

MINIATURE VESSELS FROM THE MEDIEVAL CITIES OF THE SOUTH ARAL SEA.

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Abstract

The article deals with the issue of miniature vessels excavated during archaeological work in the medieval settlements of the Southern Aral Sea region. The problems of their functional purpose and use in everyday life are raised. It also describes the composition of clay ceramic miniature vessels and provides a comparison by analogy with other materials from neighboring regions.

Key words: Miniature vessels, albarello, ceramic jugs, vessels, bowls, cups (braid), teapots, osmadons, bowls, bottles, chiragi lamps.

A lot has been written about miniature vessels, including ceramics, in archaeological literature. However, little significance is highlighted about ceramics for special purposes, especially about clay miniature vessels, which provide interesting information about the life and history of the peoples of the medieval Aral Sea region. In some articles it is written about them that these vessels are a cult item in others intended for jewelry or toiletry. Below we are trying to analyze some types of vessels found in archaeological excavations in the settlements of the Southern Aral Sea region. On this category of vessels, such as: albarella, ceramic jugs, vessels, bowls, cups (braid), teapots, osmadons, bowls, glass bottles, jugs, lamps, stone cauldrons, etc., are produced. One of them is called in special literatures Albarello. According to the researcher I.V. Volkov, the word "albarello" spread in Europe from the Italian language, in which it got from the Spanish navigator. The word itself is Arabic in origin, one root with the name of the measure of oil - [Volkov, 2004, p. 297], which by today's standards is 159 liters of volume. A lot has been written on the purpose of such vessels: Albarello - vessels intended for drugs, perfumery and other valuable liquids (oils, tinctures, etc.) [Koval', 2010, p. 262]. The researcher

of kashin miniature vessels of the New Saray states that albarello was used as an inkwell [Bulatov, 1969, p. 39]. The original shape of the vessels repeats a part of the bamboo trunk, which was traditionally used in the Far East as a portable container for storing medicines. Subsequently, this form began to be made from ceramics. The small size of the vessels made them easy to use. Albarello vessels traditionally had a cylindrical shape or a shape with slightly concave sides so that they could be positioned in a row on a shelf, but at the same time it was convenient and safe to take it with a hand in the middle.

It is believed that the shape of these vessels was borrowed from the East, where it imitated the individual articulations of large reeds and bamboo. In similar wooden or ceramic vessels, decorated with dark blue glaze and painting, oriental merchants imported aromatic substances, dried spices and specialties into Europe [Kube, 1923, p. 51].

According to the composition of the clay, the South Aral Sea albarells are divided into two groups: kashin and red clay. In turn, the first is also divided into two subgroups:

1-small tapering to the bottom, with an annular base. Found in the ancient settlement of Mizdakhan in the Golden Horde cultural layers, in which the diameter of the rim is 8.5 cm, the height is 15 cm, the bottom diameter is 7.5 cm, the wall thickness is 0.7-0.9 cm. with an opaque dull glaze (Fig. 1.2) ... Such vessels are found among the handicraft products of medieval Sogd in the 12th century. [Shishkina, 1986, p.140.Fig. 30.4]. The vessel has a bluish glaze, champlévé ornament, and a strip of violet-red engobe in the bottom part.

The second - high, on a circular pallet. This vessel was found in the Urgench layers of the XIII-XIV centuries. Corolla diameter 7.5 cm, height 17 cm, bottom diameter-7 cm, wall thickness 0.8-0.9 cm; the vessel on both sides was covered with turquoise glaze [Vakturskaya, 1959, p.323] (Fig.1.1). In medieval Otrar in the layers of the XIV - early XV centuries. meet albarello with black painting under turquoise glaze [Keramika..., 1991, p. 139].

For the manufacture of such vessels, white-gray dough was used as a raw material. Kashin appears in the region at the end of XII - beginning of XIII centuries. [Vakturskaya, 1958, p. 320]. In the Golden Horde period, Kashin ceramics became especially widespread and became diverse [Kdyrniyazov, 2015, p. 163].

