Statuette - of Mary to be dressed

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	52.3341.1
Date of production:	mid 18th century
Place of production:	Austria (presumably)
Materials:	cambric; lace; limewood; silk; spangle; wig made of human hair
Techniques:	carved; embroidered; painted
Dimensions:	height: 82 cm height: 6 cm width: 30 cm length: 23 cm width: 19,5 cm

Only the head, neck, forearms and legs are carved and painted the other parts of the body are only roughed out. The upper arms are attached to the body with screws and to them are attached the moveable forearms with wooden balls. The statue has a marbled wooden base. The undergarment is a simple bodice. The over-wear is cut to the waist with inverted pleats. In order to make dressing easier the sleeves are detached and their funnel shape was old fashioned at the time of making the dress. The wide strap of embroidery on the front of the dress continues on the lower part of the skirt and on the end of the sleeves. Among the chenille embroideries are carnation, rose and other floral motifs ears of corn, bunches of grapes and pomegranate flowers are embroidered with metal thread. The richness of the ornamentation is in-creased by the spangled ends of the sleeves and the ornament of metal thread, spangled embroidery with metal wire, lamella and a red bead in the middle on the lower part of the skirt at the meeting of the embroidered straps. The floral motifs of these straps are scattered also on the two sides of the skirt. The statue with the dress of the same age — which may be considered to date back at least to before the beginning of the 19th century — is the result of the influence of different iconographic types in general it conforms to the "Virgin with wheat" tradition as a model. The wheat motif on the dress of the statue is, however, only one of the Eucharistic and Virgin symbols. The representation of the Virgin as a girl, like the particular popularity of the childhood stories of Christ and the Virgin, reflect the emotionalism of religion characteristics of the baroque period. We may presume that the statue to be dressed showing the Virgin as a child represents a less usual tendency, resembling the cult of the infant Jesus taken from the Childhood of Jesus cycle. This statue, according to Sandor Balint, might have had a religious function in the divine service of a smaller community.

Literature

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