Pottery Manufacture on Hainan Island

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The author had a chance to visit Fubao-jiang, Chienjia-jiang and Tongfangchênn on Hainan Island in the People's Republic of China, and could conduct a thorough research on the actual condition of pottery manufacturing of the Li people. The author would like to make a report on the examples of pottery making in the region of Fubao-jiang on the basis of data the author gathered during that period and. At the same time, this report presents a reflection on the significance of pottery making techniques by making a comparison between potteries made at Fubao-jiang region and those now made in areas surrounding. The characteristics of pottery making techniques at Fubao-hsiang can be summarized as follows:

1. For the paste, only one type of clay is used, never mixing different types of clay nor using any fillers.
2. They do not use a wheel, instead, they use a revolving pedestal for manufacturing pottery.
3. Pottery is made from the bottom to upward. The body is made with the ring building method by building up two clay bands, which is then made taller by padding out the sides until it is made into a form of a bucket.
4. The main role of padding is to thin the sides, but this also includes the spreading of the paste evenly to obtain a smooth body.
5. Then, a clay coil is pasted to form the rim.
6. The body is carved in its inner side with a shell and then extruded to give a body bulge.
7. The body is then turned upside down, and its bottom is made round. Carving and surface adjustment are then made.
8. Outer surface adjustments are made with an arrowroot seed and a bamboo spatula.
9. Baking is done outdoors, with its mouth down. The baking time is as short as 10 min.
10. Sap is applied immediately after removing from the oven so as to avoid water leakage.
In the peripheral area of the South China Sea, namely Kwangtung Province, Hong Kong, the coastal districts of the Jian Province and that of Formosa (Taiwan), the pottery manufacturing techniques called hammering or paddling have existed since the Neolithic Era in a form of mat impression pottery. If we dare compare them to examples of the contemporary peoples, as for the method of forming the bodies, we will find that those ancient pottery were very close to the pottery manufacturing techniques from the Fubao-jiang district on Hainan Island. In order to conjecture the past manufacturing techniques of potteries from examples of contemporary peoples, it is necessary to observe closely pottery of the past and to make a comprehensive comparative study with the examples of contemporary peoples. If we are to proceed with comparative studies of pottery making techniques, it will be necessary, in the future, to study the pottery manufacturing techniques in their entire consistent process.