

# Restoration report

Restoration of two earthen statues from the sanctuary Lhachung,  
Diskit Monastery, Ladakh, J & K, India

Restoration mission in 2014

## The monument location:

1. area : INDIA, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Nubra Valley, Diskit village
2. monastery: Diskit Gompa
3. location: shrine Lhachung

## Information about the object of restoration:

### **Name of the object:**

*Namgyalma* - goddess of long life and fulfillment of desires

*Avalokiteshvara* - one of the many projections of bodhisattva of compassion

**Type of the object :** Statue

### **Material, technology:**

#### ***Namgyalma:***

Unburned clay mixed with natural fibers, wood, fabric, string, colored pigments, colored stones.

Statue is of a wooden structure, coated by cloth. Skeleton of hands and fingers is formed in twine. It was laden with local clay mixed with natural fibers that strengthen it, and also to some extent protect against cracking. In this material all shapes and details statues were modeled. In places of sculpted jewelry and also at the forefront of middle head colored stones were placed. The statue was finally painted by the color pigments, stirred in water probably, without any binder.

#### ***Avalokiteshvara:***

Unburned clay mixed with natural fibers, wood, fabric, twine, colored pigments with a binder, stones, beads.

The statue was probably created by similar technique as Namgyalma, but with different surface treatment, which consists of a painted-mixed pigments with an unknown binder.

### **Author and dating:**

Without signatures, statuettes exact age is unknown (it is estimated at around 300 to 400 years), the monastery was founded by Changzem Tserab Zangpo in the 15th century.

### **Information about the event:**

**Restored by:** Mgr.art. Sona Pavlovičová and Mgr. Zofia Zakrzewska Fabirkiewicz

### **Subject of the work:**

Photo documentation before reconstruction, fixation, taking samples of materials for possible research in the laboratory in Warsaw, cleaning, local reinforcement of weakened parts, gluing of broken parts, missing parts reconstruction, sealing, color unification of new parts with the original parts, photographic documentation during restoration and after restoration .

**Dates of event:** July / August 2014

### **Condition of objects before and after restoration, course of restoration:**

Both sculptures are now used during ceremonies, they are located in the monastic sanctuary Lhachung again.

### **Namgyalma**



*Namgyalma before restoration*

The entire surface is covered with significant deposit. There are many mass losses of material (on fingers, on the crown ornaments, on earrings...) and losses of polychrome, in some places significant cracks (on pedestal of the statue, on neck). Some stones that form the inlaid decoration of jewelry are missing. The most striking destruction of the statues are broken hands and fingers held only by the twine as a kind of internal skeleton. One hand was repaired in the past using the

secondary embedded frame of wooden pegs. The statue has many places of the superimposed clay (probably caused by the reconstruction of the hand).

### The course of restoration

- Photo documentation of the statue before restoration.
- Initial cleaning of statue from dust deposits with a soft brush.
- Samples taken for the materials research in the laboratory in Warsaw.
- Half-cleaning of the object by enzymatic cleaning, by ethanol, acetone, glass fiber and by scalpels. Complete cleaning of the entire object.
- Injection of 4% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone into cracks, the puttying with *markalak* (local clay).
- Injection of 4% Paraloid B72 solution in acetone into the broken parts of hands, fingers and twine skeleton, subsequently conglutination of broken parts together using 40% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone; puttying remaining gaps by *markalak*.
- Fixing the the surface of new parts by 4% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone.
- Adhering the stainless steel wire wrapped by cotton thread for the desired reconstruction of fingers, decorations for the crown and earrings after drilling them. Modeling of losses in *markalak* mixed with synthetic fibers. Smaller losses were cemented by *markalak* without synthetic fibers.
- Color unification of the new parts with the original parts using powder pigments in water.
- Fixing of the entire surface by 3% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone.
- Photo documentation of the object state after restoration.

### Materials used

- Paraloid B72
- Acetone
- Ethanol
- Powder pigments
- Stainless steel wire
- Cotton thread
- Local natural clay markalak
- Synthetic fibers



*Namgyalma*

## Avalokiteshvara



*Avalokiteshvara before restoration*

The entire surface is covered with significant deposit. There are many mass losses of material (on fingers, crown decor, earrings) and losses of polychrome. In some places there are significant cracks.

### **The course of restoration**

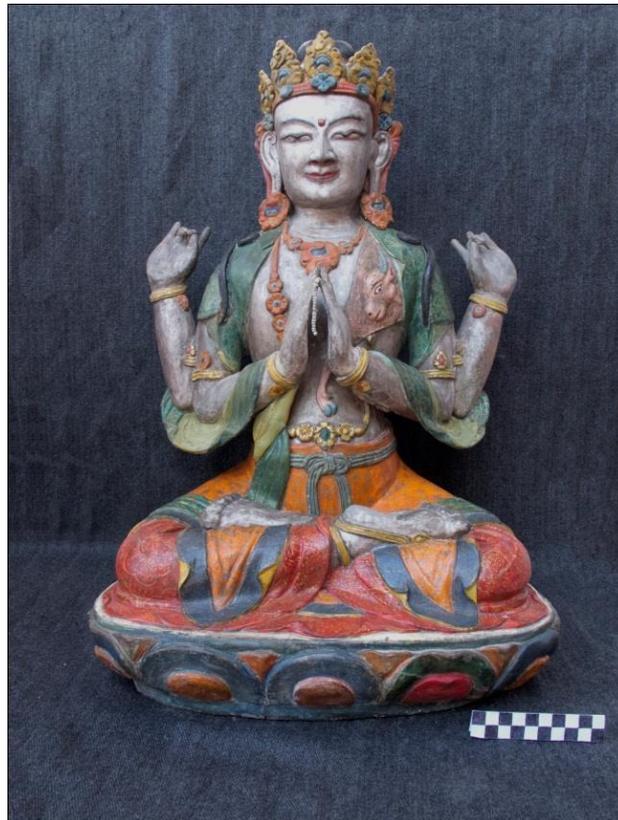
- Photo documentation condition of the building before restoration.
- Initial cleaning statues of deposit by dusting with a soft brush.
- Samples taken for materials research in the laboratory in Warsaw.
- Stratigraphic research of color layers.
- Half-cleaning object by enzymatic cleaning denature, acetone, glass fiber and scalpels. Subsequent cleaning of the entire building.
- Injection of 4% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone into the cracks, puttying them by *markalak*.
- Temporary removal of poorly fitted upper right hand (secondary repair), cleaning residues of the secondary adhesive. Reassembly of the hand using the construction of stainless steel wire, paste with 40% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone. After hardening puttying remaining gaps by *markalak*.
- Fixing of the new surfaces by 3% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone.

Modeling of losses in *markalak* mixed with synthetic fibers. Larger decreases in mass reconstructed using the skeleton of stainless steel wires. Smaller decreases cemented by *markalak* without synthetic fibers.

- Color unification of the new parts with the original parts using powder pigments in water and watercolor paints.
- Fixing of the entire surface by 3% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone.
- The non-genuine polychrome the upper back has a historic character. So, after the stratigraphic exploration we decided to save it.
- Photo documentation of the object state after restoration.

#### **Materials used**

- Paraloid B72
- Acetone
- Ethanol
- Powder pigments
- Watercolor paints
- Stainless steel wire
- Cotton thread
- Local natural clay *markalak*
- Synthetic fibers



*Avalokiteshvara after restoration*

**This report was written by :** Mgr.art. Soňa Pavlovičová,  
Mgr. Zofia Zakrzewska Fabirkiewicz

From Slovak into English translated MUDr.Dalibor Lebloch.