

THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS ON THE FORMATION AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY IN A MULTICULTURAL REGION

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The article gives a historical and chronological analysis of the formation and functioning of the customs and traditions of the Dagestan peoples, it shows their role in the socio-cultural development of the republic under current conditions. Tradition is a difficult, complex mechanism of historical and genetic continuity. Without this mechanism no socio-cultural processes are possible. Analyzing tradition as a socio-cultural phenomenon, the authors took into account its contentive and formal components. In a multicultural region such as the Republic of Dagestan tradition is a method of social self-identification and the main form of intergenerational experience transmission of religious, social and tribal relations. Also tradition is the form of interpersonal relations regulation in the process of formation and preservation of the national character. Tradition is of interdisciplinary significance, it represents some stable relationships between systems which are close in their essential qualities. Theoretical analysis of tradition shows that tradition is not static but dynamic and it is in this context that tradition has become the object of our reasoning in this study.

Key words: tradition, customs, adat, multicultural region, international communication.

Over the centuries the peoples of Dagestan as well as other peoples of the North Caucasus have formed many wonderful traditions and customs due to the specific socio-economic, historical, ethno-national and natural living conditions. The best of their traditions include: the heroic ones, freedom-loving traditions, love for the homeland and its people, respect for the history, culture and national dignity of other nations, fidelity to friendship and promise, respect and deference to the elders, modesty and courtesy, hospitality and cordiality, the traditions of mutual assistance and twinning, hard work, progressive festivals and ceremonies and many others. Being a product of social life and the product of definite social relations and relations, traditions and customs are the necessary component of existence and development of social relations in a civilized society [1, p.58]. Increased interest in the traditions and customs which are referred to as a complex and not yet sufficiently studied socio-cultural formation is reflected in the social and philosophical literature. The works of A.G. Agayev, A.K. Aliyev, R.M. Magomedova, V.D. Plakhova, I.V. Sukhanova, A.K. Uledova and others are of specific interest. *Traditions* are generally accepted form, ways of working, stable rules and principles of social connections and relationships, as well as the usual ideas, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and feelings, embodied in various forms of social consciousness which are formed historically, are handed down from generation to generation by virtue of the continuity and repetition in the historical process and are supported by the force of public opinion [1, p.61].

Customs are the most stable rules and regulations of international relations of people which are formed historically, are handed down from generation to generation, are protected by public opinion and are characteristic of the domestic life of the people, or people groups that are similar in their historical past, language and culture [6, p. 23]. The peoples of the North Caucasus have a common name designating the traditions and customs and it is adat. Categories "tradition", "custom" and "adat" along with such concepts as "culture", "morality" and "lifestyle" are of important theoretical significance in the analysis of social connections and relations, political and ideological development of peoples in every particular historical epoch [6, p. 30]. Philosophers concentrate on the procedural side of traditions. From the point of view of social philosophy, tradition is a phenomenon of social communication that is a specific form and principle of human communication.

The subject of relationship to the tradition is of current interest for Dagestan due to eccentricity of the historical moment which modern Dagestan society is experiencing. In the moments of re-

forms, crisis and great changes the public's attention is drawn to the cultural heritage. It turned out that some archaic forms of culture continue to play a very significant role in modern life. The reason is that the old customs, traditions, proverbs and the richest folklore hold highly moral practical wisdom: to be honest, kind, hardworking, honor the elders, love your home, village and region that is honour your homeland [6, p. 61]. For many centuries customs and traditions of our ancestors had the force of law and were of huge moral potential, integrating and consolidating all the nations living in Dagestan. Their special value is that they hold a generalized, time-tested experience of many centuries. Modern peoples of Dagestan are the heirs of a rich culture, rooted in antiquity. The well-known elements of this culture speak for themselves: the dance "lezginka", south-Dagestan carpet weaving, Kubachi jewelry art, Untsukul'sky marquetry, Balhar art pottery, Dagestan kitchen, gold embroidery, stone carving etc. But the greatest value is the spiritual heritage of the peoples of Dagestan: folklore, customs, traditions, and a set of moral and ethical standards.

