

THE ROLE OF FESTIVALS IN PROMOTING AND PRESERVING CULTURAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: This article scientifically analyzes the importance of holidays in preserving folk culture and national identity. Holidays are not only social entertainment events, but also a practical expression of historical memory, traditions, language, religious and aesthetic values. The article studies the socio-cultural mechanisms of forming cultural consciousness in the younger generation, increasing national pride and resisting the pressure of global culture through traditional and modern festivals.

Keywords: cultural identity, festival, tradition, national identity, tradition, aesthetic value, cultural heritage, globalization, youth education, folk oral art.

Introduction:

The uniqueness of each nation is embodied in its cultural identity, which is combined with its historical memory, traditions, linguistic richness and art forms. Holidays and festivals, which have been formed over the centuries and are passed down from generation to generation, are one of the important socio-cultural phenomena that reflect this cultural identity. Holidays not only express the joy and unity of the people, but also play an invaluable role in understanding their national identity, respecting their historical roots, appreciating values, and educating the younger generation in this spirit.

In an era of increasing globalization processes, there is a risk of unification of national cultures. Under the influence of various forms of mass culture, technological development, and Western trends, some national values are at risk of disappearing. In such conditions, festivals allow not only to preserve cultural heritage, but also to reinterpret it in modern conditions. They revive the centuries-old traditions, language and artistic manifestations, religious and aesthetic concepts of peoples through collective consciousness, harmonizing them with modernity.

From this point of view, holidays and festivals serve as a socio-cultural platform for the formation and stabilization of cultural identity. Through them, people understand their national identity, feel a sense of belonging to a particular culture, and thus strengthen social solidarity. This article aims to reveal the essence of these processes, analyze the common and different aspects

of the festival traditions of different peoples, and justify the relevance of holidays in modern society.

Holidays are a complex socio-cultural phenomenon that reflects the cultural spirit, historical memory and aesthetic worldview of the people. Each festival consists of symbols that express the inner world of any nation, enriched with many symbols, traditions, religious and secular beliefs, and serves as an important tool in the process of self-awareness and strengthening the identity of society. Through holidays, people remember their history, rediscover their cultural heritage and pass it on to future generations. It is precisely because of this feature that festivals are the focus of many sociological and cultural studies studies.

Festivals and rituals are the basis of national identity in many nations. For example, the Japanese "Hanami" flower viewing, the Indian "Diwali" festival of lights, the Uzbek "Navruz" tradition - all are holidays with historical roots and are firmly established in the minds of the people. Through such festivals, not only is the connection with the past restored, but the people each time rediscover and strengthen the signs that distinguish themselves from other nations - elements such as language, clothing, food, dance and music.

In modern society, festivals are now becoming not only religious or traditional, but also economic, touristic and political. International festivals held on a global scale - for example, the "UNESCO Cultural Heritage Festival" or the "World Culture Festival" - not only provide a dialogue between different cultures, but also serve to introduce local festival traditions to the whole world. In this way, national cultures, while maintaining their uniqueness, are recognized in other cultural spaces.

However, the process of modernization of festivals may not always lead to positive consequences. Sometimes commercialization can alienate the holiday from the public consciousness, turning it into a mere entertainment event. Therefore, it is extremely important to adapt festivals to the requirements of the times, without losing their true essence. Legal and organizational support for local festival traditions within the framework of cultural policy, a deep understanding of their role in the upbringing of the younger generation are among the main tasks of modern cultural development.

Thus, festivals are not just a ritual, but an important platform for the people to understand themselves, revive their cultural heritage and preserve it in a global environment. They protect national values, strengthen identity and call



for internal unity of society. In this regard, holidays are gaining relevance today as a means of intercultural dialogue and a factor of cultural stability.

Discussion.

Festivals and holidays can be considered as a kind of communicative phenomenon as a factor of stability of cultural identity. They form a set of cultural codes that preserve historical consciousness, social memory and intergenerational cohesion in society. From this point of view, festivals are also considered as a means of sociocultural reconstruction - they ensure the continuity of cultural norms by recreating past traditions in a modern format.

According to the theory of "invented traditions" put forward by cultural scientists E. Hobsbawm and T. Renger, many modern holidays are formed not from original historical roots, but from the political, economic and ideological needs of the present day. While this situation, on the one hand, is an effective means of strengthening identity, on the other hand, it can weaken the authentic essence of the holidays.

