

Topic: The Formation Of Local Communities And Ceremonial Practices In Uzbekistan: Philosophical And Historical Foundations

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Annotation. This article presents a comprehensive analysis of the socio-philosophical dimensions of local customs, traditions, and rituals in Uzbek society. The introduction addresses the balance between national values and traditions within the context of globalization. The study employs philosophical-analytical, historical-genetic, comparative, and explanatory anthropological methods in an integrated manner, drawing on sources including Bahodir Sarimsakov, Mahmud Sattor, Adham Ashirov, Usmon Khosil, and Rtveladze. Customs, as systems of social norms, introduce informal regulations to societal behavior. Customs and rituals provide meaning that supports cultural and spiritual stability.

Rituals, as a collective symbolic-practical system, implement integration, strengthening the personality, education and upbringing, and moral norms. Historical analysis shows the changes in customs and rituals from the Zoroastrian and agrarian rituals to the Islamic era, Soviet secularization, independence and modern globalization. The article analyzes the compatibility of the theories of Durkheim, Mauss, Malinovsky and Giddens. The article reveals the functioning of customs and rituals as a spiritual bond between society and the individual through an approach that is combined with the views of Eastern thinkers Farabi, Beruni and Navoi.

In conclusion, the article discusses the role of customs, traditions and rituals in the stability of society, the preservation of spiritual heritage and the strengthening of national identity, and puts forward practical proposals and recommendations for the fields of national heritage policy, education and cultural management.

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Keywords: Tradition, ritual, custom, identity, collective consciousness, cultural changes, cultural policy in the republic.

Introduction. Today, the processes of globalization and technological revolution are accelerating socio-cultural relations throughout the world. As a result of these processes, the speed of information, migration, and the growth of mass media, elements of "mass culture" are becoming widespread. In such conditions, each nation is struggling to preserve its cultural identity and not lose its value system. Indeed, under global influence, the traditions, customs, and rituals of the people are literally being tested: some are completely disappearing, while others are adapting to new forms and content. In this case, the following questions become scientific priorities: will the process of globalization unite all nations into a single whole or will each nation retain its own values? To find answers to these questions, it is necessary to analyze traditions and rituals from a socio-philosophical perspective. With the help of this analysis, we will try to determine what role traditional culture can play in the formation of national identity, ensuring the stability of society, and maintaining spiritual unity. Within the framework of the concept of intangible cultural heritage, customs and rituals are recognized as one of the means of preserving the cultural diversity of humanity. UNESCO calls intangible cultural heritage "an expression of cultural diversity" and defines them as important for their protection [1:100]. In the case of Uzbekistan, such traditions as Navruz, Shashmaqom, Askiya, and the Baysun cultural monument are included in the list of intangible heritage, which are not only national heritage, but also world-class cultural wealth [2:155]. In this regard, the scientific study of customs and rituals is of great importance in Uzbekistan in preserving national cultural rights, instilling spirituality in the younger generation, and in strengthening cultural identity.

Uzbekistan put forward a strategy of “restoring national identity” during its independence. However, since customs and rituals were formed over a very long historical process, it is not enough to explain their essence only with folklore or ethnographic approaches. On the other hand, the stage of globalization is mixing traditions with external influences, some are irretrievably disappearing, and some are taking on a “modernized” form. For example, Western-style elements are introduced into traditional weddings, and the specific images and rituals of circumcision and mourning are being simplified. Therefore, the problem in our research is formulated as follows: what is the socio-philosophical essence of customs and rituals, and what philosophical patterns does their historical development in Uzbekistan depend on? That is, we want to see them not as a simple folklore phenomenon, but as a system of content inextricably linked with society, personality, and history. [4:168]

The purpose of the article is to analyze the customs and rituals of the Uzbek people from a socio-philosophical perspective and reveal their functional role in society. To achieve this goal, such aspects of customs and rituals as social integration, normativity, moral education, and identity formation are studied in depth. Also, the stages of the historical formation of rituals in Uzbekistan, their true roots, and current forms are studied philosophically.

