 5. Glazed dishes. IX-XI centuries. (1-2, 8 Kv. 8A. 2 tiers. Coal mixed sandy soil layer; 3-7 Kv. 6V. Pit No.1. Excavation No.5). 2004.

Big bowls have a conical shape, characterized by an expanded flange with a rounded edge on the outside, and a flat bottom. The diameter of the flange is 21-22 cm, the diameter of the base is 6,5-7 cm. The thickness of the walls is 0,6-1 cm. A red-brick color is observed in the ceramic shard when it is baked evenly. The forms of such big bowls were found in the pottery kilns of Zamakhshar monument (Вактурская, 1959, с. 278).



Figure 6. Glazed dishes. IX-XI centuries (Sq. 8A. 2 levels. Coal mixed sandy soil layer. Excavation No. 5). 2004.

The rim of an unglazed glass or mug is 8 cm in diameter with a thin wall. The clay mixture is good, without any impurities. The firing is even, the crock is light brown (Fig. 1, 5). Similar vessels were found in Jigarbant, as well as in the Sogd region, and belong to the 10th-11th centuries (Вишневецкая, 2001, с. 44, рис.12/1,2).

Glazed pottery is represented by fragments of big and little bowls and mugs. Glazed pottery is mostly covered with yellow and green glazes, and the clay is red in color. Yellow glaze is applied over dark brown and green painted engob on pottery. In some cases, the picture is filled with small scratched carvings. Typical forms of yellow glazed pottery are mostly open type bowls with a ring base.



Figure 7. Glazed dishes. IX-XI centuries. (Sq. 6V. Pit No.1. Excavation No.5). 2004.

The group of glazed bowls (Figs. 2, 102) has two forms, consisting of conical and hemispherical bowls. The bowl of the first form (Fig. 2, 1) has a high conical body, which ends with a simple rounded edge (diameter 27 cm). The transition to the unguarded lower part of the vessel is represented by a folded place. The designs are painted with red, black and brown paint over a white engob and decorated with scratched small carvings. No trace of the glazed bowls is preserved. The composition is in the form of a cross, with a strip of pseudo-Kufic inscription along one axis, and on the other - a medallion with a strongly stylized (simulated) image of birds. A similar plot, composition, palette and decorative style are known in Movarounnahr pottery from the middle of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century (Ташходжаев, 1967, с. 119–121, рис.31; Шишкина, 1979, табл.LIX, 4; 30, рис.35, 2).



Figure 8. Glazed dishes. IX-XI centuries. (Sq. 6V. Pit No.1. Excavation No.5). 2004.

There are several examples of the second type - some of them have a flat disc-shaped base, a wide reservoir, almost hemispherical, sometimes with a slightly protruding vertical wall and a simple round flange (diameter 19 cm to 25 cm) (Fig. 2, 2-6). The thickness of its walls is 0.6-0.7 cm. The bowls are semi-spherical in shape and are made of well-tempered clay on the potter's wheel. Baked in an even fire, the ceramic shard has a brick-red color. The entire surface of the vessel from the inside, and the upper edge from the outside, is covered with white engob, covered with a semi-transparent bright green glaze. Bowls are decorated with a small carved pattern in the scratched method (Fig. 5, 4,5). They consist of several horizontal lines parallel to the edges of the vessel, and at the bottom are placed leaves filled with oblique lines and decorated with a pattern of stylized plant-like patterns. On top of the finely carved motifs, underglaze paint is applied in the form of diffused green and yellow colors, as well as in the form of brown spots. Also, on the surface of the white engob, there are dark green drops and circular lines under a transparent glaze, or red and dark brown ribbon lines along the white engob, inscriptions under a yellow glaze (in one case, the famous phrase "Allah al-Mulk" - "Property of God", in the other, the inscription cannot be read) (Чунихин, 1987, табл.7, 2-4.).

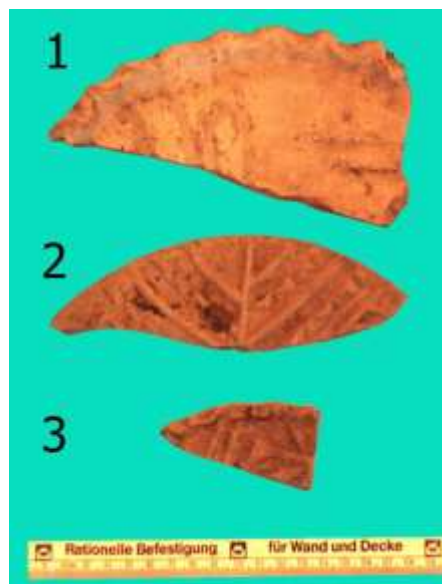


Figure 9. Ceramic lids. IX-XI centuries. (1-Sq. 8A. 2 levels. Coal mixed sandy soil layer; 2-3 Sq. 6V. Pit No.1. Excavation No.5). 2004

According to the style and characteristics of the decoration of this type of vessels, as well as the range of colors of the painting, it is well known from the materials of the 11th - early 12th centuries of Central Asia (Бяшимова, 1984, с. 139-6, рис.1, 1; с. 149; с. 152, рис.4, 2, 6, 17; 32, 286-300). The closest similar dishes were found among the bowls of the 9th-11th centuries from Zamakhshar (Вактурская, 1959, с. 297-298, рис. 7, 6; рис. 16, 2) and Jigarbant (Вишневецкая, 2001, с. 71, рис. 29/6-7). Outside Khorezm, it is found in Poykent and Afrosiyab layers of the 9th - 11th centuries (Шишкина, 1986, с. 47.), as well as in the 12th – early 13th century layers of Chach (Брусенко, 1986, с. 48, табл.16; 9; с.64-67, табл.21).

