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STONE SCULPTURES IN THE MUSEUM COLLECTION: ISSUES OF MUSEIFICATION AND EXHIBITION

Abstract. The Eurasian steppes nomads left behind numerous statues across the vast territories of the Turkic states. These stone figures are found everywhere from Eastern Mongolia to the Elbe Valley. Many statues date back to the 6th-8th centuries. Based on an analysis of archaeological finds and the collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the typology of these statues is examined: ranging from elite “khagan-type” seated figures to images of warriors and female stone sculptures.

Stone statues of the Turkic period represent a complex semiotic system in which posture, attributes, and spatial arrangement encode the social status and sacral role of the depicted character. Most sculptural representations of Turkic monuments are executed as full-length standing figures; however, some statues depict only the head of the upper part of the body. Within large elite complexes sculptures of people in both standing and sitting positions are present.

The study also provides a critical analysis of the museification process. It addresses the problem of “decontextualization” – the loss of an object’s sacral and semantic meaning when it is removed from its natural landscape and architectural ensemble. The research justifies the necessity of implementing new exhibition approaches to preserve the ancient Turkic heritage.

Keywords: Ancient Turkic stone statues, Khagan, museification, semiotics, nomadic culture of Kazakhstan, decontextualization.

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Introduction

The Eurasian steppes nomads left behind numerous statues across the vast territories of the Turkic states. These stone figures are found everywhere from Eastern Mongolia to the Elbe Valley. Many statues date back to the 6th-8th centuries.

These statues symbolized the departed ancestors, each statue carries individual features. The faces on the ancient Turkic sculptures are distinguished by Mongoloid features, round faces with long straight noses, slightly slanted eyes and curved moustaches are shown. Eyebrows and nose are drawn in one solid line.

History and geography have formed a special model of the continuity of the Turkic states, the great steppe empires. Over the centuries, they have successively replaced each other, leaving

their significant mark on the economic, political and cultural landscape of medieval Kazakhstan. Memorial monuments are an important source on the history and culture of the ancient and medieval nomads of the Altai Mountains. They reflect the rituals of the memorial cycle, designed to perpetuate the memory of the deeds of tribesmen, warrior heroes, and nomadic leaders. The monuments were built according to a certain canon, a ritual tradition that goes back deep into history. Within the framework of a separate culture, the ritual practice had its own burial and wake options inherent in the clan tradition. Burial mounds, as funerary monuments, are almost always located in a close system with objects of memorial (ritual) purpose. After the funeral of the deceased, his wake was performed with ritual actions: making a fire, feasting, sacrifice,

and so on, to feed the souls of the dead.

The purpose of this article is to identify the issues of interpretation of stone sculptures of the ancient Turks in the context of the museum exposition. The sculpture of the ancient Turks, influenced to varying degrees by Buddhism, Manichaeism, and Mazdeism and developed in the traditions of the Sogdian art school, preserved at the same time not only shamanic, but also pre-Shamanic religious beliefs. This is evidenced by the reconstruction of the ancient Turkic memorial rite based on archaeological and ethnographic sources. It was based on the most ancient ideas associated with the cult of ancestors and having an amazing similarity of the funeral and memorial rites of the Altai Turks with the traditional funeral customs of the Turkic-speaking peoples of Siberia and Central Asia (Ermolenko, 2004: 74).

Materials and research methods

The material and source base of the research consists of archaeological, museum and written materials, which allow a comprehensive examination of the problem of the formation and visualization of the ancient Turkic cultural complex in stone plastic. A significant part of the source base consists of the museum collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The materials of the Tarbagatai archaeological expedition led by Z. Samashev were used as archaeological sources. Special attention is paid to the Eleke Sazy cult and memorial complex, which is one of the most representative sacred and funerary monuments in the region. The archaeological finds of the expedition make it possible to correlate the stone sculptures with a specific historical and cultural context and clarify their functional purpose.

The study also included 15 male and 4 female stone sculptures found in Southern Kazakhstan, the Aral Sea region and the Akmola region. These monuments are considered as an integral visual array reflecting regional peculiarities, iconographic canons and the evolution of the human image in ancient Turkic sculpture.

