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THE PLASTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE FEMALE IMAGE IN SCULPTURE AND ITS EXPRESSION IN NATIONAL ART

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Abstract: This article examines the plastic interpretation of the female image in sculpture, its artistic and aesthetic characteristics, and its expression in national art. It also analyzes the historical development of the female image, the distinctive features of Uzbek sculpture, and the significance of national values in the creation of artistic images.

Keywords: sculpture, female image, plastic interpretation, national art, Uzbek sculpture, artistic image, composition, aesthetic characteristics, national values, contemporary art.

Sculpture is one of the important forms of fine art, in which the human figure, emotional experiences, character, and inner spiritual world are artistically expressed through three-dimensional forms. Within this art form, the female image holds particular significance because of its semantic depth, aesthetic qualities, and symbolic meanings. Through the image of a woman, ideas such as humanity, love, motherhood, beauty, resilience, and spiritual maturity are conveyed. The representation of women in sculpture is not merely a means of depicting the human figure; it also reveals the social views, cultural values, and artistic thought of a particular period. In particular, female images created within national art are closely connected with a people's historical memory, customs, aesthetic views, and spiritual heritage. From this perspective, studying the plastic interpretation of the female image in sculpture is important for art history, as it enables a deeper understanding of the distinctive features of national artistic thought and the principles involved in creating representations of human beings.

The historical development of the female image in fine art dates back to ancient times, when its earliest examples emerged in connection with different peoples' religious beliefs, rituals, and views of life. In ancient sculptures, the female figure was often represented through generalized forms, with attention paid not only to anatomical accuracy but also to the image's symbolic meaning and spiritual essence. Over the course of history, the artistic interpretation of the female figure changed, and opportunities expanded to reveal not only outward appearance but also individual characteristics, psychological states, and social status. N. R. Alimova's study of the transformation of the female image in art history is theoretically significant for examining this topic through the relationship between historical processes and artistic perspectives (Alimova, 2022). Therefore, analysis of the historical development of the female image should take into account not only its external form but also the worldview, aesthetic standards, and symbolic meanings characteristic of each period.

Ancient works of art created in Central Asia are important sources for studying the artistic history of the female image, as archaeological finds indicate that sculptural traditions in the region developed in antiquity. In particular, figurines discovered in the cultural regions of Bactria and Margiana make it

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possible to examine ancient artisans' approaches to depicting the human figure, simplifying volumes and forms, and imbuing images with symbolic meaning. In some female figurines made of stone and terracotta, simplified body parts, generalized facial features, and the unified compositional treatment of the body emerge as important artistic characteristics. Before drawing firm conclusions about the religious or ritual function of such works, it is necessary to consider the archaeological context, date, and scholarly description of each find. In this respect, studies of Bactrian terracottas and information about an ancient female figurine in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art are useful sources for analyzing the historical roots of sculpture in Central Asia (Art of Uzbekistan, 2005; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.).

In sculpture, the concept of plastic interpretation refers to the process of revealing an image's artistic content through a work's volume, form, proportions, surface, movement, and spatial structure. When creating a female figure, the overall structure of the body, the turn of the head, the position of the hands, the line of the shoulders, and the proportional relationships between body parts are key means that determine the expressive potential of the work. By using these elements, a sculptor can convey the figure's dignity, sincerity, inner calm, or emotional experiences; each plastic element should harmonize with the overall compositional idea. For example, unified and calm forms may emphasize the figure's inner balance, while dynamic compositions can reveal active aspects of human character. Plastic interpretation should therefore be understood not merely as the depiction of outward appearance, but as a complex artistic process arising from the interaction between form and content.

The formation and development of the female image in Uzbek sculpture are closely connected with national culture, the people's historical experience, and contemporary artistic exploration. In national art, the female figure may be interpreted as a mother, the support of a family, a symbol of kindness and compassion, a hardworking person, or an individual who actively participates in social life. The artistic impact of such images depends not only on their subject matter but also on their compositional solution, plastic expression, facial features, and the convincing portrayal of character. At the same time, expressing national identity in Uzbek sculpture is not limited to reproducing traditional forms exactly; it can also be achieved by combining historical heritage with contemporary artistic thought. As a result, the female image becomes not only an artistic symbol of national values but also an independent artistic representation reflecting an individual's inner world and place in modern society.

National characteristics in sculpture are expressed primarily through the harmony between an image's content and artistic form. Clothing, headwear, decorative elements, posture, and movement help convey a particular cultural environment. When details associated with traditional Uzbek women's clothing or way of life are incorporated into a sculptural composition, they can enrich the image's historical and cultural meaning rather than serve merely as external decoration. However, defining national identity solely through atlas and adras fabrics, skullcaps, headscarves, or other traditional items is a one-sided approach that does not sufficiently reveal the work's inner meaning and plastic structure. National artistic thought may also be expressed through the figure's psychological state, compositional balance, relationships among forms, and attitude toward human dignity. For this reason, analysis of the female image in Uzbek sculpture should consider not only

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external markers but also the work's ideological direction, aesthetic principles, and the artist's individual creative style.

