



# ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE LIFE AND CULTURE OF THE POPULATION OF FERGANA VALLEY IN THE LATE XIX-EARLY XX CENTURY IN THE WORKS OF RUSSIAN RESEARCHERS

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## ABSTRACT

*The article analyzes the features of the material and spiritual culture of the Uzbek population of Fergana valley in the last third of the XIX-early XX centuries. The main source covering the material, more than a century ago, is the book of the spouses Vladimir Petrovich and Maria Vladimirovna Nalivkin "Essay on the Life of a Woman of the Settled Landed Population of Fergana". The book was published in Kazan in 1886 and contained unique material that was not presented in either Russian or European historiography of that period. Having found themselves on the far outskirts of the Russian Empire, having studied the languages of the indigenous population to perfection, having mastered the everyday side of life, the authors of this work, especially V. P. Nalivkin, became a very famous Turkestan scholar in the scientific world. The authors' attitude is characterized by extreme benevolence and a desire for objectivity in the study of any issue. The tendency that can be traced in all the presented material is a deep interest and respect for the life of ordinary people. The work of the Nalivkins has not lost scientific interest and it is a huge field of activity for future researchers, due to its special information content.*

**KEY WORDS:** *cultural heritage, ethnographic research, Fergana valley, Russian colony, military and people's administration, material and spiritual culture, housing, food, household utensils, clothing, signs, traditions and rituals, beliefs, superstitions.*

## DISCUSSION

The practice of reviving cultural heritage as an important ideological means of mass consolidation, forming and developing national identity has become the leading leitmotif of the formation of independent statehood in the post-Soviet space. Uzbekistan has not escaped these processes either. All history shows that cultural traditions play a huge role in the development of human society. In this regard, First President I. A. Karimov stressed, «The Revival of spiritual values is an organic, natural process of growing national consciousness, returning to the spiritual origins of our people, its roots» [1, 131].

Ethnographic research of the past of our people plays an important role in the implementation of this urgent task. Namely, ethnographic sources have recorded specific traditions, rituals, features of material and spiritual culture, traditional institutions of social life of the Uzbek people at different historical stages.

The subject of this article is the characteristics of the material and spiritual culture of the Uzbek population of Fergana valley in the last third of the

XIX-early XX centuries. The main source covering the material, more than a century ago, is the book of the spouses Vladimir Petrovich and Maria Vladimirovna Nalivkin «Essay on the Life of a Woman of the Settled Landed Population of Fergana» [2].

The beginning of systematic and continuous accumulation of primary information about Central Asia by Russian people dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Conquest of Central Asia by Russia in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century radically changed the possibilities of studying the historical and cultural past and present of this region, since a huge part /of the Turkestan region/ became part of the Russian state, and the Bukhara Emirate and the Khiva khanate became vassal to it. The annexation of Central Asia to Russia led to the expansion of research into this unique region in Russian Oriental studies.

At that time, it should be noted that there were two directions in the study of the historical and cultural past of our country. The first is the state direction. For the tsarist government and its colonial administration of Turkestan and its population was



primarily an object of exploitation. Therefore, the interest in its research of representatives of the first direction was largely explained by the economic and political goals of Russia. The second direction in the study of the past of Central Asia, which took shape simultaneously with the first, was characterized by democratic and humanistic ideas, a deep interest in the life of the people.

Here, the words of the famous historiographer of Uzbekistan, B. V. Lunin, are very legitimate: Russia, enlightened and freedom loving, entered Turkestan not with the first echelon of tsarist colonizers, but with the second echelon of educated, hard-working, progressive scientists, doctors, teachers, agronomists, naturalists, and many others [3, 26]. Moreover, sometimes, as in our case, it happened that both options coincided.

In October 1872, after being promoted to officer, V. P. Nalivkin arrived in Tashkent to serve in the first battery of the Orenburg Cossack army [4].

The initial period of military service of the young officer coincided with the intensification of military operations of the tsarist government in Central Asia. After futile attempts to persuade the Khan of Khiva to sign an agreement on the recognition of vassalage by Russia, in 1873 the Khiva campaign began, in which V. P. Nalivkin took part as part of the first battery of the Orenburg Cossack army. In 1874, he also participated in the Turkmen expedition [5, Лл.19-20].

