

THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT RELIGIONS

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Abstract. The article examines how the image of a woman as a religious symbol has been reflected in different religions, historical periods and cultures, as well as how it is associated with her role and values in society. The image of a woman has a special significance not only in a spiritual or religious context, but also in the social and political environment. The article aims to study how changes in cultural and religious life have occurred through religious images of women, as well as how these images have shaped views of women in society. Using the analyzed materials and examples, the article shows how the image of women as a religious symbol has developed over time and how its role in modern society has changed.

Key words: Religious symbol, mythology, attribute, philosophical analysis, monotheistic religion, value, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, religious belief, ancient religions.

Introduction. Throughout human history, the interrelationship between religion and culture has always held great significance. Religion has influenced not only spiritual and moral aspects of life but also various social and cultural dimensions. Religious symbols leave deep and lasting impressions in human consciousness. The topic “The Image of Women in Ancient Religions” focuses on examining the place of women within religious traditions and cultures. Women have been portrayed as sacred symbols in many ancient societies, reflecting their roles, values, and status in relation to social beliefs. Religious teachings and their influence on women have shaped new social perspectives. This article studies how the symbolic representation of women emerged and developed within different cultural and religious contexts.

Research Methodology. This article employs historical-typological, discourse analysis, feminist approach, and cultural studies methods. The historical-typological method enables a gradual examination of the evolution of female deities in ancient religions. Through these methodologies, the development of women’s representation as a religious symbol and its transformation in society were identified.

Analysis and Results. The research led to several findings related to the major conceptual aspects of female symbolism in ancient belief systems.

Main Part. This section analyzes how women were depicted symbolically in ancient religious texts and mythologies. In early civilizations such as Mesopotamia,

Egypt, India, Greece, Rome, and others, female figures were often associated with motherhood, nature, fertility, and mystical powers. Small figurines of female deities were frequently created in prehistorical times. Archaeologists have discovered more than 200 Venus figurines made of stone, ivory, and clay, ranging from 3 cm to 40 cm in height. These figures usually lack facial features and often have no hands or feet, symbolizing motherhood and fertility¹.

Mesopotamia: Ishtar – goddess of war and fertility; Ea – goddess associated with water.² In Egypt: The Egyptian goddess Isis and her role are discussed. Isis was one of the most important goddesses of ancient Egypt, and she was depicted as a symbol of motherhood and kindness, as well as a sacred figure who wielded power and control over nature³.

In India, goddesses such as Indra - thunder, Aditina - fertility depict women as goddesses of all the forces of nature, famous for their strength and potential. Initially considered the god of thunder and fertility, Indra later became the patron of rulers, rulers, and kings.⁴

Rome: Minerva – goddess of crafts, art, and war, Vesta – protector of the civic household and the sacred hearth, Ceres – goddess of agriculture and harvest⁵.

A philosophical and cultural analysis of the depiction of women as religious figures. This section focuses on the importance of women in society as seen through the representation of women in ancient religions. The depiction of women as religious figures was often related to their social status, rights, and roles in society. For example, the connection of women to the earth and nature, and their role in fertility and planning, was one of the most important factors in ancient societies.

Women and Nature: In many ancient religious systems, women were seen as representatives of the earth and nature. Women's motherhood and their role in the continuation of life were associated with important ideas about controlling nature and the weather.

Women's Power and Influence: There are many examples of women being depicted as powerful religious figures, but this power was usually reflected in terms of motherhood or control over natural forces.

Conclusions and Suggestions. At the end of the analysis, a conclusion is drawn about the complexity of the depiction of women as religious figures in ancient history and

¹ Fagan, Brayan, Sharlotta “Venera Haykalchalari” 1996-yilda Oksford Universiteti matbuoti 740-741-betlar.

² R.Rajabov “Qadimgi dunyo tarixi”, Toshkent 2009-yil, 101-bet.

³ Isis in the Ancient world John Hopkens University matbuoti 1997-yil 13-23-betlar

⁴ Abdujabbor Kabirov “Qadimgi Sharq taixi” 292-bet “Tafakkur” nashriyoti. Toshkent 2016-yil.

⁵ R.Rajabov “Qadimgi dunyo tarixi” Toshkent 2009-yil, 416-bet.

how it affected society. The depiction of women as religious figures not only reflected the religious beliefs and philosophies of ancient societies, but also emphasized the specific social and political role of women. As a result, the respect or opposition to women in ancient religions simultaneously became an element that expressed important values of society.

The general conclusion of the analysis and results section is that the depiction of women as religious figures in ancient history is an important phenomenon that changes, but always deeply analyzes the role of women in society and changes views about them.

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