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Bogorodsky and sergievsky horses as a historical and cultural heritage in the collection of the Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

Abstract. The article examines toy horses by sergiev masters and sculptural images of horses by bogorodsky carvers, examines the role and place of toy horses in the system of children's culture, toy production in the country at the turn of the XIX–XX centuries. This article discusses the author's works and a fairly large-scale artisanal production.

Keywords: horse, toy horse, stucco toy, bogorodsky carvers, composition, team, «departure», «dummy», «paper toy».

Toy horses are an important part of children's culture. In ancient times the image of a horse held a sacred significance. In the culture of the ancient Slavs the horse was associated with a solar deity and this symbolism can be seen in various forms of traditional art such as embroidery, weaving and painting of household items as well as in house architecture. However, the horse holds a special place in the realm of games and toys for children.

The article considers toy horses that were manufactured at two of the largest toy factories in Russia which are Bogorodsky village and Sergiev Posad. The collection of products of these crafts including horses is rightfully considered the pride of the collection of the Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram.

As the artist of the Scientific Research Institute of the Art Industry A.A. Avseenok noted "Bogorodsky masters are able to see and notice the most essential things. The most important thing is that nothing escapes the attentive eyes of master artists. They are very observant when depicting animals. One can only be surprised at the virtuoso technique precision and magnificent craftsmanship that are manifested in the Bogorodsky sculptures of horses" [3, p. 15].

Carvers have created a variety of wooden horses diverse in characteristics, purpose, figurative and artistic solutions. Compositions with horses are one of the most characteristic directions of the traditional Bogorodsky assortment. The horses were made under the influence of two components: folk tradition passed down from generation to generation and professional art. The carved horses made by carvers in the first half of the XIX century and the middle of the XIX century are strikingly different from the products of the so-called "Zemsky period", the end of the XIX, beginning of the XX century. It was then that professional artists had a significant influence on the craft.

There are several types of horses. First of all, images of horses engaged in peasant labor: plowing transporting firewood hauling; horses grazing with foals. These simple compositions clearly show the native respect of carvers for horses. The horse is the first assistant in the peasant household (fig. 1) and the Bogorodsky masters are peasants. Residents of Bogorodskoye village were engaged in wood carving in their free time from agricultural work.

Tseretelli N.M. in his study "Russian Peasant Toy" wrote that "Almost the same abundance of options was given by the toy in the image of riding (fig. 2). The theme repeated in endless variants and combinations existed wherever the influence of the city or manor penetrated" [5, p. 50].

The famous Bogorodsky "departures" have a completely different character. These are paired sleds, threes, singles which are not at all connected with the daily life of rural residents but rather are a kind of illustration of the life of completely different segments of the population. A.Ya. Chushkin who worked in the early twentieth century became especially famous for such compositions (fig. 3). "His best compositions date back to 1910-1912 when the artist apparently reached his creative maturity" [1 p. 32]. These were elegant surprisingly finely executed compositions which in the classical Bogorodsky traditions depicted by no means peasant types. In beautiful horse and sleigh sleds the riders could be officers ladies merchants in rich fur coats. The trips were called winter or summer.



Fig. 1. The sculpture "Plowman". The middle of the XIX century. Bogorodskiy artistic wood carving. Village of Bogorodskoe. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram



Fig. 2. The sculpture "The Horseman". Bogorodskiy wood carving. The middle of the XIX century. Village of Bogorodskoe. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

In both versions horses with gracefully arched necks on graceful legs with beautiful carefully designed harness are more an object of decorative and applied art rather than a children's toy. These compositions were performed by the national master undoubtedly under the influence of zemstvo figures in particular N.D. Bartram with whom A.Ya. Chushkin collaborated during this period.



Fig. 3. A.Ya. Chushkin. The sculptural Village of Bogorodskoe. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

N.D. Bartram supplied the masters with orders. He offered them lithographs book illustrations and splint pictures as samples. Not only A.Y. Chushkin worked with N.D. Bartram but also other Bogorodsky masters. One of the representatives of the Pronin family M.A. Pronin became famous for horse-drawn sleds. His famous "troika" with a rider a coachman and a bear took their rightful place in the series of Bogorodsky products of the early twentieth century (fig. 4).



Fig. 4. M.A. Pronin. The sculptural composition "Troika". Bogorodskaya wood carving. Bogorodskoye village. The beginning of the twentieth century. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

In close cooperation with N.D. Bartram the Ryzhov town carvers also worked. The work of this dynasty can be described as an established special school of carving. A.A. Ryzhov is considered to be its founder. Ivan Alexandrovich the elder and Ivan Alexandrovich the younger are considered to be the most talented of the

seven sons. Representatives of the Ryzhov family made toys dolls and sculptures without excessive detail; they were distinguished by calm smooth lines. Actually that's why the Ryzhovs were considered one of the best craftsmen who performed "blanks", i.e. technically perfect shapes for making papier-mache toys.



Fig. 5. I.A. Ryzhov. The dummy horse.
The second half of the XIX century.
Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys
named after N.D. Bartram

The collection of the Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram contains a dummy horse by I.A. Ryzhov the elder dating from the second half of the XIX century (fig. 5).

