

THE GOLDEN HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEKISTAN’S PAINTING ART

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Abstract: This article examines the historical stages in the formation of Uzbekistan’s painting art and its role in the development of national artistic thought, from ancient mural painting traditions to the modern school of painting, through a scientific and theoretical perspective. The significance of painting art in shaping the spiritual values of the people, aesthetic education, national identity, and cultural memory is explored. In addition, the major representatives of Uzbekistan’s painting tradition, their artistic legacy, the creative explorations of the independence period, and the harmony of tradition and innovation in contemporary painting are thoroughly analyzed.

Keywords: painting, Uzbekistan art, mural painting, Afrosiyob, Varakhsha, Kamoliddin Behzod, monumental painting, national school of painting, artistic heritage, contemporary art, aesthetic thinking, fine arts

Painting is considered one of the oldest and most influential forms of artistic expression in human civilization. It reflects humanity’s aesthetic relationship with nature, society, history, and the inner spiritual world through color, light, composition, and imagery. The art of painting formed within the territory of Uzbekistan has passed through long historical stages of development and today stands as one of the most significant components of national culture. Uzbekistan’s painting represents a unique artistic phenomenon that reflects the people’s centuries-old spiritual memory, aesthetic taste, historical consciousness, and cultural identity. Its roots extend back to ancient civilizations, while its modern development is closely connected with the global art arena. In studying the formation of Uzbekistan’s painting tradition, ancient mural paintings are recognized as one of the most important scientific and historical sources. Central Asia has long been a cradle of advanced civilizations, where various forms of art flourished, including painting. The Afrosiyob murals in Samarkand are regarded as some of the oldest and most outstanding examples of Uzbekistan’s painting heritage. Dating back to the 7th century, these works demonstrate a high aesthetic standard through their compositional structure, harmony of colors, expressiveness of figures, and artistic execution. The Afrosiyob murals depict diplomatic ceremonies, human portraits, and celebratory scenes, making them not only historical documents but also products of highly developed artistic thought. In these works, the spiritual and aesthetic power of color is clearly evident.

The mural paintings of Varakhsha Palace are also an invaluable part of Uzbekistan’s artistic heritage. These works depict legendary heroes, hunting scenes, and mythological figures, characterized by dynamic composition, dramatic expression, and harmonious use of color. In these murals, local aesthetic concepts, mythological imagination, and decorative style are skillfully combined. During this period, painting served not only as a decorative medium but also as an expression of spiritual symbolism. With the arrival of Islamic culture, certain restrictions emerged in some forms of visual representation; however, the culture of working with color did not disappear. On the contrary, the aesthetics of color developed in new directions through miniature painting, book decoration, and decorative compositions. Eastern miniature art evolved as a refined and intellectually sophisticated form of painting. During this period, color became a means of creating imagery, expressing philosophical ideas, and achieving aesthetic harmony. The Timurid era, in particular, marked a period of remarkable flourishing in painting thought.

The name of Kamoliddin Behzod is recognized as one of the greatest representatives of Eastern painting art. His творчество occupies a special place in the history of Uzbekistan’s artistic thought. Behzod’s miniatures are not merely book illustrations, but profound psychological and compositional expressions of painting as an art form. Through masterful use of color, he conveyed the emotional states of figures, the dramatic nature of events, and the internal dynamics of composition. For Behzod, color was not merely decorative but a powerful medium for expressing ideas and emotions. In this sense, he entered history as one of the great masters of painting. By the beginning of the 20th century, Uzbekistan’s painting art entered a new stage of development. Professional academic painting began to take shape. Under the influence of European art schools, realistic painting, portraiture, landscape, still life, and historical genres developed. This process emerged as a synthesis of national artistic thought and external influences. Themes of national identity, people’s daily life, nature, and history became increasingly prominent in painting.

Ural Tansykbayev holds a special place as one of the most significant representatives of Uzbekistan’s painting tradition. His landscape works express the beauty, monumental grandeur, and poetic spirit of Uzbekistan’s nature with exceptional artistic mastery. His use of color, compositional structure, and skillful handling of light transformed his works into masterpieces of the national school of painting. In Tansykbayev’s art, color became the central means of visual expression.

Chingiz Akhmarov left a remarkable legacy in monumental painting. His works are characterized by Eastern poetic aesthetics, decorative color harmony, and monumental artistic thinking. Akhmarov introduced a new aesthetic approach to Uzbek painting. His compositions harmoniously combine historical romanticism, idealized imagery, and national aesthetic consciousness.

In the works of Rozi Choriyev, the human figure occupies the central place. He deeply portrayed the lives, emotions, and inner worlds of ordinary working people through painting. His portrait and genre works are distinguished by sincerity, national spirit, and artistic truthfulness. His use of color is especially notable for its emotional expressiveness. Javlon Umarbekov is considered one of the brightest representatives of contemporary Uzbek painting. His works profoundly reflect history, philosophy, symbolism, and national thought. He successfully combined classical artistic traditions with a modern visual language. This contributed significantly to shaping the new identity of Uzbekistan’s painting art. The independence period marked an entirely new stage in the development of Uzbekistan’s painting. During this era, creative freedom, the awakening of national identity, and the restoration of historical memory strongly influenced artistic growth. Artists moved beyond previously restricted themes and began exploring historical figures, national values, spirituality, independence ideology, and human psychology. Symbolism, philosophical depth, and individual creative exploration became increasingly prominent in painting. Today, Uzbekistan’s painting is characterized by the harmony of traditional and modern directions. On one hand, artists continue to draw inspiration from national miniature traditions, Eastern color aesthetics, and decorative compositional principles. On the other hand, modern artistic movements such as abstractionism, expressionism, and conceptual approaches have also entered the field. This has expanded the internal possibilities of painting and connected it more closely with global artistic developments.

Digital technologies are exerting a major influence on the development of contemporary painting. Graphic tablets, digital painting, 3D visualization, and multimedia technologies are creating entirely new artistic possibilities. Young artists increasingly combine traditional brush techniques with digital tools, shaping a new visual culture. Painting also plays an important role in today’s educational system. Art education serves as a key means of developing aesthetic thinking, creative

imagination, color sensitivity, and visual literacy. In higher education institutions, painting methodology is being improved, and a new generation of artists is being trained using modern pedagogical technologies. Painting is not only a source of aesthetic enjoyment but also a means of spiritual education. It develops humanity's capacity to perceive beauty, strengthens historical memory, and fosters national pride and spiritual awareness. Therefore, the golden heritage of Uzbekistan's painting is not merely a historical treasure, but also an essential spiritual foundation for contemporary development.

Uzbekistan's painting is a remarkable artistic phenomenon that has passed through a long historical path of development. Beginning with the mural paintings of Afrosiyob and Varakhsha, reaching a high peak in the works of Kamoliddin Behzod, and continuing through the professional painting school of the 20th century, this artistic tradition has evolved in new forms. During the independence era, painting entered a new stage of development through the harmony of national and modern values. Today, Uzbekistan's painting continues to preserve its national heritage while establishing a worthy place in the global art world.

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