Festivals and holidays form the semantic field of cultural identity. In this case, the components of culture - language, religious rituals, national clothing, folk oral art and musical heritage - are recoded in the social consciousness and enter the stage of renewal. Therefore, it is important to analyze festivals not only in terms of traditionality, but also as cultural performances. Through performances, culture is not only expressed, but also reinvented by members of society through active participation.

Holidays play an invaluable role in the process of cultural transmission - that is, the transfer of cultural values from one generation to another. Especially through festival ceremonies involving children and young people, information about national history, heroism, and ancient traditions is conveyed in a natural context. This ensures their active participation in the process of identification and the strengthening of a sense of belonging to their nation.

However, according to the opinions expressed by postmodernist cultural analysts, modern festivals are increasingly under the threat of commodification, that is, subordination to market mechanisms. This can turn them into a tourist product, an entertainment industry or a means of political propaganda. In such conditions, in order to preserve the true cultural and philosophical essence of the festival, close cooperation between state policy, civil society and the scientific community is necessary.

Also in the context of globalization, festivals are becoming a field of transcultural interaction. On the one hand, this can enhance intercultural

dialogue, but on the other hand, it can lead to the loss of some national characteristics. Therefore, it is advisable to adhere to the principles of cultural diversification when organizing festivals, that is, to balance openness and interactivity while preserving national identity.

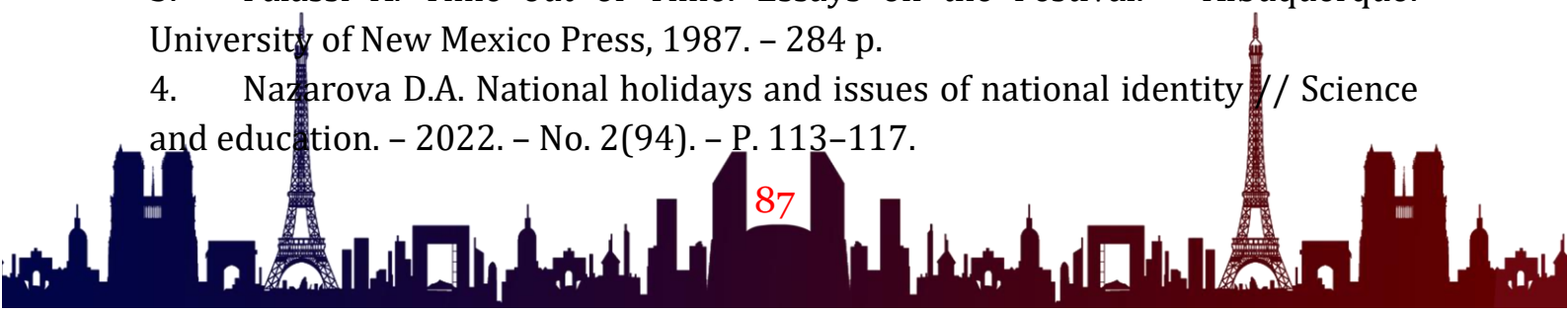
In conclusion, it can be said that festivals are not passive spectacles, but active socio-cultural processes, which are multi-level and multifunctional means of forming, preserving and strengthening identity. When studying them, it is necessary to take into account not only an anthropological approach, but also communicative, performative, economic and political aspects.

Conclusion.

Holidays and festivals, as complex socio-cultural phenomena that embody the historical layers of folk culture, awaken social consciousness and strengthen national identity, occupy a special place in the development of humanity. Through them, not only traditional customs are revived, but also the continuity of intergenerational heritage is ensured, national pride, historical memory and aesthetic taste are formed in the younger generation. At the same time, festivals are emerging in modern society as a means of cultural communication, a space for social integration and a strategic instrument of cultural policy. The results of the study show that festivals serve as an effective platform for preserving cultural identity and promoting it in the global environment. However, in this process, it is important not to allow the commercialization of festivals and their deviation from their main essence. Therefore, it is necessary to systematically support festivals by the state and civil society, develop them on a scientific basis and integrate them into the pedagogical process. In conclusion, holidays and festivals are an invaluable tool for the spiritual unity of the people, the rise of cultural consciousness and the preservation of their identity. Their preservation and development in accordance with the requirements of the times is an important condition not only for the protection of culture, but also for the creation of a strong civil society.

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