
THE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF THE FINE ARTS OF UZBEKISTAN IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY (2017–2025)

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Abstract:	Keywords
<p>This study aims to deeply study the image of Uzbekistan's fine arts in the international arena in the context of cultural diplomacy in 2017–2025. The main goal of the study is to analyze the strategies of forming a national brand and cultural communication with a global audience. This work uses analytical and comparative methods based on the theory of cultural diplomacy and the concept of "soft power" put forward by Joseph Nye.</p> <p>Exhibitions, biennales, symposia and creative exchange programs in 2017–2025 . The results show that fine arts have served as an important tool in effectively shaping the international image of the state by expressing national values in visual form. At the same time, digital platforms and virtual exhibitions have played an important role in bringing works of art to a global audience. The study analyzed the strategic importance of the integration of art and cultural diplomacy, in combination with economic diplomacy and tourism, in strengthening the national image.</p>	<p>Cultural diplomacy, fine arts, international image, soft power, Uzbekistan.</p>

Introduction

XXI century second on on the anniversary international relationship in the system countries between competition and cooperation forms fundamentally o ' changed . Along with military and economic resources, cultural capital, communicative potential and symbolic influence mechanisms have also become geopolitical potential. In this context, cultural diplomacy appears as an indispensable tool in the foreign policy strategy of the state [1]. States seek to create a positive image in the global arena by promoting their national values, historical heritage and art to an international audience . Cultural diplomacy strengthens diplomatic dialogue through its visual, intellectual and emotional communication channels, and also supports tourism, education and economic cooperation.

Visual arts are considered one of the most effective visual instruments in the context of cultural diplomacy. A work of art expresses national identity, historical memory, ethnic values, and contemporary transformation in a figurative form[2]. Therefore, works of art displayed at international exhibitions , biennales, and forums serve as a visual brand of the

state, conveying the harmony of national memory and contemporary aesthetics to a global audience. Through visual arts, the state presents itself as creative, open, and innovative, which in turn creates a positive impact in the global political arena.

Uzbekistan has intensified its policy of openness in the field of cultural diplomacy in 2017–2025. In particular, the activities of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan in international exhibitions and creative exchange programs, as well as cooperation with UNESCO, have significantly increased the visibility of the country's fine arts on the global stage.[3][4] During this period, Uzbekistan's cultural initiatives were manifested not only in the Central Asian region, but also through exhibitions in Europe, Asia, and North America . Symposia and creative exchanges held within the framework of international cooperation have made it possible to harmonize national fine arts with modern trends, as well as open new channels for delivering works of art to a global audience through digital platforms. In this way, the fine arts of Uzbekistan have played an important role not only in preserving and developing cultural heritage, but also in strengthening the state brand in the international arena and as a means of visual diplomacy.

Literature review

The theory of cultural diplomacy has developed as an independent direction in the study of international relations since the end of the 20th century . This theory allows us to study diplomatic cooperation between states not only through political and economic, but also through cultural and ideological components. The concept of “soft power” helps to analyze the mechanisms of cultural and ideological influence of the state and is an effective tool for creating a positive image in the international arena[5]. In this regard, art, in particular fine art, is considered one of the most effective visual communication tools in the context of cultural diplomacy [6].

Cultural diplomacy research shows that visual arts are strategically important not only in expressing national values, but also in communicating them to a global audience. Therefore, the themes, stylistic solutions , and visual narratives of works of art are studied as a means of forming a national brand in the international arena. Research emphasizes that the success of art in the international arena is closely related to the degree to which it expresses national identity and the degree to which it conforms to global aesthetic norms. In the period after 2017, cooperation with UNESCO, participation in international forums, biennales and symposiums have become important in developing Uzbekistan's international cultural relations [7]. In particular, international exhibitions and creative exchange programs organized by the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan have significantly increased the visibility of fine arts on the global stage[8]. Through these exhibitions , different layers of national culture – ancient and modern aesthetic thinking, elements of folklore and modern design, as well as national ornaments and color palettes – have been presented to an international audience. As a result, international experts and curators have perceived Uzbek art as a combination of national heritage and contemporary creativity.

