

DOI:10.29013/EJA-24-1-67-71



## THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING IN ANCIENT PERIOD AND THE MIDDLE AGES

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**Cite:** Talipov N.N. (2023). *The Stages of Development of the art of Engraving in Ancient Period and the Middle Ages*. *European Journal of Arts* 2024, No 1. <https://doi.org/10.29013/EJA-24-1-67-71>

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### Abstract

**The purpose of the article:** This scientific work provides information on the study of the stages of development of the art of engraving in ancient period and the Middle Ages.

**Research methods:** This scientific article is dedicated to the study of the important aspects of the development of engraving art of each period.

**Research results:** The main result of this scientific research work is to study the rules of composition made by skilled engravers.

**Practical application:** This scientific research work allows students to effectively use the rules of composition created by master engravers in the process of teaching the art of engraving to students in applied art classes.

**Keywords:** *composition, master engravers, art of engraving, ancient period, applied art classes, terracotta, ratio, size, Middle Age, stylization, symmetry, asymmetry, students, rules*

### Introduction

The roots of the fine art of Uzbekistan go back several centuries. Many historical monuments of material and spiritual culture, items belonging to the Mesolithic, Copper, Stone and Bronze Ages, as well as several examples of ancient monuments have been preserved in the territory of the country.

It is known from history that the first forms of art appeared in Uzbekistan from the Paleolithic period (13<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> millennia BC). The rock paintings found in the gorge of Zarautsoy in the south of Uzbekistan show that the hominid saw the natural world in its living state and depicted it using ordinary realism. The paintings depicting oxen, deer

and goats mainly date back to the Neolithic period (5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC). They are carved on the rocks of Khojakent and Bostonliq, located in the northeastern districts of Uzbekistan.

The first samples of the applied art of Uzbekistan were created during the time of the emergence of the settlement–farming culture. These are mainly composed of majestic designs of terracotta pottery. The earthenware items of Neolithic period are mostly decorated with simple patterns, there are certain symbols and magical words on them. The terracotta religious sculptures consisted mainly of the statues of female associated with gods of agriculture.

By the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, the regions of Bactria and Sogd were occupied by the Achaemenian Empire, but the findings of art objects from this period give us opportunity to talk about the possession of their own artistic direction in these regions. The new artistic methods were created in the art of this period. Several of their features were shown in the precious items of the Amu Darya treasure belonging to the 5<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. Some of the findings are close to classical oriental art with stringent and steady forms, while others reflect the decorative tradition, which includes images of animals from the deserts. However, the main group of the objects belonging to the Amu Darya treasure is made up the items of the art school of Bactria, whose local traditions are outdated and combined with the delicate art of the East. By summarizing the above words, we can think about the history of the composition of applied art in the centuries BC as follows: applied art began to spread widely around the world from the time of the Old Stone Age (Paleolithic is the period up to 10 thousand years BC), but the rules of composition were slow during this period. By observing the rules of nature in the New Stone Age, people developed their own senses of symmetry, rhythm and form. This led to the emergence of a unique art of pattern, which is based on the return or mixing of elements of each pattern. In the New Stone Age, the art of decorating objects with patterns became widespread.

Parallel, spiral, wavy stripes, concentric circles form the basis of many patterns of this period. The geometric patterns are gradually enriched schematically, and its elements reflect the symbolic signs of cosmic forces. For example, a rosette is a symbol of the Sun, a wavy stripe is a movement, a symbol of water, and others. People began to express their ideas and philosophical concepts through compositions. In the Bronze Age, in addition to ceramics, jewelry and objects made of copper, gold, and bronze were decorated with engraved line patterns. In the Iron Age, the use of plot pattern compositions developed. The compositions of images and patterns created on stones, items and jewelry made from ceramic, copper, gold and bronze using various colors were found in Zarautsoy in the mountain of Kokhitang, Ilonsoy and Aksoy

near Samarkand, Khojakent near Tashkent, Suvratsoy in Fergana and other places.

