

SCTCMG 2018
**International Scientific Conference “Social and Cultural
Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism”**

**THE MAIN TASKS OF MORAL EDUCATION IN CHECHEN
SOCIETY: TRADITIONS AND MODERNITY**

Z.S. Isakieva (a)*, L.T. Solovyova (b), Z.I. Khasbulatova (a, c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Chechen State Pedagogical University, Grozny, Russian Federation

(b) Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russian Federation

(c) Integrated Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences named after K. Ibragimov, Grozny, Russian Federation

Abstract

The article discusses on the basis of field ethnographic material and literary sources the main tasks of moral education in Chechen society, as well as the high moral requirements. Chechens, like all the people of Caucasus, attached great importance to the upbringing of children, both boys and girls. As follows from the reviewed materials, the basis of Chechen moral culture was respectful and caring attitude to elders and children, the desire to help those in need morally and financially, mercy in its most diverse manifestations, help and mutual help towards neighbors and relatives, the concept of honor and duty, commitment, fulfillment of certain obligations undertaken, i.e. responsibility for the words said, work and more. Chechens traditionally has given priority to the education of such moral qualities as honesty, truthfulness, modesty, politeness, respect for parents, for the elder, and hospitality. Simplicity, dignity, sociability, loyalty to friends were considered to be pronounced traits of the character of the Chechen people. For centuries, the Chechen people have developed a whole system of unwritten moral standards of behavior, an extensive set of rules relating to virtually all aspects of life and activities that characterize relationships in the family, in everyday life, in society and even at the level of managerial (state) structures – Glillakh-ozdangal, which contained the rules of etiquette, behavior, ethics, aesthetics.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Chechens, peoples of the Caucasus, socialization, moral education, etiquette, ethical standards.



1. Introduction

The most important condition for the sustainable and planned development of each society is the transfer of diverse experience accumulated in society to new generations, i.e. mandatory intergenerational transmission of ethnic culture, which is the essence of the socialization of the younger generation. This is true both in regard to the material sphere of culture, as well as with respect to spiritual culture, an integral part of which is the tradition of upbringing formed over the centuries by one or another people, ways to transfer to new generations all the norms, traditions and skills that are inherent in this ethnic community. The process of successful socialization envisaged the assimilation by the individual of the entire volume of necessary information that existed in the collective memory of this or that human community. It is well known that a necessary condition for social progress is precisely the continuity of generations, which exists in all areas of life: production, political, economic, as well as in legal, moral, aesthetic fields.

2. Problem Statement

Chechens, like all the peoples of Caucasus, attached great importance to the upbringing of children, both boys and girls. The thought that the formation of a worthy person provided for comprehensive education – physical, labor, moral, aesthetic, i.e. purposeful process of familiarizing the younger generation to the culture of society. The significance of the study of the historical features of the process of education is undoubted. As noted I.S. Cohn, “the world of childhood and the ways of raising children are old and at the same time new subject of the sciences about mankind and society” (Kohn, 1983). This determines the relevance of the problem.

3. Research Questions

This article discusses the system of moral education that existed in Chechen society, dwelling only on certain aspects of this multifaceted topic. This will also involve comparative material on other people of Caucasus.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to complexly and comprehensively study one of the sections of the traditional culture Chechen’ education – moral education, as well as its evolution in the process of historical, socio-economic, formational, sociocultural transformations.

5. Research Methods

In carrying out this study, a comparative historical method was used, which defined the approach to the studied phenomena as certain realities of historical reality, changing with the passage of time and under the influence of certain concrete historical conditions, influences and transformations. The synchronous-diachronic method was also used, which assumes consideration of the research subject in the unity of history and modernity, allows to reveal the mechanism of their complementarity and interaction; its use made it possible to detect the mutual dependence of studied categories, the patterns of their development and modernization.

6. Findings

Moral values, interconnected with other aspects of culture, are an important basis for many ideas and relationships in society. Respectful and caring attitude to elders and children, the desire to morally and financially help those in need, mercy of different kinds, help and mutual assistance of neighbors and relatives, the concept of honor and duty, the necessity to fulfill certain obligations, responsibility for the words said, diligence and much more – all this should be considered the basis of the Chechens' moral culture.