The second group is red clay: they are also divided into two subgroups:

1. It is small, on a flat pallet. They are represented in the Mizdakhan [23] settlement on the Khorezmshah cultural layers. Covered with green glaze, the diameter of the rim is 6 cm, the wide part of the body is 7.2 cm, the diameter is 6 cm. The thickness of the walls is 0.8-1.0 cm (Fig. 1.3). On the territory of Central Asia, such glazed ceramics appeared in the 9th century. [Sayko, 1963, p.32].

2. Having a slightly convex body, on an annular base. Covered with green glaze without ornament. The diameter of the vessel is 7.8 cm, the height is 12 cm, the diameter is 8 cm. The thickness of the walls is 0.8-1.3 cm (Fig. 1.4). In the South Aral region, products with green glaze were widespread in the XII century. [Vakturskaya, 1959. p. 319]. However, the presence of such vessels in the early Muslim cultural layer of the Mizdakhan indicates that they could have appeared earlier than the indicated time [Otchet..., 2018. p.27]. The characteristic features of this vessel: for its manufacture, ferruginous, non-sandy, plastic clay was used as a raw material, in which an artificial admixture of sand was fixed. Firing of products is uniform, brick-red color. Another type of albarello, only the bottom part is preserved, it is covered outward with green glaze, and the inner space is bright green glaze, retaining the height of the vessel 4.6 cm, bottom diameter - 5.2 cm, wall thickness 0.8-1.0 cm (Fig. .1.8). In general, the vessel in morphological forms, based on the bottom part, completely coincides with the above described characteristic of albarella. Internal watering was used so that perfumery products or other valuable liquids were not poured out to the walls of the vessel.

In general terms, albarello repeats one shape. The body is cylindrical with a slight bend in the middle of its height, due to which a rib forms at the place of transition of the body to the shoulder and bottom part. In most cases, the shoulders and the bottom part take the form of a

rounded rib. The maximum diameter of the body is also located here. The throat can be cylindrical or socketed with different options for the rim. The throat height is 20-25% of the total vessel height. In the bottom part, the body can narrow towards the bottom or expand, forming a high leg. The diameters of the throat, middle of the body, and the bottom are almost equal. The decor is simple: horizontal incised lines made along the throat, stuck-on rollers, the throat can be wavy. The diameters of the throat, middle of the body, and the bottom are almost equal. The decor is simple: horizontal incised lines made along the throat, molded rollers, the throat can be wavy.

All albarellos are glazed, the color of the glaze is green with a white engobe primer. The entire outer surface was covered with glazed (up to the level of expansion in the bottom part). The inner surface was covered with watering partly, but always without engobe under the primer: they could cover only the throat, the surface to the middle of the height of the body or to the bottom. Bell-shaped throat; the inner space is completely covered with glazed, this made it possible to preserve the liquid for a long time without pushing out to the wall of the vessel.

It should be noted that albarella is not a frequent find, although in the Golden Horde layers of Shemakhakala kashin ceramics is 49.13%, Mizdakhan - 43% among glazed products [Kdyrniyazov, 2015: 163], and the share of glazed albarella is only about 0,3 or 0.4%, but still they existed in the XII-XIV centuries. South Aral settlements. The researcher Kurochkina, who wrote about the albarells of the Nizhnevolsk capitals of the Golden Horde ulus, cites as an example only 27 archaeological whole forms [Kurochkina, 2012, p.79]. This also indicates the rarity of a product of this type.

All albarellos considered in this work were found in residential or outbuildings. Albarello is a medieval vessel designed for storing and transporting expensive cosmetic and medicinal liquids. Albarello vessels, as a rule, did not have a ceramic lid, but were closed with a wooden stopper, soft rock, or closed with a piece of leather, which was tied at the neck with a rope. Under the corolla cut of the vessel simultaneously served as a thorough sling.

Another type of miniature vessels is jugs; according to the composition of the clay, they are divided into two large types: glazed and unglazed. There are two groups of watering vessels. 1. Jugs covered with green glaze down to the bottom of the outer side of the vessel, but the inner part is covered only with engobe. The vessel has a rim diameter of 6 cm, a height of 10.5 cm, a convex body of 8.5 cm, a wall thickness of 0.3-0.5 cm, a semi-circular bottom diameter of 4 cm (Fig. 1.7; Fig. 3.7).

