

ACTIVITIES OF MUSEUMS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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***Annotation:** This article examines the stages of development of museum activities in the early years of Uzbekistan's independence, their role in the spiritual life of society, and their significance in the preservation and promotion of historical and cultural heritage. It also analyzes state policy aimed at improving the museum system during the independence period, particularly normative-legal documents and the activities of the "Uzbekmuseum" Foundation.*

***Keywords:** museum, independence, cultural heritage, spirituality, exposition, "Uzbekmuseum," national values, historical monument, museology, state policy*

MUSTAQILLIKNING DASTLABKI YILLARIDA MUZEYLAR FAOLIYATI

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Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada O'zbekiston mustaqilligining dastlabki yillarida muzeylar faoliyatining rivojlanish bosqichlari, ularning jamiyat ma'naviy hayotidagi o'рни hamda tarixiy-madaniy merosni asrash va targ'ib etishdagi ahamiyati yoritilgan. Shuningdek, mustaqillik davrida muzeylar tizimini takomillashtirishga qaratilgan davlat siyosati, xususan, normativ-huquqiy hujjatlar va "O'zbekmuzey" jamg'armasi faoliyati tahlil qilingan.

Kalit so'zlar: muzey, mustaqillik, madaniy meros, ma'naviyat, ekspozitsiya, "O'zbekmuzey", milliy qadriyatlar, tarixiy yodgorlik, muzeysunoslik, davlat siyosati.

ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ МУЗЕЕВ В ПЕРВЫЕ ГОДЫ НЕЗАВИСИМОСТИ

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Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются этапы развития деятельности музеев в первые годы независимости Узбекистана, их роль в духовной жизни общества, а также значение в сохранении и популяризации историко-культурного наследия. Также анализируется государственная политика, направленная на совершенствование музейной системы в период независимости, в частности нормативно-правовые документы и деятельность фонда «Узбекмузей».

Ключевые слова: музей, независимость, культурное наследие, духовность, экспозиция, «Узбекмузей», национальные ценности, исторический памятник, музееведение, государственная политика

The achievement of independence brought about fundamental changes in all spheres of life in Uzbekistan. In particular, reforms carried out in the cultural and educational sphere contributed to the awareness of national identity, restoration of historical memory, and preservation of our rich heritage. In this process, museums emerged as important social institutions, becoming centers that reflect the historical development, spiritual values, and cultural achievements of the people. In the early years of independence, the development of museum activities, strengthening their material and technical base, and improving them in accordance with modern requirements were defined as priority directions of state policy.

Today, more than a thousand museums operate in our country, preserving the historical, scientific, and cultural heritage and spiritual values of our people. These museums serve as a unique mirror reflecting the history of our homeland's development and the achievements of our people in socio-cultural fields.

As the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, I.A. Karimov, emphasized: "If we consider that a museum is a mirror of a nation's history, it must inspire feelings of pride and honor in the hearts of future generations—the children of that nation. Our task is to fully convey our great history to our descendants through such educational institutions" [1].

The word "museum" (from the Greek *mouseion* – a place dedicated to the Muses) means an institution devoted to the collection, preservation, study, and promotion of historical, material, and spiritual

monuments. It is a scientific and educational institution that carries out propaganda and educational work through its expositions and exhibitions [2].

Museums are not, as some might imagine, merely “display markets” or houses built by collectors to gather ancestral heritage. Rather, they are sacred places designed to provide clear and reliable information about a specific historical period and particular exhibits. Museums are cultural and educational institutions whose main function is to collect and preserve historical documents, cultural and spiritual monuments, and samples of natural wealth, to study them scientifically, and to display them for the general public. They conduct cultural and educational work among broad segments of the population. Museum activities provide extensive knowledge about the historical development of society, its achievements, and its rich cultural and spiritual heritage. As cultural and educational institutions, museums are among the most effective means of meeting the social needs of the population and fostering their spiritual development.

In 1991, on August 31, the Uzbek people achieved the long-awaited independence they had aspired to for many years. The attainment of independence by Uzbekistan brought about fundamental changes not only in the economic and political spheres but also in the cultural domain, including the study, preservation, and wide promotion of our rich historical heritage. Along with transformations in the socio-economic, political, and cultural life of our country, significant changes also occurred in the activities of museums across Uzbekistan. Several factors contributed to this process:

Firstly, the restoration of national feelings that had been erased from our consciousness during the years of colonial rule;

Secondly, the revival of our forgotten history in order to enhance national pride and national consciousness;

Thirdly, honoring our ancestors, instilling in the younger generation a sense of pride in their heritage, and educating them as достой successors of great traditions;

Fourthly, the necessity of our national values for building a democratic, legal, and strong state of Uzbekistan and for realizing the idea that “the future of Uzbekistan is a great state”;

Fifthly, the importance of our national values in ensuring that our country takes a достой place in the world community and in leaving a free and prosperous homeland to future generations.

These goals have been reflected in the key actions of our state. The Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, “On the Fundamental Improvement and Enhancement of Museum Activities” (PF-1913, January 12, 1998) played a significant role in the development of museums and the professional life of museum workers. The decree primarily aimed at further improving the museum system historically formed in Uzbekistan, increasing its role in the spiritual and moral development of the people, preserving, studying, enriching, and promoting rare and unique exhibits reflecting our rich history and the achievements of independence. It also emphasized strengthening national pride, patriotism, and devotion to the Motherland, ensuring museums are staffed with highly qualified specialists in line with modern requirements, reinforcing their material and technical base, and applying advanced international museology practices. In addition, the “Uzbekmuseum” Foundation was established under the Ministry of Culture and Sports to support museums [3].

From the very first days of its activity, the “Uzbekmuseum” Foundation identified its main directions and tasks to be implemented in practice:

Ensuring that museums of the republic accurately reflect the rich cultural heritage of our people and its stages of development, and create expositions imbued with the spirit of independence in accordance with modern requirements;

Returning cultural heritage that had been taken abroad over the centuries;

Transforming museums into centers of spirituality, instilling in the hearts of the people especially youth a sense of pride in the history of statehood and the legacy of great ancestors;

Strengthening promotional activities to introduce the rich exhibits and achievements of our museums to the international community and organizing interregional exhibitions;

Developing international tourism, attracting foreign visitors to Uzbek museums, and providing them with high-quality cultural services;

Making extensive use of modern technologies in compiling unified catalogs of museum collections and publishing postcards, booklets, guides, and catalogs featuring rare exhibits;

Paying serious attention to personnel training by involving museum scholars in higher education institutions and improving teaching methods, as well as combining theoretical training with practical activities and enhancing the qualifications of museum staff in leading museums of the republic [4].

In conclusion, during the early years of independence, museum activities in Uzbekistan rose to a new level. Significant efforts were made to restore national values, study historical heritage, and present it to the

wider public. The decrees and decisions adopted by the state played a crucial role in the development of the museum system. As a result, museums have become not only institutions preserving historical exhibits but also important educational centers that foster patriotism, national pride, and spiritual maturity among the younger generation.

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