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INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES"**

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THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OF UZBEK WEDDING
CEREMONIES AND THEIR STAGE REPRESENTATION

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Annotation: *This article explores the rich cultural heritage of Uzbek wedding ceremonies as depicted in folklore and their adaptation in stage performances. The discussion highlights traditional rituals such as "kelinsalom," "yor-yor", and other ceremonial practices, analyzing their symbolic significance and evolution.*

Keywords: *Uzbek weddings, traditional rituals, grand events, kelinsalom, ceremony, community, solidarity, music, dance, symbol.*

Kalit so'zlar: *O'zbek to'ylari, an'anaviy marosimlar, tantanali tadbirlar, kelin salom, marosim, jamoa, birdamlik, musiqa, raqs, ramz.*

Ключевые слова: *узбекские свадьбы, традиционные обряды, грандиозные события, келинсалом, церемония, община, солидарность, музыка, танец, символ.*

Additionally, it investigates how these traditions are represented in theatrical performances, films, and modern cultural events, emphasizing their role in preserving cultural identity. Uzbek weddings, folklore, traditional rituals, stage performance, cultural values, wedding songs, theatrical representation, kelinsalom, yor-yor. This article will emphasize the importance of wedding ceremonies in Uzbek culture as a reflection of national identity. It will briefly discuss the ceremonial, social, and symbolic aspects rooted in folklore and how these traditions evolve over time.[2] Additionally, it will outline the role of stage performances. Traditional Aspects of Uzbek Weddings. The Uzbek weddings are colorful and lovely, deeply rooted in tradition, and carry significant cultural and social importance. These celebrations have remained largely unchanged over the centuries, reflecting the enduring values of Uzbek society.[3] Weddings are grand events, often involving hundreds of guests, and are highly cherished. Even in



modern times, Uzbek weddings maintain their traditional essence, often blending ancient customs with contemporary elements like restaurant receptions. However, the core values of joy, respect, and unity remain intact, emphasizing the cultural pride associated with these events. Overview of traditional rituals such as fatiha-tuyi (betrothal), non sindirish (bread-breaking), and kiz oshi (hen party) Details on iconic ceremonies like kelinsalom (welcoming the bride) and yor-yor (farewell songs). Also mentioning cultural values associated with community solidarity, family honor, and religious practices such as “nikokh-tui” (marriage prayer). In Uzbek culture, matchmaking is a key family event, not just a personal decision. Elders from both families play a vital role in the selection of the bride, considering her qualities such as modesty, good manners, and the family's reputation. The groom's family also evaluates the bride's social status, ensuring that the union benefits both families' reputations. Once the bride is chosen, the families meet three times to finalize the engagement.

The third visit includes the flatbread (patir) ceremony, which symbolizes the formal agreement between the families and the start of the marriage preparations.[4] Uzbek weddings are deeply rooted in centuries-old traditions that reflect both cultural and spiritual values. In Uzbek culture, matchmaking is a key family event, not just a personal decision. Elders from both families play a vital role in the selection of the bride, considering her qualities such as modesty, good manners, and the family's reputation. The groom's family also evaluates the bride's social status, ensuring that the union benefits both families' reputations. When the bride is chosen, the families meet three times to for the engagement. Once both families agree, the Fatiha Wedding (or engagement ceremony) is held, where the groom's family presents gifts to the bride's family, marking the formal beginning of the wedding preparations. This is followed by the symbolic bread-breaking ritual (non sindirish), where loaves of bread are broken to signify mutual consent and blessings for the couple's union.[3]

