

VI Toretsky Settlement Excavation Study

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Abstract: The study introduces scientific use a new collection of pottery from Toretsky urban settlement (the XVth century) the cultural heritage which is studied by the researchers for the first time. Excavation VI which was founded in 2003-2004 stands out in terms of ceramic material quantity (>5400 pieces). The excavation was founded by S.I. Valiulina on the northern periphery of the settlement in order to determine the boundaries of the monument in this direction. The study revealed that the range of ancient potter product consists of the following categories: jugs, cups, pots of different sizes, bowls, lamps and spherical cone. Over 65% of ceramics is referred to “common Bulgarian” group. “Old Russian” dishes, represented mainly by pots and a few fragments of “Kama-Ural region” ceramics with a crushed shell mixture. The obtained materials based on analogy allow a preliminary dating of found objects which is the middle-second half of the XIIIth century. However, the ceramic material of the excavation VI in 2009-2011 is close to the materials of the XV century settlement main part which implies a double-sided nature of Toretsky settlement on its northern periphery.

Key words: Toretsky settlement pottery complex, Kazan Khanate, cultural continuity, excavation, determine

INTRODUCTION

The Volga region Bulgaria is a large early Feudal Medieval State in Eastern Europe that was developed at the turn of IX-X centuries. During the second half of the XIIIth century it became the part of the Golden Horde and after the Golden Horde the former lands of the Bulgarian Ulus turned into Kazan Khanate. All these states had a flourished urban life, based mainly on the achievements of crafts and trade as well as on the agriculture of the neighbouring cities population. Since Xth and till XVth century the Volga region Bulgaria is the mediator or a link in the trade with the Eastern Europe countries. During pre-Mongol period of XIth the first third of XIIIth century the capital Bilyar is a reference Bulgarian monument, the area of which made over 620 ha. When the pre-Mongol State capital faded after the Mongolian victory of 1236 the activity in his district does not cease Bilyar population continued to live in the vicinity of the destroyed city: the third Bilyar settlement (the Golden Horde Bilyar) of second half of XIIIth first half of XIV century, Balynguzsky IV settlement of XIVth century, Toretsky urban settlement of XVth century, etc. The territory of Bilyar district today has 249 monuments of X-XVth centuries: 201 unfortified settlements, 17 urban settlements, 20 cemeteries, 10 coin hoards, one sanctuary. The studied monuments reflect the continuity of Bilyarsk urban settlement occupation, since the pre-Mongol period till the Kazan Khanate period.

Nowadays the period of Kazan Khanate (1438-1552), perhaps is the least studied in the archeology of the Middle Volga region. Therefore, the excavation materials of XVth cent. Toretsky settlement studied by the Bilyar expedition of Kazan University, since 1998 under the leadership of S.I. Valiulina.

Toretsky urban settlement is located 3 km North-West of Bilyarsk urban settlement in the Alexeyevsky region of the Republic of Tatarstan. The area of the settlement makes 25 ha. The total area of study makes >4,000 m². The monument has a single layer, the cultural layer is not broken by excavations. The structures and objects are reliably dated by the numismatic material: the end of XIV-XV centuries (over 400 coins). A rich collection of clothing material is gathered >6,000 of individual finds (Valiulina, 2009).

During these years, the residential buildings, household pits, industrial complexes, graves, treasures were explored. The settlement had obviously thin construction for manors. The handicraft specialization is impressively reflected in the historical topography of the monument: the individual workshops of jewelers, coppersmiths, locksmiths were located in the Western and the central part of the settlement (excavation I, V, XI), the main crafting center of the settlement the metallurgical settlement was located in the Eastern part on the banks of Toretsky Creek. The black metal was obtained here, including cast iron and there are traces of bronze casting, the blacksmiths worked here (excavations III, IV, IX). In

the center of the settlement the XIIth excavation revealed a non-developed territory, perhaps it was a central market area or a main passage (Valiulina, 2011).

Bulk material unglazed ceramic presented by three groups "common Bulgarian" I group (70%), "Old Russian" XIV group (22%) and "Kama-Ural" region XVI group according to Khlebnikova (1984) typology (8%).

DESCRIPTION OF VI TORETSKY SETTLEMENT EXCAVATION

All excavations on the territory of the monument did not reveal any pottery hearth. However, in terms of ceramic material quantity the Excavation VI stands out. It was founded in 2003-2004 by Valiulina (2004) on the northern periphery of the settlement in order to determine the boundaries of the monument within this area.