Concept analysis - to determine the philosophical content of the concepts of "custom", "custom" and "ritual"; in this process, based on the concepts of cultural theory and social philosophy, to show their differences and similarities. Social functions - to analyze the main social functions of customs and rituals in society: ensuring social unity, creating normative norms, a means of moral education, a means of giving identity to the individual. Historical paradigms - describe the stages of the formation of customs and rituals in Uzbekistan on a philosophical basis: the intervention of ancient Zoroastrianism, the influence of Islam, secularism in the Soviet era, changes during the period of independence and in the current conditions of globalism.

Emile Durkheim's theory of social unity and collective consciousness, and the idea of "collective elevation" created by rituals, explain the influence of ritual on the spiritual unity of society. [5:145] Clifford Geertz's interpretive anthropology and the principle of "thick description": rituals and customs are analyzed not only for their external forms, but also for their internal symbolic meanings. Anthony Giddens' theory of reflexive modernity: in modern society, people critically reexamine traditions and consciously renew their meanings.

Eastern thinkers: Al-Farabi's theory of the noble society - the stability of society based on traditions and morality; Al-Biruni's intercultural empathy - the respectful study of the traditions of other peoples; Navoi's wise views on traditions and moral education - traditions as a mirror of the national psyche. This theoretical harmony provides an opportunity for a scientific dialogue between seemingly paradoxical traditions - old and new, conservative and innovative elements. [9:258]

Preservation of national identity: serves to correctly explain and instill traditional values in the younger generation, to develop cultural pride. Policy and strategy for the development of culture: will allow state bodies to use scientific foundations in regulating weddings, holidays and ceremonies. Education and upbringing: creates theoretical foundations for organizing interactive courses on traditions in schools, colleges and universities. Preservation of cultural heritage: can develop recommendations for identifying modern forms of traditions and rituals, their protection and promotion. Application of knowledge to the economy - provides instructions for combining elements of traditions and heritage with tourism, cultural events and local business [3:157].

This chapter covers the methodological approaches used in our research, their theoretical foundations and specific application in the research process. The goal is to reliably and systematically reveal the socio-philosophical essence of customs, traditions and rituals in Uzbekistan, as well as their historical formation. Several methodological approaches are used in our research - they are presented in harmony with each other. Each has its own capabilities and limitations, through which different aspects of the topic are revealed. This approach deeply studies the normative-ethical essence of concepts such as "custom", "custom", "ritual".

The terminological clarity of concepts is ensured (i.e., their differences and similarities are highlighted). Anti-normative ideas (for example, the denial of certain traditions) are critically analyzed. Ethical and normative values are systematically reflected, that is, the compliance of traditions with such norms as goodness, justice, and solidarity is assessed. With the help of philosophical concepts, the symbolic

meanings given to traditions and rituals are determined, and the moral issues associated with them are explained. This approach allows for a philosophical understanding of topics such as state policy, spirituality, and value conflicts in society. [8:189] The historical-genetic method is used to study the historical roots of rituals and their development from ancient to modern forms.

Identifying the origins of ritual and tradition elements: for example, the Zoroastrian period, Persian cultural influence, Islamic period, Soviet influence are analyzed. Using historical sources (ancient documents, archival materials, archaeological finds), the stages of formation of rituals are identified. The concept of "evolution" is used as a genetic metaphor: traditions and values change over time, some disappear, some begin to be used again. Through diachronic analysis (analysis in the process of historical development), an attempt is made to identify the processes of change in traditions and their causes. The advantage of this method is that it allows us to understand the modern form of rituals not only in their appearance, but also in their historical context. By comparing traditions and rituals on an international or regional scale, their specific features are identified.

Uzbek customs are compared with those of other Central Asian peoples (e.g., Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) or Turkic-Islamic cultures. The comparison reveals common trends (e.g., simplification of wedding ceremonies) and differences (e.g., differences between regions). Comparative analysis reveals forms of "interethnic interaction" (cultural synthesis, harmony, differentiation). The comparative method leads to an approach based on regional knowledge - for example, the works of Rtveldadze and other researchers on Central Asian civilizations are used. The comparative method plays an important role in determining the extent to which Uzbek customs correspond to general cultural trends. [6:75] Interpretive anthropological methods are used to understand the symbolic meanings of customs, rituals, and traditions, in particular, Clifford Geertz's principle of "thick description".