Written sources play an important role in the interpretation of sculptures. The texts of ancient Turkic runic monuments, such as the Tonyukuk inscriptions and the Terkhin stele, containing information about the social structure, military organization, and ideological beliefs of the Turkic society, are used. Additionally, the works of Mahmud Kashgari are involved, in particular his lexicographic and ethnographic descriptions, which

make it possible to clarify the meaning of terms, attributes and social categories reflected in the visual material.

The methodological basis of the study is a comparative typological analysis aimed at comparing the attributes depicted on stone sculptures with real archaeological finds from burial complexes. This method allows you to identify the degree of conventionality or realism of images and determine their symbolic and social significance.

The semiotic method is used to consider stone sculptures as a system of visual codes in which posture, gestures, objects in hands, and costume details function as signs indicating the social status, gender, and role of the depicted character in society.

Within the framework of the art historical analysis, the technique of carving, the features of plastic processing of stone, compositional techniques and iconographic canons characteristic of ancient Turkic sculpture are studied. This allows us to identify stylistic patterns, masterful traditions and possible cultural influences.

The complex application of these materials and methods provides an interdisciplinary approach and allows us to consider stone sculptures not only as archaeological objects, but also as an important visual source on the history and artistic culture of the ancient Turks.

Analysis

Stone sculptures from the Turkic period represent a complex semiotic system in which posture, attributes, and spatial arrangement encode the social status and sacred role of the portrayed character. Most of the sculptural images of Turkic monuments are made in the form of people standing at full height, however, some sculptures have images of only the head or the upper part of the body. Large elite complexes, such as the Kul Tigin Complex, feature sculptures of people in both standing and sitting positions.

The iconographic scheme depicting a man in a sitting position with his legs crossed is an absolute marker of the highest social hierarchy in the ancient Turkic tradition. Unlike standing statues, which are often interpreted as images of heroes ready for action or service, a sitting position could symbolize a state of absolute peace, mastery of space and high status. This is a visual metaphor for "sitting on the throne", which distinguishes the ruler (khagan) from his entourage. A similar hierarchy can be clearly

seen in the elite memorial complexes of Mongolia, for example, the statues of Bilge Khagan and the military commander Kul Tigin. In them, the central figures of the rulers are executed in a sitting position and placed in the focus of the sacred space, while the accompanying figures can be depicted standing.

The sedentary statues have never been installed isolated in an "open field". They were the semantic center of complex architectural ensembles, which, by their morphological and contextual characteristics, fully correspond to the category of so-called "Khagan-princely" monuments (according to V.E. Vojtov's terminology), designated in ancient Turkic written sources as *barq* (*Drevnetyurkskij slovar*, 1969: 84). Such objects marked the sacral space of ancient Turkic *ale* (*qorug* – "to protect", "a protected place"), serving not only as memorial sites, but also as sacred centers. They are inextricably linked with the practices of the cult of ancestors and the deification of the image of the deceased khagan. (Vojtov, 1996: 76-79). The temple acted as a model of the universe, and the seated sculpture in its center was the axis of the world, connecting the world of the living with the world of spirits. The spatial organization of such complexes always has a strict orientation along the east-west axis, that is, facing sunrise, which confirms the solar character of the Turkic cults (Vojtov, 1996).

A vivid confirmation of the existence of this tradition on the territory of Eastern Kazakhstan is the discovery made in 2021 by the Tarbagatai archaeological expedition led by Dr. Zainolla Samashev. The investigated Eleke Sazy cult and memorial complex is located on the territory of the Tarbagatai district of the East Kazakhstan region, about 95 km south-southwest of the village of Aksuat, on the third overflowing terrace of the right bank of the Kargyba River, in the eastern part of the grave field (Samashev, Ajtkali, Tolegenov, 2022).

The Eleke Sazy complex is a monumental two-pronged stone and earthen structure. The central element is a temple structure with a square shape in the plan, adjacent to the eastern side of which is a complex corridor structure, as shown by subsequent research, including a labyrinth. The spatial organization of the complex has a clearly defined orientation along the east-west axis: the total length is 90 m, the maximum width is 51 m (Samashev, Ajtkali, Tolegenov, 2022: 22).

The scale of the structure and its complex architecture indicate the high status of the buried. The labyrinth in this context can be interpreted as an

initiation path or a protective barrier separating the sacred space of *barq* from our world.

