

## ROLE OF PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN TEACHING HISTORY

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**Abstract.** *The preservation of cultural heritage plays a critical role in teaching history, particularly in the context of shaping national identity, fostering a sense of continuity, and facilitating a deeper understanding of past societies. Cultural heritage – ranging from tangible artifacts to intangible traditions – offers students an immersive and multidimensional approach to history that transcends written records. This article explores the significant role that cultural heritage preservation plays in the educational process, emphasizing its impact on historical understanding, critical thinking, and civic engagement. By examining case studies and methodologies for integrating cultural heritage into history curricula, this paper demonstrates the value of preservation efforts in enhancing students' historical awareness and their connection to broader global narratives.*

**Keywords:** *cultural heritage, history education, preservation, identity, historical understanding, national heritage, intangible culture, teaching methodologies, education curriculum, historical consciousness.*

**Introduction.** History education traditionally relies on written records, documents, and textbooks to convey the story of the past. However, the role of cultural heritage in teaching history is often underexplored. Cultural heritage encompasses not only monuments, buildings, and artifacts but also intangible elements such as language, customs, and oral traditions. The preservation of this heritage serves as a bridge between the past and present, offering unique insights into historical processes that textbooks alone cannot provide.

In countries like Uzbekistan, where history is deeply intertwined with cultural identity, the preservation of cultural heritage is paramount. By engaging students with tangible objects and the living traditions of the past, educators can foster a more holistic and experiential understanding of history. This article examines how cultural heritage preservation enhances the teaching of history by enriching students' perspectives, developing critical thinking skills, and nurturing a sense of national and global identity.

**Cultural Heritage as a Tool for Historical Understanding.** One of the most compelling reasons to incorporate cultural heritage into history education is its ability to provide a direct, tangible connection to the past. Objects, monuments, and traditions serve as physical evidence of historical events, offering students a firsthand experience of the material culture of previous generations. When students encounter an ancient artifact or visit a historical site, they are not just learning facts—they are stepping into a past that is alive and tangible.

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For example, in Uzbekistan, the historic cities of *Samarkand*, *Bukhara*, and *Khiva* are not only sites of great architectural beauty but also living repositories of the country's cultural history. By visiting these cities, students can experience firsthand the ancient structures that tell the story of the Timurid empire, the rise of Islam in Central Asia, and the region's role in the Silk Road trade network. Such direct engagement with the past enables students to understand historical events and contexts in a more nuanced and impactful way than traditional textbooks might allow.

**Enhancing Historical Critical Thinking and Interpretation.** Cultural heritage is not only about providing facts; it is about encouraging critical thinking. Preserving heritage through various forms – whether through archaeological sites, oral history, or traditional crafts – challenges students to interpret the past from multiple perspectives. The study of heritage involves examining artifacts, questioning their significance, and exploring their role in larger historical narratives.

For instance, when students study the art and architecture of the Timurid period, they are not merely memorizing facts about buildings and styles. Instead, they are invited to interpret how these structures reflect the political, religious, and economic realities of their time. Did the architecture of the era symbolize the grandeur of the empire? How did the lavish decoration of mosques and madrassas reflect the cultural and religious values of the period? These are the kinds of questions that heritage-based history education can raise, prompting students to engage deeply with the material, analyze primary sources, and consider the broader historical context.

**Fostering National and Global Identity.** Cultural heritage plays an essential role in helping students understand their national identity and place in the global community. The preservation of national heritage—such as monuments, historical sites, and local customs—allows students to connect with their own cultural roots and gain pride in their shared history. At the same time, heritage education emphasizes the global context in which these local histories unfold, encouraging students to appreciate the interconnectedness of past societies.

In the case of Uzbekistan, for example, the preservation of the cultural and architectural heritage of the Silk Road serves as a powerful symbol of the country's historical importance in global trade and cultural exchange. By teaching students about the exchange of ideas, goods, and technologies along the Silk Road, educators not only highlight Uzbekistan's historical significance but also encourage students to view their own culture as part of a broader, interconnected world history. This dual focus on national pride and global awareness enriches students' historical consciousness and enhances their ability to understand and appreciate cultural diversity.

Teachers play a central role in encouraging students to value and engage with cultural heritage. Educators need to be equipped with the knowledge, tools, and pedagogical skills necessary to integrate heritage preservation into their teaching. This involves not only understanding the historical and cultural significance of heritage sites and objects but also knowing how to engage students in thoughtful discussions about preservation efforts, ethical considerations, and the role of heritage in shaping contemporary society.

**Conclusion.** The preservation of cultural heritage is an indispensable element of history education. It provides students with a deeper, more personal understanding of the past, encourages critical thinking, and fosters a sense of both national and global identity. As history educators, it is essential to go beyond written texts and engage students with the tangible and intangible elements of cultural heritage, from artifacts to oral traditions. By doing so, we not only enrich their understanding of history but also cultivate a generation that values, respects, and actively participates in the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations. Through thoughtful integration of cultural heritage into history curricula, educators can inspire students to connect with the past in meaningful ways, promoting a more comprehensive and holistic approach to learning history.

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