

THE ART OF CARPET WEAVING: PRESENTATION IN MUSEUMS AS
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Abstract: This article examines the processes of preserving and presenting the art of carpet weaving as intangible cultural heritage in museums. It provides an in-depth analysis of the role of museums in safeguarding national craft traditions and conveying their historical and artistic significance to future generations. The article considers issues of scientific research, exhibitions, and presentations of carpets, and substantiates the importance of the museumification process in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Additionally, the article demonstrates the significance of museums in tourism and cultural education processes.

Keywords: Carpet weaving, intangible cultural heritage, museumification, craftsmanship, cultural identification, exhibition.

Introduction. Carpet making has been an integral part of people's lives and culture for centuries. This type of craft serves not only practical purposes but also reflects the aesthetic views, traditions, and way of life of the people. Since ancient times, carpets have been valued not only as household items but also as a symbol of social status and an important component of rituals and customs.

Today, as a result of technological progress and social changes, carpet weaving is entering a new stage of development. Despite the preservation of traditional styles and ancient patterns, one can observe changes in the working methods of craftsmen and the role of their products in society. It is important to understand these processes more deeply and determine the place of carpet weaving not only within the framework of tangible but also intangible cultural heritage.

Therefore, in this study, we will analyze the role of carpet weaving in modern society and examine how it is formed as cultural heritage. The relationship between traditional craftsmanship and intangible heritage, the problems arising in this field, and ways to address them constitute the main directions of our research.

Literature Review. M. S. Mukhamedova's article provides a historical perspective on the activities of the Uzbekistan Carpet and Suzani Museum, which operated from 1985 to 1990 [5]. While this article emphasizes the importance of cultural tourism and museum activities, it does not offer a comprehensive analysis of the study and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. In our research, this article serves as historical context, as the information provided by

Mukhamedova is a valuable source for examining the operations of the Uzbekistan Carpet and Suzani Museum during that period.

However, our research puts forward new proposals. The work suggests establishing a new carpet museum in Tashkent based on the carpet collections of major museums. It places special emphasis on developing carpet weaving traditions, as well as preserving and promoting intangible cultural heritage. Thus, the main purpose of using Mukhamedova's article is to shed light on the historical image of the museum that existed at that time and to propose new approaches to developing carpet weaving traditions in modern conditions.

Research Methodology. This study employs scientific approaches aimed at an in-depth analysis of museums' role in studying and popularizing intangible cultural heritage. The research examined the composition and content of carpet collections preserved in various museums of Uzbekistan, through which an attempt was made to determine the presentation methods, preservation techniques, and cultural significance of carpet weaving traditions. Special attention is given to the role of museum programs in preserving and promoting intangible cultural heritage.

The study also explores the main methodological approaches to the museumification process and preservation of carpet weaving traditions. The importance of museums' participation in cultural initiatives, as well as their role in tourism, was considered as a significant issue. During the study, opinions were expressed on the development of museums in integration with tourism and their role in preserving and popularizing intangible cultural heritage.

Analysis and results. The art of carpet weaving is one of the most ancient and unique traditions of human culture, which has evolved over centuries not only as a type of applied craft but also as an important heritage reflecting the cultural and historical mindset of peoples. The carpet weaving school of each region is distinguished by its distinctive artistic style, harmony of patterns and colors, and serves as an expression of local traditions, lifestyle, and aesthetic views. Similar to the carpet weaving schools in the Iranian city of Kashan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan, the Kyrgyz traditions of shyrdak and ala-kiyiz are also recognized by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage [11], with carpet weaving considered not only a craft but also an integral part of cultural identity. To preserve and promote this heritage, international exhibitions, seminars, and scientific research are being conducted, and measures are being taken to pass it on to the new generation.

The international recognition of the art of carpet weaving is crucial for its preservation and development as a rich cultural heritage that has been shaped over centuries. To date, 180 states are parties to the UNESCO Convention, having committed to preserving intangible cultural heritage within their territories and passing it on to future generations. The Republic of Uzbekistan, by joining this convention in 2008, took an important step towards promoting national cultural values at the international level.

The art of carpet weaving in Uzbekistan has a long history, with traditional styles that developed in different regions. The use of various patterns and natural dyes is an integral part of this cultural heritage. Today, traditional carpet weaving continues to thrive in the Khorezm region, Samarkand, Urgut, Nurata, Fergana Valley, Kashkadarya, and Surkhandarya regions [9. - P.518]. In these areas, carpet weaving is an important branch of handicraft production and is preserved

by local artisans. Therefore, to promote and protect this invaluable heritage at the international level, there are plans to include "The Traditions of Carpet Weaving in Uzbekistan" in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity [4. - P.314].

For centuries, the art of carpet weaving has embodied the lifestyle, aesthetic views, and craft traditions of various peoples. In this regard, Uzbekistan's carpet heritage is also rich and diverse, shaped by various historical, social, and cultural factors. The concept of "carpet weaving in Uzbekistan" does not fully correspond to the expression "Uzbek carpet weaving," as carpet weaving has long been practiced in the country by various ethnic groups - Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, Arabs, Turkmens, Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, and Tajiks [10. - P.7]. Therefore, when studying the traditions of carpet weaving in Uzbekistan, it is important to consider not only national but also regional and ethnographic aspects.

