

ARTS ON THE SILK ROAD (IN THE EXAMPLE OF ZARAFSHON VALLEY)

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Annotation: *This article explores the development of decorative and applied arts in the Zarafshan Valley, one of the prominent centers of traditional craftsmanship along a branch of the Great Silk Road. The author examines the historical and cultural significance of folk crafts such as embroidery (particularly suzani) and carpet weaving, situating them within the broader context of intercultural exchange along the Silk Road. Based on field research conducted in the villages of Magiyan, Shing, Farob, and Veshab, the article analyzes ornamental motifs, compositional techniques, and symbolic meanings embedded in the handmade artifacts of local artisans. The study highlights the spiritual and cultural importance of these crafts, their role in preserving the national identity of the Tajik people, and the transmission of artisanal knowledge across generations. Special attention is paid to the influence of natural surroundings and the philosophical symbolism inherent in traditional patterns.*

Keywords: *Silk Road; Zarafshan Valley; folk crafts; decorative and applied arts; Tajik embroidery; carpet weaving; ornamentation; suzani; ethnoculture; symbolism.*

Tajikistan is considered to be the oldest center of civilization of art and culture at the level of countries of the region and the world, and the researches carried out in this context show that the Silk Road, the road of culture and art has a significant role in the transfer of cultures and even the basis for the distinction of different cultures, which can be He named examples from the arts of the Bactrian, Roman, Indian, Varoru and Iranian cultures.

For centuries, this road played a constructive role as a route for large trade caravans. This historical road, which came into being in the second century BC and served mankind until the 15th century AD, not only brought different peoples closer to each other, but also introduced the products of their hands to each other. If in ancient times the people of Varorud were fascinated by the handicrafts of the Chinese and especially by the exquisite silk and fine silk of this country, then in the

country of China they were fascinated by four-legged animals and especially by the wind-legged horses of Fergana.

Chinese tourists such as Zhang Tsiang and Tajik tourists Ghiyasuddin Naqqosh, Chinese Akbar Khan and others like them visited each other's countries and wrote their travelogues. For example, Akbar Khan of China in his book "Khitoyнома" gave information about Chinese artists. Similar information about the markets and crafts of the ancestors of the Tajiks can be found in the works of Zhang Tsian, published in Sima Sian's book "Historical Notes" [7. p. 95].

Horses in the Daiyuan region were observed by the Chinese and "have bloody sweat" [2. p. 124], the landscapes were likened to a mythical paradise and to the miraculous place of Kunlun Mountain. For the Aryan people, who lived in Central Asia, China is a wonderful country and a place of charming hearts, musk deer and the like.

From these examples, it can be concluded that nature and art represent countries at all times.

There are many places in the world where nature gives its unique beauty and grace to man, and the beauty and grace of nature is a high art, with the ancient art of decoration. Tajikistan is a land where the beauty of nature and its decorative art are harmoniously combined with each other. There is an opinion that art, regardless of the place and time of its origin, is always understandable and close to a person, expresses the special characteristics of this or that nation, reflects the nature that provides a basis for any ideas and forms of creative activity. It is impossible to imagine the Tajik nation without decorative and practical arts. The main characteristic of Tajiks is strong attachment to their beloved homeland and perseverance in the winding path of history.

The decorative art of Tajikistan is one of the types of traditional art of the Tajik people, which allows us to look into the spiritual world of Tajiks, to learn about their dreams and aspirations, their worldview, their imagination, about beauty and goodness. The works of art created by florists and master craftsmen of this land are famous all over the world, they present this eastern country to the world and are considered a source of pride for the Tajik nation.

There are many handicraft centers in Tajikistan, each of which has its own unique characteristics, special business styles. Patterns and patterns of Zarafshan textiles and embroidery are a clear example of the material and spiritual ethnographic culture of its people, capable of uniting the ethnic Tajik people in order to preserve a single spiritual and aesthetic concept, a special way of thinking of the people and the system of its artistic values.

Knitting and embroidery products determined the social status and gender characteristics of their owners, and sometimes served as a "symbol of honor" for

women. Usually, women are engaged in the art of weaving and embroidery, although sometimes in some places, for example, in the Pamirs, men are also engaged in these arts. is considered a national craft.

The weaving art of Zarafshan can be compared to a kind of story or story, because the root of the word "weaving" is "weaving". Just as poets and writers weave interesting stories of themselves, chiradast weavers also create various images, poetic symbols and motifs from threads that tell the story of the rich history of our nation, its national customs and traditions. That is why their woven or embroidered products are called "silent song" [5. p. 22].

Suzani is one of the largest embroidery products of Tajiks. It plays an important role not only in the decoration of people's homes, but also in their daily life, and is considered the flower of folk creativity. The extraordinary variety of patterns, colors, beauty and sophistication and deep meanings of needlework amaze and make one bow before the miraculous hands of man.