Another type of jug in this category, also covered on both sides with green glaze. The whole archaeological vessel has a rim diameter of 5.0 cm, the wide part of the ovoid body is 8.0 cm, the flat-bottomed bottom is 5.0 cm, and the wall thickness is 0.5–0.8 cm (Fig. 1.6). The vessel is completely from the inside, and the outside is covered to the bottom part is covered with green glaze. Early variants of vessels with green glaze are associated with the Near East and date back to the 9th century. In the South Aral region, vessels with green glaze spread in the XII century, especially in the XIII-XIV centuries [Vakturskaya, 1959.p.319].

2. An unglazed red-clay jug with a bell-shaped neck retaining a height of 10.5 cm, a rim bent outward diameter of 6.5 cm, a wall thickness of 0.4-0.8 cm (Fig. 1.5; Fig. 3. 8). convex body, made of carefully elutriated clay without the addition of impurities.

Another variant of an unglazed red clay vessel is a narrow-necked jug with a high neck with a lamellar handle cut off by traces. The handle is attached at one end to the middle of the neck, the other end of the widest part of the body, the diameter of which is 8 cm. The vessel is covered with a white engobe, 11.5 cm high, the diameter of the rim bent to the side is 3.2 cm, the diameter of the flat bottom is 5 cm (Fig. 3. 4). Vessels which is similar in morphological data are found among the ceramic products of the South-West Semirechye of the 9th-10th centuries [Khudozhestvennaya..., 2011, p. 32]. and the settlement of Paikende among jugs with green glaze without handles, dating from the 10th - the very beginning of the 11th century. [Otchet...,

2006, p. 27. Fig. 82, 5]. Such vessels with narrow necks apparently served to preserve fragrant materials or important spices, and the neck was closed with wooden corks.

Among the unglazed miniature jugs, there are also gray-clay vessels. They are crafted with carefully elutriated clay. Archaeologically, the whole specimen was raised from the cultural layers of the Khorezmshah period. The vessel retained the height of 11.2 cm, the diameter of the rim slightly concave inwardly is 7 cm, the vessel has traces of a chopped off oval-rounded handle attached with one end to the middle of the neck, with the other a wide part of the body, wall thickness 0.3-0.9 cm. (fig. 3.3). It is known in ethnography that such vessels were used as storage and heating of melted oil [Peshchereva, 1959, p. 66, fig. 19. 1].

A miniature pot-shaped vessel with a lamellar handle, used primarily as a mug. The machine vessel is covered with a colorless glaze, has cobalt and green underglaze painting on white engobe. Cobalt (dark blue) ornament is applied in the form of vertical parallel lines. They divide the surface of the vessel into four ornamental belts. Inside them, there is an ornament of intertwining green plant-flower shoots. A horizontal border of cobalt dots also runs along the top of the rim. The diameter of the vessel rim is 5.4 cm, the height is 8 cm, the widest part of the body is 8.6 cm, the wall thickness is 0.3-0.5 cm, the diameter of the ring-shaped bottom is 4.2, the height of the bottom is 0.8 cm (Fig. 2.3; Fig. 3.1). The ornamental composition of the vessel is well known in the decoration of the mausoleum of Nazhmiddin Kubra (20-30s of the XIV century) and Mahmud Pakhlavan (30s of the XIV century). [Kdyrniyazov, 2007, p.30] However, it should be noted that white engobe, cobalt glaze and greenish painting were widely used in Temurid ceramics of Khorezm [Kdyrniyazov, 1989, p.70]. We know that in the medieval South Aral towns, cobalt ceramics have been widely distributed since the second half of the XIV century [Vakturskaya, 1958 p. 474-485.]. This tradition of ornamentation of vessels continues into the late medieval period of the region. Such forms of pot-shaped vessels were found in the layers of the XIII-XIV centuries in the Fergana Valley [Matbabayev, 2011, p.230, Fig. 76].

Another type of miniature vessels is teapots with a spout (jugs with a drain spout). They are not glazed, but according to their composition, the clay is divided into two categories: gray-clay and red-clay.