In 1875, there were important changes in the personal life of V. P. Nalivkin. While on vacation, he spent some time in the city of Saratov, where he got married. His chosen one was Maria Vladimirovna Sartorius. According to the famous Turkestan scholar N. P. Ostroumov, M. V. Sartoriy (the future Nalivkina) graduated from the Smolny Institute of noble maidens and was well-educated [6, Л. 23]. After his marriage, returning to Tashkent, V. P. Nalivkin took part in the Kokand campaign as part of the Cossack horse-missile division [7, Л. 120]. The initial faith of the young and enthusiastic officer Nalivkin in the peacemaking actions of the Russian government in Central Asia, in the implementation of the noble, civilizing mission of Russia was melting away. That was a result of the undisguised and harsh expression of the colonization policy and contemptuous and arrogant attitude towards the indigenous ("foreign") population of Central Asia. About the Khiva campaign, he wrote in his memoirs that what he saw was "... if not a tub, then, in any case, a glass of very cold water" [8]. In 1876, V. P. Nalivkin submitted his resignation and joined the so-called "Military-people's administration" of the Turkestan territory, as an assistant chief of the Namangan district.

In 1878, V. P. Nalivkin left military service in the military-people's administration and retired with the rank of staff captain [9, Лл. 10-12]. At the same

time, he and his wife made an unexpected decision to stay in the County. First, they settled twenty-five versts from the city of Namangan in the Radvan tract among the Kipchaks, and then they purchased a small plot of land in the village of Nanai, where they began to study the life and way of life of the indigenous population.

The six years that the Nalivkin couple lived in Namangan district allowed them to get in touch with the rich and original culture of the Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Kirghiz, and to collect materials related to the everyday life and spiritual life of the peoples.

In the winter, they lived among the Uzbeks, and in the summer, they migrated with the Kyrgyz to the mountains. At the same time, the couple learned the Uzbek language (and not only Uzbek) in such a subtlety, which cannot be achieved by textbooks and schools. V. P. Nalivkin impressed such Orientalists as N. I. Veselovsky, V. R. Rosen, and K. G. Zaleman with his knowledge of live colloquial speech of the Uzbek and Tajik languages.

The life of the Nalivkin couple during these six years in the Fergana valley was not different from that of an ordinary Uzbek family. In addition, the proof of this was the unique material that they included in the "Essay on the Life of a Woman of the Settled Landed Population of Fergana".

This unique work was published exactly 10 years after the conquest of the Khanate of Kokand by Russia and the formation of the Fergana region of the Turkestan General government (at that time already the Turkestan territory).

Its uniqueness lay in the fact of its appearance and the information contained in it. The entire scientific world immediately responded to the appearance of this publication.

The value of the work they wrote at that time was expressed in the words of the famous orientalist N. I. Veselovsky, who emphasized that this kind of work was not easy to carry out: "... the life of a woman ...we know it more by hearsay than by personal study. Only a woman can enter the female half and look behind the veil that hides it... therefore, our researchers in the region, with all their good will, did not have any opportunity to get to know this life closely"[10,217]. This comment of the reviewer determined the merit of Maria Vladimirovna Nalivkina as a collector of ethnographic material, who managed to «penetrate» the female half. Therefore, in Uzbek historiography, M. V. Nalivkina is rightly called the first Russian woman ethnographer of Central Asia [11, 375]. For her time, she collected a unique ethnographic material that has almost no analogues in Russian and Western European Oriental studies. The work of the Nalivkin spouses was awarded - the Great gold medal of the Russian Geographical society [12,998]. The famous Hungarian orientalist Arminius Vambery in a letter to V. P. Nalivkin correctly noted not only the serious



scientific significance of the work, but, most importantly, pointed out that this book is the first experience in world Oriental studies and this significantly increases the value of the work [13,87]. Already in the twentieth century, academician V. V. Barthold wrote that "the study of the life of settled Uzbeks ...still stands alone the work of the late Nalivkins, who directly studied the life (of the Uzbeks), living in a village and the way of life is no different from them" [14,544].

