

SCULPTURE IN DAGESTANI FOLK ART (1930^S–1940^S): FIELD RESEARCH IN GUNIB DISTRICT, 2010^S–2020^S

Since the Middle Ages, no sculptures had been created in Dagestan, except for volumetric ornamental forms of decorative arts and references to the art of the Bronze Age. The process of Sovietization that engulfed the region from the early 1920s was accompanied by de-Islamisation, which drastically changed all spheres of life, including art. Based on field research, the author of the paper is the first to reveal the names of the first self-taught Dagestani sculptors who had become well known in the republic by the early 1930s. The phenomenon of sculpture by Dagestani folk craftsmen has so far failed to catch the eye of specialists. This paper is based on field research materials collected in the Gunib district of Dagestan in the 2010s and 2020s. It was revealed that, prior to the late 1940s, Dagestani sculpture had developed thanks to local stone carvers. Many of their works fell victim to an outburst of vandalism caused by re-Islamisation in the 1990s. The study also revealed the biographies of the folk craftsmen, helped compile a complete list of their works, to create a photographic bank, and to identify the current location of the monuments.

Keywords: *Dagestani sculpture, relief portraits, folk craftsmen, Khalil Musaev, Magomed Murtuzalev, Omar Musalaliev, Mukhudin Idrisov, vandalism, re-Islamization*

Author Info: **Takhnaeva, Patimat** — Ph.D. in History, Head of the Department for Caucasus Studies, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: ptakhnaeva@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8830-5444>

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