1. A gray-clay teapot with traces of a chopped off handle was found in the Khorezmshah cultural layers during the excavation of the Mizdakhan settlement in 2018. The vessel has a rim diameter of 1.5 cm, a height of 6.6 cm, a flat bottom diameter of 4.2 cm, a wide body part of 7.5 cm, and a wall thickness of 0.4-1.2 cm (Fig. 2.1; Fig. 3.5).

According to the purpose of the vessel, it can be stated that it was a children's toy, because terracotta figurines of animals were found in the place with it [Otchet..., 2018.p.26. See Figure 21.3.]. Similar forms of similar teapots were found in the Kultepa settlement in the layers of the 12th century [Gritsina, 2013, p.75, fig.73].

2. A red-clay teapot (jug) with a plum without a handle was also found in the cultural layers of the 11th-early 13th centuries. The bottom part has not been preserved, made of well-elutriated clay, the rim diameter is 6.6 cm, height 6.0 cm, wall thickness 0.5-0.7 cm (Fig. 2.2; Fig. 3.6). A close analogy is found among the Sogdian materials. According to the researcher, such miniature vessels were used as a children's drinking cup [Sokolovskaya, 2015, p.280. rice, 109.1]. It is true that in our case the vessel does not have handles, but this did not prevent the vessel from being used as a drinking cup for babies.

Another type of miniature vessels is ceramic mugs. It is a miniature flat-bottomed, pear-shaped mug. Its body is somewhat elongated, the middle part is swollen, sharply tapering downward. The neck is rather high, bell-shaped, without a rim. It is formed by simple bending of the walls. The bottom is flat, rounded. The height of the vessel is 8.4 cm, the diameter of the mouth is 7 cm, the diameter of the neck is 5.8 cm, the largest diameter of the body is 7.8 cm, the thickness of the walls of the upper part is 0.3-0.6 cm, at the bottom is 0.7- 0.9 cm. The neck and the lower part of the body are secured with a small lamellar handle (Fig.2.4). The vessel is molded by hand with a roughly processed piece of clay. The molding mass is poorly mixed with

abundant chamotte admixtures. The surface is trowelled before firing with liquid clay. It is campfire firing, medium. The shard in the fracture is brownish-reddish in color. The surface of the vessel is smoked [Saypov, 2016, p.67]. Judging by the soot coating, the vessel was used many times.

Another type of miniature vessels is a glazed cup (kosach), found during excavations in 2019 in the Mizdakhhan settlement, where the cultural layers belong to the Khorezmshakh periods. The diameter of the rim is 8.0 cm, it has a hemispherical rim, a semicircular bottom is 3.5 cm, the wall thickness is 0.3-0.5-0.9 cm. Made of carefully elutriated clay, covered with a yellowish engobe (Fig. 2.10.). In the southern region, such vessels were found from the Zamakhshar settlement in the layers of the 10-11th centuries [Vakturskaya, 1959, p. 298]. A close analogy can be found in among the Samanid ceramics of Maverennahr [Sokolovskaya, 2015, p.248, fig.77.23].

Osmadons are undoubtedly very interesting types of miniature vessels. In the South Aral settlements, they can be found in the form of made on a pottery machine and stucco. According to the colors of the clay, they are also divided into glazed and unglazed products.

1. glazed vessels based on kashin clay, rim diameter 6.5 cm, height 2.5 cm, wall thickness 0.6-0.8 cm. (Fig. 2.9).

2. gray-clay vessels with drainage. The rim diameter is 6.0 cm, the height is 2.4 cm, and the wall thickness is 0.4-0.8 cm (Fig. 2.5). Similar items in archaeological literature are believed to have been used as both by the Osmadons.

3. Flat-shaped red clay vessels with plums. The rim diameter is 6.0 cm, the height is 1.8 cm, the bottom diameter is 4.0 cm, the wall thickness is 0.2-0.6 cm (Fig. 2.6). the bottom part is cut off from the machine casually. He considers such vessels in special literatures to be a lamp, but they do not have traces of soot on our products.