In the days leading up to the wedding, various other rituals are observed. One of these is the Sarpo Kurar (gift exchange), a ceremonial tradition to ensure the bride's honor and dignity in her new family. One significant pre-wedding tradition is the Qiz Oshi, or bachelorette party, which is held at the bride's family home with only female relatives and friends present. The event is filled with music, dancing, and sharing sweets, celebrating the bride's transition from her family home to married life.[4] The



gathering also provides a chance for the women to emotionally support the bride. In contrast, the groom's family hosts a bachelor morning palov (Ertalabki Osh) event, a male-only gathering centered around a ceremonial meal of palov (rice dish), symbolizing respect and unity within the family and community. The post-wedding stage includes rituals such as the face-opening and bride's bow ceremonies. The bride's bow involves the bride bowing before her husband's relatives to signify respect and humility, while the face-opening marks her formal introduction to her new family. Another important post-wedding tradition is the Kelin Salom . It is the finishing touch of the wedding customs in Uzbekistan. The literal translation of the name means "greetings of the bride". On the third day after the marriage the relatives of the girl visit her new house; and the bride in the national costume welcomes them and makes low bows, emphasizing her respectful integration into her new home. These rituals, from matchmaking to post-wedding celebrations, preserve important social values and strengthen family ties, ensuring the continuity of Uzbek cultural heritage for generations to come. Each stage, filled with symbolic acts and folkloric elements, demonstrates the profound connection between wedding customs and the broader cultural identity of Uzbekistan.

The representation of Uzbek weddings in stage performances plays a crucial role in showcasing the emotional and cultural depth of these traditions. These performances are more than just entertainment—they preserve and pass down customs through music, dance, and ritual reenactments. Songs like "Ulanlar" capture key moments of the wedding, particularly the bride's farewell from her family, marking her transition into marriage. "Yor-Yor" is a cherished Uzbek folk song traditionally performed during weddings, particularly when the bride are being celebrated. Song by women who form a circle around the bride, the song expresses joy, unity, and cultural pride. Its melodic and lyrical elements emphasize communal connection, strengthening bonds between the bride and her community. "Yor-Yor" holds emotional significance as it encapsulates the essence of Uzbek wedding traditions, blending festive celebration with deep cultural values. These songs, deeply embedded in Uzbek folklore, carry symbolic meanings.[6] Stage performances often feature these wedding songs to highlight the cultural values of respect, family integration, and hospitality. For instance, "Yor-Yor" are not just celebratory but also symbolic, emphasizing community bonds and the sanctity of marriage. Other songs, like "Kelin



Salom," depict the bride's greeting to her new family, symbolizing her acceptance and her role within her new community. These performances bring to life the broader cultural practices, demonstrating the collective memory and significance of these rituals. The Nikah (marriage prayer) is the holiest and prominent event in the life of Uzbeks, deeply influenced by Islamic traditions. The ceremony is a significant milestone in the lives of both the bride and the groom. It is not only a formal union between two individuals but also a binding contract that ties them in a relationship recognized by both religion and the state. Before the ceremony, the groom and his family go to the bride's house, where they are warmly received by the bride's family. This visit often includes a lavish feast, symbolizing the joining of families and the celebration of the union. The atmosphere is one of joy and anticipation as both families come together to mark the occasion. The actual Nikah ceremony is led by a religious leader, usually an imam, who performs the marriage prayers known as Khutbai Nikah. During this time, the imam explains the spiritual and social responsibilities that come with marriage. He recites verses from the Qur'an, offering blessings to the couple and emphasizing the significance of mutual respect, love, and cooperation in the relationship. The imam also explains the legal aspects of marriage, including the rights and duties of both the bride and the groom. A key part of the ceremony is the exchange of vows, where the groom and bride express their consent to the marriage.[5] The bride's father (or a male guardian) is typically present to give his blessing and consent to the union. Following the marriage prayers, the couple is considered officially married under both religious and legal standards. However, the couple is not yet considered fully married in the eyes of society until this religious ceremony is completed, as it confirms the marriage's legitimacy according to Islamic law. Once the Nikah ceremony concludes, the wedding celebrations continue into the evening, filled with music, dancing, and the sharing of food. The celebration are both a reflection of the religious and cultural importance of the marriage and an expression of joy for the couple's new life together. The religious ceremony, however, remains the core event, solidifying the couple's bond and their responsibilities to one another.