Characteristics of the material culture of the settled Uzbek population of Fergana valley in the last third of the XIX century in the work of the Nalivkins are presented in the following aspects: housing, utensils, food, clothing, jewelry. A special place in the work, corresponding to its name, is given to the description of the lifestyle of an Uzbek woman. Such chapters as "Appearance of a woman and her clothes", "Character of a woman, her habits, activities and behavior in relation to others", "Pregnancy and childbirth, Girl", "Girl. Matchmaking. Marriage" and others make this book extremely interesting not only for philistines, but also for the scientific world.

The characteristics of the dwelling are represented by a detailed and colorful description of its appearance, materials used for construction, as well as technological techniques for the construction of walls, ceilings, roofs, Windows, doors, etc. Ethnographic materials emphasized the conditionality and dependence of this aspect of material culture on socio-economic, ethnic and other factors. Central Asian housing construction in the last third of the XIX century, according to the authors, had characteristic features of construction equipment, due to the natural and climatic conditions of the region. This was expressed, in particular, in the use of original building materials: "the main, basic materials of all in General ...buildings are: clay and wood, - mostly poplar and tallow"[2,72]. The lack of sufficient wood here was made up for by clay. The walls were built from a clay-and-straw mixture-Adobe, and clay and straw were used to cover the roofs. Wood was used to install pillars, door supports, window frames, and roofs. Ethnographic materials recorded the division of buildings in the courtyard into male/ tashkari /and female/ ichkari / halves. This division was based on religious motives, but also directly depended on the property status of the householders."...Poor families did not have the means to build buildings in the double ...in large numbers, or in those whose homestead plots were so small that their size did not allow for division into two parts, violations of the traditional layout were often allowed" [2,74-75]. The layout of courtyards directly depended on industrial activities. On the working /women's/ half of the yard, in addition to the sleeping quarters, there was also a small storeroom / "Khazina-khona"/, a stable / "Mal-khona"/, and sometimes a stable and a grain barn [2,80]. In

addition to residential and farm buildings, there were also gardens. The authors paid special attention to the ethno specific features of the location of courtyard buildings, such as their placement, where they adjoined the inner side of the wall surrounding the courtyard in such a way that "...the Windows almost never face the street"[2,81].

The absence of furniture in the house, the arrangement of niches in the walls of rooms intended for folding clothes, bed linen, carpets, etc. was also specific to the European view. Very unusual and interesting was the device of the hearth for heating rooms - "sandal" and earthen stove - "ir-uchaka". "In some villages of the Namangan district settlers from the vicinity of the city of Turkestan, who came here about 100 years ago arrange the so-called ir-uchak /earthen oven/. Under the dirt floor ...a small furnace is formed, the pipe of which under the floor is output through one of the walls to the outside. The oven itself is used for cooking, and the pipe heats a significant part of the floor on which the whole family sleeps. The same kind of heating, or rather floor heating, is practiced in Kulja and, it seems, in Kashgar" [2,83-84].

Much attention in "Essays on everyday life..." was paid to such an element of material culture as food. The authors of the work listed the following most common types of dishes: "Favorite, national dish should be called Palau / pilaf. – Л.Н/ which is considered the best and even to some extent, an aristocratic dish?"- they wrote. [2,124]. In addition to pilaf, the following dishes were considered traditional: "... Shavla- liquid pilaf or rather rice porridge, seasoned with onions, carrots and pieces of lamb. "Shurpa" - mutton soup with peppers, onions, carrots, radish and pumpkin, and sometimes sour cream. "Gulchatai" - a mess of chopped meat and dough. Mastava - soup made from finely chopped meat, rice, onions and sour milk; chuchvara – dumplings. "Kaurma" - pieces of lamb fried in lard; "hasip" - sausage made from lamb liver and rice. "Kazi" - horse sausage; "Shir-Gurung" – milk, rice porridge; "heap", or "Kuja" - a porridge of Guinea corn /sorghum/, less often from corn or barley with sour cream. "Un-ash" - noodles, cooked in water without any meat with sour cream; "mash-gurung" - porridge on the water from rice and lentils with turnip, carrot, onion, sour cream or meat; "Shir-Kadu" - milk soup with pumpkin and rice" [2,124-125]. In addition to the listed, most common traditional dishes of the local population, the authors of "Essays on everyday life..." noted the functional dependence of the diet on traditional household activities: "in summer, not only the majority of citizens, but even in local villages, the main elements of food are: bread, fruit and sour milk. The content of meat in food increases somewhat only in those villages where the odors are significant, and where from the time of ripening of bread until autumn, the



