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THE MANIFESTATION OF NATIONAL VALUES ACROSS HISTORICAL PERIODS

Abstract. *This article examines the manifestation and development of national values across historical periods. It argues that, although values are diverse in nature, the human being – human life, rights, freedom, and well-being – stands as the highest value. The article analyzes the revival of the Uzbek people's material, spiritual, and historical values after independence, the interrelationship between national and universal values, and the dynamic, changing character of values under shifting economic, political, and cultural conditions. It emphasizes that a nation builds its future on the historical experience of its ancestors rather than on borrowed templates.*

Keywords: *national values, universal values, spirituality, historical heritage, traditions, national identity, independence, cultural continuity.*

INTRODUCTION

Values are diverse in nature. Among them, natural, material, spiritual, socio-political, and moral values stand out distinctly. Even so, the highest of all values is the human being – human life, rights and freedom, and a healthy and prosperous existence. Honoring human dignity and worth is an important factor in the moral purification and flourishing of society, as we observe and recognize in everyday life. National identity is constituted not by a single trait but by the interplay of shared history, language, religion, territory, and symbols that distinguish one community from another (Smith, 1991).

Like every nation and people living in our country, the Uzbek people possess their own remarkable material, spiritual, and historical values. Studying them wisely and objectively is a factor of spiritual elevation. Experience shows that approaching human and national values in an unscientific and non-objective manner leads to disastrous, negative consequences. A respectful attitude toward national culture, traditions, and

values is a firm guarantee of a nation's self-respect and of devotion to the homeland. The purpose of this article is to examine how national values have been manifested across historical periods and how they relate to universal human values.

MAIN PART

Strengthening cooperation with all healthy forces is of great importance in elevating national values. Religious figures, clergy, and the elders of neighborhoods (mahalla) and town quarters are providing close assistance in restoring the customs and traditions of our people. Through their initiative and active participation, mosques that had fallen into ruin are being rebuilt, and new ones are being constructed and brought into use. They have also made a significant contribution to reviving festivals such as Navruz and Hayit, among other beneficial undertakings. Such cooperation must be continued and refined in the years ahead (Karimov, 2008).

Owing to the revival of national values, today every true child of our beloved homeland feels himself an inseparable part of his native land and takes pride in it; this may rightly be called one of the greatest treasures granted by independence. Decisive changes are now taking place in the consciousness of our people: they are beginning to understand their own worth more deeply, and as a result the sense of homeland and compatriotism, freed from old ideological shells, is recovering its true form.

The aspiration to know deeply our people's rich historical culture, customs, and traditions, to take pride in the republic's strength and achievements, and to strive continually to increase them, serves as a firm foundation for the unity of all peoples and nations of our country around the great goal of building a prosperous state.

Refining national values is also of great importance in educating people in the spirit of universal human values. World experience testifies that every country that has gained independence can enter the path of progress only if, rather than confining itself within its own bounds, it makes wise use of the values accumulated by other peoples. This can be clearly seen in the present-day life of Uzbekistan (Smith, 1991).

Since ancient times, the peoples of the land of Turan have lived in trade-economic and cultural contact with near and distant lands and countries. The Great Silk Road, which led from the depths of Asia to the Near East, Europe, and Africa, is an example of this. The renown of our native land – which produced scholars and thinkers known throughout the cultural world, the builders of cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara,

Shahrisabz, and Khiva, and commanders who founded great empires – has drawn the attention of the world's peoples for centuries. Our people have always cherished their homeland deeply and worked to make it flourish; for this reason the monuments they created continue to astonish humanity with their grandeur and beauty.

Today, too, our free people boldly strive toward all that is new and advanced in enlightenment, science and technology, and culture and art. In this, the experience and values accumulated by Muslim peoples are especially valuable. Research shows that national values are organically linked with universal human values: they influence one another, each complementing and enriching the other in content.

National and universal values are not frozen, unchanging things. On the contrary, under the influence of the economic, political, cultural, and other changes occurring in society, national and universal values are constantly developing, changing, and being renewed. As a result, certain values that were once artificially and forcibly imposed upon our people may gradually lose their significance and disappear. At the same time, festivals and traditions that our people cherished for thousands of years but that were forgotten under an inhumane ideology may rise again. Likewise, it is natural that, with the restoration and development of economic, political, and cultural relations among different peoples, the values of various nations influence and enrich one another, and in some cases new values take shape and become embedded in life.

Every person's future life and happiness are organically bound up with values. For this reason, in today's complex circumstances, bringing national and universal values closer together is of great importance – and in this, strengthening trade-economic and cultural ties among countries and peoples occupies a significant place. In harmonizing national and universal values, the importance of socio-political values such as peace and stability is incomparable. Much beneficial work is being done in this sphere in our republic, and as a result Uzbekistan's international prestige is steadily rising (Karimov, 2008).

One further point must be noted. Some say that national spirituality should always take primary importance. Indeed, even a lifetime – were God to grant a person a hundred years – would not suffice to comprehend one's national spirituality fully. Rather than taking a pinch from the culture of India, two phrases from European learning, and two morsels from the spiritual heritage of the Islamic world and then laying claim to a 'universal' theory of spirituality, is it not better to study, as consistently as possible,

the works of the great scholars who lived in the Uzbek land and, on the basis of that knowledge, to reflect on national spirituality? Even a person who has studied the national spirituality and the works of the region's cultural representatives from primary sources throughout his life would be embarrassed to claim that he has fully grasped our national spirituality. This is, in truth, the work of many: the whole nation must care for the nation's spirituality.

As is well known, every nation and people builds its way of life and its future on the foundation of the historical experience of its ancestors; no people can live freely and develop on the basis of alien frameworks and alien templates. As our national leader has said, 'A human being does not cut a robe for himself to another's measure' (Karimov, 2008). Just as every household has its own rules, the organization of every country's life has its own measures, norms, and regulations. These take shape in connection with that land's natural-geographical conditions, historical experience, and national character.

CONCLUSION

National values are a living, historically evolving system that has been manifested in distinct forms across different periods while preserving an inner continuity. They are inseparable from universal human values, with which they interact and which they mutually enrich. The revival of national values after independence – the restoration of traditions, festivals, and historical self-awareness – has strengthened the Uzbek people's sense of identity and devotion to the homeland. At the same time, because values change with the economic, political, and cultural life of society, the task of harmonizing national and universal values, grounded in the historical experience of one's own people rather than in borrowed templates, remains a continuing responsibility of the whole nation.

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