The key artifact of this complex is a stone statue classified as "Khagan" (Fig.1a). A fragment of a Khagan-type sculpture depicts a seated man with his legs crossed and tucked under him. Despite the loss of the head and upper torso, the status is unmistakably read through the detailed attributes characteristic of the highest nobility.

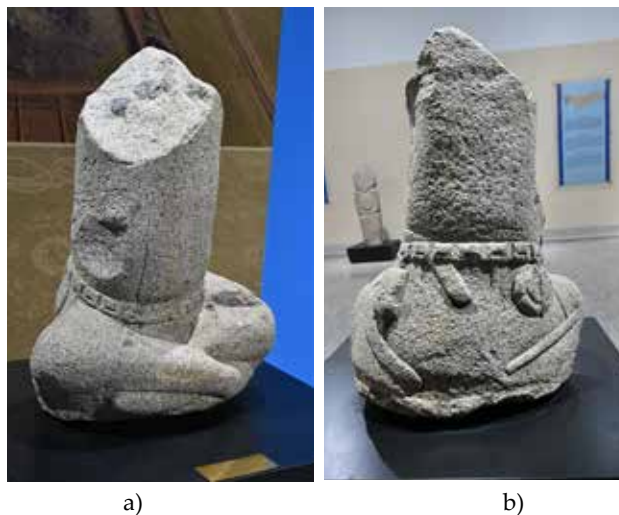


Fig. 1. Khagan stone sculpture from Eleke Sazy complex: a) Front side; b) Back side

The detailing of the costume and equipment on the statue from the Saza tree carries important ethnographic information. The sculpture is decorated with a unique belt set consisting of three types of plaques: rectangular and segmented with slots for threading belts, as well as moonstone-type plaques with scalloped outlines (Fig.1b). In the Turkic society, the belt was an indicator of social status; the number and material of the belt directly indicated the rank and its merits. The intricate decoration of the belt once again proves that the depicted man belongs to the elite of the khaganate.

A small bag was attached to the belt on the right side. The presence of such handbags is associated with ritual practice. These bags contained flint and tinder, the items needed to light the sacred fire, as well as possibly ancestral amulets. This highlights the role of the khagan not only as a ruler, but also as a priest or head of the clan responsible for communicating with spirits.

Such anthropomorphic sculptures are typical for memorial ensembles of the highest social hierarchy of ancient Turkic society. The largest number of them were found in Northern Mongolia, as well as in

other regions inhabited by medieval ancient Turkic peoples (Samashev, 2012). These sculptures act not only as artistic and religious objects, but also as ideograms of power embodied in stone. They serve as markers of the khaganate's political presence on the territory and as centers of religious worship, where the image of a deified ancestor was used to consolidate society (Vojtov, 1996: 21-22).

The sacralization of the khagan's image is also given in written sources. In the Tonyukuk inscription and the Terkhin stele, the role of the supreme ruler is presented from the first words, considering him inviolable and "not born" (Terkhin inscription), which "Tengri himself gave Khan..." (Tonyukuk Stele). The sacredness of the Khagan's personality is also noted in the work of Mahmud Kashgari: "Allah the Almighty raised the luminary of Fate to the constellations of the Turks, directed the heavens to revolve around their kingdom, named them at-Turk and endowed them with power, made them the Rulers of the Century and placed the reins of the Chosen people in their hands, exalted them above [other] people and guided them to the truth" (Kashgari, 2005: 53).

The collection of ancient Turkic monumental sculpture of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan includes 15 male stone sculptures. This collection, presented in the museum's exposition and collections, is an important source for the reconstruction of the material culture and ideological ideas of the nomads of Central Asia. The analysis of male stone sculptures allows us to identify key ethnographic markers and consider the specifics of the museum existence of these objects.

The most representative group of sculptures belongs to the period of the 9th-11th centuries. And it demonstrates the established iconographic canon of the noble Turkic warrior. A striking example is the monumental sculpture from Southern Kazakhstan (ҚРҰМ НҰК 26328/1-2), dating from the 11th century (Fig.2). Its height is 270 cm. This monument is presented in the hall of the Ancient Turkic civilization and captures the classical three-part structure of the image. The front part is characterized by detailed elaboration – the eyes, eyebrows, nose, mustache, and mouth are clearly highlighted. Important ethnomarking details are the earring in the right ear and the image of long hair on the back of the sculpture. In the context of the Turkic cultural tradition, these elements do not serve as gender characteristics, but as an indicator of the high social rank of a male warrior. The iconography

of the torso includes an image of clothing with two triangular lapels, as well as a canonical pose: a bowl in the bent right hand and a long straight sword in the lowered left.