The traditional norms of behavior, handed down from generation to generation, were practically related to all aspects of society: from birth and marriage to work, everyday communication in family life and work, social forms of leisure behavior, etc. As a rule, they were not regulated by any specific legal institutions, but often were more durable than the last, based basically on public morality and public opinion (Tishkov, 1994).

1. The entire set of moral and aesthetic standards of behavior among any people is based on the ideas about a certain positive image of the “ideal member” of their society at a certain time, in a certain situation and in a certain role. This collective, historically formed image of the “ideal”, “mythologized person” of this or another ethnic community is imprinted in the minds of every member of this community. Every nation historically develops and has its own specific and inherent standard of behavior, and the norms of national etiquette prescribe a member of this community to follow a given standard in each specific situation (Gardanov, 1964).

Naturally, among different nations, including the Chechens, this standard is somewhat different, which is determined by the way of life, the dominant way of life, moral and moral ideas, concepts of attitude to the opposite sex, relations between the older and the younger, the idea of good and evil, about good and bad, about courage, heroism, honesty, etc. Every nation has historically composed the written (legally codified) and unwritten norms of “decent behavior”, which in case of unfulfillment face disapproval or condemnation of other members of society. Despite the fact that the violation of the norms of such an “ideal behavior” or “ideal model” of behavior was not legally punished, they nevertheless stably existed and exist for long periods of time in one or another ethnic community, being interdependent elements of a social, ethnic and confessional nature. The fact that people of the North Caucasus formed a "socio-psychological model of the "real "highlander and woman from the mountains," is reflected in the work of Y.S. Smirnova (1983).

In the Chechen family, traditionally, priority has been given to the education of such moral qualities as honesty, truthfulness, modesty, politeness, respect for parents, for the elder, and hospitality. Simplicity, dignity, sociability, loyalty to friends were considered to be pronounced traits of the character of the Chechen people. In family life, family rituals and customs “traditional culture and etiquette are vivid and manifested” (Khasbulatova, 2018).

An old Chechen saying tells: “Gilillakh-ozdangalla dotsachoh I – Irs Khir Dats. “Where there is no morality, there will be no happiness.” “Gillakkh-ozdangalla” is etiquette, norms of behavior, ethics, aesthetics; it is a whole system of ethical norms. The Chechens, who didn't have a written language for a long time, have created an interesting system of unwritten moral standards relating to all aspects of life that characterize complex relationships in the family, in everyday life, in society and even at the state level.

“Gillakkh-ozdangalla” can be defined as a set of etiquette rules of behavior relating to the external manifestation of attitudes towards people: relationships, as a set of behavior rules in public places, clothing, etc.

The observance of moral standards among other peoples of the Caucasus, for example, among the Circassians, also played a significant role. Thus, the Adyghe customs - “Adyghe Khabze” - were “a wide range of social norms in all areas of life activity without exception, ranging from simple everyday rules to the mandatory norms of legal regulation” (Mafedev, 1991).

Moral and aesthetic education can be considered an important, essential basis for the formation of character, moral and ethical image of a person throughout his life, his relationship with society; it largely determines the real status of a person in a social environment (Nikishenkov, 1999).

Chechens paid great attention to such moral categories in children as discipline, a sense of collectivism, obedience and respect for parents and elder people, loyalty in friendship, love of homeland, etc. The boys were brought up courage, loyalty, perseverance, dedication, in girls – patience, politeness, obedience to their elders, and in the future – to her husband. All this corresponded to the moral and aesthetic ideal of that era, when the criteria for educating the younger generation among the Chechens were closely related to the historical conditions of their life.

Chechens educated girls with respect to moral values of Islam, taught them to work hard. The girl had to be a hard-working, thrifty, patient, obedient wife, mother and sister. Many of the respondents, recalling their childhood, gave examples of how the girls had the patience of sobar, thrift hama khoora, hama bar. The girl should have been able to cook, weave, sew, embroider, etc. By the age of 15, girls in Chechen families could do almost everything.

A girl from a very early age was prepared to get married and create her own family (Karpov, 2001). Similar requirements for the moral upbringing of children have Georgians: the child get acquainted with generally accepted norms of morality, the rules of behavior in his family, and with the behavior of elders as an example. Growing up, the children gradually enter into the system of relationships that existed in the family, and it becomes an immutable law for them (the relationship of elder and younger ones, rules of behavior in relation to parents, relatives, neighbors, hospitality practices, etc.) Attitude towards parents was very respectful, children are indebted to their father and mother: “The child will never be able to “pay” parents for all good that they have done to him”. “Even if a child will fry eggs on his hands, that doesn’t pay for his mother’s care”, – said the Georgian proverb (Solovyova, 1995).

