

TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. Tourism industry. Development of modern international tourism infrastructure in our country that meets world quality standards. Main areas of development of the historical and cultural system, potential and key factors of tourism development in Uzbekistan. Additionally, the handicraft sector's role in tourism development in Uzbekistan. Current and historical analysis of handicraft tourism in the Fergana Valley.

Keywords: Handicrafts, "Uzbektourism," tourism culture, hotels, travel agencies, tourists, UNT, enterprises, ceramics, world tourism.

In the context of global globalization, tourism has become one of the important social, economic, and cultural factors. The total revenue in this sector of the economy amounts to trillions of dollars, and more than a billion people travel around the world every year. Currently, this sphere is developing rapidly in Uzbekistan. During the years of independence, regulatory documents were adopted by the government to modernize the industry. The promising development of this sphere continues today. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Republic of Uzbekistan has been included in the list of top 10 countries with rapidly developing tourism sectors. From this, we can see that large-scale work is being carried out in the Republic of Uzbekistan to develop the tourism sector.

After the Republic of Uzbekistan gained independence, the national tourism services market began to take shape. The Law on Foreign Economic Activity, adopted in the early years of independence, created new opportunities for enterprises selling tourist services. Attention was focused on issues such as forming a new management system in this sector, creating additional types of businesses that support tourism operations, organizing banking, audit, and consulting services for the industry, promoting tourism products internationally, and licensing privatized tourism enterprises. In turn, during the initial years of independence, several processes that were simultaneously crucial for the tourism sector were identified:

- The decline of enterprises and organizations from the old system (excursion bureaus, travel bureaus), which became uncompetitive with modern services in terms of their structure and type of activity;
- The establishment of new organizations as tour operators and travel agents;
- The development of tourism products in demand by both Uzbek and foreign consumers through the revitalization of former tourism enterprises.

To accelerate the development of the tourism sector in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the National Company "Uzbektourism" was established in 1992. This company began carrying out all organizational, managerial, and coordination work in the Republic. A year later, the company became a member of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This, in turn, became an important factor in the development of international tourism. In 1994, at the initiative of UNESCO and the government of Uzbekistan, the Samarkand Declaration on the Development of International Tourism in the Cities of the Great Silk Road was adopted in Samarkand. All these reforms contributed to the rapid development of the tourism sector in Uzbekistan. Craftsmanship became more differentiated as it became more deeply integrated into commodity-money relations. Through initial capital accumulation, resourceful and active artisans became capital owners, and small factories and plants emerged based on their workshops, where impoverished artisans began to work for wages. Consequently, the development of crafts led to the emergence of a capitalist form of market economy. Crafts also contributed to industrial development in European cities. Weaving looms were improved, and the appearance of blast furnaces in Germany in the mid-14th century led to significant changes in metallurgy. In the 14th-15th centuries, firearms production began. Capitalist production relations hindered the further development of crafts, and many branches of craftsmanship declined. As a result of the industrial revolution, factory products began to be mass-produced quickly and cheaply, displacing handicraft products from the market.

In developed countries, only handicraft sectors that produce custom orders and valuable artistic items (such as tailoring, shoemaking, carpet weaving, jewelry making, woodcarving, and others) have been preserved. At the beginning of the 20th century, with the widespread implementation of mechanized production, the variety and volume of handicraft products sharply decreased. Although large-scale industrial production became established throughout the 20th century and by the beginning of the 21st century, the significance of craftsmanship has been maintained. Due to the small market segment of handicrafts, there is a niche for

individualized demand that large-scale production cannot occupy. The emergence of mini-technology allows for individual and high-quality production of goods in handicrafts. This includes the production and servicing of national costumes, traditional musical instruments, small tools, and various commemorative items. Modern handicrafts consist of individual labor activities within small businesses and family enterprises.

In the territory of Uzbekistan, as early as the Neolithic period, pottery production and weaving emerged as the first significant branches of craftsmanship (exemplified by the Kaltaminor culture in the Khorezm oasis, Sopollitepa in the Surkhandarya region, and others). From the 2nd century BC, the Great Silk Road played a crucial role in the trade of handicraft products. In the Middle Ages, goods produced in Eastern countries (such as steel in the Arab Caliphate, silk, porcelain, and paper in Central Asia and India) were highly valued in European markets. In India, fine cotton fabrics were developed, while in China, silk weaving looms were invented. Additionally, glassmaking technology continued to advance in both China and Central Asia.