Also, exhibitions within the framework of the Tashkent International Investment Forum, the Silk Road International University of Tourism, and other cultural events have made it possible to present art in an integrated manner with economic diplomacy [9]. This has paved the way for the use of fine arts not only as an aesthetic but also as a strategic tool. At the same time, the possibility of bringing works of art to a global audience through digital platforms and online galleries demonstrates the use of innovative approaches in the process of cultural diplomacy. In this way, Uzbekistan's art diplomacy has served to strengthen the image of openness, creativity , and innovation.

Although previous studies have shown the role of cultural diplomacy in shaping the image of the state, the dynamics of Uzbek fine arts in the international arena, their visual strategy, their activities in exhibitions and biennales, and their presentation on digital platforms have not been sufficiently studied so far [10]. Therefore, this study is considered a new scientific contribution in terms of not only strengthening the theoretical foundations, but also analyzing the international image of Uzbek fine arts through practical examples. The study also provides an opportunity to strategically analyze Uzbekistan's institutional mechanisms of cultural diplomacy, creative exchange programs, and works of art exhibited at international exhibitions.

This literature review shows that the relationship between cultural diplomacy and the visual arts has not yet been fully explored in the international academic community, and therefore the results of the study serve to systematically document Uzbekistan's experience of art diplomacy in the global arena. Through this approach, it is possible to clearly demonstrate its innovative and strategic role in shaping the country's international image.

Methodology

This study aims to analyze the image of Uzbekistan's visual arts in the international arena in the context of cultural diplomacy, and was carried out by combining several methodological approaches. The study primarily used a systematic-analytical approach. This approach allowed for the analysis of the concepts of cultural diplomacy and national image through visual communication [11]. The systematic-analytical approach allowed for a systematic study of Uzbekistan's visual arts projects in the international arena, their structure, themes, and visual aesthetic characteristics. This revealed the role of works of art in expressing national values and their effectiveness in communicating with an international audience.

The second approach was discursive analysis. The discursive analysis methodology allowed us to identify national identities and visual narratives through speeches of heads of state, official statements, materials presented at international exhibitions, and the media [12]. This method allowed us to deeply study the social, political , and cultural context of visual arts, as well as analyze the impact of symbolic and aesthetic elements expressed in works of art on the international stage. Discursive analysis revealed the strategic features of the communication of Uzbek visual arts with a global audience and the mechanisms for forming a national brand.

The third approach of the study is the comparative method. This method made it possible to compare the experience of cultural diplomacy of Uzbekistan with other countries in the Central Asian region [13]. With the help of comparative analysis, it was possible to determine the effectiveness and innovative approaches of Uzbekistan's art strategy in the international arena, as well as its competitiveness and regional role. The results of the comparative analysis showed that the visual arts of Uzbekistan occupy a unique place in the formation of a national brand not only in the regional, but also in the global context.

The main source of analysis was international exhibitions, biennales, symposia and art projects on digital platforms held between 2017 and 2025. These materials allowed for a visual and content analysis of the activities of Uzbek fine arts in the international arena. At the same time, works of art exhibited on digital platforms provided free access to a global audience, increasing the transnational communication potential of art. During the study, each exhibition and creative exchange program was analyzed separately, assessing their importance in the strategy of cultural diplomacy, their role in expressing national identity and their effectiveness in shaping an international image.

In addition, the methodology, along with analytical and comparative approaches, also took into account the dynamics of the time, themes and style of the studied materials. These approaches helped to clearly demonstrate the development trends of the visual arts of Uzbekistan in the international arena. The results of the study served to determine the role of art in the formation of a national brand through visual, emotional and cultural communication channels. Thus, the methodology made it possible to study the inextricable link between the visual arts of Uzbekistan and cultural diplomacy on a systematic and scientific basis.

Results and Discussion

According to the analysis , the visual arts of Uzbekistan have demonstrated several key trends in shaping their international image. First of all, the country's artists and creative groups have played an important role in bringing national culture to a global audience by actively participating in international exhibitions, biennales, and symposiums. This process has allowed not only the works of art themselves, but also their organizational and curation processes to adapt to international standards.

