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SCULPTURAL ART OF NORTHERN BACTRIA

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Abstract

Northern Bactria is considered a territory that has made an important contribution to the development of the history of world civilization, the rise of the material and spiritual life of mankind. Research has shown that many monuments have been preserved from here, starting from the Stone Age and ending with the Middle Ages. During the excavations, pottery, all kinds of jewelry, coins, various types of figurines and statuettes, frescoes and other objects were found in them. This is a vivid expression of the highly developed culture of our people in the past. The article provides a brief overview of the sculpture, which is a unique monument of art.

Keywords: *Khalchayan, Dalverzintepa, Ayritom, Karatepa, Fayaztepa, Zartepa, Hayitobodtepa, Buddha, Buddhism, Kushan period, ancient world, sculpture, culture, art, clay, hook, limestone*

Introduction

There are many archaeological monuments of different historical periods in the territory of our republic. They are rich in various information that shed light on the development of the history and culture of our people. In this regard, the results of research conducted in Northern Bactria are particularly noteworthy. Today, great work is being done by archaeologists to study the artistic significance of art monuments that have been found and are still being found. Sculptural culture, which is a type of unique art monuments, is also of great importance. In ancient times, many statues and figurines were found in the territory of Central Asia. These statues and figurines

reflect people's religious ideas, beliefs, and aesthetic views.

It is known that sculpture is one of the oldest forms of art, and it has had its direction and content in every era. Looking into the past, we see that the art of sculpture has been developing since ancient times. In this regard, many monographs and articles of our scientists expressed opinions and comments. For example, scholar academician G.A. Pugachenkova's 204-page monograph "Skulptura Khalchayana", published in Moscow in 1971, is of great importance. In the monograph, Hamza Institute of Art History G.A. The results of the research work carried out in Khalchayan in 1953–1963 by a group of employees

of the Uzbekistan art history expedition under the leadership of Pugachenkova (V. Dolinskaya, D. Roziboev, B. Turgunov, Kh. Khusnitinkhojaev), topography and stratigraphy of the settlement, architecture, fine and applied art monuments and other valuable information is displayed. In addition, it is worth mentioning the article of the scientist entitled “Dalvarzintepa and Khadda sculptures” published in “Moziydan Sado” magazine, No. 2(58) of 2013. Article by G.A. A comparative analysis of the sculptures of the two largest Kushon art centers of Bactria – Dalvarzintepa (Uzbekistan) and Hadda (Afghanistan) taken from Pugachenkova’s scientific diary.

Candidate of History Sh. R. Pideev’s articles entitled “Sculptures of the Kushon era” published in the magazine “Art of Soviet Uzbekistan” in issue 7 of 1984, and “Elegance in the depths of the hills” (co-authored with T. Annoev) in issue 6 of the same magazine in 1978 are also noteworthy. The scientist’s article “Sculptures of the Kushan period” describes the ideas about small figurines – ter-

racottas, which are a type of unique art monuments found in the cities and villages of the Surkhandarya region of the Kushan period. In “Elegance in the Depths of the Hills”, the Bactrian Archaeological Expedition of the Institute of Archeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR talks about the excavations of Talashgantepa from the Achaemenid era, Zartepa from the Kushan period, and Kuyovkurgan from the early Middle Ages and its results.

According to research, ancient Uzbek sculpture has been researched by the “Artistic Expedition” since 1960. As a result of expeditions led by specialists led by academician G. A. Pugachenkova, many rare monuments of sculptural works reflecting the development of our past culture were found. These findings serve as the main source for the study of ancient Uzbek sculpture. These artifacts represent the socio-political, spiritual and cultural way of life of the Akhmen state from the last period of rule in the 4th century BC to the 3rd–4th centuries AD (Polatov D. S., 2017. 17).

Figure 1. *Muzykanty. Fragment frieze cornice Ayrtona. Termez. height 36–38 cm. 1–2 years old. Leningrad. Hermitage*

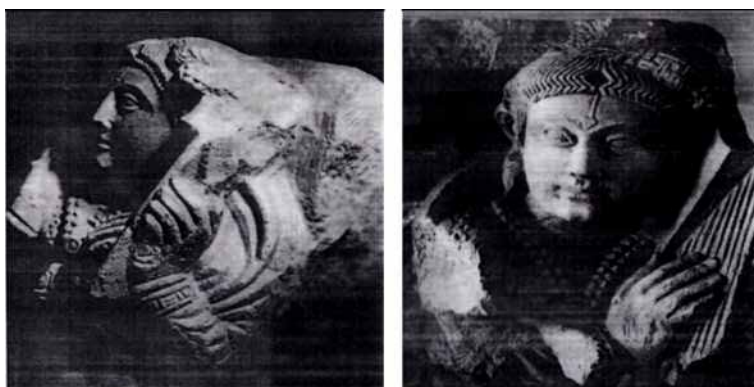


Figure 2. *Arytom. Marble limestone. Mil. I–II centuries*



Examples of sculptures found in monuments such as Holchayon, Dalvarzintepa, Ayritom, Karatepa, Fayoztepa, Zartepa, Hayitobodtepa of Northern Bactria are noteworthy. Among the monuments related to Buddhism, Ayritom statues have a special place. Eight tablets – pyromons found there are

now kept in one of the Eastern halls of the Hermitage (Pictures 1–2). The sculptures of Dalvarzintepa are also noteworthy. We can see that the facial structures and clothes of the people of the Kushan state are reflected in them (Figures 4–6).

