



Development Of Small Plastic in the Territory of Central Asia

Tairova Kholida Khamidovna

lecturer at the National Institute
Arts and Design named after Kamoliddin Behzod
Tashkent city, Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article discusses the role of fine art in sculpture and its role in compositional and plastic modeling of images in volumetric form and a particular material.

Keywords: Sculpture, art, small plastic, relief, easel sculpture, decorative sculpture, statue, terracotta, porcelain.

Man has lived in Central Asia since ancient times. The remains of ancient cultures were found during excavations in the territory of Bactria - Tokharistan, Afrasiab, Khorezm, Khalchayan and other places. Some metal and glass details, an ivory figurine, but especially objects of local coroplasty deserve attention in the composition of small art objects from Khalchayan. Of the greatest interest among the small Khalchayan finds are coroplasty items. Small terracotta sculpture occupies a very prominent place in the complex of Central Asian antiquities. Revealing in their content the little-known aspects of the cult ideology, mythological views and epic creativity of the ancient Central Asian peoples, coroplasty products to a certain extent also characterize the features of the leading aesthetic views and the general trends of their creative development. Coroplasty belongs to that category of "small arts" that not only repeat the main lines of development of the monumental arts, but also contain their own specific features. The most important of them is that, made in the form of mass products and thus serving various social strata of ancient society, terracotta thus most closely met the ideological and artistic needs of broad social groups of a certain era.

On the territory of Bactria-Tokharistan, works of coroplasty were found, which introduce new factual material, on the basis of which broad generalizations will be possible in the future. At present, science already has a number of terracottas discovered during archaeological research of the settlements of the Termez region - Termez itself, Khatyn-Rabat, Zartepa, Khairabattep, Balalyktepa, archaeological sites of ancient Kobadian (Key-Kobad-shah) and the Gissar valley (Uzbekontepa, Kurganch) . To this list one can add the terracotta of the capital of Bactria-Baktra (near modern Balkh) lying on the left bank of the Amu Darya oasis.

The image of a naked goddess, expressed in female figurines, has deep roots in the world artistic culture. The idea of a Woman, the successor of the family, the bearer of the life-giving forces of nature, goes back to the immemorial times of matriarchy, and somewhere in the depths of the Solutrean era, the first idol of the Ancestor of all things, the bearer of the mighty forces of fertility and abundance, inspired by the primitive imagination of man, arises. Millennia pass, humanity goes through a long and difficult path of social development and change, and the image of the mother goddess does not disappear, although it noticeably evolves as social consciousness develops. In the art of the slave-owning world, she appears in various images of Isis, Ishtar, Demeter, Cybele and

many others. At the same time, the Asiatic East adheres with special perseverance to the archaic iconography of a naked woman standing in a motionless pose - even in those times when Greek art already wrapped its mother goddesses in draped clothes befitting a virtuous matron, giving them a natural pose of "balanced peace".

A direct parallel to this ancient group is given by a bone figurine from

Khalchayan, found in the area of Koi-Turabektepa. This is a miniature pendant in the form of a female figurine, on the back of which a thickening with a drilled hole was left by a carver, and two holes were made at the folds of the arms. She conveys the image of a naked woman with tightly closed legs, her right hand lowered and her left pressed to her chest. The face, rounded, the hairstyle frames it with strands, but smoothed out behind. Wide hips, full legs, a triangle of the floor, convex buttocks are clearly modeled - everything in this figurine emphasizes the signs of a woman - the ancestor and producer of offspring. There is no doubt that this pendant, conveying the ancient image of the Mother Goddess, was endowed with magical properties and served as an amulet. The figurine is polished to a shine, apparently from prolonged wear. Its dating probably goes back to the 5th-4th centuries. BC e.

Images of a naked and half-naked goddess (apparently close to

Anterior Asian Cybele) give figurines from ancient Merv, found in the layers of the II-I centuries. BC. Nude female figurines are known among the raised terracottas of Afrasiab and Khorezm. The archaeological layer of occurrence of the described Khalchayan terracotta, its proximity to the archaizing Achaemenid coroplasty, but at the same time to the mentioned early terracottas of the Seleucid-Parthian Seleucia, Merv, Taxila - all this allows us to date it within the 2nd-1st centuries. BC e.

In the Western domain of Khanakatep, in a lumpy blockage of destroyed walls, there was a female figurine without a head and lower legs. The material is a very dense, pinkish terracotta, the print is made in a matrix with a back and sides trimmed with a knife. High relief conveys the figure of a naked woman - broad shoulders, strongly modeled bulges of the chest, abdomen, knees. The posture is strictly frontal, legs are closed, hands are pressed to the hips. Above the waist and at the hips there are belts, on the arms, at the forearm and wrists there are double bracelets.