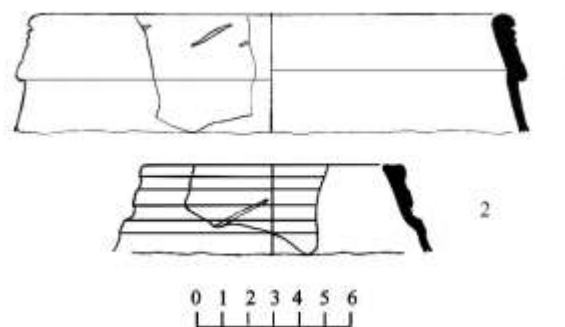


Figure 10. Ceramic samples of the 11th-12th centuries (1-Shibbalan gray dense layer. Tier I. Shurf No.2, 2010; 2- Surface layer. Tier I. Trench No.5, 2011).



One of the bowls, unlike the above fragments, is covered with a transparent bright green glaze of one color over a white engob (Fig. 5, 8). The edge of the bowl is painted with brownish glaze, and a yellow-gold line is drawn parallel to it. In Khorezm, similar bowls date back to the 10th-11th centuries (Вишневская, 2001, С. 67).

The bottom parts of the bowls have a concave disk-like base (Fig. 3, 5; Fig. 5, 6-8). Their diameters are 9-12 cm, the walls are 0,5-0,6 cm thick. The surface is covered with white engob. In one case, the engob even covers the entire surface of the vessel. Some researchers note that the complete covering of the base surface is one of the characteristic features of glazed pottery typical of the 9th – of the first half 10th centuries (Шишкина, 1979, с. 45, 51; Брусенко, 1986, с. 23.). A transparent bright green and yellow glaze is applied over the engob. Vegetal and geometric motifs in dark brown and green colors were used to decorate underglaze paints. In addition, in the square center there is a "rosette" in the form of four leaves on a dotted background (Fig. 5, 6; Fig. 8, 2). Researchers note that the decoration on the dot background is related to the imitation of the decoration of metal objects (Ташходжаев, 1967, с. 101; Шишкина, 1979, с. 44-45; Вишневская, 2001, с. 59.). Similar to the above mentioned, pottery can be found in Zamakhshar (Вактурская, 1959, с. 285-286, рис.7, 3-5.), Jigarbant (Вишневская, 2001, с. 59, рис.22/4) monuments, as well as found in Afrosiyab (Шишкина, 1979, табл. XXVIII) and Chach (Брусенко, 1986, табл.3/1,2; 22) outside of Khorezm. They belong of the 9th and early 10th centuries.

Also, the diameter of the hemispherical bowl (Fig. 5, 2; Fig. 6, 1) with the flange turned outward and the mouth widened is 11 cm and 4,5 cm at the base. The base is disc-like and flat. The wall thickness is 0,2-0,5 cm. The edge of the flange is bordered with a red-brown line. The interior is also decorated with air-blue paint in the form of pseudo-epigraphic patterns and lines parallel to the ceramic surface. Due to the spilled surface, it is difficult to identify traces of engob and secret. Perhaps it is covered with a colorless transparent glaze. Similar bowls were found in Jigarbant (Вишневская, 2001, с. 67, рис.26/1) and Afrasiyob (Шишкина, 1979, табл. XII, 8-9; табл. XXVI, 3; табл. XXVII, 3), they belong to the 9th-10th centuries.

A finely crafted mug (Fig. 5, 1; Fig. 6, 2) has a rectangular handle, surmounted by a rounded shield. Its rounded body is slightly narrowed to the throat with an undefined edge. The tag part is not preserved. The diameter of the flange is 8 cm. The wall thickness is 0,5 cm. Made of well-tempered clay, it has a red-brick color on the ceramic shard when it is evenly fired. The outer side is completely covered with white engob, and the inner side is covered with a transparent colorless glaze. The outer surface is decorated with brown almond-shaped leaf branches and unjoined ends under the glaze. Mugs of a similar shape, but without a shield on the handle, appeared in Khorezm as early as the 8th century (Неразик, 1959, с.245, рис.6/16; с.244, рис.7/1; Вишневская, 2001, с.56, рис.21/1) and were widespread in Central Asia (Распопова, 1960, с.145-148, рис.2/5,6,20,21). Mugs with a shield on the handle were found in Afrosiyab (Шишкина, 1979, Табл.13, 14) and Chach (Брусенко, 1986, табл.30, 7; 41, 2). They are dated to the second half of the 9th century and the first half of the 10th century.

In addition to ceramics, two samples of baked bricks in miniature form (9 x 5.5-4 cm, 8 x 5-4 cm) were used as onlay between polished bricks for facade decoration of architectural buildings (sq. 9A, Excavation No.5). In Central Asia, the method of decorating facades with the help of jumper is known from the 11th - 12th centuries (Кдырнязов, 2015, с. 71-72).

CONCLUSION

Thus, from the end of the 8th century to the beginning of the 9th century, there is a revival of crafts and trade activities in the regions that were part of the caliphate. The objects analyzed above show that life continued actively in Kyat-kala left bank during this period. From the 9th century, it is possible to talk about extensive cultural and craft contacts with other regions of Central Asia, first of all with Sogd. This tendency is especially evident in the case of glazed pottery. The ceramics found in Kyat-kala left bank are almost similar to the first glazed pottery types of Khorezm and Central Asia. In general, until the beginning of the 13th century, trade and cultural relations of the oasis with neighboring regions continued to develop continuously and widely. As the center of the micro-oasis located in the ancient irrigation networks, the Kyat-kala left bank is an active participant in these processes and is manifested in economic relations. With the invasion of the Mongols, the city fell into depression and remained deserted for several centuries.

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