Figure 3. *Ayritom. Clay figurines. 1964 year. Autumn (Archive)*



Figure 4. *Dalvarzintepa. Figurine parts. 1967 year. (Archive)*



Figure 5. *Dalvarzintepa. Figurine parts. 1967 year. (Archive)*



The discovery of sculptural examples in Holchayon and Dalvarzintepa sheds new light on the development of sculptural art in Kushan Bactria. These two large settlements are located 40 km from each other,

in the middle stream of Surkhandarya, in the area known as Chaganiyan in medieval sources. Figure 7. Location map of Holchayon and Dalvarzintepa monuments (Google Earth).

Figure 6. *Dalvarzintepa. Bodhisattva head. The ruler's head. 1967 year. (Archive)*



Figure 7. *Location map of Holchayon and Dalvarzintepa monuments (Google Earth)*



The statues of Holchayon are close to the period of the Geray dynasty, and the statues of Dalvarzintepa are to the period of the coins of Kadphis I and Kadphis II. Dalvarzin sculptures represent a new stage in the development of sculpture of the Kushon period compared to the sculpture of Holchayon (Pugachenkova. G.A., 1968. 12).

Most of the sculptures depict mainly members of the royal family, rich nobles, musicians and clowns. An example of this is the sculptures found in the Holchayan monument. Sh. R. According to Pidaev, "The sculptures found in Holchayan are lifelike, impressive and attractive. Each sculpture here is a world in itself, a priceless masterpiece.

Figure 8. *Holchayon. Warrior's head. A young man from the Geray family. Sculptures on the wall of the palace*



In them, the ideology of their time, religious ideas, some aspects of cultural household life are vividly expressed. The sculptures and paintings found in Holchayan are made in the style typical of the past era. After all, Hellenism, the cultural traditions of the local Bactrians and nomadic Yuechi tribes were also reflected here to a certain extent. On the basis of these three forces, Kushan culture was formed” (Pidaev Sh.R., 1990).

Looking at the sculptures of Holchayan, we see that Bactrian sculptors penetrated deeply into the inner world of the images

they depicted, studied people’s living standards, and raised their artistic value. One of the most wonderful qualities of sculptors is that the pain, natural beauty, and glory of a person are reflected in their works. Buddhist statues were found in monuments such as Ayritom, Dalvarzintepa, Karatepa, Fayoztepa. According to the research, it was known that clay, limestone, ganch were used in making the statues. According to information, the interior of the Karatepa Buddha monument is decorated with ganch sculptures.

Figure 9. *Karatepa. Female head. Buddha head. Mil. III century*



According to According B. Turgunov, it is worth writing a separate book about Fayoztepa’s sculpture. Because from there the Buddha and the bodhisattva, the devas and all the other personages present in the Buddhist temples are incarnated (Turgunov B., 1976) and the statues are made of clay and ganch.

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Figure 11. *Fayoztepa. Buddha with monks. A piece of sculpture. Bodhisattva. Sun god. Mil. I–II century*



The statue of Buddha found in Fayoztepa, that is, in the middle of a large solid stone made of limestone, sitting with hands folded, with priests on both sides, skillfully decorated with leaves of the bearberry tree, is

noteworthy. Today, this statue is kept in one of the museums of Termiz. It should be said that Buddha’s sitting with his hands folded or raised up meant a certain meaning, for example, if the paws of one hand are in the palm

of the other hand, it is “mudra” – “immersion in thought”, if he raises his hand up, it means reassurance, his hair is combed into a ball. “ushnina”, and the spot on the forehead was called “urna” (Pidaev Sh.R. 1984. 29).

The discovery of sculptures in Holchayon and Dalverzintepa sheds a completely new light on the development of sculptural art in Kushan Bactria. These sculptures are distinguished by their unique characteristics. For example, the statues of Dalvarzintepa were made of sticky clay, covered with cloth, then ganch was given, and the sculptor created the image of the desired person. Undoubtedly, the influence of Hellenic sculptural art is noticeable in the work of these statues.

Thus, we come to the conclusion that in ancient times in the south of our republic

there was a unique art of sculpture. In the lands of Surkhandarya region, flower sculptors created sculptures from local materials – stone, ordinary clay and ganch. No matter how many statues there are, they are not alike, one does not repeat the other. These sculptures are of unique importance and enrich the sculptural art of the ancient world with their unique masterpieces.

Sculptural examples provide valuable information about the images related to the religious ideas, aesthetic views, and folk legends of our people in the distant past. Statues and figurines also give an idea of people’s faces, clothes, style, and what kind of jewelry they wear. Depending on their distribution, it is possible to learn about the cultural relations of peoples.

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