

**ARTIFACTS REFLECTING THE TRADITIONS OF PRODUCING
GLAZED CERAMICS FROM THE KUTAISI HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

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სტატიამი განხილულია ქუთაისის სახელმწიფო ისტორიული მუზეუმის არქეოლოგიის ფონდში დაცული მეთუნეობის არტეფაქტები, რომლებიც მნიშვნელოვანია მოჭიქული კერამიკის დამზადების ტრადიციების გარკვევისათვის. ნაშრომის მიზანს წარმოადგენს შუასაუკუნეების კერამიკული სახელოსნოების ნაშთების და ჭიქური არტეფაქტების შესწავლისა და ანალიზის გზით, ქუთაისის ნაქალაქარის ტერიტორიაზე მოჭიქული კერამიკის წარმოების ისტორიის გააზრება. კვლევის ბაზას წარმოადგენდა პროფესორ ომარ ლანჩავას ხელმძღვანელობით 1984-2010 წლებში ქუთაისის ნაქალაქარზე ჩატარებული არქეოლოგიური ექსპედიციების დროს მოპოვებული მასალები: კერამიკული სახელოსნოს ნაშთი, კერამიკის გამოსაწვავი ქურები, ქვის სამეთუნეო ჩარხი, კერამიკის წარმოების ამსახველი სხვადასხვა ნივთები, ჭიქურიანი კერამიკის ფრაგმენტები და სხვ. აღნიშნული მასალების ანალიზისა და სტრატиграფიული მონაცემების განსაზღვრის შედეგად შეიძლება დავასკვნათ, რომ ქუთაისის ნაქალაქარის ტერიტორიაზე VIII-XI საუკუნეებში ფუნქციონირებდა კერამიკული სახელოსნო და მზადდებოდა, როგორც მოჭიქული კერამიკის ჭურჭელი, ისე სამშენებლო კერამიკა. კვლევა მნიშვნელოვანია კერამიკის ქუთაისური კოლექციის სამეცნიერო მიმოქცევაში შემოტანის თვალსაზრისით და ქუთაისქალაქის სოციალურ-ეკონომიკური და კულტურული ყოფა-ცხოვრების დადგენის მიზნით.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: კერამიკა, კერამიკული სახელოსნო, ჭიქურიანი ფრაგმენტები, წარმოების ისტორია, ქუთაისის ნაქალაქარი.

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Abstract

The article discusses the pottery artifacts preserved in the archeology fund of the Kutaisi State Historical Museum, which are important for clarifying the traditions of making glazed ceramics. The aim of the work is to understand the history of the production of glazed ceramics in the territory of old city Kutaisi through the study and analysis of the remains of medieval ceramic workshops and glass artifacts. The research base was represented by the materials obtained during the archaeological expeditions headed by prof. Omar Lanchava, conducted in the territory of old city in 1984-2010 years: the remains of a ceramic workshop, pottery furnace, a stone ceramic processing machine tool, various items representing the production of ceramics, fragments of glazed ceramics, etc. As a result of the analysis of the mentioned materials and determination of stratigraphic data, it can be concluded that a ceramic workshop functioned in the VIII-XI centuries in the territory of former city of Kutaisi and produced both glazed ceramic vessels and building ceramics. The research is important from the point of view of bringing the Kutaisi collection of ceramics into scientific circulation and for determining the socio-economic and cultural life of Kutaisi city.

Key words: Ceramics, Ceramic workshop, Glazed fragments, Production history, Kutaisi former city.

Introduction

Ceramics is one of the most expressive and informative monuments of material culture, that's why it is called "archaeological alphabet". After a person began to take care of meeting the basic needs necessary for his existence (making a dwelling, making weapons, dishes), pottery became an integral part of his life. Since ancient times, the basis for covering ceramic vessels with glaze was laid. Its history spans millennia. The development of this field in Georgia is mainly related to the Middle Ages (VIII-XVIII centuries). In this regard, the old city area of Kutaisi is not an exception, which is confirmed by the very interesting fragments and artifacts of glazed ceramics discovered during the archaeological expeditions conducted in the area in different periods, 1984-2010 years, under the leadership of Professor Omar Lanchava. The mentioned material, which reaches 1000 units, is currently an important part of the archaeological fond of Kutaisi State Historical Museum,