4. Molded vessels with a convex body and a flat bottom. The rim diameter is 2.5 cm, the height is 3.8 cm, the wall thickness is 0.2-0.3 cm. (Fig. 2.7), another type of this category of vessels is the rim diameter 2.5 cm, 4.0 cm high, wall thickness 0.4-0.5 cm. (Fig. 2.8). Researchers have analyzed similar forms of such vessels as small molded toy vessels [Nerazik, 1959, p.252]. The vessels are miniature copies of large pots and jugs. Most of them belong to the 7th-8th centuries and were found in the Berkutkala oasis of the Southern Aral Sea region. However, despite this, such vessels have been used for centuries as a toilet device in this region.

Thus, all the types analyzed in our articles belong to the categories of miniature vessels, despite the small importance of vessels, they were all important tools in the everyday life of the South Aral townspeople in the medieval period. In order to make such types of vessels, potters will need careful preparation and highly qualified skills. Of course, it is very laborious work to fully analyze all types of miniature vessels of the South Aral fortifications in one condensed article, it requires a more detailed analysis. Nevertheless, miniature vessels are widely used in the everyday life of this region, as a preservation of medicines, perfumery products and other valuable liquids. It can be said that, apart from the miniature glazed vessels of the Southern Aral Sea region, most of the unglazed vessels do not have ornamental patterns. In addition, among the ceramics, miniature vessels, like other types of ceramics for special purposes, had their irreplaceable place in the use of the economic life of the medieval settlements of the Southern Aral Sea region.

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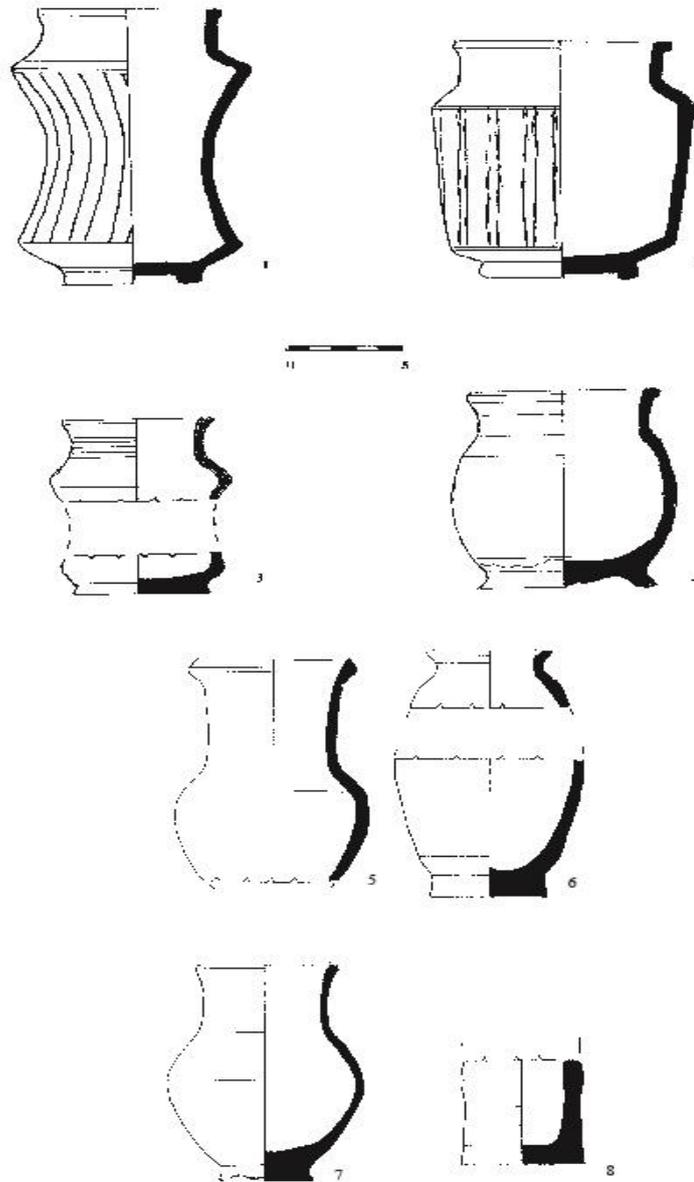


Fig. 1. Miniature vessels from the fortified settlements of the medieval South Aral Sea region: 1-2- kashin albarella; 3, 8 - red clay albarella; 4, 6 - glazed jugs; 5- red clay jug; 7- jug with green glaze.