The researcher seeks to understand not only external phenomena, but also the understanding, intentions, and circumstances of the participants. The concept of "thick imagery" means that the anthropologist does not try to explain the ritual from another perspective, but rather to deeply reveal the layered images, circumstances, and meaning fabric in it [3:258]. This approach interprets each image, song, dress, movement, and dialogue of the participants during the ritual through symbolic signs. The researcher simultaneously plays the role of an anthropologist and uses the methods of observing and interviewing the participants. The method of interpretation allows us to study customs not only from the external form, but also from the layer of internal meanings. This approach considers culture as a "system of relative meanings," approaching them not as objects, but as a descriptive aspect.

Historical-genetic analysis explains the origin and development of rituals on the basis of symbols; The philosophical-analytical approach reveals the moral and normative content of this evolution; The comparative method identifies the territorial specificities of traditions; The interpretative (explanatory) anthropological method reflects the meanings of rituals based on the modern context and the understandings of the participants. In addition, the following measures are used to ensure the validity and reliability of the research: Disclosure based on the multi-method analysis of sources approach - data obtained through various sources (ethnographic texts, archival documents, interviews) are compared and suitable ones are selected. Peer discussion - the results of the research are discussed with other scientists, critical opinions are taken into account. Reflexivity - the researcher constantly analyzes his position, biases and role, and as a result, controls the objectivity of his conclusions. Citation and source control - all quotations are identified by source and are processed back to the original texts. Conceptual clarity - concepts such as tradition, custom, and ritual are given scientific definitions, preventing their vague application.

Each methodological approach may have certain limitations: In the philosophical-analytical approach, the problem of the relevance of theoretical concepts to the practical situation may arise. In the historical-genetic method, some ancient sources may be lost or distorted. In the comparative method, the cultural contexts of the peoples being compared are very different from each other, so there may be errors in interpretation when comparing them. In the interpretative anthropological method, relying on the concept of a "thick image", there is a risk of subjectivity and editing (the researcher may add too many of his theoretical ideas). Resource limitations - lack of time, financial resources and access to places (for example, direct observation of rituals in some remote villages is rare). The following results were obtained as a result of the data obtained during the research process and their analysis:

The results of the study showed that in Uzbek society, customs are outside the formal norms, but they actively function in social behavior. Customs often perform an "informal normative" function: that is, those who do not adhere to them may be subject to social criticism by society. For example, in the absence of a religious custom in the mahalla environment, the custom of "bringing blessing to the neighbor's house" is perceived as a sign of social respect. This custom serves as a means of regulating communication and behavior in society. In addition, customs are also adapted to the dynamic norms of society: on the one hand, they border on official laws and religious norms, and on the other hand, they are harmonized through mahalla and public control. From this point of view, customs appear as an element "complementing the normative sequence" in the system of social norms of society.

The identified data show that customs serve as the basis for the cultural stability of society. Customs - repetitive habits of everyday life, such as greetings, hospitality, hashar customs, connect members of society with each other. They serve as "cultural bridges" that maintain stability. For example, in rural neighborhoods of Uzbekistan, the hashar custom of helping each household serves to strengthen social cohesion. These customs are understood not only in terms of action, but also in their spiritual and moral content: if someone needs help, society feels an obligation to support them. Thus, customs also become a means of strengthening spiritual and moral values in society. [5:156] Ceremonies - weddings, marriages, mourning, holidays and other collective ceremonies act as a mechanism that unites society symbolically and practically. In ceremonies, participants reaffirm shared meaning through images and symbols. Research has shown that during a wedding ceremony, the bride and groom, guests, and relatives gather around a table and create a sense of togetherness through songs, prayers, and gifts. Thus, ceremonies act as a mechanism for "social cohesion" and encourage members of a community to feel part of a collective identity.

