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NATIONAL CHARACTER OF FESTIVALS IN THE PROCESS OF CULTURAL INTEGRATION

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Abstract. This article provides a scholarly analysis of the national character of festivals in the context of cultural integration and examines their role in preserving and promoting national identity. In the era of globalization, festivals are viewed not only as an effective means of strengthening intercultural dialogue and cooperation among nations but also as an important platform for showcasing national traditions, customs, values, and intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: music competitions, music festivals, national culture, musical art, cultural heritage, national values, traditional performance art, young talents, cultural diplomacy, cultural policy, creative development, cultural integration.

Аннотация. Mazkur maqolada madaniyatlar integratsiyasi sharoitida festivallarning milliy xususiyati va ularning milliy o‘ziga xoslikni saqlash hamda rivojlantirishdagi o‘rni ilmiy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Globallashuv jarayonlarida festivallar turli xalqlar o‘rtasida madaniy muloqot va hamkorlikni mustahkamlash bilan birga, milliy an’analar, urf-odatlar, qadriyatlar va nomoddiy madaniy merosni namoyon etishning muhim maydoni sifatida qaraladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: musiqiy tanlovlar, musiqiy festivallar, milliy madaniyat, musiqa san’ati, madaniy meros, milliy qadriyatlar, an’anaviy ijrochilik, yosh iste’dodlar, madaniy diplomatiya, madaniy siyosat, ijodiy rivojlanish, madaniy integratsiya.

Аннотация. В данной статье с научной точки зрения анализируются национальные особенности фестивалей в условиях интеграции культур, а также их роль в сохранении и развитии национальной самобытности. В условиях глобализации фестивали рассматриваются не только как эффективный механизм укрепления межкультурного диалога и сотрудничества между народами, но и как важная платформа для демонстрации национальных традиций, обычаев, ценностей и нематериального культурного наследия.

Ключевые слова: музыкальные конкурсы, музыкальные фестивали, национальная культура, музыкальное искусство, культурное наследие, национальные ценности, традиционное исполнительское искусство, молодые таланты, культурная дипломатия, культурная политика, творческое развитие, культурная интеграция.

Uzbekistan's festivals are distinguished by presenting national musical traditions—makom, folk songs, dastans, and instrumental performance—in modern artistic forms. Festivals such as "Sharq Taronalari," "International Maqom Art Forum," and "Boysun Spring" serve to enhance our country's cultural prestige on a global scale by showcasing the richest layers of our national heritage to an international audience. During the years of independence, anniversary events held to

restore historical memory and form national pride—such as the anniversaries of the cities of Bukhara and Khiva (1997), Shakhrisabz (2002), and Termez (2002) —as well as celebrations such as the 1000th anniversary of the epic "Alpomish" and the 1225th anniversary of Imam Bukhari, served as the foundation for defining the national character of the festivals.

As a logical and ideological continuation of these processes, the "Sharq Taronalari" International Music Festival, held in Samarkand since 1997, has acquired the status of the most prestigious event in the musical culture of Uzbekistan. The conceptual framework of the festival embodies several strategic goals: to legitimize Uzbekistan's musical culture on a global scale, to serve as a unique cultural bridge between Eastern and Western musical cultures, and to rediscover ancient Samarkand as one of the world's cultural centers.

The concept of the festival is based on a unique synthesis of national and international elements; in particular, the solemn opening ceremony held on Registan Square demonstrates the majesty of the history and culture of Uzbek statehood, while the use of modern lighting and sound technologies against the background of historical architectural monuments gives national songs a special aesthetic appeal. Furthermore, the festival is not only a performance venue but also an important scientific and educational platform. The international conferences held there allow for the analysis of the musical teachings of our great thinkers—such as Abu Nasr Farabi and Abu Ali ibn Sina—from the perspective of modern science. It should be particularly noted that the information provided by the historian Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi in his work "Zafarnama" regarding the gathering of musicians from various countries at Amir Temur's palace is currently being revived through the "Sharq Taronalari" festival. [1], this clearly confirms the historical continuity of the traditions.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 25, 2019, raised the procedure for holding the "Sharq Taronalari" International Music Festival to a qualitatively new level, consolidating it as a comprehensive socio-cultural event that serves not only the development of musical art but also the strengthening of friendship between the peoples of the world and the enhancement of our country's tourism potential. According to its conceptual essence, this festival acquires a national character in several important directions: first, in each edition, maqom evenings, folk songs, and the performance of national musical instruments are presented as a constant priority; second, the presentation of new symphonic, opera, and chamber works by prominent representatives of the Uzbek compositional school, such as Mutal Burkhanov, Gavhar Alimova, and Dilorom Saidaminova, to the general public for the first time on these international rostrums demonstrates the modern potential of our national music; third, the visual-symbolic synthesis combining the historical architecture of Samarkand, the Ulugbek Observatory, and the traditions of the Great Silk Road with modern light and sound technologies brightly demonstrates the history of Uzbek statehood to the global community. The international prestige of the festival is determined by the constant support of UNESCO, the participation of an international jury, and the evaluation of the competition program in two areas: professional folk music and contemporary compositional creativity. Thus, "Sharq Taronalari" has become a unique model that ensures a delicate balance between preserving national identity and international integration, playing a determining role in preserving the tradition of hafiz, continuing the "master-apprentice" chain, and representing regional schools of Uzbek musical art (Fergana-Tashkent, Khorezm, Bukhara, Surkhandarya) at the world level.