Needlework in Tajikistan is a decorative wall art that is usually embroidered with colorful silk threads on the surface of cotton, silk or velvet fabric. It is surrounded by black ink. The composition of the products is made up of flowers and symbolic motifs.

When doing needlework, women leave a piece of finished cloth for the apprentice girls, so that they too can contribute to the almost finished work of the older Chevarans. According to folk traditions, the unfinished role meant the continuity of generations, it meant that there were always weddings in the family.

In ancient times, people believed that the needle has miraculous power and protects young families from all kinds of disasters. Once upon a time, there were different schools and styles of needlework, for example: needle, yorma, bigiz, etc. Each village and each region of Tajikistan differed from each other in its style of embroidery. In particular, the needles that are sewn not in Panjakent itself, but in the villages around it, are very different. In terms of their patterns, they are sometimes reminiscent of pine cones or pine cones. However, in terms of color choice, they are often (especially in the early 19th century products) unlike the needles of the mentioned regions, they are distinguished by their relatively soft and elegant colors.

"Gulbandina" (rose, orange, circular, flower circle, solar cycle, solar, round cup flower) is a pattern in the form of a blooming flower (for example: rose flower, bougainvillea, mino flower, etc.).

Its round shape was a symbol of the sun, cosmic power, love, beauty and heavenly life. The sun and the moon were represented by wreaths - sometimes with a large wreath (solar, round bronze, moon and sun) and a small wreath (moon,

moon and love). Whirlwind-shaped bouquet represented the idea of constant rotation of the wheel of the sky.

Five-point needles are distinguished by the artistic color of their patterns, with a combination of low pink and brown colors, which are rarely encountered in Tajik embroidery. The bouquets here are reminiscent of the stars in the sky and are embroidered on a large area without any other additional elements around them. Five-pointed stitchers often call such bouquets "stars". Undoubtedly, they represent the same astral themes that are reflected in the famous Panjakent wall paintings of the 7th-8th centuries.

In five-point needlework, such rare topics can be found, such as the role of the elements of the palm of the hand. The hand has hidden power, protects a person from harm, helps in work, makes childbirth easier. The symbol of five fingers is depicted in the drawings to remove any misfortune and evil eye. This symbol is used by many nations in their practical arts.

In Panjakent, it is depicted in the form of a long branch with a five-petalled flower at its tip. This motif is often used when decorating prayer mats.

Each needle has several meanings. The first is the structure of the universe. The second - symbols of the four elements - fire, water, earth and wind. The meaning of life is hidden in every pattern. The meaning of life, according to the interpretation of the needle, is continuity and continuity of generations. Needlework has a beginning and not an end, according to the old custom, there is always a piece of unfinished role left in the needlework. It's hard to find, but it's there.

Eternity is the main symbol of each needle. And finally, it expresses the wishes and intentions and wishes for health and safety of the person to whom the needle is given. A flower, an almond, a pepper, a pomegranate, a tree, a cup, a teapot, and each of these elements has its own meaning, its own philosophy. It is a mistake to describe these symbols unilaterally, in their limited meaning. The knife is a symbol of protection and support in the almond, the flower is the symbol of the fire that cleanses from sins, the bouquet is the symbol of the human face, the tree is the symbol of life, health and longevity, the cup is the symbol of a happy life, the teapot is the symbol of hospitality and peace of life.

The motifs that are most often found in needlework are "bouquet" (rose, orange, round, round, solar cycle, round, cup flower), which is a pattern in the form of a blooming flower (rose, bougainvillea, mine flower). The shape of its period was a symbol of the sun, meaning cosmic power, evolution, love and beauty, heavenly life. The sun and the moon were imagined as bouquets, sometimes with a large bouquet (solar, turunj dura, beads and the sun) and with a small bouquet (moon, moon and love). The whirlwind bouquet represented the

idea of the constant rotation of the wheel of the sky. With a knife - a symbol of protection, with a flower - fire, a purifying element, with a bouquet - a person's face, with a tree - life, long life and health, with a vase - life, with a teapot - hospitality and presence, pleasure, peace [4. p. 105]. Carpet weaving is one of the art forms of the Tajik people, and the richness of the weaving traditions of the Tajik people was manifested in various types of carpet weaving. Carpets made of wool and cotton have their own characteristics and different technologies and purposes. According to ancient customs and traditions, Tajik houses were mainly decorated with needlework, embroidery, rugs, felt and colorful carpets, which met the aesthetic and material needs of the population. They are placed on the ground during holidays, weddings, holidays, prayers on the floor of the house, in yards and gardens.

According to the researchers of this type of handicraft, carpet weaving among Tajiks appeared under the influence of their nomadic neighbors - Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Turkmen, Kazakhs, Uzbeks. Since ancient times, tribes of different origins have been engaged in this craft, and they used different methods and unique designs to weave beautiful and beautiful carpets. The close proximity of different tribes and peoples, economic relations and their constant communication led to the perpetuation of the common features of carpet weaving, which were manifested both in the styles and methods of carpet weaving and in the patterns of carpets.