For a long time, the attitude of Chechens to family and household are deep respect for their children, respect for elders, nobleness towards people around them, regardless of their nationality, gender, education, position in society, etc.

The elder in all cases spoke first, the young man gave up his place and stood, lit the elder tube (cigarette), served food, listened to his advice, etc. It was considered highly indecent to interfere in the conversation of elders, to laugh loudly in their presence, to say what is indecent to sex and age, to perform any ignorant act in the presence of elders, including in the presence of parents (smoke, make a reservation, etc.).

Children were gradually inculcated with elementary skills of addressing adults, eating during meals, on a visit etc. The children in the Chechen family were and are treated with great attention, affection, care

and love. The people of Caucasus are known for their love of children, and Chechens are no exception. Children, especially the youngest, were often pampered. Etiquette, the ethics of the Chechens prescribed to treat children gently, patiently, with restraint. No one raised a voice on a child. The family sought to instill in children from a very early age good-nature, respect for elders, women, and a kind attitude towards all living things. The emotional attitude of parents to children gradually changed as the child grew up: from mild forgiveness in early childhood to demanding rigor in adolescence and friendly care in his youth. B.K. Bgazhnokov writes about the existence of a kind of “cult of children” among the Circassians. Bgazhnokov, noting that many norms of the Adyg etiquette symbolized “attentive, sensitive, respectful attitude towards children” (Bgazhnokov, 2011).

The peculiarities of the moral education of Chechens can be seen in the relationships between women and men, adults and children, older and younger in the house, on the street, in public places, on the way, etc.

According to the worldview of the peoples of the Caucasus, including the Chechens, the religious and moral basis of intergenerational relations in the family is quite clearly manifested in the ideas about the meaning of parental blessing or curse, especially of the parent.

Chechens had many strict rules that flowed from honoring an older man. The custom certainly requires respect from all the younger ones to all the elders and regulates its demand as follows: the eldest sits, and the younger one stands until he receives an invitation to sit down; when there are several young people in the room, the elderly are sitting in order of seniority, and young people are at the door. On the road, the elder is on the right, and the younger is on the left, if there are three people - in the middle. When there is a whole company on the road, the younger ones are like the guardians of the elders: some of them are in front, some in the back, the rest are on the sides around the center made up by the elders. Any old man could demand the services of any young man, and the latter implicitly performed them. One of the most important and primary elements of the “cult” of elders is getting up at each appearance. “Even a female crow stands up (jumps) when a male crow flies”, - say Chechens. Every person with self-respect considers necessary to stand up, even when an unpleasant person appears, otherwise he will show his bad manners. According to the Chechen custom, if someone from the company gets up, then everyone who is younger than his years should also rise from their seats and stand until they either sit down again or say a kind “wah” (sit) (Ahmadov, 2002).

Young people, including a son or daughter, even those who became parents a long time ago, did not have (and do not have) Chechens' rights to sit in the presence of their father without his invitation. In the presence of elders, you must stand at some distance from the elder, if on the stairs – then a step below, etc. A young (and not very) person who knows how to honor his elders does not immediately sit down when the elder asks him, and not close to him. It is not allowed to waddle in the presence of elders (and even without them), with legs crossed, etc. Walking along with the elders, it is not supposed to be the first to go into the room; you cannot cross the road before the elder. From parents it was required that they take into account the influence of others on the children, know who the children communicate with outside the home, and protect children from bad acquaintances and influences. This is indicated by such proverbs: “You enter the thorny shrub — the thorn sticks”, “You become the same with the environment you live in”, “Do not talk with a bad person”, etc. The works of the Chechens' folklore through dramatized figurative pictures,

fascinating subjects recreate situations aimed at the emotional perception of the moral foundations of human society (kindness, patriotism, love for the environment, diligence, etc.) or condemning the vices, negative phenomena of the surrounding life. (Oshayev, 1960). On their basis, were formed social qualities, without the knowledge of which it was impossible to live in family and in society.