In the 9th-10th centuries, major craft centers emerged in Central Asia. The production of cotton fabrics, carpets (Urgench, Shash), silk (Merv), weapons and knives from copper and iron (Fergana), silk fabrics, and glass products (Bukhara) flourished. In the 13th century, the Mongol invasion dealt a blow to the development of crafts. The rise of the Timurid state had a very positive impact on the development of craftsmanship. All types of crafts in Central Asia persisted until the 1920s. Crafts played a significant role in the production relations of cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Kokand, Khiva, and Tashkent. In the 1860s, 27 types of crafts were developed in Khiva, with 556 artisan shops in the city's markets. By the 1880s, 2,528 households in the city were engaged in crafts. Craftsmanship in Uzbekistan was highly specialized and encompassed various professions. For example, in leather processing, there were tanners, bootmakers, makers of traditional leather shoes, cobblers, saddlers, hat makers, furriers, and belt makers. In the textile industry, there were cotton weavers, atlas (silk) makers, carpet makers, mat makers, and felt makers. In metalworking, there were blacksmiths, horseshoers, coppersmiths, locksmiths, and jewelers. These professions defined the sectoral structure of craftsmanship. As in Muslim workshops in the East, women in Uzbekistan engaged in sewing and embroidery at home. The social structure of crafts included categories such as master, apprentice, and student. The internal order and rules of craftsmanship were defined by the "Risola" (Treatise) as its charter. Each profession had its own guide, or pir, and "Risola,"

following customs and traditions passed down through generations. For example, before starting work, a craftsman would remember his pir, ask for his help, and give a blessing to his apprentice. After Uzbekistan became a Russian colony, crafts faced competition from the metropolitan industry and lost their former status. However, many branches of crafts persisted as they continued to produce goods that satisfied local needs, such as clothing, dishes, various household items, and small tools, supplying them to the local market. Imported raw materials, materials, and small equipment played a crucial role in ensuring the viability of crafts. For instance, using leather dyes imported from the USA, tanners began to produce thin leather called amirkon. Consequently, amirkon boots, leather socks, and shoes appeared. With the arrival of sewing machines from the German company "Singer," sewing (tailoring) became widespread.

With the establishment of Soviet power in the 1920s, the majority of artisans were initially incorporated into artels, and later into factories, plants, and artistic goods enterprises. The state began supplying them with raw materials, equipment, and tools, while the products they created were sold through shops and consumer cooperatives. Talented artisans were admitted to creative organizations, and decorative applied arts were developed. For example, in the 1930s, an educational and production combine was established in Tashkent, where young artisans received training. In 1968, a school workshop for engravers was established in Bukhara, and in 1978, a school workshop for woodcarving was founded in Kokand.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M.Mirziyoyev emphasized the need to strengthen tourism with specific measures to promote our cultural values and replenish foreign currency reserves. Currently, preserving national crafts and folk applied arts plays a crucial role in tourism development. This is because industrial products are a factor that negatively impacts the activities of local artisans. To safeguard national crafts and maintain their continuity, it is necessary, first and foremost, to develop tourism. Only then can we preserve and further develop our long-standing cultural heritage traditions. The main goal of developing handicraft tourism is to preserve national crafts as a tourism resource for the benefit of future generations.

The role of education in the development of handicrafts is paramount. Each type of craft requires specific techniques and knowledge. Therefore, in many countries, crafts are also considered a subject taught through schools and colleges. This learning process is not limited to teaching a craft, but also encompasses aspects such as creativity, design, and understanding of historical and cultural heritage. Craft schools, workshops, and art schools encourage young

people to develop their craftsmanship. In this system, students acquire not only practical knowledge but also unlock their creative potential. Several countries organize special seminars, training sessions, and international fairs to promote the study of crafts and increase interest in them. In countries like Uzbekistan, special programs have been developed to teach national craft traditions to the younger generation. Crafts, due to their historical and cultural significance, are an important means of preserving a people's heritage. Many ancient arts, including textiles, jewelry, ceramics, woodcarving, and others, continue to receive great attention today. These fields not only have practical significance but also reflect historical processes.

One of the crucial aspects of preserving cultural heritage is ensuring its transmission from generation to generation. Several international organizations, such as UNESCO, are paying great attention to the preservation of craftsmanship as cultural heritage. In this process, studying ancient crafts, reviving them, and adapting them to the modern era are of paramount importance. For instance, we can cite the handicraft schools and workshops located in the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand in Uzbekistan. These places, with their historical significance and artisanal craftsmanship, are attracting tourists not only from within the country but also from around the world. Consequently, craftsmanship has become an effective means of preserving not only economic benefits but also cultural riches.

The process of globalization has led to the integration of cultures and economies on a global scale. In this process, craftsmanship not only provides opportunities to enter new markets but also helps develop connections between global cultures. Handicraft products are sold not only in local markets but also in the international market. However, the process of globalization also poses threats to local craftsmanship. Large-scale industrial production and mass manufacturing may risk completely replacing traditional handicraft products. Therefore, protecting traditional forms of craftsmanship, further improving them, and passing them on to future generations remains the responsibility of every society. Today, the concept of sustainable development is expanding worldwide. Craftsmanship is considered one of the important components in this regard. Many artisans use natural materials and environmentally friendly production techniques. This can be not only ecologically beneficial but also economically efficient. For example, craftsmen produce their products using recyclable materials, natural dyes, and resources. Thus, handicrafts are not only a demonstration of art and labor but also an effective way to contribute to environmental sustainability. The social significance of

handicrafts is also substantial. This sector remains an important economic activity for the population, especially in rural and remote areas. Handicrafts also provide social support for women, youth, and people with disabilities. Craftsmanship is one of the oldest and most developed fields of human activity. It has become an integral part not only of art and economics but also of culture, education, ecology, and social development. The development and preservation of handicrafts, their adaptation to modern requirements, serve to preserve the cultural heritage of the people and increase social well-being. This field remains important not only as a part of national culture but also as a component of global culture. A number of programs and projects are aimed at developing handicrafts, especially in rural areas, with the goal of improving the standard of living of the population and creating new jobs. This serves to ensure not only economic but also social stability.