although, the traditions of making glazed ceramics and the history of its development in the territory of old city of Kutaisi is not fully studied. The Kutaisi part of the glazed ceramics is completely ignored in modern publications dedicated to the research of Georgian ceramics, and thus it is not included in the scientific circulation. The issue is quite relevant, because without the study and analysis of these materials, it is literally impossible to present a complete picture of the history of ceramics production. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to understand the history of the production of glazed ceramics in the territory of old city Kutaisi through the study and analysis of the remains of ceramic workshops and artifacts (representing the production and preparation of glaze powder) found as a result of archaeological research and search of different periods. The work will be important not only for bringing the issue into scientific circulation, but also for establishing the social-economic and cultural life of the medieval Kutaisi city and in this direction also from the point of view of using glazed ceramics as a historical source.

A number of scientists have researched the folk traditions of pottery glazing in Georgia. Among the studies of the last century interesting are the publications of L. Bochorishvili (Bochorishvili, 1949), S. Bedukadze (Bedukadze, 1957: 285-302), Ts. Kakabadze (Kakadadze, 1970: 107-109), Z. Maisuradze (Maisuradze, 1953), M. Mitsishvili (Mitsishvili, 1975: 152-158) (Mitsishvili, 1976) and others. Along with the discussion and analysis of artifacts found by archaeological excavations or by chance - fragments of ceramics and glazed vessels, the description of the rules for the manufacture and processing of glaze “powder” characteristic of this or that area is also presented. Among the recent publications, the work of Z. Tvalchrelidze (Tvalchrelidze, 2003-2004: 110-126), which presents a study of the glass bowls from Gareji “Dodos Rqa” (horn) site. Important and noteworthy is N. Qartsidze’s monography (Qartsidze, 2010), which presents an in-depth analysis of the Kutaisi collection of glazed ceramics. Interestingly, researcher K. Qamadadze’s work (Qamadadze, 2014) – with a description of single-colored glazed products found in the territory of Gonio Castle in different years, and his own publication (Qamadadze, 2016: ???), in which glazed vases decorated with “marble-like” decor found at Gonio and Batumi castles are discussed.

Methods

The following modern methods were selected as the main criteria for studying the issue: the principle of historical materials analysis; Visual-descriptive, statistical, typological, formal classification, technological, comparative analysis and analogies.

Results

The archaeological findings of old city of Kutaisi and its surroundings reveal that pottery - the culture of making objects from fired clay - has begun in the region since the Neolithic era. Fragments and artefacts obtained as a result of archeological research of different periods have reached us, namely: fragments of hand-carved thick-walled vessels decorated with rude ornaments (Nebieridze, 1972);

Pottery products of the Eneolithic-Early Bronze Age - large-sized straw-colored surface-polished amphorae (with wide mouth and flat bottom) as well as rough, black-fired ceramics from the Tetramitsa hill and the exterior of the Bagrat temple (Lanchava, Isakadze, Berdzenishvili, Qartsideze, Chumburidze, 2010: 67-73); Black-fired vessels of the Middle Bronze Age from Motsameta (Japaridze, 1998: 38-58). From the 1st half of the 1st millennium B.C., ceramic production, on a wide scale and variety, has already emerged as one of the main and leading components of the ancient Colchian culture (Lortkipanidze, 2002: 338). From the early Middle Ages, the successful development of Colchian ceramics is evident in the Kutaisi region (Lanchava, 2007). From this period, new technologies are developed and introduced. The Kutaisi potters early mastered the innovations that became almost universal from the end of the 8th century, when a new type of pottery products was introduced in the form of glazed vessels and building ceramics. It is from here that Kutaisi glazed ceramics began to be established, which is confirmed by the artefacts showing artistic pottery production obtained as a result of long archaeological research.

Discussion and conclusions

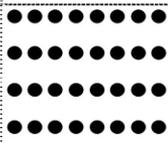
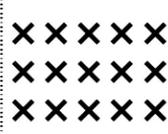
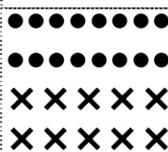
The remains of ceramic workshops of different eras found in different areas during the archaeological researches in old city of Kutaisi are important for determining the history of the production of Kutaisi glazed ceramics. Due to damage, it is impossible to characterize them in full. Some of them were large-scale urban workshops, while others were small-scale individual enterprises.

