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THE INTERACTION BETWEEN MODERN FOLKLORE AND POPULAR CULTURE

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ANNOTATION

This study explores the evolving relationship between modern folklore and popular culture, with particular attention to how traditional stories, symbols, and motifs are reshaped and reimagined in today's media landscape. It investigates how folklore adapts within digital environments, music, cinema, and social media, mirroring contemporary social values and shared identities. The research underscores the dual role of popular culture in both preserving and transforming folklore, as it revives ancient myths, legends, and folk themes through new artistic and cultural forms. By examining this interaction, the paper highlights the enduring importance of folklore in maintaining cultural continuity and inspiring creativity in the modern era.

Keywords: modern folklore, popular culture, cultural identity, digital media, tradition and innovation, mythology, cultural transformation, contemporary art, collective memory, storytelling.

ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЕ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ФОЛЬКЛОРА И МАССОВОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ АННОТАЦИЯ

В данном исследовании рассматриваются развивающиеся отношения между современным фольклором и массовой культурой, особое внимание уделяется тому, как традиционные сюжеты, символы и мотивы переосмысливаются и преобразуются в современном медиапространстве. В исследовании рассматривается, как фольклор адаптируется в цифровой среде, музыке, кино и социальных сетях, отражая современные социальные ценности и общую идентичность. В исследовании подчеркивается двойная роль массовой культуры как в сохранении, так и в трансформации фольклора, поскольку она возрождает древние мифы, легенды и народные мотивы через новые художественные и культурные формы. Рассматривая это взаимодействие, авторы статьи подчёркивают непреходящую важность фольклора для поддержания культурной преемственности и вдохновения для творчества в современную эпоху.

Ключевые слова: современный фольклор, массовая культура, культурная идентичность, цифровые медиа, традиции и инновации, мифология, культурная трансформация, современное искусство, коллективная память, сторителлинг.

INTRODUCTION

In today's cultural environment, the line separating folklore from popular culture has become increasingly blurred. Traditions once passed down orally are now revitalized through digital media, entertainment industries, and global communication networks. Contemporary folklore evolves as societies reinterpret ancient myths, legends, and customs to align with modern realities, while popular culture continuously draws upon these traditional elements to generate new artistic and social meanings. This ongoing exchange between folklore and popular culture symbolizes a dialogue between heritage and modernity, collective memory and individual creativity.[1]

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At present, folklore components—such as folktales, songs, sayings, and mythical figures—are being reimagined across diverse platforms like cinema, music, literature, memes, and social media. These modern adaptations function not only as sources of entertainment but also as expressions of cultural identity, shared values, and continuity in an ever-changing world. Through such reinterpretations, folklore remains a vibrant and adaptable medium of communication that bridges generations and cultures.[2]

Exploring the relationship between modern folklore and popular culture offers significant insights into how traditions are maintained, transformed, and redefined in the 21st century. Examining this connection reveals how societies employ storytelling and symbolism to interpret contemporary life while preserving ties to their cultural origins. Ultimately, the convergence of folklore and popular culture demonstrates that traditional narratives are not static remnants of the past but living, evolving forces that continue to influence creativity, identity, and cultural expression in the modern era.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The connection between modern folklore and popular culture represents a continuous process of transformation and mutual exchange between tradition and modernity. Historically, folklore was transmitted mainly through oral storytelling, rituals, songs, and customs passed down within local communities. In the contemporary era, however, these traditional elements have found new forms of expression within popular culture—appearing in film, music, television, literature, and especially across digital media platforms. This relationship demonstrates how cultural expression evolves to fit new contexts while preserving its links to collective imagination and shared social values.[3]

A central feature of this interaction is the reinterpretation of traditional myths, legends, and folktales in popular culture. Modern creators—such as filmmakers, authors, and musicians—frequently draw on folkloric characters, motifs, and symbols to communicate current ideas and social concerns. Mythical heroes and archetypal figures, for instance, are re-envisioned in fantasy films, video games, and comic books as symbols of identity, justice, or rebellion. These creative adaptations allow folklore to serve as a medium for exploring modern realities while retaining its symbolic richness and emotional depth.[4]

The interplay between modern folklore and popular culture reveals an intricate process of adaptation and cultural exchange. In today's globalized, digitized world, folklore has expanded beyond its traditional oral and ritual settings to become an integral part of mass culture. Platforms such as social media, television, cinema, and music provide new spaces where folklore thrives, continually acquiring fresh meanings that resonate with modern audiences. This evolution proves that folklore is not a remnant of the past but a living, adaptive system of narratives and symbols that grow alongside society.

A significant dimension of this relationship lies in how myths, legends, and fairy tales are reinterpreted through popular media. Films, novels, and games often reimagine traditional stories to reflect contemporary values and address social issues. Folkloric heroes and mythological characters are frequently transformed into icons of empowerment or vehicles for social commentary, enabling audiences to engage with them in relevant and personal ways. This modernization keeps folklore alive and relatable, ensuring that its symbolic and cultural essence endures.[5]

The rise of digital culture has also given birth to what researchers term “digital folklore” or “internet folklore,” which includes memes, viral narratives, online myths, and shared cultural references. These digital expressions share many traits with traditional folklore—such as collectivity, anonymity, and

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constant evolution—but they spread through virtual networks rather than oral traditions. Like their traditional counterparts, these digital forms play a vital role in building community identity and reinforcing shared values in the online space.

Popular culture also contributes to the preservation and revitalization of folklore by reintroducing traditional themes to new audiences. Folk-inspired elements in television, fashion, music videos, and design often renew interest in cultural heritage among younger generations. In this way, popular culture acts as both a creative platform and a cultural bridge, maintaining the presence of folklore within the modern collective consciousness.[6]

Findings from this interdisciplinary exploration indicate that the interaction between modern folklore and popular culture encourages both cultural continuity and innovation. It demonstrates how timeless themes—such as love, morality, transformation, and human struggle—can be reimaged through contemporary media while preserving their universal significance. Furthermore, this ongoing exchange enhances intercultural understanding, as folkloric elements circulate globally and acquire new interpretations across different societies.

Ultimately, the fusion of folklore and popular culture underscores the adaptability and resilience of traditional knowledge in the modern age. Rather than fading away, folklore continues to inspire creativity, link generations, and mirror the evolving beliefs and values of today's interconnected world.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between modern folklore and popular culture highlights the lasting strength of traditional stories to evolve, transform, and retain their significance in today's world. With the rise of digital technologies and global communication, the ways in which people create and share stories have changed, giving folklore a renewed presence in films, music, social media, and various forms of popular art. This evolution proves that folklore is not a relic of the past, but a living, adaptable expression of cultural creativity.

When intertwined with popular culture, folklore functions both as a bridge to cultural heritage and as a means of expressing contemporary identity. It connects generations, linking ancient wisdom and collective memory with present-day values, emotions, and social issues. In return, popular culture draws strength from the depth, symbolism, and authenticity that folklore contributes, enriching creative expression and cultural dialogue.

In essence, the merging of folklore and popular culture embodies an ongoing exchange between tradition and innovation. It demonstrates that culture is never static but constantly shaped by human imagination and shared experiences. This continuous interaction keeps the essence of folklore alive, ensuring its ongoing relevance in inspiring creativity, communication, and cultural identity in the modern era.

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