The Fergana Valley is one of the most ancient and culturally rich regions of Uzbekistan. This area is renowned for its natural beauty, historical monuments, and especially its craftsmanship traditions. The Fergana Valley showcases its uniqueness particularly in textiles, ceramics, jewelry, and other forms of craftsmanship. Artisanal skills in this region have been developing for centuries and have not lost their historical, cultural, and economic significance even today. The Fergana Valley, as one of the intersections of ancient trade routes, has been a region that united different cultures and peoples, providing highly favorable conditions for the development of crafts. This area is famous for its rich natural resources, including materials such as cotton, wool for carpets, wood, and metal. The formation of craftsmanship in the Fergana Valley developed especially through connections with centers such as Khiva, Bukhara, and Samarkand. The crafts of the Fergana Valley are particularly widespread in textiles, carpet weaving, ceramics, and various other handicrafts. The artisans of the Fergana Valley have created objects that are recognized not only for their practicality but also as works of art. Their products are renowned for their high-quality workmanship and unique designs.

We can list the following as traditional crafts of the Fergana Valley:

***Textiles.** The Fergana Valley is considered one of the most highly developed regions in the textile industry. This region is famous for its unique traditional textile products, especially atlas, adras, and other types of fabrics. Fergana textiles stand out for their colorful patterns and high-quality materials. These fabrics are mainly used in the production of dresses, atlas cloths, tablecloths, pillows, and other items. The primary material used in the Fergana Valley's textile industry is cotton. The process of weaving cotton fabric has become an

inseparable part of national craftsmanship. Fabrics such as atlas and adras are valued not only for their practical use but also for their aesthetic appeal, reflecting the cultural heritage of this region.

***Carpet.** Weaving The Fergana Valley is also renowned for its carpet-making traditions. In Fergana, hand-woven carpets, in particular, are of exceptionally high quality and are adorned with various colors and patterns. Fergana carpets are famous for their unique designs, each reflecting its own national and cultural characteristics. These carpets are highly valued not only in the domestic market but also internationally. The art of carpet weaving has developed in the villages of the Fergana Valley, especially in the cities of Anhor, Kokand, and others. Artisans continue this tradition, passing down their craft from generation to generation. Fergana carpets are typically woven from cotton threads and embellished with distinctive patterns and imagery.

***Jewelry.** Jewelry making is also one of the significant crafts in the Fergana Valley. Over the centuries, Fergana's jewelers have created numerous unique and exquisite jewelry pieces. These items are usually crafted from silver, gold, and other precious metals, taking various forms such as necklaces, bracelets, pendants, rings, and more. Fergana's jewelry art is distinguished by its intricate patterns and designs. The jewelry pieces possess not only aesthetic beauty but also cultural significance, with each item carrying its own history, meaning, and symbolism. These ornaments are often used in various ceremonies and festive occasions.

***Ceramics.** The ceramic art of the Fergana Valley has a very ancient and rich history. Ceramic products are particularly used in the production of dishes, teapots, vases, and various other practical items. Great attention is paid not only to the quality but also to the aesthetic aspects of ceramic products made in Fergana. These items are often decorated with colorful paints and patterns. Fergana ceramic art is enriched with numerous traditional forms and patterns, with each item having its own unique design and shape. These ceramic products are primarily handcrafted and are distinguished by their high-quality materials and beautiful decorations.

Craftsmanship in the Fergana Valley holds great importance not only culturally but also economically. Handicrafts are one of the primary activities, especially for small and medium-sized businesses. Artisans in Fergana sell their products not only in the domestic market but also in international markets. As a result, new jobs are being created in the handicraft sector,

and the well-being of the population is improving. Products from the Fergana Valley's handicraft industry, particularly in textiles, carpets, ceramics, and jewelry, are exported to various countries. This, in turn, contributes to the development of the Fergana Valley's economy and ensures the economic stability of the region. The traditions of craftsmanship in the Fergana Valley play a crucial role in preserving not only economic but also cultural heritage. These types of crafts, with their rich historical and cultural significance, help maintain the uniqueness of the Fergana Valley. Each handcrafted product reflects the history, culture, and traditions of this region. In this way, the craftsmanship of the Fergana Valley serves not only as a practical endeavor but also as a preserver of art and culture.

Conclusion. Currently, the tourism sector in the Republic of Uzbekistan is developing rapidly. We need to further develop the areas of craftsmanship that the population is engaged in, which have been passed down from ancestors to descendants for centuries. The Fergana Valley, with its craft traditions and historical heritage, is of great importance not only for the culture of Uzbekistan but also for the whole world. Various types of crafts - textiles, carpet-making, ceramics, and jewelry - demonstrate the uniqueness and cultural richness of the Fergana Valley. Artisans in this region continue to create products that stand out not only as practical items but also as works of art.

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