The modeling of horses using blanks continued in the fishery until the beginning of the twentieth century although since the 1860s they begin to produce horses in detachable plaster molds in Sergiev Posad. "Nowhere in Russia have so many horses been made as in Sergiev Posad. Russian toys in the hands of Sergiev artisans have become more popular than ever" G.L. Dain who is a well-known toy researcher wrote in the book "Sergiev Posad as the capital of Russian toys" [2, p. 142]. These lines perfectly illustrate first of all the papier-mache horses

which were often called paper horses (fig. 6).

The first official mention of the manufacture of horses in Sergiev Posad dates back to the end of the XVIII century. The "horse goods" of Sergiev artisans were extremely diverse. The horses were made singly in pairs in threes mounted on a stand of two parallel wooden sticks with four wheels. Most of all Sergiev artisans made so-called "harnesses". Horses were harnessed to sleighs, carts, carriages. There were also types of wagons that have long been out of use. Dyne mentions that the horses were diverse "in suit and size: large up to 65 cm, medium up to 40 cm, semi-average up to 30 cm. It is noteworthy that artisans and buyers have never named a product by size. It was encrypted in the name itself" [2, p. 142].

The decoration of the toy horses was also extremely diverse. The cheapest ones were painted with chalk paint, the more expensive ones were varnished, the more they were cleaned with beautiful harnesses and saddles. Some had a "voice", i.e. a sound mechanism that allows them to make sounds similar to horse neighing (fig. 7).

Horses were often covered with leather and covered with fur. Rocking horses with curved runners were very common (fig. 8).

Sergievsky's favorite horse, i.e. the dappled gray is an almost fabulous horse with a simplified generalized modeling of the body and legs with an expressive powerful neck; a finely elegantly sculpted head with glass inset eyes and a luxurious tail made of linen silk or horsehair (fig. 9, 10).



Fig. 6. Toy "Horse with foal". Sergiev Posad. The second half of the XIX century. The Art and Pedagogical Museum



Fig. 7. A wheelchair horse. The end of the XIX – beginning of the XX century. Sergiev Posad. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram



Fig. 8. Rocking horse. Sergiev Posad. The end of the XIX – beginning of the XX century. Sergiev Posad. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram



Fig. 9. Wheelchair horses. The beginning of the twentieth century. Sergiev Posad. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

Sergievsky and Bogorodsky toy horses made of wood and papier-mache are an independent trend in Russian toy handicraft production which have become a remarkable phenomenon in Russian culture of the XIX – XX centuries. Photographic documents of the past paintings memoirs fiction and children's literature testify to the important role the horse played in the children's culture of the late XIX – early XX century. The fact confirming the special attitude to this toy is the presence of the image of a horse already in Soviet times on the coat of arms of the city of Zagorsk against the background of the outlines of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra. The graphic outline of the rocking horse still lives on the logo of the

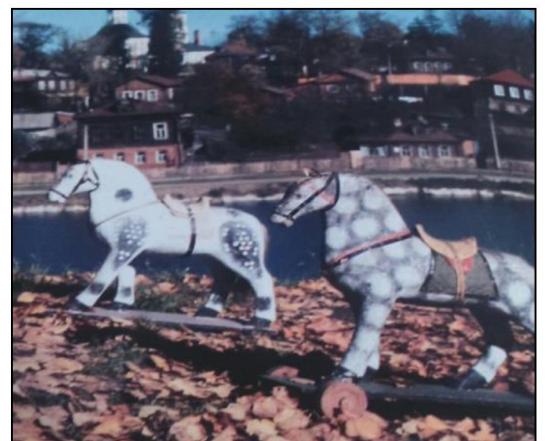


Fig. 10. Wheelchair horses. The beginning of the twentieth century. Sergiev Posad. Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram

Sergiev Posad Institute of Toys, i.e. a branch of the Higher school of folk arts (academy) and which is considered to be a tribute to ancient artistic traditions.

In Soviet times toy horses made of wood and papier-mache (wheelchairs, rocking chairs) continued to be made at two toy factories in Zagorsk. The last toy horse was made at the factory in the early 1980s.

Students of the Sergiev Posad Institute of Toys, i.e. a branch of the Higher school of folk arts (academy) are currently actively working on a program of renovation of museum items from the collection of the Art and Pedagogical Museum of Toys named after N.D. Bartram [4]. So among the interesting works one can highlight the renovation of traditional Sergiev horses made of wood and papier-mache handicraft production and the renovation of the works of professional artist I.I. Oveshkov (fig. 11-12). The renovation was carried out using traditional materials and technologies. This is another vivid evidence that Sergievsky toy horses are the brightest phenomenon in the world of games and toys.



Fig. 11. G. Skobkarev. 2023. "Wheelchair Horse", renovation Sergiev Posad Toy Institute, branch of the Higher school of folk arts (academy)



Fig. 12. G. Skobkarev. 2023 "A wheelchair horse with a cart", renovation. Sergiev Posad Institute of Toys, branch of the Higher school of folk arts (academy)

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