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## **POP-UP GREETING CARD AS A MEANS OF PRESERVING AND POPULARIZING UKRAINIAN MYTHOLOGICAL TRADITIONS**

Greeting cards, as printed publications, have a long history of development and continue to play an essential role in visual communication. Since the emergence of the printing press, they have been used not only for greetings but also as a means of conveying cultural and social messages. Despite the growing digitalization, printed cards remain popular due to their materiality, aesthetic appeal, and the personal nature of communication. The tactile experience of holding a beautifully designed greeting card contributes to its sentimental and artistic value, making it a unique medium of expression.

Traditional two-dimensional greeting cards have long served as a means of personal expression, enabling individuals to convey emotions and messages on various occasions. However, in an era of evolving consumer preferences, static, flat designs are gradually becoming less engaging, particularly for audiences accustomed to dynamic visual stimuli. The increasing demand for unique, aesthetically appealing, and immersive experiences has led to a shift in the greeting card industry. Modern consumers seek products that evoke stronger emotional responses, provide sensory engagement, and stand out from conventional alternatives. This is particularly evident in the rise of pop-up greeting cards, which transform the act of receiving and opening a card into a visually and physically interactive experience. Unlike traditional greeting cards that rely on printed illustrations and text alone, pop-up cards incorporate three-dimensional structures that unfold upon opening, adding depth and spatial dynamism to the design. This mechanical aspect enhances the recipient's engagement by encouraging interaction, making the experience more immersive and memorable. A flat image may communicate a sentiment, but a pop-up card transforms that sentiment into a scene, turning the message into something tangible and dynamic. This effect is particularly significant for emotionally charged occasions such as birthdays, weddings, and holiday celebrations, where the sense of surprise and delight enhances the impact of the gesture.

Furthermore, the presence of 3D elements stimulates cognitive and emotional responses that static designs cannot achieve. Studies in consumer psychology suggest that three-dimensional visuals create stronger memory retention and emotional attachment compared to their flat counterparts. The physical act of manipulating a pop-up card—opening, unfolding, and observing the transformation—engages multiple senses, reinforcing the significance of the moment. This heightened level of engagement is a crucial factor in the continued popularity of printed greeting cards in an age where digital

alternatives dominate personal communication. In addition, pop-up greeting cards are not merely decorative or entertaining; they also possess artistic and collectible value. Many of these cards are intricately designed using advanced paper engineering techniques, including laser-cutting, layered compositions, and precise folding mechanisms. These elements showcase craftsmanship and innovation, appealing to consumers who appreciate handcrafted and artistic products. The growing interest in artisanal goods and sustainable paper products further contributes to the demand for pop-up cards as high-quality, meaningful keepsakes rather than disposable items.

The relevance of pop-up greeting cards is further amplified by their ability to offer a more engaging alternative to digital media. While e-cards provide convenience, they lack the tangible and interactive quality that makes pop-up cards so appealing. The physicality of a pop-up design allows recipients to experience the unfolding process in real-time, creating a lasting impression that digital animations cannot replicate. Additionally, the materiality of these cards fosters a sense of nostalgia, linking contemporary designs to the long-standing tradition of exchanging printed greetings. Ultimately, pop-up greeting cards redefine the role of printed materials in personal communication by offering a multisensory, visually dynamic, and emotionally engaging experience. By integrating structural complexity with artistic creativity, these cards serve as more than just a medium for written messages—they become small-scale works of art that enhance the way people celebrate, remember, and connect. The originality of such cards' design opens up broad possibilities for creative experimentation, particularly in incorporating ethnic motifs and symbolism. Ukrainian mythology is a rich source of imagery that can be adapted to modern printed product designs. The choice of themes dedicated to Christmas Eve, Generous Evening, and Kupala Night is justified given their importance in folk culture. These cards can serve not only as decorative items but also as a tool for promoting Ukrainian traditions among young people and international audiences [2]. By doing so, the design product gains additional social significance, as it fulfills not only an aesthetic function but also helps preserve and transmit national identity. Pop-up greeting cards serve not only as visually appealing keepsakes but also as effective tools for preserving and conveying cultural traditions, particularly those rooted in mythology, folklore, and religious practices. In societies where oral storytelling and symbolic representation have historically played a crucial role in cultural preservation, pop-up cards offer a unique and engaging medium to present these narratives in a contemporary format. By incorporating depictions of traditional rituals and belief systems, such cards become more than mere decorative items; they act as cultural artifacts that encapsulate historical knowledge and spiritual heritage.