The ceramic material of >5400 pieces was collected from the excavation VI (2003-2004) the area of which makes 60 m².

Total 269 fragments of pottery of the Ist "common Bulgarian" group originate from a cultural layer, 2 pieces of molded dishes with a mixture of crushed shells, 11 stones, 17 fragments of bricks. The 161 fragment of animal bones which belong to cattle and horses. There are also the bones of birds and fish among animal bones. There are no individual finds here. I bayonet scraping revealed the contours of three structures pit 1, 2, 3.

Pit 1 presented an abundance of ceramic material even at the first bayonet. The pit occupied the following squares: 1-2, 6-8, 10-13. Pit filling loose brown soil with an abundance of baked clay, coal, slag pieces. The pit contained a large quantity of ceramic material 5133 fragments with 70 fragments of hand-made vessels with a mixture of crushed shells-Kama-Ural dishware, 40 pieces of molded vessels with a mixture of gravel. The bulk of the ceramic material is referred to common Bulgarian red clay dishes. The ledges are identified in the southern wall of the pit. The construction bottom is blocked by a carbonaceous layer, pole hole spot in the center (its diameter makes 25 cm). Pit 1 had a depth of 16 cm. Obviously, it was a wooden structure with a columnar construction, the entrance on the south side and served as the warehouse of pottery products. The fact that the building was not living premise shows a complete lack of other things except of a large number of ceramic finds. Only a large iron needle is found among the individual findings. The head of the excavation works interpreted it as one of pottery production complex objects (Valiulina, 2005).

Pit 2 is located on the squares 3-5, 9. The pit dimensions make 80×120 cm. The pit content is loose brown soil with carbon inclusions. Mass discoveries: ceramics 70 fragments, including 1 copy of molded ware with a mixture of crushed shells, animal bones, 10 stones. Individual findings: bilateral bone comb.

Pit 3 is detected after the first bayonet along the northern wall of the excavation, near the northeast corner (square 5, 9) had an incorrect rounded shape, the size was 120×70 cm and was deepened into the northern wall of the excavation. Filling: dark brown, loose soil with the inclusions of charcoal, plastering, brick and rubble. After the second sampling the pit area was overlapped with 2-3 cm layer of coal and a layer of calcined substance (15-20 cm) with clay and crushed brick, a carbonaceous layer below up to 5 cm for the mainland bottom of the pit. A small number of finds-small fragments of pottery, animal bones.

The preliminary analysis of the clothing inventory, primarily pottery from the pit 1 allowed the excavation author to assume a more recent period of the excavation VI objects, than within the main part of the settlement. Pit 3 non-completed in 2003-2004, according to Valiulina (2005) was a part of the hearth collapse or a pit before the hearth and was the part of a production facility with the warehouse of pottery production (pit 1).

In 2004, the geophysical explorations were carried out by the employees of the Department of Geophysics Department of the Kazan University within the settlement area (head: I.I. Galyamov). Magnetometric investigations were carried out with the use of quantum magnetometer MM-60M1 within the area of 900 m² in the northern direction from the northern wall of the excavation VI. The results of research were the maps of the magnetic field stress at different levels and the maps of the magnetic field vertical gradient which revealed an anomaly to the northwest of the excavation VI, related to man-made objects (Valiulina, 2005). A potter's horn was supposed to find within this area.

To continue the studies of an assumed pottery workshop in 2009 on the North-Eastern side of the VI-2003-2004 excavation site A.R. Nuretdinova finished the excavation with the area of 16 m². After the removal of a cultural layer two pits spots were revealed: the continuation of the pit 3 and the pit 4.

Pit 3 was found after the edge parsing along the southern profile. The object is the edge of the pit 3, investigated by R. VI-2004. A small number of finds was revealed the small fragments of pottery, bark, animal bones were present mainly in the calcined layer.

Pit 4 revealed on the 17th square after the first bayonet removal. There was a column pit in the Northern part (diameter: 12 cm) with the depth of 7 cm, the second column pit depth with the diameter of 15 cm, the depth of 5 cm on the ledge. The filling: ashy loose soil with crushed clay, an array of calcined clay in the center of the pit (the collapse of the furnace). During the 1st sample kalatch like flints was revealed, the northern and the eastern part of the pit had disintegrated vessels, the fragments of bark, including a birchbark container, the small fragments of animal bones, a silver ring. After the clearing of the furnace at the bottom of the pit 4 spindles and a fragment of glazed ceramics were revealed.