The female portrait is an important genre of sculpture. Alongside depicting a person's outward appearance, it helps reveal character, spiritual world, and individual traits. Facial structure, gaze, head position, the proportions of the neck and shoulders, and the interplay of light and shadow across the surface are important means of determining a portrait's psychological impact. A sculptor seeks not merely to achieve physical likeness but also to convey the portrayed person's individuality through artistic generalization; as a result, the portrait combines an individual likeness with broader meaning. Zilolakhon Asqarova's article on the interpretation of the image of the Eastern woman in sculptor Azamat Khatamov's portraits is a directly relevant source for studying this issue through examples from Uzbek art (Asqarova, 2023).

When analyzing works in this area, it is important to identify the relationship between the portrait's outward appearance, plastic solution, psychological expression, and national-cultural content.

Studies related to Azamat Khatamov's work are of particular interest for examining the artistic interpretation of the female image in Uzbek sculpture, since they consider portraiture and the representation of the human figure from the perspective of national art. Analysis of the sculptor's work should focus on the compositional structure of the image, the generalization of forms, facial expression, and the methods used to reveal the portrait's individual characteristics. The scholarly article on the artistic interpretation of the Eastern woman's image provides an initial source for studying these issues, and its arguments should be compared with the artworks themselves and other art-historical studies (Asqarova, 2023). Khatamov's article on the interpretation of the female image in Uzbek sculpture is also among the sources that can be used to explore this topic theoretically (Khatamov, 2023). Studying such research makes it possible to go beyond general descriptions of the national characteristics of the female image and examine the relationship between plastic form, content, and the artist's style through specific works of art.

The choice of material and the method used to work it are also artistically important in the plastic interpretation of the female image, since the natural properties of marble, bronze, wood, stone, clay, and other materials affect a work's overall appearance. For example, in sculptures made of stone and marble, the material's solidity, surface treatment, and clarity of volume may reinforce the image's monumental or restrained character. Materials such as bronze allow artists to create complex forms, enrich surface texture, and express plastic relationships between different parts of a composition. In terracotta figurines, the material's use in relatively compact forms, the distinctive surface, and the generalization of volume are important for studying ancient artisans' artistic outlook. Thus, choosing a sculptural material is not merely a technical matter but a creative decision that shapes the female image's content, formal structure, and aesthetic effect on the viewer.

In monumental sculpture, the female image can express collective memory, historical events, cultural values, and social ideas, while easel sculpture can explore her individual experiences and psychological characteristics in greater depth. In monumental works, the large scale of the composition, its relationship to space, its visibility from the viewer's perspective, and its harmony with the architectural environment are especially important. Easel sculptures, by contrast, allow a

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more subtle depiction of a person's inner world through facial expression, hand gestures, body posture, and plastic details. In both forms, artistic success depends not only on technical skill but also on the harmony between the image's ideological content and its plastic solution. Accordingly, a comparative study of the female image in monumental and easel sculpture helps identify how form, content, and artistic function change within national art.

In the period following Uzbekistan's independence, the re-examination of national cultural heritage, the strengthening of historical memory, and the development of contemporary means of artistic expression became important subjects in art-historical research. The catalogue Uzbek Sculpture 1991–2006, associated with an introduction by Kamola Akilova, is one source that can be used to study sculptural developments during this period. Analysis of sculpture from the independence era should pay particular attention to references to national history, contemporary interpretations of traditional images, new compositional solutions, and the use of materials.

Using female images as examples makes it possible to study the relationships among national identity, historical memory, family values, and the individual image of modern people. However, when drawing conclusions about the content or authorial concept of a particular work, one should not rely solely on catalogue information; the artwork itself, its creation history, and other scholarly sources should also be examined comparatively.

In conclusion, the plastic interpretation of the female image in sculpture is a complex artistic process associated with depicting the human figure, revealing her inner world, and expressing the aesthetic views of a particular people. Artistic practices ranging from ancient Central Asian figurines to contemporary Uzbek sculpture make it possible to study how the female image has taken different forms under the influence of historical periods, cultural environments, and creative approaches.

In national art, the distinctive character of this image is expressed not only through traditional clothing and symbolic signs but also through plastic form, compositional solution, psychological expression, and the work's ideological content. Therefore, combining historical-comparative, formal-plastic, and figurative methods of analysis in art-historical studies of the female image can strengthen the validity of scholarly conclusions. Research in this field helps deepen understanding of the development of Uzbek sculpture, appreciate national artistic heritage, and illuminate the aesthetic and spiritual potential of the female image in contemporary art.

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