Fig. 2. Male stone statue, the 11th century, Southern Kazakhstan

A similar semantics can be traced in the sculpture of the 9th-11th centuries. from the Turkestan region (Fig.3a). The sculpture depicts a man in clothes with a collar. Of particular interest is the detail of the gesture: the bowl in the right hand is held with two fingers, reflecting the nuances of the ritual etiquette of the era. The military status is emphasized by a set of weapons: the left hand rests on a curved dagger, and a long sword is depicted below along the body.

A separate category is made up of archaic plastic, represented by a sculpture of the VII-VIII centuries from the Aral Sea region (ҚРҰМ НҰК-13687) (Fig. 3b). Small size (33*19*28 cm) and the flattened shape distinguish it from later samples. The artistic emphasis is shifted to the individualization of the portrait: arched eyebrows, large almond-shaped eyes and a massive chin create an expressive image. A unique feature is the position of the hands at the waist level with the thumbs up, a specific gesture that probably has a sacred and ritual significance in nomadic communication.



Fig.3. Male stone statues: a) the 9th – 11th cc., Turkestan region; б) the 7th -8th cc., the Aral Sea region.

Typologically, the collection of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan correlates with the elite monuments of Altai. The general visual code is the image of ceremonial vestments and a waist set with curly plaques, the main indicator of rank in the Turkic hierarchy. It is important to keep in mind that the modern perception of these statues as monochrome objects made of limestone or marble is distorted by time. Initially, the sculptures were subjected to polychrome coloring, which conveyed the real color scheme of fabrics and marbles, however, in conditions of prolonged exposure to an aggressive environment, the colorful layer was lost.

Scientific work with the collection involves solving a number of conservation and methodological problems. The history of the exhibits often includes complex restoration interventions. An illustrative case is the restoration of a 19th-century sculpture from Southern Kazakhstan (ҚРҰМ НҚ 26328/1-2), which entered the museum in a fragmented form. To restore the integrity of the monument, a structural reinforcement technique was applied: a metal pin was inserted into the base of the head and torso, and the joint was consolidated with a composite based on glue and stone chips. This example illustrates the evolution of restoration approaches and the need to document such interventions.

To reconstruct the role of women in ancient Turkic society, it is necessary to consider written sources and material memorials as a single cultural code. A comparison of epigraphic data with

archaeological finds suggests that a woman in the Steppe possessed not only a sacred, but also a high socio-political status.

According to the written monuments, the ruler's wife occupied a position comparable to the khagan himself. The Terkhin inscription speaks of "Il-Etmish Bilge-khagan, born of Heaven", and at the same time of "Elbilge-khatun, born of Heaven", which emphasizes the dualism of supreme power. Mahmoud Kashgari confirms this in his work, defining the title "khatun" as belonging to the ruling dynasty and citing the proverb "When the khan has things to do, the princess's worries remain on the sidelines", which indicates a division of spheres of influence, but recognition of the importance of women's concerns (Kashgari, 2005: 386). In addition, there was a clear hierarchy: the title "kunju" designated women of noble origin, but with a rank lower than khatun. Dynastic marriages, as indicated in the monument to Kul Tigin, served as a guarantor of political alliances, where the marriage of a princess secured the status of vassal rulers (Boroffka, Sultanova, 2024: 41).

The high social status of women was embodied in monumental art. Stone sculptures from the era of the Turkic khaganates depicted not only warriors, but also women, which is a direct reflection of their role in society. A striking example is the Kul Tigin memorial complex, where a statue of his wife was erected. Only a fragment of the head has been preserved from the statue, on which the Mongoloid

facial features are clearly visible. Tightly compressed lips are especially expressive, giving the image determination and strength of character.