Mass excavation material from VI-2009 excavation was presented by 442 pottery fragments (including 302 fragments of “common Bulgarian” group), ceramic waste (7 things), daubing (10 pieces). The ceramic material of the first bayonet is presented by jugs (11 pieces), pots (4 pieces), bowls (1 piece) of the 1st “common Bulgarian” group according to Khlebnikova (1984) typology. At least 30% of the red clay dishes are covered by glossing. According to morphological (shape, size, pattern) and process (test nature, firing) characteristics the set is close to ceramic complex from the excavation VI-1 2004 pit. This similarity is natural, since a large part of the layer is presented by ballast a former excavation bank with small fragments of pottery. The ceramics of objects showed a different picture: coarse dark brown ceramics at the rest of the settlement of the XVth century.

In addition to the alleged production complex a very small amount of ceramics is found in the pits: Pit 3-11 fr., Pit 4-146 fr. The material of the objects differs by test nature, firing, the form of pottery from the first bayonet. Both pits have a significant proportion of modeled ceramics. It should be noted the presence of the Group XIV Old Russian one which is found everywhere in the central excavations.

The revealed thermotechnical structure represents a household furnace under a shed. A small area of the excavation does not answer the question about the availability of ceramic craft complex in this part of the monument and the ratio of XIIIth cent. objects (Pit 1 R.VI-2004) with the main area of Toretsky settlement (XVth century).

The results of the geophysical study did not show any other anthropogenic anomalies within this area. So the works continued in a southern direction from the excavation VI-2003-2004.

In 2010 and 2011 two excavations (of 40 and 60 m², respectively) were founded to the South. The performed

research did not reveal any production facilities. Two pits of economic purpose were revealed: pit 5 and 6. Both pits revealed a small amount of pottery, small bone fragments. By nature the ceramic material from excavations is close to the materials from the main part of the XVth century settlement.

DESCRIPTION OF THINGS

We noted and processed 1608 ceramic fragments, including 105 fr. of “Old Russian” ceramics and 10 fr. with a mixture of crushed shells “Kama-Ural” ceramics.

Group I: These are one-handed pitchers (Fig. 1). Whole forms were not revealed. A characteristic feature is the presence of a single flattened oval in a cross-section handle, C-shaped or L-shaped in profile. The collar is thickened outside. the edge is rounded. The vessel surface is always polished. From a functional point of view the vessels are dining ones, the largest could be used for carrying and storing water and other liquids (Kochkina, 1986).

- Subgroup I.1 (Fig. 1e): Large pitchers 4 fr. with wide neck (collar diameter = 11-12.3 cm). Whole pitchers were not revealed
- Subgroup I.2 (Fig. 1f): Large pitchers 3 fr. with a wide neck (collar diameter = 11.6-12.5 cm with drain = 13.5-14.5 cm). There is a handle on the opposite side of the collar drawn with a finger. Whole pitchers were not revealed

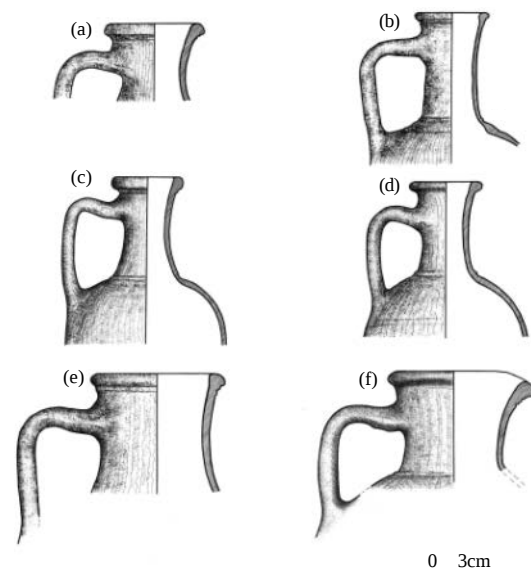


Fig. 1: Pitchers

- Subgroup I.3 (Fig. 1a-d): Medium pitchers 21 pieces with a narrow neck (collar diameter = 6.45-7.5 cm, neck diameter = 4.6-5.7 cm). The profile line of the neck is slightly concave, slightly widens towards the base of the neck. The transition to the body is smooth. It is often shown in relief. The diameter of the bottom = 9.5-12.5 cm. Whole pitchers were not revealed. Toretsky pitchers are close to the materials of Gorkinsky VIII settlement, dated by XIIIth century (Valiulina, 2009)
- Subgroup I.4: Small jars 2 pieces (Bottom diameter = 4.2-4.5 cm). The absence of whole forms makes the reconstruction of vessels complicated

Group II: This group includes four smaller vessels and average proportions (cups), whose height is less than or equal to the diameter of the body (collar diameter = 8 cm, body diameter = 13 cm) (Fig. 2e-g). The vessels have the combination of distinct wide mouth and the flattened contours of a body. There are no whole vessels. The vessel surface is always polished. The vessels are functionally dining ones and are intended probably for personal use (Kochkina, 1986).