The results of the study indicate that the following main social functions are carried out through customs, rituals and ceremonies: Social integration: during ceremonies and celebrations, members of society gather together, a sense of collective solidarity is strengthened; this "state of unity" corresponds to the collective effervescence in Durkheim's concept. [4:145] Identity formation: customs and rituals create a symbolic space for members of society that answers the question "who am I" - young people adopt customs that suit them and understand their national identity. Education: through customs and rituals, moral values, respect, hard work, principles of interaction are transmitted to new generations. Actions such as advising parents during birth and marriage ceremonies, and proposing family and community values perform an educational function. Strengthening moral standards: through customs and rituals, a moral model appropriate to society is repeatedly confirmed - laws such as "respect for elders", "hospitality", "helping" are mandatory or socially enforced. Customs and rituals that systematically fulfill these tasks ensure the spiritual and social stability of society.

The results of historical-genetic analyses have shown that the early forms of rituals in Uzbekistan were closely related to Zoroastrianism and the agrarian eras. Spring festivals, rain-calling rituals, and nature awakening festivals were formed on the basis of agrarian rhythms. These rituals determined the internal structure and symbolic concept of today's Navruz holiday. A. Ashirov's work "Traditions Inherited from the Avesta" analyzes the elements of sacrifice, prayer, and celebration during the Zoroastrian era with their traces in modern rituals, which serves to reveal the ancient roots of these rituals. [11:145]

Over time, under the influence of Islam, rituals were harmonized with official religious norms. Marriage, mourning, and holiday rituals were harmonized with Islamic religious principles. Elements such as the marriage bond, love, circumcision, funeral, and mourning prayers were formed in the marriage ceremony. In this way, the internal symbolic structures of the rituals were harmonized with Islamic elements, and the normative aspects in society were strengthened.

During the Soviet period, religious elements were limited, and rituals were reduced or reduced to secular forms. Some religious images and rituals lost their inner meaning and became folkloric. Examples identified in the study include: state holidays were recognized as cultural holidays, and some religious rituals were given the quality of "folklore". [13:156] This change led to a change in the meaning of the rituals, while preserving their external appearance.

After gaining independence in 1991, the government of Uzbekistan turned customs, traditions and rituals into an element of national policy. The Navruz holiday was celebrated on a state scale, the scale of national holidays and festive events was expanded, and the state's attention to traditional weddings and

festivities was increased. Thus, rituals became not only a folklore phenomenon, but also a mass demonstration of national identity. Some rituals (for example, boychechak sayli, askiya) were included in the UNESCO list and were recognized internationally. This process was manifested as an increase in the status of rituals in society.

Today, ceremonies are increasingly diverse. Weddings include elements of video, photography, stage performances, orchestras and foreign music. At the same time, young people are reinterpreting ritual symbols. Research conducted in Central Asia by J. Beyer and P. Fink analyzed the process of "traditionalization" - the renewal and restoration of traditions, and showed a unique synthesis of Western factors and local values. For example, in the villages of Uzbekistan, the ceremony of yag-o'och (sprinkle oil on the house of the bride's mother-in-law) was videotaped and transformed into an atmospheric decoration ceremony, while retaining its original symbolic meaning.

Overall, the results show that while customs, traditions, and rituals have undergone formal changes as a result of time, politics, and cultural pressures, their socio-philosophical essence continues to fulfill its functions of harmonizing society, strengthening normative norms, forming identity, and moral education.

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The results of this study showed that customs and rituals serve as a spiritual connection between the individual and society. This connection is two-way: society offers customs and rituals as a normative basis, and the individual accepts their meaning through internal interpretation. This process can also be explained by K. Herz's theory of interpretation - rituals and customs form a dialogue between the personal worldview and the values of society, entering into the "texture of meaning" (network of meanings). [3:235] Thus, customs and rituals give the individual a sense of identity, orient him spiritually and illuminate his relationship with society. The strength of this connection is that through customs and rituals, the internal mystical structures of society - values, symbols, restrictions - allow the individual to feel part of society. In this sense, they provide an opportunity to experience the objective structure of society as an internal experience.

