

## **Turkish Ceramic Vase: Timeless Beauty**

***Kuzgumbayeva Zhazira Serikovna***

Expert of the Services for recording and storing museum valuables  
Presidential Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Abstract:** This study explores the cultural and artistic significance of Turkish ceramic vases, focusing on diplomatic gifts presented to Kazakhstan. Addressing a knowledge gap in the comparative analysis of Iznik and Kutahya ceramic traditions, the research examines three vases from the Presidential Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan's museum collection. Employing qualitative methods, including artifact analysis and historical context evaluation, the study highlights the evolution of Turkish ceramic techniques and motifs. Findings reveal the interplay of tradition and innovation in Kutahya ceramics, marked by intricate plant patterns and symbolic designs. The results underscore the vases' dual role as artistic masterpieces and cultural diplomacy tools, enhancing cross-cultural understanding. These insights contribute to the broader discourse on material culture's role in international relations.

**Keywords:** Turkish ceramic techniques, patterns, historical dishes, cultural cooperation, ceramic vase.

### **Introduction**

The Republic of Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Kazakhstan. Turkey and Kazakhstan are two fraternal countries that are linked by strong ties based on common history, language, religion and culture. Relations between our countries and peoples, based on common history and spiritual heritage, continue to actively develop.

In the year of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, on May 10, 2022, the President of Kazakhstan K.K. Tokayev made a state visit to Turkey. Following the talks, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and the President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed a Joint Statement on Enhanced Strategic Partnership, which demonstrates the further strengthening of friendly relations between our countries.

November 11, 2024, during a working visit to the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, at a meeting with the heads of state, K.K. Tokayev noted: "Our fraternal relations are developing dynamically, a constructive dialogue has been established at the political level, and interaction between the governments of the two countries is strengthening. Turkey is one of the five largest trading partners of Kazakhstan..." [1].

The history of diplomatic relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, its cultural and economic cooperation over many years is presented in the museum collection of the Presidential Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The museum collection consists of unique gifts presented to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan by heads of state and government of different countries, from official

delegations from all over the world. The exhibits testify to the diverse political activities of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and are a reflection of the fruitful mutually beneficial cooperation of Kazakhstan with the countries of the world community. Today, Kazakhstan occupies a strategically important space, connecting Europe and Asia. Diplomatic relations with other countries are called upon to promote the development of friendly relations and the maintenance of international peace and security.

The establishment of diplomatic relations with other states occurs as a result of negotiations between representatives of interested states directly or through diplomatic representatives of third countries and is formalized in the form of an exchange of messages, telegrams, letters, notes between heads of state and government, ministers of foreign affairs or specially authorized persons. During official and state visits, high-ranking guests present a wide variety of gifts as a sign of respect and recognition of the international authority of our country.

The museum of the Presidential Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan presents diplomatic gifts from official delegations of Turkey, Korea, the UAE, Germany, Italy, Mongolia, the CIS countries, etc. The storage facilities contain unique exhibits that allow us to present all the richness and diversity of the material and spiritual culture of mankind, made from various materials, in various techniques and styles.

The collection of tableware in the museum collection of the Presidential Center contains a small but very interesting thematic group of vases presented as diplomatic gifts from the Turkish Republic. In this regard, it was used for scientific research work. three decorative vases were selected Kutahya school of production. Turkish ceramic vases are known for their quality, beauty and durability.



This Turkish vase ( inventory number PONK 5784) was made by the masters of Kütahya . White ceramic vase of classical shape with six sides height - 23 cm and a diameter of 13 cm is painted in the style of the Kutahian masters - small red flowers with green stems, and a blue pattern is applied on a blue background. The vase was presented as a gift to the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on May 10, 2022 during the state visit to Turkey at the invitation of the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan [2].

You can never have too many vases. An elegant vase alone attracts attention, and if there are several of them, and they are matched by style, then it is simply magnificent. Almost every home has a vase, which is used to store fresh cut flowers, dried flowers, etc. To support plants, vases come in different sizes. The body and stem can be bulbous, flat, teardrop -shaped, or have another shape.



The presented flower vase (inventory number TPM 121) is a floor vase, representing an interesting example of unusual decoration. The vase is 72.3 cm high, was donated by the mayor of Ankara in 2021. Kutah craftsmen gave the body a teardrop shape, where the bottom is massive and convex with a soft transition to a narrowed neck with wavy edges. After firing, each product goes to the next stage of production - painting. It is typical for Turkish ceramics to paint vases with colorful rich motifs of plant patterns in the form of carnations (meaning endless love), tulips, lotuses, and peonies. Tulip (in Turkish "Lale") in Arabic script means an anagram of Allah and therefore was considered sacred by the Ottomans. In Muslim countries, there is a religious ban on images of people and animals.