latter is exchanged by butchers for meat and fat" [2,127]. Thus, the diet was determined largely by the seasonal sequence of receipts of agricultural products. In "Essays..." the functional relationship of certain dishes with religious beliefs and rituals was not overlooked. During the holidays of Ramadan and Kurban Hayit / and during the fast "Ruza"/ food became more calorific, and dishes more diverse, because "religion limits only the time of eating, and not the variety of products that are consumed in food"[2,128]. Of great interest is the observation of the authors of the book about the division of all food into hot and cold: "To the first belong: mutton meat, sugar, butter, lard, black tea /heirloom/, molasses, Palau, soup, milk rice porridge, and also bread in winter; in summer it becomes cold. The second category includes: bread in summer, beef meat, milk, kатыk, all dishes without meat, but with kатыk, kampo, which was used exclusively as medicine" [2,169]. Unfortunately, the authors of the work did not explain what was associated with this division of food. In the later ethnographic studies, there were notes that this division was based on the difference in the temperament of people and that healthy people usually do not pay attention to the composition of food, in the case of illness, observance of a proper diet was crucial [15,120].

The Uzbeks of Fergana in the last third of the XIX century had signs associated with a particular type of food. For example, if a pregnant woman prefers so-called hot food, then she will have a boy, if cold, then a girl [2,169].

Special attention was paid to such an element of material culture as household utensils. The local Uzbek population made the main part of domestic dishes from clay, copper, cast iron and wooden products were much smaller. We are particularly interested in the signs and superstitions associated with the use of various household items. For example, dishes made from flour / noodles, dough for pies, etc. / were prepared on a Board called "ash-takhta". It was a certain size with a slightly convex surface and four small legs. There was a sign that "azh-takhta", put not on legs, but on an edge foreshadowed in the house of the deceased [2,86].

Interesting for the reader is the description of the device / oven-*Н.П*/ for baking bread - "tanur" or "tandur", which the authors conditionally attributed to household items.

Much attention is paid to the description of women's clothing. The authors believed that the cut and appearance of clothing depended on factors such as natural and climatic conditions, features of everyday life and religious regulations. Style, material and color of the fabrics was dependent on sex and age division, reflect the affiliation of their speakers of various social classes are clearly divided into complexes according to climatic seasons-summer and winter. During the period under review,

there were also archaic types of clothing used only by the elderly. For example, cotton stockings instead of leather ichigs or robes with short, elbow-length sleeves / "munsak" / instead of the commonly used cotton robes with long sleeves. [2,96-97]. The authors also noted the presence of ritual clothing. Shirts made of blue fabric were universally considered mourning. A sash of blue cloth, girded by a woman, over a robe also testified to her mourning [2,97]. Social differences in clothing were expressed not in the composition of the costume elements, but in the number of clothes and the quality of the fabrics from which they were made. If in villages women sewed everyday shirts from rough cotton fabrics of home manufacture, and festive ones - from Kumach or factory calico, then city women wore calico and Kumach shirts on weekdays, however, they wore dresses sewn from silk fabrics on holidays and in front guests [2,97]. Such evidence of the Nalivkins is also confirmed by modern ethnographic studies [16,15-21; 92]. The Nalivkins ' data on the presence of regional differences in clothing complexes, in the use of individual costume elements, in particular, in the ways of dressing the burqa by Namangan and Kokand women are valuable."... For example, in Namangan top edge of the veil is always lowered to the forehead, and the lower end of chimbet let out from under the burqa; in Kokand on the contrary, the upper edge of the veil lies in the middle of the crown, adhered floors and hand him close edges and bottom of chimbet" [2,96].