Fig.4. Female stone statue, 9th -11th cc., Akmola region

The tradition of perpetuating female images was not limited to the Khagan's headquarters. The collections of the National Museum of Kazakhstan contain and exhibit sculptures of the 9th-11th centuries found in the Erementau district of the Akmola region in the Tomdykol-3 complex (Fig.4). Despite the fact that researcher Ya. Sher noted the difficulty of gender identification of many sculptures due to their schematics or poor preservation, the presence of pronounced female features (including nude figures) (Sher, 1963) and the specific attributes on female stone sculptures from the Erementau district confirm the ubiquity of this memorial practice. Thus, stone sculptures serve as a "visual duplicate" of those high titles and rights that are recorded in ancient texts.

From the point of view of museology, combining these data allows us to build a deeper concept of the exposition of the hall of the ancient Turkic civilization. When describing exhibits where gender is not explicitly expressed, the phrase

"anthropomorphic sculpture" should be used, but if there is a context, it is important to focus on the gender aspect, helping the visitor understand that a woman in Turkic society held a high social status (Sher, 1963). Four female statues, donated by archaeologist V.S. Voloshin in 2019, represent a ready-made exhibition module. The size range (from 66 to 173 cm) allows you to create a dynamic composition that demonstrates the variability of the canon in the 9th-11th centuries.

As a rule, the sculptures were quite detailed, and give us excellent evidence of the appearance of the inhabitants of the steppe of the 6th-8th centuries. Stone sculptures often depicted hats, braids, robes, belts, jewelry, and weapons.

Turkic monuments give us the image of a man with braided hair. The statues often depict traditional Turkic clothing, belts with weapons suspended from them, and waist bags. Another common attribute of Turkic monuments is a bowl in the hand. It symbolized the participation of the deceased in a memorial service with friends and relatives.

Results

Museification of elite seated statues is associated with a number of methodological and scenic problems. The transfer of an object from an authentic sacred landscape environment to the museum's exhibition space inevitably leads to the transformation of its semantic field and the loss of a number of semantic codes.

The fundamental problem is the decontextualization and loss of architectonics, that is, the gap between sculpture and its architectural surroundings. In the original context, the seated statue of Khagan was not an autonomous object, but a compositional and sacred center of the memorial temple. The architecture, the presence of fences and a maze created a hierarchy of space where the figure of the ruler was dominant. In the conditions of the traditional linear museum exposition of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where monuments are lined up along the walls, the status difference between the "Khagan" seated statue and ordinary stone sculptures is being leveled. Spatial desemantization deprives the object of its domineering aura, turning the sacred center into an ordinary exhibit of an archaeological collection.

The ancient Turkic memorial tradition implied a strict orientation of the complex to the cardinal points, facing east, and the possibility of a circular view of the sculpture. This is critically important for

seated statues, as a significant array of ethnographic information is placed on the side and rear planes of the monument. The practice of wall-mounted exposure makes these zones “blind” for the researcher and the visitor, truncating the informative value of the monument by 40-50% and violating the integrity of perception of the image of the warrior ruler.

The specificity of Turkic stone carving lies in the use of low bas-relief techniques and graphic engraving, designed for conditions of natural sunlight. In the conditions of the museum hall, where diffused overhead light is used, optical flattening of the relief occurs. The engraved small details become almost indistinguishable without special contrast lighting. In addition, museification records the current state of the stone, ignoring the fact of the original polychromy of the sculptures. The absence of a color layer, which in ancient times served as an important tool for encoding social information, distorts the aesthetic and semiotic perception of an object by a modern audience.

An important problem in the exhibition of the seated khagan from the Eleke Sazy complex is the psychological aspect of its fragmentation. In museum communication, the “front area” is the main point of emotional contact between the viewer and the object. The absence of a head makes it difficult to personify the object and reduces empathy for the figure not only as a khagan, but as a historical subject in general. Therefore, the expositor faces an ethical and methodological dilemma: the preservation of scientific authenticity comes into conflict with the need to reconstruct a holistic artistic image for visitors. And the solution to this problem dictates the need to use digital augmented reality tools.

Due to the lack of epigraphic data on most sculptures, the main tool for their dating and attribution is a comparative typological analysis of “realities”. Researchers, including museum staff, are comparing the objects depicted on the stone with specific finds from closed archaeological complexes (burials) and other art monuments of Central Asia. This method makes it possible to establish the dating and ethnocultural affiliation of stone statues with high accuracy, turning them into a full-fledged historical source.