Group III: Khum (10 pieces). This group consisted of broad proportion vessels (Fig. 3a, c, d). They have a clearly expressed short wide neck (collar diameter = 19-23 cm). The vessel surface is polished carefully. A linear and (or) a wavy pattern was usually applied on shoulders. Whole vessels were not discovered.

Group IV: Group IV is presented by pot like vessels. There are 12 such vessels.

- The subgroup IV.1 (Fig. 3b): this subgroup includes the vessels with a clear short neck (collar diameter = 17-18 cm). Some vessels have handles. The vessel surface is carefully polished. The shoulders are usually covered with a multi row incised ornament made of waves and horizontal lines. The whole vessels were not discovered
- Subgroup IV.2 (Fig. 2a-d); Small pots 9 pieces (Collar diameter = 7-8 cm). The absence of whole vessels complicates their reconstruction

Group 5: This group includes the wide open vessels-bowls (26 pieces) (Fig. 4). The collar

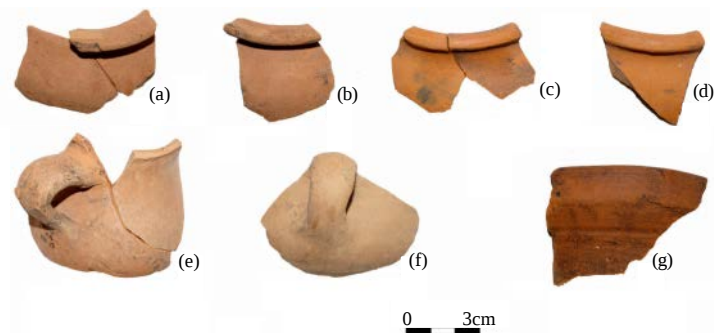


Fig. 2: Small pots (a-d) and cups (e-g)

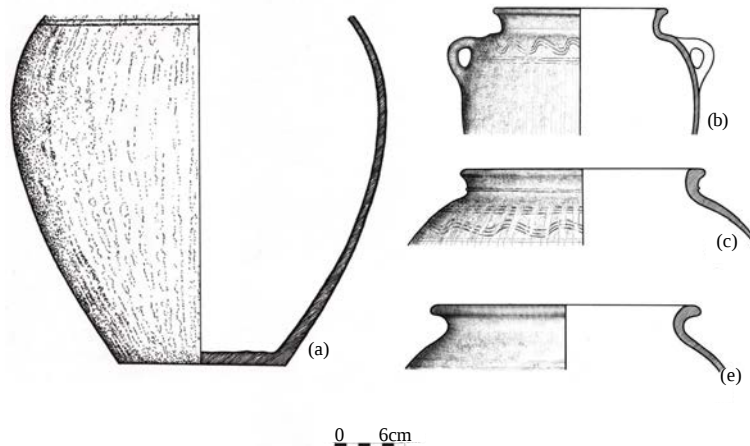


Fig. 3: Pots

diameter = 135-280 cm. Whole vessels were not discovered. The location of a body inflection is stressed by edge sometimes. The collars are thickened and rounded or pointed on both sides, the edge is a convex one. The vessel surfaces are sometimes coated with glossing. The bowls were applied as household utensils.

Group VI: It has lamps (5 pieces) which are small and shallow wide bowls with a short edge smoothly curved inside, the collar is a rounded one or slightly pointed (Fig. 5e, f). The peculiarity of these vessels is the spout for a wick and a short, often hook-shaped handle located on the opposite side of the spout. One lamp has a broken off handle, the other one is fragmented. Another three copies are in a very fragmented state with the traces of soot. The body diameter makes 135-280 cm. As many forms have been found. The bowls were used as household utensils. Whole vessels were not discovered.

Among the major described above single excavated vessels in single copies a spherical cone, Toovak a pot, a boiler, a moulded are presented.