The invasion campaigns (334–326 BC) of Alexander the Great, which led to the collapse of the Achaemenid Empire started Hellenistic period in the history of Central Asian culture and art. The Hellenistic traditions were clearly manifested in the art of Bactria (Dalvarzintepa, Kampirtepa, Old Termez), and they find expression less in the artistic culture of Sogd and Khorezm. During the ancient world, architecture, sculpture, figurative images on the walls became the most widespread and characteristic types of art of that time.

The Hellenic politics managed to maintain its power for such a long time that it got its strong roots in the ancient material and spiritual culture of the peoples of Central Asia. A hundred years after the collapse of the Greco–Bactrian Kingdom, the traditions of Hellenistic culture were reborn with new power in Ganharā, a major Hellenistic center in the area of India under the Kushan Empire. The Hellenistic deities were described mainly in temples dedicated to the gods, on the surface of coins and on statues. For almost two hundred years, the Greek language was as important as the French language in the European countries of the Middle Ages, and the Hellenic tradition did not lose its attractive freshness until Islam.

In turn, the Kushan Empire came into existence on the ruins of the Greco–Bactrian state, which ended in about 140 BC under the attack of the nomadic Sakas, who were expelled by the Yueji tribes (1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD). The works of applied art aimed at creating a generalized image of the ruler, embodying the idea of unlimited power, which was blessed by God in the magnificent sculpture of the Kushan period were more democratized in their direction.

The Kushan Empire is one of the most important states in the political system of the ancient world. The Kushan Empire stood on the same level as the three great states of that time—Rome, Han and Parthia. The Kushan Empire first began to appear in the area of southern Uzbekistan (Northern Bactria).

In the first quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, this area was conquered by the Yueji (Tocharians) who migrated from the area belonged

to the Gansu tribe of modern China under the pressure of the Huns, and not long after, they also occupied Southern Bactria and formed a confederate state with the capital city of Bactra.

This state existed until the Kushan Kingdom established by Kujula Kadphises in the second half of the 1st century AD. The Kushan Empire included the Amu Darya regions of modern Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Northern India. The unique findings found as a result of scientific archaeological research carried out in different periods in the remains of ancient cities of Uzbekistan, such as Ayritom, Zartepa, Khalchayan, Saksanahur, Darvarzintepa, prove that the Kushan culture was highly developed. The wonderful art monuments of this period include colorful paintings of religious ceremonies decorating the walls of temples and shrines, bone and ceramic objects, ancient coins, small statues made of clay, female figures associated with the goddess of fertility worshiped locally, the introduction of Buddhism to Central Asia and Buddha images reflecting spread of the religion. But among them, sculpture can be a clear proof indicating the high level of Kushan art. Generally speaking, the art of the Kushan period reflects the final stage of the development of the ancient artistic culture of Uzbekistan.

The 4th-5th centuries are interpreted with the collapse of ancient empires, the establishment of the Hephthalite state as a result of the invasion of nomadic tribes from the north into Central Asia. This country disintegrates under the attack of the Turks in AD563–567. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, a part of the territory of Uzbekistan was part of the Turkish Khanate. The artistic craft of this period were mainly reflected in household items made of metal, in which the traditions of Sassanid and Far Eastern art were developed in their own way. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, the complexity of the image of the pattern on the walls is distinguished by the richness of the composition and the variety of colors (Bolaliktepa fortress, Varakhsha palace). The masters used the art of clay, ganch carving, wood and stone carving to decorate the rich houses and palaces of Sogd.

The religious themes, sacred plots and figures occupied the leading place in art in earlier times, while secular themes were in the first place in the art of the early Middle Ages.

The major centers of urban civilization were formed in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Choch and Southern Sogd. These cities were centers of development of pottery, glassmaking, art metal and textiles. In return for the unparalleled service of the Great Silk Road, connections between the traditions of local folk arts and crafts and the artistic methods of the masters of Iran, India, Byzantium, China and the Steppe East were strengthened. The extensive trade relations led to the appearance of art products from near and far countries in local markets, as a result of which Sogdian carving adopted styles from various tribes, from the Iranian–Sasanians to the Turks, and it led to a unique artistic harmony. By pursuing the Sassanid style, the Sogdian nobles tried to manifest their greatness and status. The art of the Steppe Turks was neither influenced by Sassanid carving styles based on court laws and aesthetics, nor by Sogdian silver patterns made in a free and energetic style.