For example, a pop-up greeting card illustrating an ancient Ukrainian ceremony, such as a Kupala Night festival or a winter solstice celebration, does more than depict a static image. Instead, the three-dimensional structure allows the recipient to experience the scene dynamically—layers of cut paper unfold to reveal figures dancing around a ritual bonfire, symbolic elements such as floral wreaths and sacred water emerge in relief, and intricate folds highlight the interconnectedness of the natural and spiritual worlds. This

method of presentation not only enhances visual storytelling but also immerses the viewer in the atmosphere of the historical event, reinforcing the emotional and spiritual dimensions of the depicted ritual. By combining graphic design with mechanical elements that change when the card is opened, designers can enhance the interaction between the audience and the subject matter. For instance, a pop-up card that showcases an ancient offering ritual might feature movable components, such as a figure raising hands in prayer or an unfolding structure representing a temple or sacred tree. These dynamic elements allow viewers to engage with the imagery beyond passive observation, fostering a sense of participation and deeper emotional connection. This transformation from a flat, symbolic representation to an animated three-dimensional experience significantly strengthens the card's ability to convey cultural meaning.

Furthermore, the use of pop-up greeting cards as educational tools has the potential to introduce younger generations to their ancestral heritage in an engaging and accessible way. Many traditional rituals, particularly those tied to seasonal festivals, have complex symbolic meanings that are not always easily understood through text alone. Pop-up cards provide a means of simplifying and visually explaining these customs while maintaining their authenticity. A well-crafted design can depict elements such as sacred animals, ritualistic objects, and celestial symbols, helping to contextualize their significance within folklore and belief systems.

Another important aspect of these cultural representations is the use of national symbolism and artistic motifs. Many ancient societies, including those of Ukraine, encoded their values and cosmological beliefs into visual forms such as geometric patterns, floral compositions, and depictions of deities. These symbols, when incorporated into pop-up greeting cards, contribute to the intuitive comprehension of profound cultural codes. For instance, the Tree of Life—a prevalent symbol in Slavic mythology representing growth, ancestry, and the link between earthly and spiritual realms—can be artistically rendered in a way that enhances its visual prominence through 3D layering. Similarly, traditional embroidery patterns, sun motifs, and depictions of mythological creatures can be seamlessly integrated into the design, reinforcing the continuity between past traditions and contemporary interpretations. In addition, pop-up cards have the ability to bridge generational gaps by reviving interest in cultural traditions among modern audiences. Many young people today may not actively participate in ancestral rituals, but they can develop an appreciation for their heritage through creative representations. A pop-up card celebrating ancient seasonal festivals or heroic folklore legends presents these traditions in an accessible, visually engaging manner that encourages curiosity and learning. Such designs can be particularly valuable for members of the diaspora, helping to maintain a connection with their cultural roots despite geographical distance.

Ultimately, pop-up greeting cards serve as a compelling medium for transmitting traditional knowledge, reinforcing cultural identity, and fostering appreciation for ancestral customs. Their combination of visual artistry, structural ingenuity, and narrative depth makes them an ideal format for preserving and sharing the rich tapestry of human heritage. Through careful design and thoughtful storytelling, these cards transcend their

role as simple paper products, transforming into immersive and meaningful cultural expressions.

From an economic perspective, creating pop-up greeting cards is a labor-intensive process that requires careful planning and high-quality materials. The cost of such a product is higher than that of standard cards; however, the premium printing market has a steady demand for exclusive design solutions. Analyzing the commercial success of similar products in other countries indicates that consumers are willing to pay for a unique product that has cultural and artistic value [4]. Market experience shows that pop-up cards can be not only a part of mass production but also collectible items, making them even more attractive from a commercial standpoint. Furthermore, they hold potential as souvenirs for cultural tourism, providing visitors with an authentic representation of national traditions in an engaging format. Additionally, pop-up cards contribute to preserving national heritage through their ability to visually reconstruct historical scenes. By incorporating mythological symbols such as the Tree of Life, solar deities, or ritualistic fire, these cards offer an artistic interpretation of Ukrainian folklore. The craftsmanship involved in their creation—such as laser cutting, embossed details, and hand-assembled structures—adds to their uniqueness and value. This fusion of historical storytelling and innovative design allows such products to serve as educational tools as well, introducing audiences to Ukraine's rich mythological landscape in an engaging manner.

Thus, using Ukrainian mythology in pop-up card design allows for the fusion of traditional imagery with modern technological solutions, creating a product that has both artistic and educational functions. These cards can promote Ukrainian culture globally, serve as unique souvenirs for tourists, and simultaneously deepen the national identity of Ukrainians. The combination of artistic vision, engineering precision, and cultural content makes these cards particularly valuable for the printed product market. Therefore, pop-up cards are not merely objects of graphic design but also a powerful tool of cultural diplomacy and a means of promoting national traditions in a globalized world. Their potential extends beyond aesthetic appeal, offering a medium through which historical narratives and artistic craftsmanship can be preserved and appreciated for future generations.

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