The figurine develops the same type as the previous one. shading, but there are some changes: nudity is already broken by belts, bracelets are on the hands

Similar details can be seen on a female figurine from the Saka layer.

Taxila (II-I centuries BC) and on numerous images of naked women in carved bone from Begram, dating of which is put by researchers within the broad framework of the Kushan era. The appearance of these works of art in Begram is clearly associated with the Indian stream. The essential difference of the Khalchayan figurine is that, like the Sako-Indian figurines from Taxila, it retains the canonical immobility of the pose, while for all purely Indian sculpture since ancient times an asymmetric position of the figures has been inherent: soft turns of the body, plastic concentration of support on one leg, with hip flexion. Thus, although the details of the decoration of the hands and body of the Khalchayan figurine have parallels in Indian sculpture, it is only a variant of the traditional goddess, whose nakedness is already violated by the "belt of shame". The distribution of this type in Bactrian coroplasty is evidenced by the discovery at the ancient site of Zartepa of a naked figurine with a bracelet and a belt around the hips, with closed legs and slightly spread arms. The interpretation of her as a "dancer" is essentially unfounded - in fact, this is a somewhat updated



version of the archaic naked goddess of the progenitor, whose image undergoes certain modifications with the convicts.

In Khalchayan there is also another group of female terracotta figurines dressed in thick clothes. The upper half of such terracotta was found in the palace. Dense brownish shard and brownish-cherry engobe; Stamped impression, somewhat indistinct. The back and sides are trimmed with a knife. The face is rounded, inexpressive; the eyes are bulging, the hair is parted and voluminous strands (four each) are laid over the forehead and at the temples; in the ears of the pendant (but maybe it is also strands of hair?). The left arm is half-bent, her hand is at the waist; the right one is tightly pressed. Clothing fits the figure, forming a triangular neckline; around the neck like a necklace.

From the 1st century BC e. and especially in the first centuries of our era throughout the Middle

Asia in coroplasty, the process of dressing figurines of goddesses in dense clothes - first Hellenized, and then purely local cut, very diverse in different areas. It is characteristic that, if the goddesses of the Kushan circle, depicted on coins of the 1st-2nd centuries, are still traditionally keep in touch with Greek fashions - heavy peplos with a himation thrown over it, then in their interpretation they are also already obvious modifications are observed - in particular, the peplos is transformed into a heavy dress with a dense system of folds at the hem and sewn-in sleeves. In the products of mass small sculpture, local costume clearly predominates.

When the Greeks appeared in Central Asia, high traditions of fine art already existed here. The objects of the Amu-Darya treasure testify to the development of statuary and small plastic art imitating it with a certain cycle of plots and stylistic features. An ancient historian reports that at the time of Alexander's campaigns in temples, palaces and private houses in Central Asia, the Greeks often came across images on the theme of the popular local epic novel about Zariadra and Odatida. It is not clear whether we are talking about pictorial or plastic images, but the very fact of their distribution in the wide life of the local population is important.

During the period of Greek colonization of the lands of Uzbekistan, elements of the Hellenistic culture began to penetrate here - initially almost in unchanged forms. On the old settlements in Termez, Samarkand and others, intaglio gems are found with the image of a warrior in an antique helmet with a long crest. Perhaps some of them show Alexander the Great, but basically this is a generalized image of those bearers of military prowess from the local aristocratic Hellenized environment, whose representatives unconditionally joined the Greek civilization and for whom such gems were made. Their dating is no later than the 4th-3rd centuries BC. e., since already in the period of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom, as we will see, the nature of the military headdress will become different (Fig. 12.13).

The Greco-Bactrian stage in the history of the artistic culture of Uzbekistan (III-II centuries BC) is still very vague. About a century and a half has passed since the first numismatic collections began to be replenished with magnificent coins with portraits and names of the Greco-Bactrian basileus, which were collected, and mainly bought up, in the regions of northwestern India, then - Afghanistan and Central Asia. The undeniable merits of these coins, sometimes not inferior to highly artistic medals, put forward an assumption about the unusually high level of Greco-Bactrian artistic



culture in general and gave rise to great expectations of possible discoveries of outstanding monuments. Many years passed, archaeologists excavated numerous ancient settlements and settlements scattered on the lands of Bactriana, but the Greco-Bactrian riddle remained undeciphered.

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