

The Fergana Valley: Distinctive Features of the Formation of Ughir National Clothing

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Article information:

Manuscript received: 21 Apr 2025; **Accepted:** 22 May 2025; **Published:** 23 Jun 2025

Abstract: This article analyzes the national clothing of the Uyghur people living in the Fergana Valley and explores the historical process of its formation. Through traditional garments, the customs, lifestyle, aesthetic views, and natural-climatic conditions of the Uyghur people are reflected. The article highlights the differences between Uyghur clothing in the Fergana Valley and general Uzbek national dress, focusing on the harmony of modernity and tradition, as well as the role of clothing as a marker of national identity. It also discusses the symbolism of colors, patterns, and types of fabric. The article emphasizes the importance of national dress in preserving cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations.

Keywords: Fergana Valley, Uyghur national clothing, tradition, aesthetics, historical formation, fabric, color symbolism, national culture, national identity, and lifestyle.

One of the first and most important inventions in human history is clothing. What distinguishes humanity from the animal kingdom is its ability to think, and one of the fruits of this thinking is clothing. The dynamics of the formation of clothing are proportional to the development of human lifestyles.

Looking at the history of the formation of traditional national clothing, we can see that over several thousand years it has developed a number of important functions. Clothing protected the human body from the cold and the effects of various other adverse conditions in nature. As clothing developed and was directly influenced by the external (natural) environment, economic activity, beliefs, changes in socio-cultural orientation, national and religious views, its following important functions began to appear. That is, a sexual and socially distinguishing and ritual-religious function appeared in humanity. Indeed, each people dressed in accordance with its economic orientation, lifestyle, climate in the region where it lived, social system, customs, and religious beliefs. In addition, in harmony with the development of clothing, its own unique clothing culture also developed. To date, studies have been conducted in areas such as ethnology, art studies, and cultural studies to study the history, evolution, transformation, and local characteristics of Uyghur national clothing.

Among the Fergana Valley Uyghurs, a unique clothing culture and traditions have been formed over the centuries.

As is known, traditional folk clothing has been formed in long-term historical processes and is also a mirror reflecting the material well-being of the people. The constant change, development and improvement of traditional national clothing is directly related to the socio-economic, historical and ethnic processes taking place in society. Traditional clothing is usually divided into types of clothing for men, women and children. Clothing was sewn according to socio-economic conditions, age and season.

The traditional clothing of the peoples living in Central Asia was formed in accordance with the climate of the geographical region in which they lived, that is, the dry cold of winter and the scorching heat of summer, of course.

The Uyghurs who migrated to the Fergana Valley, like other ethnic groups, entering into ethno-cultural contacts with the local indigenous population, undoubtedly tried to preserve their traditions and the main features of their national culture. However, not always the ethnic groups that migrated to the region were able to preserve the features characteristic of their national culture (especially in material culture). According to U. Abdullaev, some of the features characteristic of the "brought culture" were not accepted by the local population at that time. Another part, mixed with the culture of the local population and eventually became part of it. Undoubtedly, this process also occurred in the national costumes of the people ¹.

Two important aspects of the traditional clothing of the Uyghur people - fabric and sewing style - are unique. The uniqueness of men's traditional clothing can be seen more in the decorations and collar. Men's traditional clothing is sewn with an open or closed front, wide and long sleeves, and a length of just above the knee or below the knee. Such men's shirts are decorated with a ribbon and are called "*tunikanusha*". Kifta-style shirts are widely distributed among khojas, toras and saids, and are also called "mullacha" ².

O.A. Sukhareva, who studied the evolution of the traditional clothing of the peoples of Central Asia in the "*tunikanuskha*" style, emphasizes: "The process of differentiation in the clothing of the peoples living in the cultural and historical region that includes the Fergana Valley, Kyrgyzstan, East Turkestan, and the Pamir foothills was primarily due to the division of traditional clothing by gender - the emergence of open-fronted shirts for men and closed-fronted shirts for women ³."

According to R.Ya. Rassudova, who has made a comparative study of the clothing of the nomadic people of the Fergana Valley, by the end of the 19th century, a number of changes had occurred in the style of shirts in this style. These changes are primarily visible in the fact that the shirt became shorter and narrower, and the shoulder section (collar) became slightly rounded ⁴.