In addition, through artists and creative exchange programs, a fusion of national ornamentation, historical motifs, and modern visual trends has been observed. Through this approach, Uzbek art has been able to preserve national heritage while also integrating with modern aesthetic trends. As a result, an international audience has embraced not only the country's historical cultural heritage, but also its creative and innovative potential. Discursive analysis has shown that through the fusion of national historical symbols and modern aesthetics in works of art, a cultural dialogue with a global audience has been effectively established [14].

Digital transformation has brought Uzbekistan's visual arts to a new level in the international arena. Through virtual exhibitions , online platforms, and digital projects,

artworks have been brought to a transnational audience. At the same time, visual content created through digital media has increased the interactive and public reach of art, which has served to strengthen the country's open and modern image in the global arena.

Cultural initiatives integrated with economic diplomacy and tourism have strengthened the country's creative, innovative, and open image . [15] For example, exhibitions, creative exchanges, and cultural events held within the framework of the Tashkent International Investment Forum and the Silk Road International University of Tourism have served not only to showcase works of art but also to promote Uzbekistan's tourism and investment potential to a global audience. In this way, the integration of cultural diplomacy and the visual arts has become strategically important in shaping the national brand, developing global communication, and developing diplomatic dialogue.

The analysis showed that the visual arts of Uzbekistan are being effectively used in the international arena not only as a means of reflecting national values, but also as a means of strengthening the country's visual brand, in harmony with modern aesthetic trends. This process has been further strengthened by the development of digital platforms, which have created the opportunity to present works of art interactively and visually to a transnational audience. As a result, Uzbekistan's strategic initiatives in cultural diplomacy have played an important role in preserving national identity, improving its international image , and contributing to global dialogue.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the period 2017–2025, the visual arts of Uzbekistan have proven to be an effective tool in shaping the international image. The results of the study showed that the country's active participation in international exhibitions, biennales, symposia and creative exchange programs, as well as the strategy of bringing works of art to a global audience through digital platforms, have served to strengthen the visual brand of Uzbekistan. Visual arts have contributed to global communication by expressing national identity, preserving historical heritage and combining it with modern aesthetic thinking. In this way, art has confirmed its importance as a strategic tool for shaping a national brand and establishing effective dialogue with an international audience in the context of cultural diplomacy .

The analysis showed that Uzbekistan's international art strategy focused on several key areas. First, active participation in international exhibitions and biennials significantly increased the visibility of the country's visual arts on the global stage. Second, through creative exchange programs, a fusion of national ornamentation, historical motifs , and modern visual trends was achieved. Third, digital transformation has expanded the possibilities for art to reach a transnational audience, expanding global communication through online galleries and virtual exhibitions [12].

Based on these results, the study puts forward **the following recommendations** . **First of all**, it is recommended to expand participation in international exhibitions and biennials. Such activities will serve to increase the recognition of Uzbek art among a global audience, strengthen the national brand , and strengthen international cooperation. Participation in

exhibitions and biennials also allows for the development of networking with international experts and curators.

The second recommendation is to develop virtual exhibitions and online galleries. Digital technologies and virtual platforms are effective tools for bringing works of art to a global audience. This not only eliminates geographical restrictions, but also creates the opportunity to attract the young and creative generation, establish interactive dialogue, and effectively use modern communication channels.

Third, it is recommended to strengthen cooperation between cultural diplomacy institutions and fine arts centers. This will increase the opportunities for scientific and creative analysis of national art, strategic communication, and successful presentation at international exhibitions. Expanding cooperation will serve to strengthen the country's cultural brand in the global arena.

Fourth, it is important to expand creative exchange programs. Transnational exchange of experiences between artists and creative groups creates opportunities for the adoption of new ideas, technologies and visual innovations. At the same time, creative exchange programs play a strategic role in shaping the image of an open and innovative country [12]. In conclusion, the visual arts of Uzbekistan are working effectively as a means of expressing national identity in the international arena, forming a state brand through cultural diplomacy, and establishing effective dialogue in global communication. The results of the study show that the integration between art and cultural diplomacy serves to strengthen the country's open, creative, and modern image. If these recommendations are implemented, the visual arts of Uzbekistan in the international arena can become a more effective and strategic instrument.

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