Today, carpet weaving still exists in most regions of Tajikistan and beyond, in Tajik-populated areas of neighboring countries. It is particularly developed in Western Badakhshan and its surrounding districts, as well as in the northern regions of the republic: Panjakent, Asht, Gonchi districts and some villages of the Hisar valley.

There is a legend about the origin of the art of carpet weaving. They say that a man had two wives. The older woman constantly hurt the younger woman - Bibihojal. Bibihojal, unable to bear the oppression of her husband, leaves the house with her little son. The shepherd picks wool from the bushes, puts it in a ceramic pot and pours water over it, then spins long threads from this wool and weaves beautiful rugs and carpets. Bibihojal's weaving craft brings her great fame. he willingly taught his craft to many, and they, in turn, taught others [1.p.76].

The list of Tajik carpets is very wide. In addition to the traditional patnok carpets, there are also known woolen rugs with a high pat (julbarak or julhirs), and carpets without a pat (rugs). They have different names in different districts. For example, in the districts of Panjakent, Ghonchi, they are called shoal. Different types of wool can also be included in these handicrafts. Among the Tajik people, especially, the zhulbarak palos is widely developed. This type of patnok products has been made since ancient times in the Panjakent district, as well as in the

Kashkadarya and Surkhondarya districts of Uzbekistan. Julbaraks have many advantages in terms of their beauty and quality, that's why they can be seen in most of the houses in these regions. Their fur is dense and high, they retain heat, and are pleasant to the touch. It takes a lot of work to prepare such layers. Knots of wool are tied by hand into nets and then it is sheared [3. p. 42].

The pattern of these layers is not complicated. In a rectangular area, several (4 or 2) solid figures are usually placed proportionally. The entire composition is framed by a border that usually consists of a straight line. As a decoration of the palos, they use motifs of various designs and shapes - "flowers". Especially for petals, the role of sheep's horns (horns) is characteristic, which has several types. They are composed of symmetrically arranged folds, which are the symbol of the sheep's horns. It is placed in such a way that it fills the entire area of the pad.

The fringes are usually decorated with black, gray and cinnamon colors - the natural colors of sheep's wool. Usually, only parts of the pattern (flower) are painted with yellow and red colors, and always in pairs. One of the characteristics of the flower pattern in them is that the flowers, even if they are colored, are always surrounded by a wide black border. This allows the design to stand out with its charm in the general background.

The wool for this rug is dyed using traditional methods at home. they always use vegetable dyes. The method of preparation of many colors is complicated and laborious. It has been created for centuries and is the property of several generations. Julkhirs patnoki carpet was created in very ancient times, during the study of two cultures - the culture of nomads and settlers. The name of the carpet, which is derived from the words Arabic and Persian, whose first producers were the Persian and Arab peoples [6. p. 45].

Rugs and rugs are the most popular handicrafts of Tajiks. In ancient times, sheep or goat wool and later cotton were used for its preparation. Sometimes rugs are woven from wool and cotton. In some regions of northern Tajikistan: Asht, Gonchi, Panjakent, especially in the villages of Rasraut and Shing, they have been engaged in the production of such rugs and rugs (scarves) since ancient times. They were woven on the simplest machines directly on the yard, as a large space was needed to weave large strips.

It is worth noting the motifs of the Zarafshan Valley, which were previously used in the decoration of carpets. Unfortunately, today not everyone knows the names of the patterns and their meaning, as well as the meaning of the colors used in the carpet.

In the course of the research, a number of patterns were discovered, such as a matchbox, an hourglass, a comb, a hairpin, a ram, etc. [1. p. 76].

In all eras, the contribution of textile and embroidery products and their role in the formation and development of Tajik culture and artistic creativity, like all the peoples of the Middle East and the Silk Road, was very great. In the formation and development of traditional art, the characteristics of the natural environment, the way of life and livelihood, the collective memory of the people and even their imagination about splendor and luxury played an important role.

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Annotation. The Great Silk Road has played a constructive role as a route for large trade caravans. This historical road, which came into being in the second century BC and served mankind until the 15th century AD, not only brought different peoples closer to each other, but also introduced the products of their hands to each other.

One of the branches of the Great Silk Road was through the Zeravshan valley, and this area was part of the craft activities of these inhabitants. Since ancient times, the handicrafts of the artisans of the Zeravshan Valley have spread throughout the world, and this spread of artisans' products can be observed in our time.

The article examines embroidery and carpet weaving in the Zeravshan Valley, which is considered the birthplace of folk crafts. Patterns made in hand embroidery, decorations and carpets were studied. Among other things, suzani,



veils and pillowcases were studied. Research was carried out mainly in the jamoats of the Zeravshan Valley, the villages of Magiyan, Shing, Farob and Veshab.

Key words: *Silk Road, Zerafshan, folk craft, decorative - applied art, ornaments, carpet, suzani.*