Wedding ceremonies, particularly traditional ones like those in Uzbekistan, have long been celebrated not only as personal milestones but also as essential expressions of cultural heritage. In modern times, these ceremonies are increasingly represented on stage, whether in theater, film,



or performances, which serve to highlight the cultural values embedded in each ritual. These stage representations are more than mere performances—they act as dynamic means of communicating deep cultural messages. Each element, from the bride's attire to the songs and dances performed, becomes a "sign system" that conveys specific meanings about the culture. As discussed in the article, traditional costumes function as a form of communication that carries cultural significance. In the same way, the traditional wedding dress worn by an Uzbek bride, often intricately embroidered, not only enhances the aesthetic value of the ceremony but also symbolizes the cultural and spiritual continuity of the past.[12] Similarly, wedding dances, rituals, and songs act as powerful mediums through which traditional values such as respect for family, community unity, and joy are communicated to the audience. By presenting these ceremonies on stage, the younger generation is not only entertained but also educated about the importance of these traditions, ensuring that they remain relevant and appreciated in contemporary society. Uzbek wedding traditions are deeply embedded in the country's folklore and have maintained their cultural significance—customs, traditions, and values passed down through generations. Rituals, such as the Nikoh ceremony, remain crucial in Uzbek weddings, and rituals like the breaking of bread during the Fatiha ceremony continue to symbolize unity and betrothal and community blessings. These practices are deeply connected to the cultural and religious values of Uzbek society, reflecting a blend of folklore, history, and national identity.

Modernization, however, has introduced certain changes. For instance, the move from home-based celebrations to larger venues like banquet halls or restaurants reflects the influence of contemporary life on traditional customs. Yet, the essential elements of the wedding, such as symbolic acts and customs derived from folklore, remain intact. The adaptation of wedding music, such as the traditional Yor-Yor song, into modern performances and media ensures that these cultural practices continue to resonate with younger generations, while also reflecting contemporary aesthetics. Furthermore, some elements of Uzbek weddings, such as the bride's veil or the significance of Palov, continue to embody ancient customs, even as their presentation evolves. The preservation of wedding songs and symbolic practices such as the "nine plates" and "wedding applause" showcases how folklore persists through generations. These



symbols of unity and joy continue to hold deep cultural significance, bridging the past and present in a modern context. In essence, while the essence of Uzbek wedding traditions remains strong, their adaptation to modern settings demonstrates how the nation's folklore remains alive and culturally relevant. The ability of these traditions to evolve without losing their essence ensures that the weddings continue to serve as a reflection of the broader cultural and historical heritage of the Uzbek people.[1]

The preservation of cultural heritage is essential for maintaining the unique identity of a nation, and wedding traditions play a vital role in this process. As highlighted in the article, traditional practices such as national costumes and folk festivals are crucial for safeguarding a nation's cultural identity, especially in the face of modern influences and globalization. Similarly, the customs surrounding Uzbek weddings serve as living testimonies to the nation's cultural values and history. [1] From the "Nikoh" (marriage contract) to the "Kelin Salom" (bride's greeting), each ritual carries significant meaning, connecting the present to the past. In this context, wedding rituals are not static; they evolve while retaining their core cultural values. The article suggests that traditions must adapt to modern contexts while preserving their original purpose. In Uzbekistan, despite the influence of modernity, wedding ceremonies maintain key elements that underscore the nation's cultural identity. These rituals continue to reflect universal values such as respect for elders, family, and the passage of life. Through the performance and celebration of these ceremonies, Uzbekistan ensures that its cultural heritage is passed down to future generations, strengthening the national identity and reinforcing the connection between past, present, and future. The act of preserving and adapting these wedding traditions—whether celebrated in a modern wedding or represented on stage—plays a significant role in preserving the uniqueness and continuity of Uzbek culture.

Traditional Uzbek wedding ceremonies are deeply rooted in the country's folklore and cultural heritage.[2] These rituals, such as the Fatiha, Nikah, and symbolic acts like breaking bread and the bride's veil are central in the wedding process, connecting the couple to their families, community, and faith. Folklore, through songs and narratives, reflects these customs and passes them down through generations, strengthening national identity. Modern adaptations of these rituals in stage performances and public events help keep these traditions alive and relevant, ensuring they continue to educate future generations about their cultural



significance. The combination of tradition, folklore, and modern interpretations plays a key role in preserving Uzbekistan's cultural fabric and promoting its values both locally and globally.

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