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GENERAL FEATURES OF THE UZBEK NATIONAL CHARACTER

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Abstract

This article provides a theoretical and analytical examination of the general characteristics of the Uzbek national character, which has been shaped by the historical development, social way of life, customs, and rituals of the Uzbek people. The study conceptualizes national character as a mass social phenomenon and analyzes its manifestations through family upbringing, the mahalla system, neighborhood relations, mutual assistance, and social solidarity. Furthermore, the article substantiates national character traits as a significant factor ensuring social stability and cultural continuity within society. The findings of the research make it possible to identify stable characteristics of the Uzbek national character that have been consistently sustained in social behavior, collective consciousness, and everyday social practices.

Keywords: National character, lifestyle of the Uzbek people, customs and rituals, mahalla, family upbringing, neighborhood relations, solidarity, social consciousness.

Annotatsiya:

Mazkur maqolada o‘zbek xalqining tarixiy taraqqiyoti, ijtimoiy turmush tarzi, urf-odat va marosimlari asosida shakllangan o‘zbek milliy xarakterining umumiy belgilari ilmiy-nazariy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda milliy xarakter

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ommaviy ijtimoiy fenomen sifatida qaralib, uning oilaviy tarbiya, mahalla tizimi, qo'shnichilik munosabatlari, o'zaro yordam va hamjihatlik orqali namoyon bo'lish shakllari yoritiladi. Shuningdek, maqolada milliy xarakter belgilari jamiyatning ijtimoiy barqarorligi va madaniy uzviyligini ta'minlovchi muhim omil sifatida asoslab beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari o'zbek milliy xarakterining ijtimoiy xulq-atvor, jamoaviy ong va kundalik hayot amaliyotlarida uzluksiz davom etib kelayotgan barqaror xususiyatlarini aniqlash imkonini beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: Milliy xarakter, o'zbek xalqining turmush tarzi, urf-odat va marosimlar, mahalla, oilaviy tarbiya, qo'shnichilik munosabatlari, hamjihatlik, ijtimoiy ong.

Аннотация:

В данной статье с научно-теоретических позиций анализируются общие характеристики узбекского национального характера, сформировавшегося на основе исторического развития, социального уклада жизни, традиций, обычаев и обрядов узбекского народа. В исследовании национальный характер рассматривается как массовый социальный феномен, а также раскрываются формы его проявления через семейное воспитание, систему махалли, соседские отношения, взаимопомощь и социальную сплочённость. Кроме того, в статье обосновывается роль признаков национального характера как важного фактора обеспечения социальной стабильности и культурной преемственности общества. Результаты исследования позволяют выявить устойчивые характеристики узбекского национального характера, которые последовательно проявляются в социальном поведении, коллективном сознании и повседневных социальных практиках.

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Ключевые слова: Национальный характер, образ жизни узбекского народа, традиции и обряды, махалля, семейное воспитание, соседские отношения, сплочённость, социальное сознание.

Introduction

In the context of contemporary globalization processes, issues of national identity, national consciousness, and national character are increasingly becoming significant objects of study within the social and humanitarian sciences. The national character, shaped by the historical experience, social life, and cultural environment of each people, occupies an important place in the behavior of individuals, social relations, and value systems of society. From this perspective, the scientific study of the Uzbek national character possesses not only theoretical but also practical significance.

In Uzbek society, national character is primarily manifested through collectivism, mutual assistance, respect for elders, strong neighborhood (mahalla) relations, and the close integration of rituals and traditions into everyday life. These features have developed as a result of the historical way of life and social experience of the Uzbek people and serve to ensure social stability and cohesion. In particular, family upbringing and the institution of the mahalla function as key social mechanisms for transmitting elements of national character from generation to generation.

An analysis of scientific literature shows that national character is not merely a set of individual psychological traits, but a complex social phenomenon closely linked to a people's historical memory, cultural traditions, and social relations. Therefore, this article analyzes the general features of Uzbek national character through customs, rituals, and forms of collective life, and reveals their social significance on a scientific basis.

