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THE ROLE OF UZBEK ANIMATION IN SHAPING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CHILDREN'S CONSCIOUSNESS

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Annotation: This article analyzes the expression of national values and artistic images in Uzbek animated films. It demonstrates how national traditions, customs, and spiritual and moral principles are instilled in children's consciousness through the art of animation. Using examples of selected Uzbek animated films, the study examines how national identity is manifested through the harmony of artistic means of expression such as form, color, character imagery, and music. In addition, the article explores the integration of folklore, fairy tale, and legend motifs with modern artistic tools in Uzbek animation. The research is conducted from an art history perspective, with particular attention paid to the educational significance of visual expression.

Key words: Uzbek animation, national values, artistic image, children's upbringing, visual expression, art studies, fairy tale, folklore, graphics, music.

The film industry makes an invaluable contribution to the development of national culture and art, the upbringing of young people in the spirit of patriotism and loyalty, and the cultivation of respect for the older generation. Cinema plays an important role in expanding human knowledge, and its rich content directly influences the level of public awareness and education.

Animated films occupy a significant place in the lives of children and adolescents, influencing their worldview, dreams, confidence in life, and language development. Today, modern Uzbek and Karakalpak animated films have become an integral part of the spiritual wealth of the people. The lifestyle of the nation, its rich national values, traditions, customs, and attitudes toward life and society are vividly reflected in animated films. In the rapidly developing technological environment of the 21st century, children's interest in television, cinema, and animation has grown tremendously.

The primary purpose of animated films is to teach children kindness, generosity, and compassion. Animation plays a crucial role in ensuring the comprehensive development of young people, satisfying their spiritual and educational needs, and helping them deeply understand the essence of patriotism, civic responsibility, and universal and national values.

Animation has become a close companion of today's child. The internet and television channels offer millions of animated films designed for children of all ages, and their number and influence continue to grow. It must be acknowledged that many parents have delegated the

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responsibility of child upbringing to animated content, allowing children to spend three to four hours a day watching cartoons. Constant parental busyness—whether at home or at work—has led children to become increasingly dependent on visual entertainment from an early age.

According to the recommendations of the World Health Organization, any digital content is harmful for children under the age of 2.5, with some experts extending this limit to three years due to the risk of delayed brain development. Age ratings on television channels (0+, 3+, 5+, etc.) are often ineffective. Russian physician and Doctor of Psychology Nadezhda Mazurova notes that there are no clear global standards for animation, and parents choose content based on personal preference. While animated films should not be regarded as entirely harmful, it is concerning when children become attached to content that does not reflect their national culture, identity, and worldview [1].

Currently, the Uzbekistan Cinematography Agency oversees the Uzbekistan Museum of Cinema Art, which features a special exhibition dedicated to animation. The museum displays drawn and toy characters from the best animated films created by Uzbek artists and directors. Visitors experience great pleasure viewing these exhibits.

Every year, on October 28—International Animation Day—the Uzbekistan Cinematography Agency organizes press conferences, video conferences, and free screenings of national animated films in cinemas across Tashkent, the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and other regions, focusing on the challenges and solutions for the development of Uzbek animation.

Historically, on this date in 1892, French artist and inventor Émile Reynaud presented moving images to the public at the Grévin Museum. In 2002, on the initiative of the French branch of the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), October 28 was officially established as Animation Day to commemorate the 110th anniversary of Reynaud's first public screening.

By order of the Cinematography Agency, the Uzbek animated series *Auto Adventures* was produced in 2019 by the *Astir* Animation Studio, directed by Abdullatif Haydarov, in honor of International Children's Day. The main characters of the series include domestically produced vehicles such as Damas, Spark, Matiz, Lacetti, Captiva, Malibu, MAN trucks, and ISUZU buses, which quickly became favorites among young viewers.

Each episode portrays the adventures of cheerful vehicles against the animated landscapes of Tashkent city. Beyond entertainment, the series has educational value, teaching children friendship, kindness, diligence, sincerity, responsibility, and basic traffic rules.

Modern Uzbek animated films increasingly incorporate broader storylines, contemporary heroes, and reflections of recent reforms and transformations taking place in the country. Thanks to the use of advanced technologies, Uzbek animation has begun to secure its place among international productions.

In 2021, the international animation film festival "AMEN–2021" was held in Turkestan, Kazakhstan, with participation from 49 countries. At this festival, director Aziz Muhammadov's animated film *The House on Wheels* won the Grand Prix, while *The Magic Tambourine* received the award for Best Artistic Solution [2].

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In the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the state unitary enterprise “Karakalpakfilm” Studio is actively engaged in film and animation production. Its primary mission is to develop national cinema culture and produce feature, documentary, scientific-publicistic, and animated films, as well as dubbing films into Uzbek and Russian. The studio widely uses Karakalpak folklore, fairy tales, and children’s songs. Karakalpak people are well known for their epic oral traditions. Today, the state has adopted important decisions and programs to support the development of animation as a tool for educating the younger generation [3].

Since March 22, 2021, the “AQLVOY” children’s educational-entertainment television channel has been operating under the initiative of the Ministry of Preschool Education, based on a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers. The channel broadcasts high-quality animated series and programs produced by leading studios from Russia, the USA, South Korea, China, and other countries, adapted into Uzbek language with cultural sensitivity.

According to Resolution No. 291 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated May 8, 2021, measures were introduced to strengthen the material and technical base of the “Karakalpakfilm” Studio and increase its annual production capacity. The plan includes the production of feature films, documentaries, animated films, and the children’s humorous newsreel *Tulkishek*. This initiative provides significant opportunities for children to watch animated content in their native language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the creation of animated films that convey the richness of the Uzbek and Karakalpak languages and culture is a vital responsibility of creators and society as a whole. Instilling love for the mother tongue and national identity in the minds of the younger generation through animation remains a crucial task. Therefore, creative efforts in the field of animation must be further developed and consistently continued.

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