The ring shaped containers, spoons, bowls, and jugs with handles placed in the upper part of the container in a transverse shape, with images of legendary heroes took the leading forms in Sogdian silver carving. There are also dishes with animal symbols. The elements of unstable Turkish carving, eastern Iran, Sogd and Tan period art were important for the eastern districts of Uzbekistan (Fergana carving). The nomadic Turks and Sogdian colonists lived together in the territory of Fergana region, as a result of which there was a phenomenon of mixing of cultures in Fergana art and pottery. In Fergana artistic art, depictions of creatures, including unusual elephants and monkeys were very popular. But nevertheless, the image of deer, mountain goat, gazelle and various birds is also often found. The interest in animal subjects was very high in the art of the people from steppe, where images of the world of creatures occupy the main place. In the artistic art of Fergana, local styles and specific features of Hellenism are often observed.

The development of the Khorezm carving school is evidenced by a two-handled bowl inscribed with Khorezm inscriptions belongs to the 3<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The cups with small size (base circle 12–13 cm) differ from the methodical and compositional aspect. One of them describes the image of Siyavash, the ancient god of the king of plants, who is in

the symbol of the Khorezm state, riding a horse and the other describes the image of the four-armed goddess Great Mother, a symbol of common holiness, sitting solemnly on the shoulder of a lion. In the artistic art of the early Middle Ages, we can observe the harmony of different styles and directions, the world of creatures, mythical and epic themes have reached a high level. The rich pictorial forms of that period gave way over time to the patterned style of medieval Muslim art. The discovery of various decorations related to the Mediterranean Sea in the ossuaries of the Sogdians has aroused great interest among scientists. The main reason for the emergence of such a connection with the distant past is that Christians and Jews who were expelled from Asia Minor and Iran lived in Sogd permanently. The Sogdian masters used themes related mainly to the local population, based on harmonious compositions.

One of the most common compositions is the statues of gods placed in the main entrance of Sogdian temples. Sometimes wreaths in the form of heads, two or three flowers with leaves are depicted on the walls of the entire ossuary. In the early Middle Ages, it had become a widespread habit to decorate the walls of the houses of rulers, nobles (rich people) and public buildings with magnificent paintings. First, the patterns are plastered with a clay mixture, treated with glue, and then drawn on the surface of the dry wall. The natural gold was used for gilding with glue paints. The artists of Central Asia did not have any knowledge about the laws of space, ray, shadow and light, which are the achievements of European art. However, the compositions created by the masters of Central Asia were distinguished by the particular tonality of the lines, the very clear description of the patterns, the expressiveness of the ghosts, and the harmony of the leading colors.

On the eve of the introduction of Islam to Central Asia in the 6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> centuries, our ancestors presented the highest examples of majestic mural painting. It found its truth in the following words of Ibn al-Asar: “When the old society is on the verge of destruction, the torch of its culture first shines by roaring”.

With the spread of Islam, the images of people who believe in this religion, as well as religious beliefs regarding the depiction of natural creatures began to form. But, nevertheless, old manuscript sources confirm that there were mural paintings in Bukhara caravanserais during the Samonite period (9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries), and this art became popular in the 10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries.

During the conquest of Central Asia by the Arabs and the spread of Islam to other countries (7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> centuries), visual art, which was the basis of artistic styles in craftsmanship and memorization gave way to the art of patterning. With the spreading of Islam, negative views on the depiction of living creatures in works of applied art began to appear. Therefore, in the nations that accepted the religion of Islam, the art of decorative patterns was strengthened and achieved complete superiority in art.

The appearance and formation of a new sophistication continued until the invasion of the Mongols (the beginning of the 13th century). The second era includes the period of Timur and the Timurids (14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries), this era started the Renaissance period not only in Movarounnahr, but also in the social and cultural life of the entire Middle East. During this period, art, poetry and science were highly developed. Such types of elegant art as handicrafts, miniatures and architecture developed immeasurably. At that time, elegant and luxurious styles dominated. Several Uzbek khanates were formed in the place of Amir Timur and the Timurids state, and finally, the third period began.

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submitted 22.08.2023;  
accepted for publication 20.09.2023;  
published 8.10.2023  
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