The main popular clothing for men in both parts of Turkestan was the "yaktak" (yehtak). At that time, the yaktak was the main outerwear of all the inhabitants of the valley, and was sewn from white and lighter gray and gray fabrics. According to ethnologist U. Abdullaev, at the beginning of the 20th century, it became customary to open the front of the yaktak in a triangular shape and tie a belt around the waist. At that time, the yaktak also served as men's underwear. Also during this period, "*Kazakh collar*" and "*Nogai collar*" versions appeared among men's shirts. Shirts of this type were first popular among Kazakhs and Tatars, and later became popular among the local peoples of the valley and among the Uyghurs ⁵.

Women's dresses were mainly tailored to their age and social status, and they differed little in style. Uyghur women's dresses were usually not long. European traveler Robert Shaw also noted in his memoirs that the dresses of Qashqadar women were not very long, and their trousers (nezimi) were less visible ⁶.

These ideas are also confirmed by Islamjon Qasimi, who described Uyghur national clothing, and notes that the Kashgar women's dresses were shorter and the straps on their trousers were visible ⁷. The

¹Abdullaev U. Interethnic processes in the Fergana Valley ... - P. 99.

²Rassudova R.Ya. Comparative characteristics of men's clothing in the Fergana - Tashkent region (XIX - XX centuries)

³Sukhareva O.A. Opyt analiza pokroev traditional "tunic-image" Sredneaziatskoy odejdy v plane ix istorii i evolyutsii// Kostyum narodov Sredney Azii.-M., 1979.- S. 78 - 79.

⁴Rassudova R.Ya. K istorii odejdy... S. 156.

⁵Abdullaev U. S. Interethnic processes in the Fergana Valley... -P.107.

⁶Sha R. Ocherki Verkhney Tatarii, Yarkenda i Kashgara. -Spb., 1872. -S.343.

⁷Kasimi I. Uyghur national costume. -Almaty: Nash mir, 1996.-S.39.

researcher, who paid more attention to women's clothing, gave a general, rather than regional, explanation.

In general, women's dresses differed from each other in color and fabric. For example, older Uyghur women wore a "straight dress" made of plain gray or cotton fabric, not brightly colored and with flowers, while young girls wore a wide and beautiful collar, that is, a "turned collar"⁸. Later, the modern style of pleated dress of local women became widespread. In the 60s of the 20th century, women's clothing underwent a certain modernization process, as a result of which "*Chinese dress*" and "*European style*" dresses became popular among women⁹. In general, the national clothing of the sedentary Uyghur population began to change under the influence of local traditions. This is most clearly seen in the headdresses, coats and jackets of Uyghur women. Wearing a jacket or a jacket over a dress was characteristic of many peoples. Among Uyghur women, the "Kashgari tovar" jacket was quite popular. Of course, there were several types of jackets - cotton jackets, avra jackets, velvet jackets, which were worn depending on the season. Jackets were sewn from fabrics such as kimkhob, dukhoba, tovar, and buttons were sewn on them. Uyghur jackets, on the other hand, were sewn on the sides, and this style was later abandoned¹⁰. It should be noted that the development of handicrafts in the region, especially weaving and tailoring, and its ethnic and intercultural influence were more evident in clothing.

Headgear is, first of all, an element that reflects the high culture of the people. Headgear was also worn depending on the season, gender and age, as well as social status. The turban, which was widespread in the valley, was considered the main headdress for people of all ages and genders. Men's turbans differed from each other in structure, sewing, and floral patterns, and the Kashgar and Guljada turbans were almost identical to the turbans made in the Fergana Valley. The Margilan, Namangan, and Kokand turbans were widespread in all ethnic groups in the western and eastern regions, and the turbans made in the valley were previously popular among the Uyghurs¹¹. In Kashgar, men's turbans were sewn from white, black, and dark blue las and velvet fabrics¹². According to the method of sewing and manufacturing, the turbans made in the valley were practically the same. Among the festive costumes of the Uyghurs of East Turkestan, a special place is occupied by a headdress called "pasha doppi". Such headdresses were distinguished from the headdresses made in the valley by the height and width of the top. Even the Uyghurs living in Fergana valued¹³ "*pasha doppi*" until the 1960s. Sometimes men also wear dark blue velvet or floral, round-shaped versions. In Kashgar and the Fergana Valley, almond or pepper patterns were sewn onto the headdresses with white silk. Men in Khotan and Kashgar wore headdresses sewn with white silk¹⁴. Similar "tus doppi" (chust doppi) were quite popular both in Kashgar and in the valley¹⁵. In addition, the white felt hats of the herding Kyrgyz, as well as many other leather hats, can also be seen among the valley Uyghurs at the beginning of the 20th century¹⁶.