The diversity of national characters among peoples is determined by their socio-economic experience, historical development, and natural living conditions. For

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example, in the relatively small country of the Netherlands, diligence is widely recognized, and this trait is reflected in the efficient use of limited land resources to produce highly productive agriculture. In the culture of the peoples of the Caucasus, cradle songs, ritual chants, and legends are often oriented toward instilling ideas of courage and resilience, reflecting the influence of a complex and risk-laden environment. In this regard, L.N. Gumilyov, in his studies on ethnic processes, emphasizes that the psychological stability and active life position of ethnic groups living in mountainous regions are largely shaped by such natural and historical conditions.

The manifestation of such traits in the Uzbek national character as diligence, hospitality, respect for elders, kindness toward younger people, compassion, and generosity is directly connected with historical development. In terms of diligence, the construction of the Fergana Canal in the recent past vividly demonstrates the industrious and collective labor traditions of the Uzbek people. Russian writer P. Pavlenko, in his work “Fergansky Pochin” (1939), describes how collective farmers of the Fergana Valley undertook the construction of a major canal. Within 45–47 days, a 270-kilometer-long canal, with a width of 6–25 meters, was built using the traditional hashar (collective voluntary labor) method (Harvard Davis Center). Collective labor organized through the hashar system in kolkhozes and sovkhoses represents one of the important manifestations of the traditional lifestyle and national character of the Uzbek people. According to K. P. Kravtsov (1975), hashar is not only a means of accomplishing economic tasks but also a mechanism for strengthening social and psychological cohesion within the community. Participation in hashar reflects values such as mutual assistance, dedication to common goals, and a sense of responsibility, which are key elements of national character.

Similarly, hospitality in Uzbek culture is expressed at a very high level: guests are warmly welcomed, and it is customary to offer the best food and household resources. Traditional proverbs such as “When a guest comes, blessings come

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with them,” “A guest brings joy,” and “A house without guests loses its charm” reflect these cultural traits.

Among the central elements of Uzbek national values are respect for parents and reverence for elders. These traditions are instilled in children from an early age within the family. Such values are primarily formed through family upbringing and have a strong influence on children’s social behavior, communication culture, and moral outlook. Research shows that respect for parents and relatives, listening to their advice, and learning from their experience are key factors ensuring family stability. Through these values, younger generations internalize behavioral norms such as compassion, patience, responsibility, and loyalty to collective interests. Within family hierarchy, younger members traditionally show obedience and respect toward elders. At the same time, by listening to elders’ advice, young people learn to interact effectively with society and to adhere to social order and moral norms. These practices represent concrete examples of how national values are transmitted across generations through family education.

In addition, neighborhood relations in Uzbek culture constitute an essential component of social life. Numerous studies indicate that Uzbek neighborliness is closely associated with collectivist values and traditions of mutual assistance. For instance, the exchange of food is not only a domestic custom but also a means of fostering strong social ties and mutual respect among neighbors. This process strengthens mahalla relations and contributes to the formation of a complex social support network within society. Therefore, practices such as sharing food or providing immediate assistance during difficult times remain stable social traditions in everyday Uzbek life.

Furthermore, qualities such as kindness, modesty, honor, a sense of shame, politeness, tolerance, sincerity, and solidarity are inherent in the Uzbek national character. Traditional customs and rituals serve as important mechanisms for strengthening social cohesion among members of society. In folk culture, mutual assistance, solidarity, and social responsibility are highly valued. Particularly

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during funeral rituals, even individuals who are not personally acquainted with the deceased participate in collective acts such as carrying the coffin and supporting mourning ceremonies. This reflects a shared sense of humanity and demonstrates the collective nature of Uzbek national character. Such practices are preserved as enduring social functions of rituals and customs, which are regarded as integral components of the Uzbek way of life and system of social relations. Each nation possesses traditions and customs that correspond to and reflect its natural geographical conditions, socio-economic life, and historical development. These emerge in the course of collective activity and experience. Over time, patterns of interaction among individuals – shaped by specific living conditions – become standardized norms, transmitted from generation to generation, and ultimately transform into enduring customs and traditions.

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