

# Philosophical-anthropological approach to human body modelling in art sculpture

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## Abstract

This article discusses the art of plastic modelling of the human body in light of modern philosophical and anthropological approaches to the study of sculpture as a form of fine art in high school (FEFU).

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## Introduction

Modelling as a method of studying nature and society has existed in various fields of knowledge since the creation of man himself and was gradually perfected during the historical development of mankind. Still, it is relatively recently that the science of fine arts has addressed the problem of plastic modelling of the human body in art sculptures in terms of philosophical and anthropological approaches to the study of the spiritual implication of human corporeality.

## Searching for language of plastic modelling

The language of plastic modelling as a means of communication and information exchange represents

the level of accumulated human knowledge in the field of fine arts and is used not just by narrow specialists. This language is universal and available to any individual in society.

New objective transformation in the specifics of sculptural design of the human body plastics directs an emphasis towards philosophical comprehension. The research in the field of philosophical anthropology, initiated by early pioneers in this branch of knowledge, such as M. Scheler, H. Plessner and Claude Lévi-Strauss, and other philosophers, has been advanced by such scholars of modern thought, such as J.-P. Sartre, A. Portman, Ernst Cassirer, A. Gehlen, V. Podoroga, and J. Cohn.

The development of the history of art shows us that the earliest sculptures created in primitive cultures and extant until now appear to us as three-dimensional works of art that bear a specific patina, aging of the surface of sculptural materials, which is acquired in the sequence of historical events and enriches the plastics of the movement and form.

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Primitive man tried to reproduce as accurately as possible the shapes and forms of known animals, including mammoths, moose, bears, deer, and, most importantly, his tribesmen. The decorative features of the first household items, tools and hunting weapons were especially diverse and bright at this early stage of experimentation. Based on accumulated artistic experience gained from the observation of the world of nature, the primitive man learned to recognise and combine the variety of static and moving parts of the structures of living beings to create a united plastic image. The simplest geometric pattern in the first created forms was the first attempt at plastic construction, modelling and artistic decorative stylisation. The creation of the images of humans, animals and whatever other aspects of the surrounding material world represents some primitive form of civilisation and, according to scientists, shows features of philosophical self-reflection and an attempt to live in harmony with the surrounding world and develop in the spirit of the time.

The need to share experiences with fellow tribesmen inspired the human being to search for the language of communication. Among such modes of expression and communication as gestures, rhythmic body movements, sounds, and the art of collective ritual dances, fine art also developed in its infancy: paintings on natural rock surfaces, graphic and three-dimensional volumetric plastic representations that laid the primal bases of the artistic figurative language of Paleolithic art.

A thorough analysis of sculptures even in the early period of development of social consciousness and primitive arts, in the absence of authorship, can clearly show us where a work of art was the product of collective creativity. Nevertheless, we quite definitely see in the artwork of that early time the signs of ideological function, with features of cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as some apparent tradition of images. With that, a distinction from adjacent cultures is obvious too.

From the archaeological findings relating to the early historical development of human society, we can judge how deep and imaginative the creative experience of primitive man was. For specialists in archaeology, anthropology, ethnography and art, these findings are an instructive example of a high, concentrated expression of the creative figurative thought of an artist of the primitive age. Vibrantly relating to this elegant and bright creative experience, we can use it as an example for contemporary creators of all types of arts.

For instance, the cult of fertility in ancient cultures was expressed in various forms of erotic magic, in depicting scenes of mating animals, in phallic symbols, and with special emphasis on genital body parts in Paleolithic female figures. Thus, the essence of traditional primitive art is a peculiar way of understanding the world and, despite the fact that every individual perceives art work very specifically, the involved philosophical category unites and cements entire communities and builds society as a whole, with its economic and political order, its ethnicity, and its culture.

Despite the variety of interpretations of traditional images, we can see a certain stylistic unity within large areas. This unity is especially remarkable in female figurines, known as the Paleolithic “Venus”, which traces the same degree of conditionality in the generalisation and treatment of the female figures: the absence of facial features and the hyperbolic volume of breasts, abdomen, and thighs, with a complete absence or mere schematic depiction of the upper and lower extremities. These “Venus figurines” appear as a definite “fertility symbol” and most probably symbolised “the hope for survival and longevity, within well-nourished and reproductively successful communities” [2].

The authors of these emotionally bright and memorable works of primitive art do not identify themselves and somehow do not represent the essence of their personality, with their unique experience. Personality traits in art works appear clearly only in the Renaissance, where authorship is an indisputable evidence of the author's preferences, selectivity, and individual creativity.

Thus, the needs of expression bring us to the search to solve the issue of self-improvement of human society, to methodological search strategies in the development of a philosophical-anthropological approach in the artistic plastic modelling of human corporeality, which is still looking for a convincing answer to the question about the specificity of the relationship of the human spirit and body, combining the results of biological research and the human sciences.

Anthropology, in the Hegelian sense, is the doctrine of the human soul. The main criticism of the Frankfurt School of Philosophy against Hegel's philosophy of spirit is that anthropology, indicating a fixed human nature, inhibits the historical process. From the point of view of the modern French philosophical thought of Deleuze and Guattari, the nature of the formation of any society is based on the priority of the desire for power, a dispositif in which both technical and humanitarian and, consequently, philosophical and anthropological discourses determine cultural policy

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