The remains of the pre-Christian ceramic workshop on the southern slope of the old city citadel leave the impression of a city manufacture of wide use. A brick-paved floor (agurpenili), a stone pottery processing tool, ceramic slags and broken fragments were found here (we are supported by the diaries of the expedition leader O. Lanchava). According to the stratigraphic data (Table 1) this enterprise was determined by IV-V centuries. One important conclusion can be made from the remaining material: a stone ceramic tool with fast rotation was used in the production (Lanchava, 1996)

The remnants of a large-scale city enterprise of the next era, VIII-IX centuries, were found in the western part of inner city near the buttressed wall between main pillar and the Hall. Here, 6 kilns for firing ceramics were arranged in pairs between the small bastions. The walls of the actual workshop should have been in the form of a wooden shed attached to the bastioned wall. And the kilns, the remains of which have reached us, were circular, vertical in shape, and were made of refractory clay in pairs (three pairs in total).

There, in a corner near the main pier, a well-settled, raw clay staple was found for the extraction and excavation of ready-made raw pottery. A powerful fire, coal-ash layer, which was observed in large quantities in this area, testifies to the long-term operation of the production.

Table 1.

I		humus layer	This layer is late, created in XVIII-XIX centuries. Contemporaneous with Gabriel's palace and even earlier, contemporaneous with the unfired clay (Alizi) building.
II		Coal-gray layer	It is powerful (0.5 m.); On the upper horizon, the remains of Kilns can be seen. On the same horizon, pressure-polished red-painted ceramics (II-stage of workshop life).
III		Burnt clay	At this time, the reconstruction of the theological school can be seen. Stores with a workshop have been built on it from the east side. Probably, this workshop also dates back to the 10th-12th centuries. acted.
IV		Coal-gray layer and burnt clay	The first stage of the existence of the ceramic workshop in the VIII-IX centuries. e.g. Between I and II towers, a big kiln was found. It contained two jugs and one low-skirted, wide-mouthed jam.
V		Gray corduroy layer	Up to 1 m. thick, with limestone and plaster mixtures, probably VI-VIII centuries.
VI		Plaster layer	With the remains of the grooved-bodied amphora of IV-VII centuries.
VII		Gravel layer	At the level of the plinth there is generally a layer of Late Antiquity

The data shows that this part of inner city was a workshop district in the 8th-9th centuries. At the same time, there was also a lime-burning kiln, the products of which were apparently used for the construction of Kutatishi church in the time of kings Archil-Leon (from the middle of the 8th century). It is also impressive that the workshop and this area in general were supplied with water by a specially constructed clay main (8th century) coming from the sources of the Terramitsa. It went through the territory of the inner city, then the former bath complex, branched off in the northeastern corner of the “Kutatishi church”, one branch went east, towards the citadel (royal complex, brick palace, bath, etc.); The other one went down to main pillar and actually provided water to the workshop area and the big hall.

According to the researchers, the functioning of the workshop should have started after the Arab invasion (in the middle of the 8th century). Since the western border of the great wall of the inner city seems to have been destroyed at this

time, its ruins are still preserved from the inner side along the western wall along the entire perimeter.

The liquidation of the results of the fierce invasions of Murvan “Kru”(the deaf) took place at a fast pace. The rulers of the country will start the work of rebuilding the city with new enthusiasm. A new temple is being built on the site of the old basilicas (“Kutatisi Sakdari”); In the citadel, there is a royal brick palace, a bathhouse, a new water main. The fortification system was reconstructed and renovated, etc. Sh.

But the question is, were glazed ceramics made here, directly in this workshop? According to the data found in the area in front of the hall and in one of the wells, such a cautious assumption can be made. However, it can be seen from the diaries of the head of the expedition that in front of the temple, on the southern slope, in the area of Gabriel’s courtyard, since 1984, black igneous layers with limestone admixtures appeared (already at a depth of 50 m). In the same layer there were a lot of glazed ceramic fragments and sherds: blue-glazed jars with a raised heel, scratched ornamented surface; Fragments covered with different colors of glaze (green, white, yellow and black dots); A stone grinder fragment, probably part of a glaze-grinding device. Deeper in the same pit (approx. 1.5 m. depth) a fragment of a light brown-glazed, full-sized jar with yellow-green ornaments, probably from the 11th-12th centuries, was found. 1.80 m in trench No. 3 in the neighborhood. At depth, under the burnt yellow clay, a fragment of stone was found in the glaze. It is also in the burnt layer, in which there are remains of slaked lime. Probably, here too we may be dealing with the existence of an individual clay (glass) firing workshop.