The problem of exposing ancient Turkic monumental sculpture lies in the conflict between form and context. As V. Benjamin notes, the removal of an object from the sacred environment leads to the loss of its “aura” and ritual function. Using the example of the ancient statue of Venus, the author

argued about the sacredness of this figure for the ancient Greeks and “the symbol of a terrible idol for medieval clerics”. (Benyamin, 1996: 26). In the conditions of a traditional museum, the “museum effect” described by S. Alpers is triggered – a cult object is transformed into a purely aesthetic, in our case, a work of stone-cutting art. (Alpers, 2022). Museification of monumental monuments of nomads is a complex cultural process that is not limited to the physical movement of the object. The removal of the monument from the natural landscape environment and its integration into the museum space inevitably entail a transformation of its ontological status. In modern museology, this process is characterized as decontextualization, which results in the preservation of the material form with the loss of its immaterial, sacred content.

The analysis of expository practice allows us to identify four levels of semantic reduction leading to the loss of the authentic meaning of the monument.

In the traditional worldview of the Turkic peoples, space was not homogeneous, it was structured through sacred markers. The stone statue acted not just as a memorial sign, but as a tool for sacred navigation and organization of space.

The main condition for the installation of the statue was its strict orientation facing East, which ensured its connection with solar cults and the supreme deity Tengri. In a closed exhibition hall, the orientation of the sculpture follows the architectural logic of the room. In the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, stone sculptures are located along two walls, depriving viewers of a circular view, as well as ignoring the west-east vector, thereby depriving it of its cosmological function.

In the memorial composition of the Turkic tribes, the statue could be the beginning of the composition, from which a long string of stone statues and balbals stretched to the east. Traditional expository practice removes only artistically valuable sculptures, leaving strings of balbals in the field or in the funds as “insignificant material”. In the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, stone sculptures repeat this composition of the alley in the exhibition, but with one caveat: the stone sculptures belong to different territories and date back to different periods.

For a standing statue, the key attributes are a set belt and bladed weapons, which are often depicted from the side or behind. In the steppe, the approach to the statue was possible from all sides. The back and sides of the sculpture were as informative as



the front side. In museums, standing statues are often installed along the walls, suggesting only a frontal inspection. This turns the three-dimensional sculpture into a high relief. The “blind spot” hides the most important ethnographic markers of rank, turning a detailed historical source into a generalized image of an “anthropomorphic stone image”.

The carving technique of the Turkic masters was designed to interact with dynamic sunlight. Under the rays of the sun, which changed the angle of incidence during the day, the flat images on the stone acquired meaning. Diffused museum light “flattens” the image. The texture of the stone (sandstone, granite) begins to dominate the image. Without specially directed warm light, the sacred image becomes unreadable, visually “dead”.

Conclusion

One of the urgent problems of the study of ancient Turkic memorial monuments is their rapid disappearance in our time. The unique objects of the material heritage of medieval nomadic cultures, preserved for thousands of years, are now being lost due to human economic activity. A significant part of the monuments is known only from a limited number of museum sketches and archival photographs, which significantly complicates their comprehensive study and reconstruction. Often, ancient sculptures are subjected to mechanical destruction during agricultural work – they are uprooted, deformed and brought to stone mounds on the outskirts of fields. There are cases when in Altai these objects were used as building materials for the construction of bridges and other economic structures, which leads to the irreversible loss of the

most important sources on the history and culture of the Turkic peoples.

The analysis of the concept of stone sculptures of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan allows us to characterize it as a representative source on the history, social stratification and ideology of the Turkic khaganates. The collection, which includes both elite seated statues and female images, demonstrates the complex hierarchy and developed memorial culture of the nomads.

At the same time, the process of museification of these objects has revealed a fundamental problem of decontextualization. Traditional methods of exposure, that is, wall placement, diffuse lighting, disorientation to the cardinal directions, lead to a significant loss of semantic information. The loss of sacredness leads to a break in connection with the landscape and the architectural ensemble, depriving the monument of its ritual function. Another important problem is information reduction, which means that the impossibility of a circular view hides up to 50% of the ethnographic details (hairstyle, weapons) applied to the backs of the sculpture. The loss of semantic information is also represented through a distortion of perception: museum lighting eliminates low-relief techniques designed for natural sunlight.