This approach allows for the recognition of Uzbek carpet weaving art as a significant part of not only national but also world cultural heritage. International recognition, in turn, serves to preserve and develop craft traditions, as well as support the creative activities of local artisans. Furthermore, along with strengthening the position of national carpet weaving schools in the history of global carpet art, this can also become a stimulus for the development of cultural tourism and economic growth.

The protection of cultural heritage is of utmost importance for preserving this art over centuries and passing it on to future generations. Today, museumification is one of the important tools in the process of preserving and popularizing carpet weaving, allowing us to understand the historical, social, and cultural uniqueness of each region through carpet samples. Museums contribute to the sustainable development of this art by documenting it, conducting scientific research, and introducing it to the general public. Therefore, promoting the art of carpet weaving as cultural heritage and ensuring its continuity is currently one of the most pressing issues in the field of cultural studies and museology.

In the 1970s, specialized departments were established in Uzbekistan's museums to advance ethnographic research. In 1972, an ethnography department was opened at the Museum of History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan (now the State Museum of History of Uzbekistan of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan). Concurrently, the folklore sector at the Alisher Navoi Literature Museum (now the Alisher Navoi State Museum of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan) was reorganized into the folklore and ethnography sector [8. -P.198.]. These initiatives expanded the museums' capabilities for enriching ethnographic collections, documenting and researching traditional culture.

Thus, it is necessary to resume ethnographic expeditions by museums to conduct more in-depth studies of the existing traditional carpet weaving schools in Uzbekistan and pass them on to future generations. Such research serves not only to examine the technical aspects of carpet weaving but also to document the rituals, customs, and terminology associated with this craft. It is particularly important to collect and acquire samples of traditional carpets to enrich museum collections. For instance, in the 1950s-1970s, researchers from the State Museum of History of Uzbekistan organized ethnographic expeditions to the aforementioned regions and studied traditional carpets. The Julkhirs (Bear's Fur) carpet, brought from Samarkand, was incorporated into the museum collection and exhibited in 1974 [1]. Given the small number of Julkhirs carpets

in the museum, it should be noted that this rare specimen, presented at the exhibition, was brought to the museum in 1946 by the renowned ethnographer V.G. Moshkova. She published a scientific article [7] about this, and this research went down in history as the first scientifically grounded study and detailed analysis of carpets preserved in Uzbekistan's museums. In her article, Moshkova paid special attention to the technical features of the carpet, its patterns, and ethnographic significance. These studies laid an important theoretical foundation for the further exploration of the art of carpet weaving.

In 1975, during an expedition of museum researchers to Nurata, the region's handicraft activities were comprehensively studied. Various examples of material cultural heritage, previously absent from the collection, were gathered for the museum's holdings: craftsmen's tools, household items, clothing, embroidery, jewelry, copper and ceramic utensils, and agricultural implements. Information about craft traditions, the "master-apprentice" system, and special terms and rituals associated with these items was also documented. Prior to the expedition, researchers examined scientific sources on the crafts and ethnography of Nurata, as well as the museum's archival documents [2].

According to the results of this expedition, the carpet weaving traditions of Nurata are closely linked to local economic conditions. Since the region specializes in breeding Karakul sheep, carpet weaving at home was also widespread in the past. The expedition participants described several objects reflecting this process. In particular, Ungalova Omona acquired a handmade alacha rug and a loom used for weaving flat-woven carpets [3]. These items are important not only as material expressions of craft traditions but also for their potential to represent carpet weaving practices in a museum setting. The museum staff's acquisition of a loom was likely aimed at scientific study and documentation of the technological features of Nurata's carpet weaving traditions. Such rare items, if displayed in the museum's exhibition, undoubtedly played a significant role not only in showcasing the craftsmanship processes but also in providing visitors with a vivid representation of traditional carpet weaving methods.

For many years, museums have organized long-term ethnographic expeditions to study, document, and promote not only tangible but also intangible cultural heritage. These studies allowed for an in-depth examination of traditional crafts, rituals, and oral traditions, based on evidence confirming their practical application. However, at present, such expeditions are rarely conducted by museums, resulting in important aspects of cultural heritage, especially traditional craft practices and their contexts, being inadequately documented. This affects the completeness of the information underlying the exhibits presented in museums.

If "Uzbekistan's carpet weaving traditions" are included in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List, it will not only ensure international recognition but could also have a significant impact on the development of cultural tourism. Naturally, foreign researchers, art scholars, craft enthusiasts, and the general public will have a growing desire to become more closely acquainted with the art of carpet weaving in Uzbekistan. The role of museums in this process becomes even more important: they should serve not only as venues for displaying carpets of historical and artistic value but also as research platforms. From this perspective, the idea of establishing a specialized carpet museum in Tashkent based on museums with large collections related to Uzbekistan's carpet art can be scientifically and practically justified. Such a museum existed before - in 1985, the Museum of Carpets and Suzani of Uzbekistan was established in Tashkent,

functioning as a branch of the State Museum of Arts of Uzbekistan [5. - P. 157-158]. However, its activities were later discontinued.