The absolute elements of the spiritual culture of the people are traditions and rituals, which reflect the specific conditions of life and life of the population, elements of its education. These problems are given a special place in the work of the Nalivkins. We will consider ethnographic material related to the birth and upbringing of children and related concepts, rituals, omens and superstitions. It should be particularly noted that the facts presented by the Nalivkins were repeatedly important sources of later ethnographic research [17,189-210]. The authors described in detail all the stages of pregnancy in an Uzbek woman, folk knowledge of obstetrics, existing signs in case of guessing the sex of the unborn child, magic actions used to facilitate childbirth, etc. For example, it was believed that often a piece of a horse's hoof was burned in the room where the birth took place, or the woman in labor was given a cup to drink from, on the inner walls of which some prayer was written in ink [2,171]. All this was done in order to ease the suffering of the woman in labor. The postpartum period was associated with the belief not to leave the woman who gave birth and her child alone for six weeks, due to fears for their lives as: "... they may be strangled by a yellow-haired Ajina" [2,171]. On the sixth or seventh day after the birth of the child, the rite of placement in the cradle / "bishik"/was



performed. The position in the cradle is also associated with putting on the first shirt. On this day, a family celebration was held, guests came (mostly women), and the child's father or grandfather gave the newborn a name [2,173]. There are several interesting superstitions associated with naming a child. "Those who have children who do not live, at the birth of a new child, wishing that he remained alive, did not die like the children of the previous ones, give one of such names as Tursun / "let him stay"/, Takhta / "wait, wait"/, makhkam / "strong"/ etc. " [2,173]. Further, for more security of the child it could give to any woman who fed him breast five or six days, after which, the child this "temporary mother" is supposed to buy: "Buying thus of a child; he is given the name of Stub-Aldi /"bought" / if it is a boy or Catkin /"sold"/ if it's a girl"[2, 174]. Interesting, in our opinion, the rite of the second bathing / the first occurred immediately after birth, which occurred on the twentieth birthday of the child. After bathing, the second shirt was put on, while the first one, dressed on the sixth or seventh day from the moment of birth, remained for the next child. Some local beliefs were also associated with this rite of second bathing. "In some places, as for example, in Tajik villages of Kokand county boy were washed on day 18 after birth, i.e. two days earlier than the usual time, so that later his bride was taken for less kalym, and the girl for 22 days, that is, two days later, so that later she was given a large kalym " [2,174].

The Nalivkins noted that when the twins were born in a family, they were usually given the following names: if boys were born, they were given the names Hussein and Hassan, and if girls - Zuhra and Fatima. An interesting fact is that along with the naming of the name, the year in which the child was born was also remembered. Moreover, it was meant, the name of each year of the twelve-year cycle. "That's why it is very common here instead of asking how old you are, asking what your year is, i.e., what was the name of the year in which you were born?"

The authors of "Essays..." noted that Uzbek families loved children in their own way, caressed them, and never complained about the number of children and the difficulty of their upbringing. It is not by chance that the Nalivkins noted that cases of throwing children in Fergana at that time under consideration are extremely rare. There was a saying among the population: "There are children - the house is Bazar / revival/, there are no children - the house is Mazar /despondency/ [2,168]. The authors of "Essays..." did not ignore such issues as childcare and hygiene, nutrition and childhood diseases. The authors also noted the existence of differences in the games of boys and girls, and at the same time, differences in labor education [2,189-191].

In General, it should be noted that as representatives of the democratic trend in Oriental studies, the authors of the work were alien to a

disdainful and arrogant attitude to the life, traditions and customs of the people they describe. On the contrary, their research is characterized by extreme benevolence and a desire for objectivity in the study of any issue. The tendency that can be traced in all the presented material is a deep interest and respect for the life of ordinary people. The work of the Nalivkins has not lost scientific interest and it is a huge field of activity for future researchers, due to its special information content.

The modern period is characterized by an ethno-cultural revival, rapid development of national consciousness, strengthening of the tendency to revive the national culture, spirituality, and moral principles of the Uzbek people. The collective memory of the people and the worldview of past generations, the study of which is becoming important today, are accumulated in ethnic traditions, rituals, and ritual activities.

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