The winter warm hat "boruk" is considered quite ancient. The work "Divoni Lugatit Turk" states that "bork is a cap-like hat"¹⁷. There are two types of it - a hat and a telpak, and animal skin and fur are used for its sewing¹⁸. Among the headdresses of Uyghur women, just like in the valley, a hat and a scarf occupy a large place. Tall, red, blue velvet with flowers sewn from silk or beads was called "kadak" and

⁸ Field notes. 20 24 years. Kashkar-kishlak, Osh region, Kyrgyz Republic. Reporter E. Tukhtaohunova. 70 years old.

⁹ Gubaeva S.S. Naseleni Ferganskoy doliny v kontse.....-S.512.

¹⁰ Field notes. 2023. Kashgar-kishlak, Osh region, Kyrgyz Republic. Reporter M. Gazieva. 65 years old.

¹¹ Abdullaev U. S. Interethnic processes in the Fergana Valley. ...-P.119-120.

¹² Field notes. 20 24 years. Kyrgyz Republic, Osh region, Kashgar-kishlak. Reporter R. Tukhtaokhunov. 72 years old.

¹³ Zakharova I.V. Materialnaya kultura uygurov Sovetskogo Soyuza... -S. 275-276.

¹⁴ Kasimi I. Uyghur national costume ...- S.17.

¹⁵ Karimova R. Traditsionnye zudojestvennye memesla i promysly Uygurov... - S. 146.

¹⁶ Field notes. 20 24 years. Kashkar-kishlak, Osh region, Kyrgyz Republic. Reporter E. Tukhtaohunova. 70 years old.

¹⁷ Mahmud Kashgari. Devoni dictionary of Turkish.-Tashkent: 1960. T. 1.-B.333.

¹⁸ Chvyr L.A. Uygury of Eastern Turkestan and neighboring people....-S.135.

"maupuda" hat. Hats were sometimes worn over a scarf ¹⁹. Wearing a hat in this way was slightly different from that of the Uzbeks ²⁰. The winter headdress of women, called "suvsar tumak", "emchi tumak", was made of fox or marten fur. Researcher Ch. Valikhonov noted that "wealthy Uyghur women from Kashgar wore suvsar tumaks" ²¹.

Uyghur women wore necklaces with coral, large beads (busa), necklaces made of precious metals, and chest amulets with the image of flowers or birds. Sometimes amulets were worn with necklaces, and rings were believed to protect against various evils, and rings were believed to protect against the evil eye. Also, according to informant O. Shokirova, when a girl was born, gold jewelry was added to the water ²²when preparing "chilla water" with the words " *may her heart be strong and she be wealthy* . "

The most famous jewelry of Uyghur women was ²³the "kashkarcha baldak" and "kashkarcha zirak". Such jewelry was popular among the women of the valley before the Uyghurs arrived. The crescent-shaped "kashkarcha earring" was decorated with coral and pearls, and the "kashgar baldak" was a ring-shaped piece of gold and silver, decorated with turquoise, rubies, and corals. The beautiful shape of the kashkar baldak, resembling a new moon, the flowers of the panjarasimon, the shine of gold and pearls, and the jewelry-like workmanship gave this baldak its charm ²⁴.

In conclusion, the national costumes of the Uyghur population are more regional in nature, and under the influence of different nations, the transformation process in this area of material culture has accelerated. The Uyghurs who settled in the valley and the Uzbeks exchanged cultural achievements and styles in several areas of applied art, especially jewelry.

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²⁰Chvyr L.A. Uygury of Eastern Turkestan and sosednie narody...-S.240.

²¹Valikhanov Ch.Ch. Izbrannye proizvedeniya.– M. , 1986. -S.177.

²²Field notes. 2007 year . Andijan city , Andijan region. Reporter O.Shokirova

²³Karimova R.U. Traditsionnye khudozhestvennye memesla i promysly Uygurov.– Almaty: Dyk - Press , 2005. –P.85.; Karimova R.U. Khudozhestvennaya memesla Uygurov SUAR KNR: traditsii i sovremennost// M aterialy mejdunarodnoy konferentsii Tsentralnaya Asia-Kitay: sostoyanie i perespektivy sotrudnichestva.– Almaty, 2008 . -S.251.

²⁴National Encyclopedia of Uzbekistan. T. 10. – Tashkent, 2005. – P. 631; Davlatova S. Dynamic changes in the jewelry of the Kashkadarya oasis population and its features // Traditional and modern ethnocultural processes in Central Asia. Part 2. – Tashkent: 2005. – P. 77.