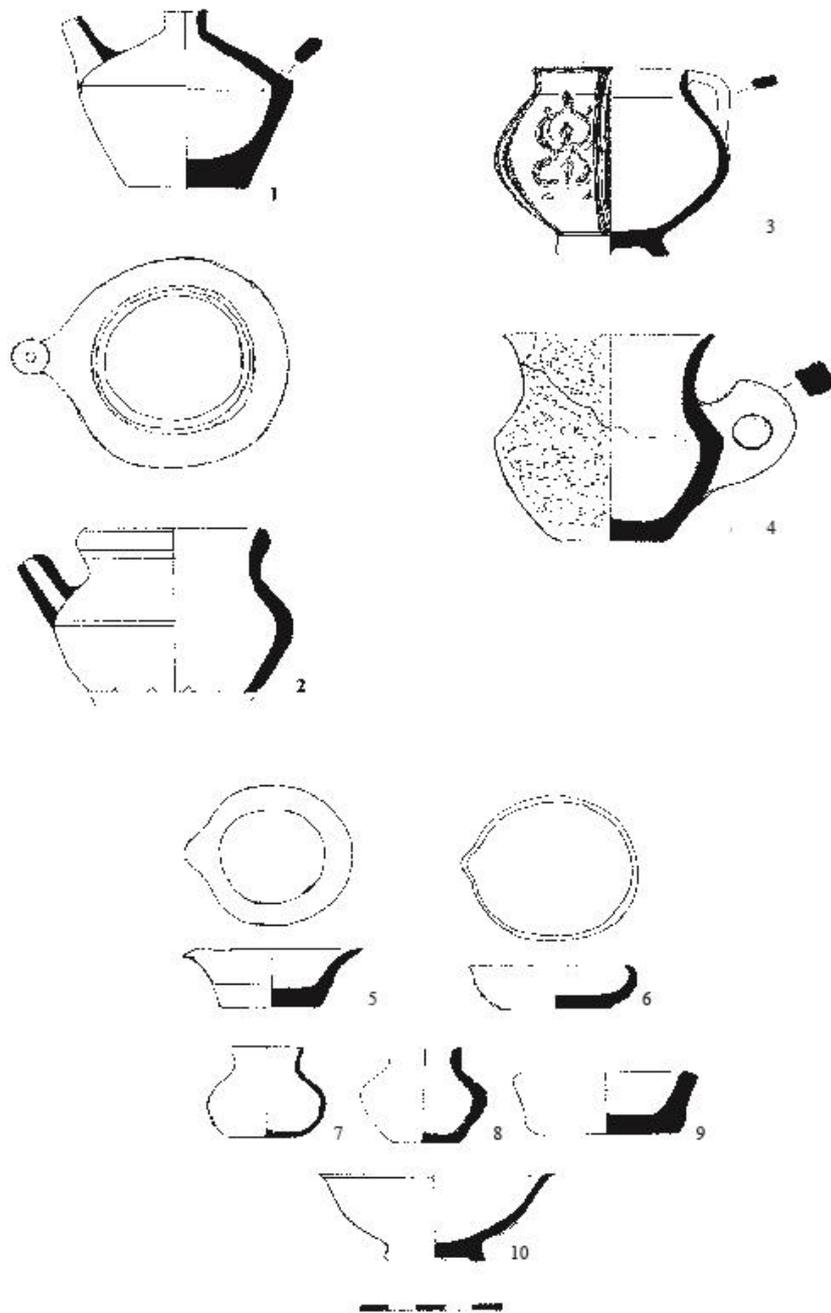


Fig. 2. Miniature vessels from ancient settlements of the medieval South Aral Sea region: 1- gray-clay teapot; 2- red clay teapot; 3.9 - kashin vessels; 4- mug; 5- gray clay vessel with drain; 6 - flat-shaped red clay vessel; 7-8 - molded vessels; 10- glazed cup.



Figure: 3. Miniature vessels from ancient settlements of the medieval South Aral Sea region: 1-kashin vessel; 2, 4, 8 - red clay jugs; 3-gray clay jug; 5- gray clay teapot; 6- red clay teapot; 7- jug with green glaze.