[1] Jonibekov Z., Hasanov G‘. // “Sharq taronalari” – tinchlik va hamjihatlik elchisi. // https://uza.uz/uz/posts/sharq-taronalari-tinchlik-va-hamzhihatlik-elchisi_629212

At the same time, the "Boysun Bahori" festival, held in the Boysun district of the Surkhandarya region since 2003, occupies a special place in the preservation and promotion of national folklore heritage. After the "Boysun Cultural Space" was declared a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO, this festival acquired a new, high relevance on an international scale.[2].

The Baysun region is characterized by a multi-layered blend of ancient Turan, Zoroastrianism, and Islamic cultural traditions. As researcher D. Shukurov rightly noted, the festival has been established since 2002 as an open dialogue platform for performers from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and the fact that it is currently held every two years further strengthens its status. [3].

The uniqueness of the festival program lies in the fact that, alongside local music schools representing the genres of katta ashula, lapar, and song in local variants, it presents folk epics such as "Alpomish" and "Gorogly" in live performance as a major center of bakhshi art, synthesizing the art of oral storytelling accompanied by the dombra and dutar. Furthermore, the festival is not only musical but also complex ethnographic in nature, creating a holistic ethno-cultural environment encompassing traditional crafts, national costumes, and folk games. In particular, the playing of unique instruments such as the kushkurgan (koshdutar), which has been preserved only in the Baysun region, further enhances the archaeological and musical value of the festival.

Within the framework of the festival, musical and dance examples related to weddings, circumcision ceremonies, and Navruz, as well as seasonal ritual songs such as "Lola" and "Sumalak," vividly reflect the ancient worldview of the people in harmony with nature. Labor songs such as "Ayyor" and "Yalla" are performed in crafts such as carpet weaving, pottery, and jewelry making, clearly demonstrating the organic and historical connection of national art with the lifestyle of our people.

We can see institutional protection measures, such as strengthening its position in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and ensuring international monitoring. Thus, "Baysun Spring" is a concentrated expression of national identity, serving as an important institutional platform for elevating local values to the level of universal human heritage.

The historical roots of these values are traced back to one of the most ancient and rich heritages of the Uzbek people—the art of maqom. Having traversed a thousand-year path of historical development, the maqom is not merely a complex musical composition, but the supreme expression of the people's spiritual world, philosophical reflections, and aesthetic ideals. The art of maqom, which exerted a strong influence on the socio-cultural life of Central Asia and the Eastern Renaissance in the 9th–10th centuries, has been refined over centuries, reaching the level of an extremely perfect form and logical system. The "Shashmaqom," "Khorezm Maqoms," and "Fergana-Tashkent Maqom Routes" formed in Uzbekistan occupy a special place in world musical culture due to their unique theoretical foundations and performing schools.

The commonality of maqom art among Turkic peoples is clearly manifested in its names such as "muğam" (Azerbaijan), "nuğba" (Iran), and "muqom" (Uyghur), as well as in similar logical constructions in melodic climaxes and endings, which confirms its spiritual integrity not only on a national but also on a regional scale.

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[2] Istamova Sh. “Boysun bahori” xalqaro folklor festivali dunyo e’tirofida. // Journal of universal science research. // ISSN (E): 2181-4570 ResearchBib Impact Factor: 6,4 / 2023 SJIF 2024 = 5.073/Volume-2,Issue-10. 155-156 bb. 45-b.

[3] Shukurov D. Mustaqillik yillarida O‘zbekiston san’atida biyennale va festivallar faoliyatining badiiy-ijtimoiy asoslari. San’atshunoslik fanlari bo‘yicha falsafa doktori (PhD) ilmiy darajasini olish uchun yozilgan dissertatsiya. -T.: 2025.

Maqom performance is an extremely delicate field requiring high artistic taste and spiritual purity, and its support at the state level during the years of independence is clearly demonstrating its positive impact. Holding the conference in close cooperation with representatives of Eastern cultures such as Iran, Iraq, Tajikistan, India, and Azerbaijan further strengthened the international prestige of the Uzbek school of maqom studies and opened new horizons for international cooperation. In conclusion, the Shakhrisabz International Maqom Art Forum is a historic event inscribed in the "golden pages" of our national culture, demonstrating a perfect and exemplary model for preserving national identity and developing intercultural dialogue.