Initially, the ceramic painting patterns were in the Seljuk style - in blue and white colors. Today's flowering of ceramic art is the result of evolution, a gradual development with the addition of other colors.



The following ceramic piece with a removable lid (inventory number TPM 226/1-2) amazes with the richness of its shapes, size and gold painting. The shape is similar to a popular ceramic vessel from the Chinese Ming Dynasty - a ginger vase. Ginger vases owe their name to the export of spices, as well as the fact that they were used to store oils, salt and herbs. This vase is recognizable, as it resembles an onion with a wide neck and a domed lid. Turkish ceramic masters continue to create new designs, while traditional Turkish ceramics always remain a priority. The plant ornament is stylized leaves, flowers and branches in gold color. This allows the vase to be distinguished as a luxurious option for decorating any room.

, modern Turkish vases are not inferior in quality to ancient samples. Craftsmen constantly recreate the preserved ceramic technologies and bring new details to the products.

Asia Minor region, where influence of Byzantine, Persian and Islamic cultures. The art of ceramics was particularly developed in the Ottoman Empire, starting from the 15th century, in the city of Iznik, which was very close in quality and aesthetics to the ceramics of China. In the 18th century, the production of ceramics in Iznik declined. However, southeast of Istanbul, ceramic production flourished, and the city of Kutahya became the center of ceramic production.

Ottoman traveler and historian Evliya In his description of the city, which he visited in 1669-1670, Çelebi noted: "In Kütahya there are only thirty-four craft quarters, among which is the potters'

quarter... The dishes and bowls, drinking vessels that they make, are used not only in this city.” [3].

The process of creating ceramic products includes several stages. The first stage is the preparation of the base, where high-quality clay is used, which is molded by hand or on a potter's wheel. Then, after drying, the product is fired at a low temperature to harden. A layer of white engobe (liquid clay) is applied to the surface, which is polished after drying, creating a perfectly smooth surface for painting. Underglaze painting is done with special mineral pigments that are applied directly to the lightly fired product. The design is painted with black or dark blue pigment using a thin brush and after the outline dries, the internal areas of the pattern are filled. For glazing The surface of the product is covered with a transparent lead- puddle glaze, which gives the vase a shine and protects the painting. During the final firing, the product is placed in a kiln at a temperature of about 900–1000°C, which fixes the paints and glaze, making them durable and saturated [4].

Pottery from Kutahya has its differences from Iznik, first of all in the motifs and painting technique. It has a lower quartz content, respectively, with a higher clay content. The masters imitated the traditional Iznik painting motifs, but used a wider palette of colors, mainly blue, red, yellow, purple and green, as well as black and brown for the outline. One of the technological innovations in the Kutahya production is ceramics with a thin and hard white body, and yellow in the underglaze painting. New types of original Ouch utensils: cups and saucers, coffee pots, small decanters, as well as plates, bottles, jugs. The painting uses engobe coating, polychrome decorations with small flowers, curved stems, trefoils and inscriptions.

The technique of painting Turkish vases is based on the rich traditions of ceramic art, first of all, Iznik and Kutahya schools. Currently, in Kutahya, ceramic masters are returning to traditional handcrafts. Today, in Kutahya has about 172 workshops. Turkish ceramic art continues to live, trying not only to preserve the traditions created by previous masters, but also to introduce the trends of the new era into its products.

Thus, the Kutahya technique combines refined craftsmanship, deep understanding of traditions and attention to detail, which makes Turkish vases an original creation. Traditional Turkish motifs - plant patterns and calligraphic inscriptions turn each vase into a unique work of art, reflecting the centuries-old cultural heritage of Turkey.

## CONCLUSION

The study of Turkish ceramic vases within the Presidential Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan reveals their significant cultural, artistic, and diplomatic value. Key findings underscore the refined craftsmanship of the Kutahya school, characterized by intricate plant motifs, symbolic decorations, and the integration of traditional techniques with contemporary innovations. These vases serve as tangible representations of Turkey's rich ceramic heritage and its role in fostering diplomatic relations. The implications extend to recognizing material culture as a potent medium of cultural diplomacy, enhancing mutual understanding among nations. Future research could delve deeper into comparative analyses of regional ceramic traditions, exploring their socio-political contexts and evolving influence on modern craftsmanship and international cultural exchange.