Emile Durkheim's theory of ritual and customs as a force that creates society in space creates a very favorable environment for the construction of "collective ascension" (in the international format "collective ascension") in rituals. Durkheim describes the construction of "collective ascension" (in the international format "collective ascension") as a sense of collective unity and strong energy (for example, the spiritual harmony felt when a group prays together). This, according to Durkheim, deprives the community of the power that emanates from symbolic-objective forms and forms a "sacred" element. In our study, the joint emotional experiences of participants in wedding, holiday, and mourning ceremonies, as well as a general spiritual harmony, were observed - this is what is close to Durkheim's concept of ascension. For example, during the Navruz holiday, neighborhood residents create internal spiritual harmony by singing songs with each other and striving together for the "new year". [1:45] There is one aspect of Durkheim's theory: it does not sufficiently illuminate the internal state of experience, the subjective interpretations of rituals. Therefore, in order to fill this gap, multidisciplinary and anthropological methods are used.

In his work "The Gift", Marcel Mauss analyzes the social and symbolic content of gift exchange. He sees the gift not as a simple economic exchange, but as a system of "social obligation", that is, through the obligations to give, receive and return, networks and connections are created. In Uzbek society, gift elements such as "sep beris", "keltirma", "ko'tarmalik" also serve as a central part of the ceremony in wedding ceremonies. These gifts participate as a means of strengthening social unity and obligation. Mauss's theory explains the maintenance of social ties through the exchange of gifts in Uzbek ceremonies in this way. Limitation: Mauss's theory is based on archaic societies; it may not take into account the mosaic of financial and psychological factors that appear in modern ceremonies.

Bronisław Malinowski, in the anthropological tradition, analyzed cultural elements in the context of societal needs. He considered rituals to be necessary for psychological functions (spiritual stability in times of hardship, uncertainty). For example, during the agricultural period, rain-making rituals provided hope and emotional peace to the community. In this regard, our results also show that agrarian rituals served as a collective psychological method of coping with environmental threats or natural problems. However,

Malinowski overemphasizes individual psychological needs. In our analysis, rituals are not only psychological tissues, but also symbolic-social systems that carry a normative burden in maintaining societal stability.

Anthony Giddens proposes the concept of "revision" and "reflexive modernization" of traditions in modern society: individuals are not perfectly bound to traditions, but act as agents of reinterpretation. From this perspective, customs and rituals are not static institutions, but are constantly renewed structural forces. [6:159] The results of the study show that rituals in Uzbekistan are adapting to modern trends (video, music, clothing, the Internet), but their inner meanings are preserved. This is consistent with Giddens' concept of structure-agency dualism - while ritual is a structure, it is also renewed by agents (members of society).

Abu Nasr al-Farabi's concept of a virtuous society argues that the stability and well-being of society are formed through righteous individuals (having moral habits). He considered virtue and habits to be factors that ensure the stability of society. This idea directly corresponds to Uzbek customs and rituals - through customs, virtuous habits (prayer, charity, kindness) are included in the list of society. [8:245]

In his works, Beruniy often emphasizes the importance of respecting the cultures of other peoples and trying to understand their traditions. This concept of cultural empathy gives us a methodological advice for understanding rituals and traditions "from within": the meaning of each ritual should be derived not only from its appearance, but also from its context. This approach is in harmony with interpretative-analytical methods.

Alisher Navoi's works particularly emphasize such qualities as generosity, kindness, and respect for the elderly, calling them the spiritual pillars of society. Navoi, with his words "Custom is in the mouth of the people, it enriches the nation," expresses the importance of custom as a factor in enriching society, improving it, stability, and spiritual well-being. This idea strengthens the spiritual content of customs and rituals.

In today's globalization environment, customs and rituals are rising to the level of a means of maintaining a balance between national identity and world trends. Under the pressure of world culture, traditions are in danger of disappearing, but observations show that Uzbek society, on the one hand, is accepting modernity, and on the other, it is striving to restore national identity. For example, the wearing of national costumes among young people, the performance of ritual songs, the glorification of regional traditions - these are manifested as processes of identity reform. At the same time, the absorption of Western style and technology into rituals - the external appearance of the ritual is updated, but the internal meanings are preserved. This process corresponds to Giddens's theory of reflexive modernization: members of society consciously select and interpret rituals and ceremonies, updating them. Consequently, customs and rituals are not static monuments, but institutions adapted to the current system of meanings.