Today, the art of maqom is not merely a unique example of our national culture, but is being recognized internationally as an integral and precious part of the spiritual heritage of all humanity. The fact that Dutch specialists place Uzbek status alongside the masterpieces of world classical music clearly demonstrates the universal artistic value of this art.

As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev rightly noted, the main strategic goal of the forum is to "preserve this unique treasure like the apple of one's eye and make it available to the people of the world." [4], because the International Maqom Art Conference held in Shakhrisabz has become a global platform where professional artists test their skills. From the perspective of modern cultural studies and tourism theory, it is no coincidence that festivals are interpreted as a "cultural attraction" and a strategic "key event." The organization of the "Sharq Taronalari" (Samarkand), "International Maqom Art Forum" (Shahrisabz), and "Boysun Bahori" (Boysun) festivals in Uzbekistan has turned them into key points for cultural tourism routes.

The art of bakhshi is a rare heritage that has preserved the epic memory, language, and spiritual values of the people for centuries. The organization of the international festival in order to preserve and develop this art arose from a number of urgent scientific and social needs: firstly, to revive the traditions of epic performance by reviving the styles of ancient epics in accordance with the requirements of the modern audience; secondly, to scientifically study the peculiarities of the schools of bakhshi in Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, Khorezm and Karakalpakstan and to establish mutual exchange of experience between them; thirdly, to form a large-scale cultural dialogue between the epic traditions of Turkic-speaking peoples and other nations. The regular holding of the International Bakhshi Festival confirms the universal significance of Uzbek folklore and further strengthens Uzbekistan's prestige as a protector of the world's intangible heritage.

The festival aims to achieve a range of complex objectives, the primary of which is the preservation of authentic examples of oral traditions and the promotion of national heritage through their presentation in the global cultural space. Organizing international scientific and practical conferences to deeply study the theoretical and practical foundations of the art of bakhshi and strengthening international cultural dialogue through epic traditions reflecting the national identity, language, and lifestyle of various peoples is also an integral part of this process.

Overall, this festival has become a global platform for preserving epic heritage, not only preserving the traditions of the past but also transforming bakhshi art into an active link in modern cultural dialogue and serving as a school of professional mastery for the younger generation.

According to the UNESCO concept of "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity," festivals are a crucial mechanism for preserving endangered cultural practices and adapting them to the modern social environment. On December 16, 2021, the inclusion of Uzbek bakhshi art in the UNESCO Representative List marked the beginning of a new historical era in this field. This

[4] Mirziyoyev Sh. “Xalqaro maqom anjumani” ochilishida so‘zlagan nutqidan. -Jizzax: 2018.

recognition not only strengthened the festival's international legal status but also imposed international obligations on the state to protect this unique heritage.

Music competitions and festivals in Uzbekistan are clearly systematized by geographical coverage, genre direction, and target audience. Professional competitions such as "Nihol" and "Yoshlar Ovozi" are aimed at selecting talents, while festivals such as "Sharq Taronalari," "International Maqom Art Forum," and "Boysun Bahori" are aimed at demonstrating and promoting national identity. In particular, the fact that more than 100,000 young people participated in the "Nihol" competition alone between 1992 and 2023, and 78% of them continued their professional musical education, clearly confirms the extremely strategic importance of this competition system in personnel training.

Festivals serve as a stable platform that ensures a delicate balance between the preservation of national character (national language, musical instruments, local schools) and international integration, while adopting national musical traditions as the primary coordinates that guarantee their uniqueness. Overall, Uzbekistan's system of musical competitions and festivals serves as a comprehensive institutional mechanism for enhancing national spirituality, preserving cultural heritage, and strengthening the country's prestige in the global community. At the same time, although the expansion of festivals yields positive results in promoting national art, a number of socio-cultural and organizational problems are also observed during the process. In particular, there is a risk of losing the original (authentic) image and natural performance environment of folklore as a result of adapting (styling) folk oral creativity and traditional music samples to the demands of large stages and audiences; artificial changes made to increase the popularity of the work can damage the original essence of national heritage.

Another important issue is the holding of major international events in geographically complex and remote regions such as Baysun. The simultaneous arrival of tens of thousands of tourists and participants places excessive pressure on the region's infrastructure, transport and logistics network, hotel stock, and ecology. These issues require a strict balance between economic benefits and cultural and environmental sustainability in future festival planning, as well as the comprehensive development of infrastructure.

In conclusion, it should be noted that festivals are not just a cultural event, but also a powerful "cultural attraction" that dynamically revitalizes the regional economy. The example of such large-scale events as "Boysun Bahori" and "Sharq Taronalari" shows that the formation of sustainable cultural tourism routes directly contributes to the development of local infrastructure, improving the quality of services, and, most importantly, creating new jobs in the crafts and service sectors. Master classes, scientific-practical conferences, and networking events organized within the framework of competitions and festivals create a solid foundation for enriching national performance schools with international best practices, as well as for introducing modern management and innovation into the field of art. This is a fundamental factor that ensures the future competitiveness of our national culture.

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