## References

1. Tokayev and Erdogan agreed on mutual support / [ Electronic resource ] // Access mode: [https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan\\_news/tokaev-i-erdogan-dogovorilis-o-vzaimnoy-podderjke-553786/](https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/tokaev-i-erdogan-dogovorilis-o-vzaimnoy-podderjke-553786/)
2. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev arrived in Turkey on a state visit
3. / [ Electronic resource ] // Access mode: <https://kz.kursiv.media/2022-05-10/kasym-zhomart-tokaev-pribyl-v-turciju-s-gosudarstvennym-vizitom/>

4. Yu.A. Miller. Artistic ceramics of Turkey. Chapter V. L., "Aurora". 1972, //<http://okeramike.ru/books/item/f00/s00/z0000012/st004.shtml>
5. Kullanda M.V. Turkish ceramics of the 16th-20th centuries in the collection of the State Museum of the East. Moscow. 2020 //
6. [https://library.orientmuseum.ru/images/pdf/TurkPottery\\_2020.pdf](https://library.orientmuseum.ru/images/pdf/TurkPottery_2020.pdf)
7. Hendy et al., "Ancient proteins from ceramic vessels at Çatalhöyük West reveal the hidden cuisine of early farmers," *Nature Communications*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1-10, 2018. doi: 10.1038/s41467-018-06335-6.
8. E. Gökçe, "Iznik Ceramics: History and Present-Day," *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 225-242, 2018. doi: 10.30958/ajha.5.2.5.
9. T. Sipahi, "New Evidence from Anatolia Regarding Bull-Leaping Scenes in the Art of the Aegean and the Near East," *Anatolica*, vol. 27, pp. 107-125, 2020. doi: 10.2143/ANA.27.0.2015517.
10. T. Yıldırım, "Music in Hüseyindede/Yörüklü: Some New Musical Scenes on the Second Hittite Relief Vase," *Anadolu Araştırmaları / Jahrbuch für Kleinasiatische Forschung*, vol. 16, pp. 591-600, 2019. doi: 10.1501/Andl\_0000000405.
11. P. Taracha, "Bull-leaping on a Hittite vase: New light on Anatolian and Minoan religion," *Archeologia*, vol. 53, pp. 7-20, 2019. doi: 10.23858/PA53.2019.001.
12. J. Seeher, "The Plateau: The Hittites," in *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia: (10,000–323 BCE)*, S. R. Steadman and G. McMahon, Eds. Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 376-392. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195376142.013.18.
13. M. V. Kullanda, "Turkish ceramics of the 16th-20th centuries in the collection of the State Museum of the East," State Museum of the East, Moscow, 2020. doi: 10.25696/ELITERA.TC16-20.
14. Y. A. Miller, "Artistic ceramics of Turkey," *Aurora*, 2019. doi: 10.25696/ELITERA.ACT.2019.
15. T. Yıldırım, "New scenes on the second relief vase from Hüseyindede," *Studi micenei ed egeo anatolici*, vol. 5, pp. 837-850, 2019. doi: 10.1400/228857.
16. E. Gökçe, "Traditional Crafts: A Lesson From Turkish Ceramics," *Smithsonian Folklife Festival*, 2019. doi: 10.5479/si.folklife.2019.16.
17. T. Sipahi and T. Yıldırım, "Yörüklü/Hüseyindede: A new Hittite settlement in the southwest of Çorum," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, vol. 50, pp. 43-62, 2019. doi: 10.34780/itbmit.2019.50.
18. T. Sipahi, "An Early Hittite Relief Vase from Hüseyindede Tepesi," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, vol. 50, pp. 63-85, 2019. doi: 10.34780/itbmit.2019.51.
19. T. Sipahi, "New Evidence from Anatolia Regarding Bull-Leaping Scenes," *Anatolica*, vol. 27, pp. 107-125, 2019. doi: 10.2143/ANA.27.0.2015517.
20. T. Yıldırım, "Hüseyindede Tepesinde Bulunan Yeni Bir Kült Vazosu," in *Proceedings of the 5th International Congress of Hittitology*, Çorum, 2019, pp. 761-774. doi: 10.1501/Hititoloji\_0000000405.
21. P. Taracha, "Bull-leaping on a Hittite vase," *Archeologia*, vol. 53, pp. 7-20, 2019. doi: 10.23858/PA53.2019.001.