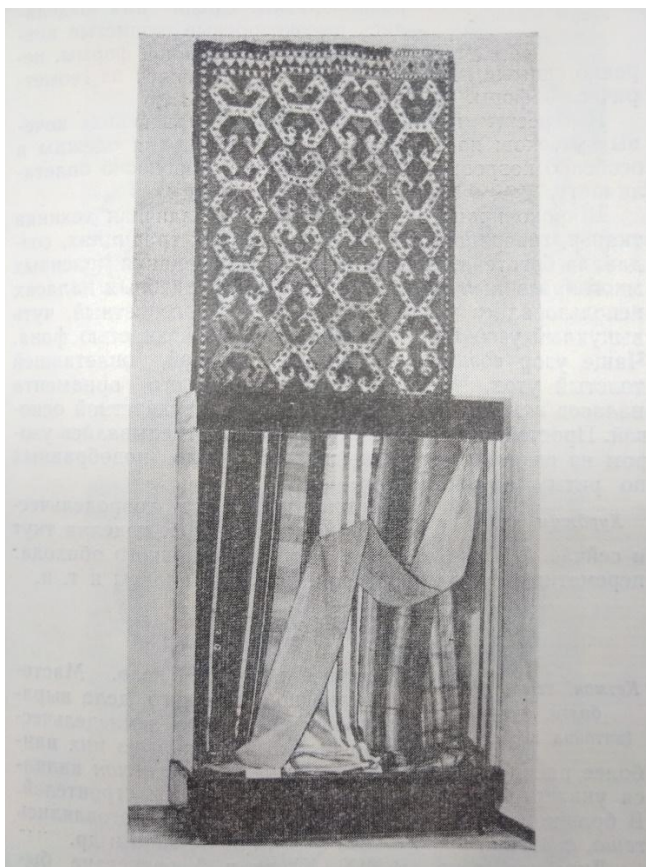
Today, recreating such a museum can serve not only to preserve cultural heritage but also to gain international recognition for carpet weaving traditions in Uzbekistan. A museum specializing in carpets not only showcases the achievements of carpet-making art and craft but also allows for a visual demonstration of their creation process. If masters carry out the process of carpet weaving in the museum, it will truly become a "living museum" in every sense. This will enable visitors to directly observe the technology of carpet weaving, familiarize themselves with natural dyes, methods of spinning threads, traditional patterns, and their significance. Thus, the museum can become not just a collection of exhibits, but a center for preserving and actively continuing the cultural heritage.

Turning to international experience, it is worth noting that the inclusion of Azerbaijani carpet weaving art in the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 [11] confirms its global recognition. This attests to the high appreciation of the unique style of Azerbaijani carpet weaving and its rich cultural heritage worldwide. A vivid example in this field is the Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum (Azərbaycan Milli Xalça Muzeyi). This museum has gained international acclaim not only for its material treasures - unique carpets and other specimens of applied art - but also for promoting intangible heritage, specifically the art of carpet weaving and its ancient traditions. The museum's activities allow tourists to gain a profound understanding of the historical roots of national art and the processes of its contemporary development, as well as providing an opportunity for direct participation in these traditions.

Azerbaijan's experience demonstrates that museums can not only preserve and study cultural heritage but also popularize it and develop cultural tourism. For instance, the exhibition "Patterns of the Land of Fire," organized at the Heydar Aliyev Azerbaijan Cultural Center under the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Uzbekistan (Tashkent), plays a significant role in advancing cultural tourism. This museum, established in 2017, serves as a unique platform for strengthening cultural and artistic ties between the two nations [12]. It contributes to reinforcing intercultural connections by widely promoting the rich traditions and cultural heritage of Azerbaijani carpet weaving in our country.

Therefore, creating a museum aimed at in-depth study, showcasing, and popularizing the art of carpet weaving in Uzbekistan will not only serve to preserve historical and cultural heritage but also enhance the prestige of national art on an international level. Drawing from Azerbaijan's experience, the establishment of a new carpet museum in Tashkent is a relevant scientific and practical initiative.

Conclusion. The art of carpet weaving is an integral part of folk traditions, and its museumification allows for the preservation and widespread popularization of cultural heritage. Museums play an important role not only in preserving carpets but also in conducting in-depth studies of their sociocultural, artistic, and historical significance. Therefore, the systematic study and exhibition of carpets in museum collections contributes to strengthening cultural identity and ensuring the continuity of craft traditions.



The "Julkhirs" carpet. In 1974, an exhibition titled "Craftsmanship of Uzbekistan in the 19th-20th Centuries" was organized at the State Museum of History of Uzbekistan [6. - P.13.].

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