



## POTTERY IN TERMIZ IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE PLACE OF THE MERCURY CELLS IN IT

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### Annotation

In this article, we will witness the development of pottery in the Old Termez region in the Middle Ages, how skilled and masterful the potters were. We can learn about the excavations in the Potters' Quarter and the pottery found there, especially the mercury.

**Keywords:** Old Termez, pottery, ceramics, mercury, handicrafts, vinegar, Jean Poladiyan, Mention, narrow throat

### Introduction

The development of Tarmita-Termez was driven by steady economic growth. The production of handicrafts played a leading role in this. New types of crafts have appeared in the city, production technology has improved, and the volume of output has increased. Pottery took center stage, during which time the variety of pottery increased, and their quality increased and became more diverse. The emergence of a special pottery neighborhood in the city also made it possible. We can see that trade also played an important role in the economic life of Termez. This situation is also described in detail in written sources. In particular, Ibn Hawqal noted that there were luxurious rabods (caravanserais) in Termez, which brought great income.

To the east of this caravanserai was a neighborhood of potters, where craftsmen made unglazed pottery, including lavish pots and jars of various shapes and sizes. Each workshop owner had two or three jugs.

Another center for the production of pottery specializes in the production of wheel-shaped vessels - "mercury jugs". Large production centers were also located outside the Rabod area. In particular, to the south-east of Rabod there is a large pot for making baked bricks. To the north of Rabot was a neighborhood of potters. There are various dishes and utensils: khum, khumcha, khurmacha, togora, tuvvoKh and others. Another similar center was located just north of Shahrstan. There were jugs for baking mercury and vinegar.



The decisive role of handicraft production in the economic life of Termez is shown not only by the presence of any professional centers, but also by the products of these industries. The most developed branch of handicraft production in Termez was, of course, pottery.

Termez potters were the first in Central Asia in the 10th and 11th centuries to produce perfect ceramics. Termez ceramics of this period were of high quality, varied in variety and rich in decoration. Open jars: various shokosa and bowls decorated in color. The potters have painted a beautiful pattern considering the shape of the pot. The most common patterns were the inflorescence, the woven pattern, the image of an animal, and the inscription on a slanted tree, in a firm and unfinished cup. When comparing the ceramic vinegar made in Termez with the products of other pottery centers in Central Asia, it became clear that they do not lag behind the famous pottery of Samarkand, Merv and Shosh.

The production of glazed pottery began in the 11th century and reached its peak in the 12th century, when vinegar began to replace pottery in many ways. This is due to the improvement of the technique of production of solid ceramics, which allowed to sharply increase the production of such products. At the same time, a variety of embossed images made the appearance of the vessels more luxurious and decorative. At the same time, graphic ceramics are widely used, and such stylized Islamic, girih, and epigraphic patterns are usually used to decorate jars of various shapes and sizes. This type of pattern is often used in a mixed variant. As a result, very complex vessels were formed.

The pottery produced in Termez at the beginning of the 11th-13th centuries shows the high level of professionalism of Termez potters and the level of development of the material culture of its inhabitants. Termez pottery has much in common with other pottery centers in Central Asia and neighboring countries, with more Khorasan pottery than Movaraunnahr. This was due to the fact that Termez was politically connected with the states in the Khorasan region. However, the ceramics produced in Termez also had a number of local characteristics. During this period, Termez played a significant role in the production of ceramics.

Among the various ceramic household items are mercury jugs with thick walls, a spherical shape, a simple narrow throat and a very small mouth, and a fish-shaped base. Archaeologists studying the culture of medieval cities are well aware of these unique vessels. These vessels were found in many areas.



It has been found in large numbers in several monuments of our country, including the Middle East, Egypt, Crimea, and Central Asia, especially in Termez. The study of mercury pots is a problem for archaeologists, as E. Lentz, Z. Vinogradov, Mention, B. V. Lunin wrote about the excavations and pottery of medieval cities, in particular, about mercury pots.

Although mercury jars are common, the question of their creation, purpose, and function is still debated. If we pay attention to its construction, it is radically different from ordinary ceramics. It is very hard and dense, dried at high temperatures, dark in color, and much more expensive than other ceramics. There is no general conclusion as to what its function is. There are different assumptions about this.

There were special groups of drawings in mercury glasses. For example, we can divide these groups into containers for the preparation and storage of medicines, containers for seeds, wine, vinegar, musk, a bowl of melted butter, milk and oil. All this is still speculation. None of them have yet been proven.

In conclusion, a comprehensive study of these pottery found in Termez shows that the Termez potters who made them were masters of their craft and achieved great success in this field. The pottery found is a shining proof of our opinion. The vessels inform us of the highly developed material culture of the termites.

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