The spheroconical vessel is represented by a top part fragment (the cap diameter = 3 cm). The vessel is deformed, has a brown crock (Fig. 5g). The brown spheroconical vessels are widely known in the early Bulgarian trade and craft settlements of Xth-XIth centuries: Bilyarskoe II, Izmerskoe I and I Semenovskoe Villages.

One fragment of collar with a horizontal loop-handle rising above the edge of the collar belonged to a clay boiler with a collar diameter of 31 cm (Fig. 5d). The vessel dough is yellow has a poor firing with large inclusions of grog. The vessel had two handles, the mounting method of which resembles the mounting copper boiler handles. These clay pots were found at the VIIth excavation of pre-Mongol Murom town (Matveeva, 1975) and in the suburban settlement Nastasino (Koval, 2004). This form is presented more often in the pre-Mongol Derbent layer (Valiulina, 2004).

We should also note the presence of “ancient Russian” dishes, presented by pots (Fig. 5a-c) and 10 fragments of “Kama-Ural” ceramics with a mixture of crushed shell. At that “Kama-Ural” ceramics demonstrated by the XVIth group at Excavation VI which is not customary for the monument according to Khlebnikova (1988) typology and by the VIIth group with a rope ornament. The samples of this group are found in pre-Mongolian layers of Bulgaria and during the Golden Horde period.

SUMMARY

The field studies of Toretzky northern edge of the urban settlement aimed to establish the boundary of

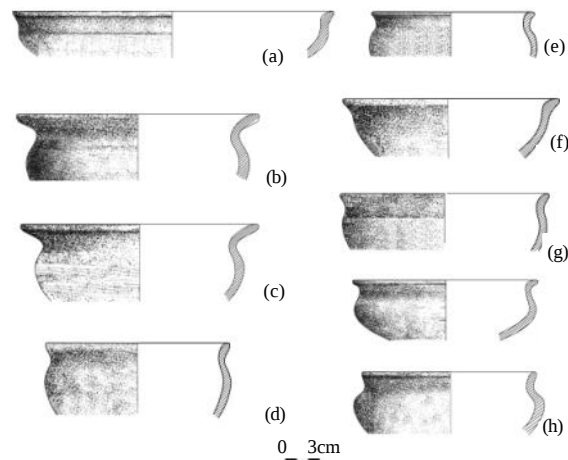


Fig. 4: Bowls

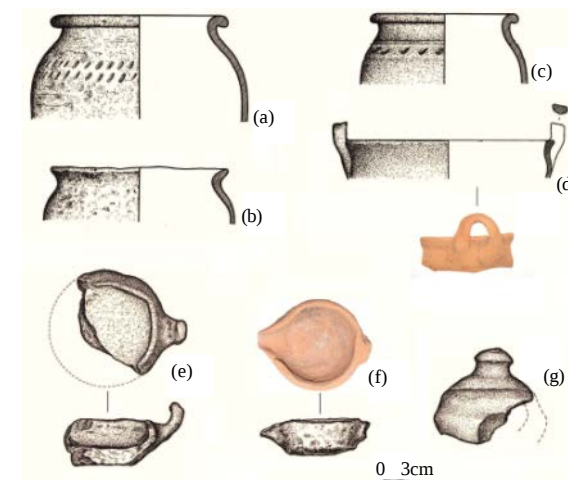


Fig. 5: “Ancient Russian” pots (a-c), boiler (d), lamps (e, f), spherical cone vessel (g)

the monument in the area, led to the following results: first of all the boundary of the monument should be pushed further to the north and it has to be designated and secondly the area of the VIth excavation has the traces of industrial objects corresponding to pottery. This specificity is presented by the amount of ceramic material (the waste of utensils which was not used), the absence of residential facilities and a very rare household clothing material obtained after excavations. In these circumstances, the main source burden is executed by a pottery set from the excavation. The materials obtained on the basis of analogy, primarily of adjacent sites Bilyarsk settlement and Gorkinsky VIIIth Village allow to date preliminary the identified objects by middle second half of the XIIIth century Which implies a double-sided nature of Toretzky settlement at its northern periphery.

CONCLUSION

The ceramic set considered in the article is similar to the materials of the second half of the XIIIth century according to their form and the method of vessel ornamentation. Apparently, pit 1 is the warehouse of pottery products. We may assume that there is a potter furnace somewhere nearby, which has not been detected yet. However, one issue remains unclear: what monument this object represents? The need for further research on the North-Eastern periphery of the monument is evident. Further works should contribute to the understanding of the settlement development dynamics of Bilyar area from a historical perspective till the Kazan Khanate period.

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