Social regulations accumulating ancestors' experience of many years include the concepts "namus", "yah" - "courage", "cleverness", etc. These regulations form the basis of moral and ethical standards of modern Dagestan society. The concept namus incorporates a moral codex of the republic inhabitants. Essentially namus is a kind of synthesis of traditions and customs, their quintessence [6, C.68]. It once pervaded all norms of highland life, honor, conscience and nobility. Above all, namus teaches to preserve moral and humanistic principles in relations between all peoples of Dagestan and Dagestani in particular. From the earliest times there had been a lot of formulated rules and ethical standards in Dagestan. How to make one's life, how to welcome a man, how to behave in public places right up to the words said and gestures, etc. There is no accidental detail in the moral and ethical rules of namus which constitute the code of honor. Everything is aimed not to offend the honor and dignity of a person. Proverbial wisdom says: "One who loses namus is lost to the community."

Ethical and moral norms played an important role in the culture of Dagestan peoples. Developing over the centuries, they have contributed to the spiritual self-preservation and development of the nation, regulated behavior in society and family, determined the education of children and relations with neighbours. The defining moral core for Dagestani comprised conscience, dignity, courage and honor. To lose them meant to lose more than life. According to V.D. Plakhova, in the social sphere traditions and customs present social norms, covering family, national, ethnic, household and other public relationships. In modern society there is a system of different social norms: legal and non-legal, morals, traditions, customs and public opinion, which are the structural elements of the regulatory system. Traditions and customs have become an integral part of the modern system of social norms. For example, the inextricable link of the community traditions with the policy of public authorities, law, ideology and culture, giving them a deep and comprehensive impact [11, p. 240].

In the literature it is usual to distinguish two mostly general classes of social norms, which differ in the mechanism of formation and functioning: 1) the class of decreed norms, including standards, appearance, functioning, development and existence of people; 2) the class of spontaneously forming and functioning social norms arising without special intervention of relevant social services, authorities; the class of norms functioning "naturally" as the embodiment and expression of the organic system processes of self-organization of society and people [11, p. 242]. Social norms in the spiritual life of community are embodied in special socio-psychological phenomena: habits, skills, patterns, etalons of mass behavior; ideals, slogans, principles. Generally, in the philosophical sense social norms are the form of human activity. With the help of social norms traditions and customs embody certain forms of behavior in the conventional samples, form and consolidate ideas, thoughts, moods, feelings, emotions.

The mechanism of influence of traditions and customs on the process of personality and collective formation is associated with such socio-psychological phenomena as imitation, suggestion, infection. Due to traditions the cultural experience passes from generation to generation and from one nation to another. The process of cultural heritage translation depends on the peculiarities of communication technologies that are available in the community at a particular historical period.

The common features and characteristics of social norms should include social functions they perform, as well as such special features as *continuity*, *repeatability*, *sustainability*, through which they provide stabilization and reproduction of social connections and relationships, accumulation and transference of the most significant social experience. Customs as well as traditions act as the means of orientation and control of social behavior of an individual and society as a whole.

Though it seems that there are significant differences between them which do not allow to equate them. First of all, in comparison with the customs traditions reflect deeper all-encompassing phenomena related to the production, social and ideological aspects of society. Traditions are more concerned with the political, moral, legal ideology than with feelings, emotions and other components of social psychology, whereas customs are closer and more connected with social psychology than with ideology. In characterizing the revolutionary and patriotic traditions of various schools, movements, the concept of "tradition" and not custom is usually used. Traditions can characterize the entire stages of historical development, they can be connected with the names of prominent figures of science, art, literature and etc. "Custom" is a narrower concept. Researchers of customs and traditions have come to more or less general consensus that predominantly life, morality, family relationships, daily life of people are the fields of the custom in modern civilizations [1, p.128].

One of the most important conditions for spiritual development of modern society is such characteristic of traditions and customs as *continuity*. Being the "unwritten laws" of society, traditions and customs are handed down from generation to generation through the festivals, rites, rituals, ceremonies, etc. Customs and traditions of past epochs are deeply rooted in people's minds and play a significant role in their behavior. Thus, tradition is not the mechanical reproduction of ideas and principles borrowed from the past. Continuity necessarily includes the element of creative transformation. Due to the property of continuity, traditions transfer elaborated and well established storage of skills and habits, ideas and concepts, forms and methods of communication. Thus traditions provide an opportunity for humanity to perform new creative tasks by using the collective experience of the past generations. And this ability of traditions and customs is the means by which the mankind develops and arises.

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