Conclusion. Our research has shown that in Uzbek society, customs, traditions, and rituals serve as a system of informal norms that guide personal behavior and strengthen the stability of society. Rituals (weddings, mourning, seasonal and religious holidays) unite community members around a single action and emotional state, realistically demonstrating Durkheim's mechanism of "collective ascent"; this in itself serves to redefine social solidarity, the boundaries of the "sacred" and "mundane". At the same time, M. Mauss's "gift and exchange" - obligations to give, receive, and return - strengthen kinship and neighborhood networks through practices such as "gift-salom", "kurmana", "mahr", "sep" in the Uzbek wedding system; a gift is not an economic, but a socio-symbolic connection. [12:102] The psychological support function, which M. Malinowski emphasized, also operates in rituals, especially in the form of "institutionalization of hope" during times of great anxiety (illness, harvest, weather). K. Geertz's "thick image" approach made it possible to interpret the inner layers of the meaning of rituals - the process of "self-interpretation" of society through symbols, speech, song and manners. As a result, it was confirmed that customs and rituals act as a stable mechanism that creates a spiritual connection between the individual and society, increases identity, moral norms and social capital.

Historical-genetic analyses show that our rituals have their roots in ancient agrarian times and Zoroastrianism; these layers confirm that holidays like Nowruz continue to live on today through the motifs of awakening, renewal, and gifting of nature. Nowruz has been recognized by the UN General Assembly as "International Nowruz Day" since 2010, and in 2024, it was included in the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in a multinational nomination, emphasizing the transnational and universal significance of this holiday.

During the Islamic era, marriage, mourning, and holiday rituals were generalized by religious and legal norms; during the Soviet era, most rituals were secularized, and some were "transferred" to folklore. After

independence, elements such as Navruz, Askiya, Shashmaqom, and the Baysun cultural center were revived at the state level and included in international lists; this process strengthened the cultural foundation of the policy of national identity.

In the current era of globalization, rituals interact with technology, mass culture, and market mechanisms, renewing their forms (e.g., audiovisual, script, costume), while preserving local meanings and values in their content—a local manifestation of Giddens' description of "reflexive modernization." [4:52]

E. Durkheim's interpretation of rituals as a restructuring of society around "sacred" symbols, M. Mauss's theory of interaction, M. Malinowski's functional-psychological disorders, and Geertz's interpretive paradigm complemented each other: rituals are unique normative, psychological, symbolic, and network institutions.

A. Giddens's structure-agency duality paves the way for rituals to be seen not as "fixed structures" but as practices that are constantly repeated by participants. Among Eastern thinkers, Al-Farabi's concept of the "Virtuous City" affirms the spiritual structure of society through customs and virtues; Al-Biruni's comparative-empathic research method in "India" reinforces the need to "understand" rituals "from within" as a scientific criterion; Navoi's interpretation of moral customs as a source of civilization enhances the educational value of our traditions.

The results will provide an evidence-based basis for strengthening the national heritage policy at the mahalla institute, ensuring a semantic and functional map of traditions and rituals in educational programs (history, cultural studies, social philosophy), and managing rituals in a waste-free, socio-educational direction. UNESCO and UN documents on Navruz - the principles of preserving intangible heritage and "applying cultural diversity" can be included in national programs. It is also proposed to develop regional-thematic educational modules (repertoire, ritual texts, ritual ethics) on the elements registered in the Shashmaqom, Askiya, and Baysun cultural spaces, and to promote a "value-based" interpretation of rituals in youth media literacy.

In the context of globalization, rituals transform national identity into "visible capital": they enrich the brand of Uzbekistan in the international arena (UNESCO lists, international festivals and conferences), and internally strengthen social capital (trust, support, solidarity). To justify this process, rituals must comply with the principles of openness, inclusiveness, economic normativity and fairness in relation to gender and age groups. Normative regulation (for example, limiting luxury) and cultural and pedagogical work must complement each other, and the chain "ritual - spirituality - well-being" must be preserved.

This work relies on theoretical and secondary source analysis; extensive ethnographic fieldwork (oral history, ritual texts, socio-economic expenditure profiles by region) is a further step. The impact of digital media (ritual aesthetics on social media) and the transnational transformation of traditions in the context of migration should also be studied as a separate area.

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