Thus, despite the fact that the museum performs a critically important function of physically preserving monuments from destruction in the natural environment, current conservation decisions require revision. It is necessary to switch to methods that make it possible to reconstruct not only the appearance, but also the semiotic context of ancient Turkic sculpture.

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МУЗЕЙ КОЛЛЕКЦИЯСЫНДАҒЫ ТАС МҮСІНДЕР: МУЗЕЙЛЕНДІРУ ЖӘНЕ ЭКСПОЗИЦИЯЛАУ МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ

Аңдатпа. Еуразия даласының көшпелілері түркі мемлекеттерінің ұланғайыр аумағында көптеген тас мүсіндерді қалдырды. Балбалдар деп аталатын тас мүсіндер Шығыс Моңғолиядан Эльба аңғарына дейінгі жерлерде жиі ұшырасады. Мүсіндердің басым бөлігі VI-VIII ғасырларға жатады. Қазақстан Республикасының Ұлттық музейіндегі археологиялық олжалар мен коллекцияларды талдау негізінде элиталық «қағандық» отырған мүсіндерден бастап, жауынгерлер мен әйелдерге арналған тас мүсіндерге дейінгі үлгілердің типологиясы қарастырылады.

Түркі дәуіріне жататын тас мүсіндер бейнеленген кейіпкердің әлеуметтік мәртебесі мен сакралдық қызметін айқындайтын қалпы, атрибуттық белгілері және кеңістіктік орналасуы арқылы кодталған күрделі семиотикалық жүйені құрайды. Түркі ескерткіштеріндегі мүсіндік бейнелердің басым бөлігі толық бойымен тұрған адам кейпінде сомдалған, алайда кейбір мүсіндерде тек басы немесе денесінің жоғарғы бөлігі ғана бейнеленген. Ірі элиталық кешендер құрамында адамдардың мүсіндері әрі тұрған, әрі отырған қалыпта бейнеленген.

Сондай-ақ зерттеуде музейлендіру үдерісіне сыни талдау жасалады. Нысанды табиғи ландшафт пен сәулеттік ансамбль құрамынан бөліп алу нәтижесінде оның сакралды-мағыналық мазмұнының жоғалуын білдіретін «деконтекстуализация» мәселесі қарастырылады. Көне түркі мұрасын сақтау үшін жаңа экспозициялық тәсілдерді енгізудің қажеттілігі негізделеді.

Кілт сөздер: ежелгі түркі тас мүсіндері, қаған, музейлендіру, семиотика, Қазақстанның көшпелі мәдениеті, деконтекстуализация.

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КАМЕННЫЕ ИЗВАЯНИЯ В МУЗЕЙНОЙ КОЛЛЕКЦИИ: ВОПРОСЫ МУЗЕЕФИКАЦИИ И ЭКСПОНИРОВАНИЯ

Аннотация. Кочевники Евразийских степей оставили после себя множество изваяний на обширных территориях тюркских государств. Каменные фигуры, называемые балбалами, встречаются повсеместно от Восточной Монголии до долины Эльбы. Большое количество изваяний датируются VI-VIII веками. На основе анализа археологических находок и коллекций Национального музея Республики Казахстан рассматривается типология изваяний: от элитарных «каганских» сидячих фигур до образов воинов и женских каменных изваяний.

Каменные изваяния тюркского периода представляют собой сложную семиотическую систему, в которой поза, атрибутика и пространственное расположение кодируют социальный статус и сакральную роль изображаемого персонажа. Большинство скульптурных изображений тюркских памятников выполнены в виде стоящих в полный рост людей, однако некоторые изваяния имеют изображение только головы или верхней части тела. В составе больших элитарных комплексов присутствуют скульптуры людей, как в стоячем, так и в сидячем положении.

В исследовании также проводится критический анализ процесса музеификации. Рассматривается проблема «деконтекстуализации» – утраты сакрально-смыслового значения объекта при его изъятии из природного ландшафта и архитектурного ансамбля. Обосновывается необходимость внедрения новых экспозиционных подходов для сохранения древнетюркского наследия.

Ключевые слова: древнетюркские каменные изваяния, каган, музеификация, семиотика, кочевая культура Казахстана, деконтекстуализация.

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