In addition, in the archeology fund of the Kutaisi Historical Museum, there are preserved items representing ceramic production in the territory of Kutaisi old city at different times, namely:

Three-legged clay top stand – inv. 10130 A-842. K. castle field dairy No. 7206.88, Red-crested. There is a trace of glaze on the leg. Dimensions: height - 2.5 cm; The distance between the supports is 6 cm on average; Found: Kutaisi old city, i24 plot, 9, 10 square. (Fig. 1, a);

Wedge fragment – K. castle field dairy No. 739, red-faced. Round-horizontal sectioned. There are glaze spots on the fragment. Dimensions: dm - 4.5 cm; According to the diaries of the expedition, several units were discovered. Currently, only one piece is preserved, as well as the top stand discussed above. (Fig. 1, b);



fig. 1. Glazed pottery fragments from Kutaisi old city

Glazed stone fragments (5 units) – K.G. No. 203.08, four were found in old city of Kutaisi, one in Gelati (Fig. 1, c);

A large-sized fragment of glazed cobblestone – inv. 10130 A-842. K. castle field dairy No. 5780.87, green-blue. The surface has residues of fermentation, secondary use in wall construction. It was found: in the 8th and 12th squares of plot i2, old city, Kutaisi. (Fig. 1, d).

An important material is the grinding wheel for the preparation of glaze powder:

Glazed hand grinder's hand-held stone supply – inv. 6362 BB-896, with traces of green glaze remaining on the handle. Dimensions: height – 23 cm; The diameter of the lower part is 11 cm. (Fig. 2, a);

A fragment of the **glazed hand grinder's hand-held stone** – inv. 6362 BB-896, traces of green glaze remain. Dimensions: remaining height – 12 cm; The diameter of the lower part is 12 cm. (Fig. 2, b);



a



b



c

fig. 2. Fragments of the glazed hand grinder from Kutaisi old city

The fragment of the base of the bowl – inv. 10130 AA-842. K. castle field dairy No. 5443.86, red-faced, thick-walled, thin-bottomed. The inner side has a spot of green glaze at the base, indicating the manufacture of the glaze. In particular, production should have been developed not only in the middle ages, but also in the late middle ages. What is indicated by the thick-walled bottom lining. Dm of the base of the bowl – 10 cm; thickness of the fold – 1.2 cm; Found: Kutaisi old city, in the 2nd and 3rd squares of the M4 plot (Fig. 2, c).

The above-mentioned assumption is supported by the fact that a large number of grooved tiles - calypter - came out of the foundation of the theological school. Some of them are dark liver (brown), some with dark green glaze. Along with it, a glazed antefix was found with a Georgian inscription: "Kriste Adide"(Christ glory). According to the diaries of the head of the expedition, the a pottery kiln was found in one of the storerooms of the theological institute (on the upper side). From the stratigraphic point of view (Table 1), this workshop belonged to the third construction layer.

The above-mentioned materials found as a result of archaeological research - the remains of a ceramic workshop, a stone kiln, kilns for firing ceramics, production items, ceramic slag, and various glazed fragments are important materials for determining the history of glazed ceramics production in the territory of Kutaisi old city. Their study and analysis according to stratigraphic data allows us to assume that the workshop functioned for a long time. Basically, two periods of existence can be distinguished: VIII-IX centuries and X-XI centuries. It seems to have been destroyed during the "Great Turkism"(invasions of Ottomans) in the 80s of the 11th century. A similar workshop-enterprise is assumed at the Gelati monastery complex.

It is a pity that a more specific material has not been traced to the production site of glazed vessels. The considered collection only gives a general idea for clarifying the history of glazed ceramics in the old city area of Kutaisi. The long-term intensive life and renovations in this place have actually destroyed the old layers, which is why there are many, still unanswered questions. Restoring the production process, presenting a complete picture and establishing a chronological framework require further research and clarification using parallel materials.

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