What Chechen proverbs, sayings, fairy tales, legends, etc. say, serves as a good didactic material, which reveals such concepts as the role of elders in the formation of moral principles of the family and society. Images of older people were perceived as carriers of good, wisdom: they gave advice to young people in difficult situations, provided necessary assistance. Proverbs and sayings, various parables, i.e. folklore, raised a child, instilled in him a love for people, readiness for heroism and much more. For example, in the fairy tale "Eat butter and honey", the dying father in allegorical form instructed his son how to live without him. (Elmurzaev, 1964).

The true meaning of the instructions was not always to be comprehended only after making many mistakes. My father said: "Always eat sweet, never say hello first, always wear new shoes." The son, following these "precepts", soon went bankrupt and only after asked his mother what the father's testament meant. Mother explained that "always eat sweet" means that after work any food will seem tasty, the second testament meant that if you go out to work in your field before others (weed, dig, water), everyone who comes will greet you; and the third meant that shoes would always appear new if systematically looked after. Only daily work, as Chechens believe, forms the necessary moral qualities of the next generation. It is noteworthy that in Georgian society it was also believed that early introduction to work also has an educational meaning: "Idleness rises thousands of absurd thoughts and leads to misfortune. When a person is engaged in business, an angel flies over his head and takes away all evil from him," the children were instructed. According to Georgians, good parents had to teach their child since they were little (Solovyova, 1995).

The art of spoken word of the Chechen people was and is a kind of education for family members, an indispensable spiritual and artistic environment in which people lived. It had a great educational and cognitive value. Through the works of folklore, were recognized the world, nature, people, good and evil, the environment, etc.

One of the norms of moral behavior in Chechen society was the avoidance custom. For a long time, the young wife should not have talked, rarely met with the older members of her husband's family, etc. Among Chechens, like other people, respect for a person was an important ethical norm and acted as a universal moral principle of human society, and it can be said that even now it plays a big role in relations between people in all spheres of their life activity, creating in different social environment healthy moral and psychological atmosphere.

Many pre-Soviet researchers, writing about the Chechens, spoke about the freedom of girls, especially respect for them in the family from a brother and father. Even touching a girl's hand or hair or taking her handkerchief was considered a reason to force a young man to marry or make a full payment for the girl's honour, as the researcher of the Caucasus traditions M.M. Kovalevsky wrote (1887). It should be noted that the norms of responsibility in violation of the honor and dignity of women occupied a significant place in the life of Chechens. Under customary law, insulting a woman was at the same time insulting her

entire family and even close and distant relatives, and if the woman was married, the person who had insulted her honor and dignity became the debtor of not only her relatives, but also husband and sons.

Mutual aid "belkhi" (from the word "bolkh" – work) in the life of the Chechens played a significant role, facilitating the work of people in the construction, conduct of various works mentioned above, where the simultaneous participation of the masses of people was required. The Institute of Mutual Aid "Belkhi" is a complex custom in its structure, in the center of which is joint unpaid work, where girls, young married and unmarried women are invited. They spent time on "Belkhi", got acquainted and communicated with each other (Tangiev, 1990).

The duration of work at the "Belkhi" lasted until the evening, but this did not exclude an earlier completion of the work. The hostess could not comment on the others' actions even if she did not like someone's work. During work on "Belkhi" people sung songs, made jokes and danced.

The Chechens had a whole complex of ethical, moral ideas and norms regarding the question of participation in the "Belkhi". Thus, accepting an invitation was not obligatory, but, nevertheless, it was considered impossible to refuse an invitation; even in case of extreme impossibility, it was necessary to come, work for a while and only then liveexplaining themselves. This indicates a strong moral obligation of the "Belkhi". The idea of the moral obligation to participate in the "Belkhi" was especially pronounced when help was organized by the community for a family in need of support, lost a breadwinner or in case of natural disasters, cattle cases, etc. Chechens considered it a moral duty to work in the field and bring wood for construction, etc. (Khadzhiev, 1930).

Speaking about ethical traditions when working, it should be noted that in the formation of reputation an important role played mastery, the ability to show this in the process of work on mutual aid, on common haymaking fields and other types of collective work. So, the opinion of people about a girl was directly taken into account when choosing a bride, and it was created while observing her in the process of her work, as well as directly by what she has done: everyone had her clothes.

A comprehensive analysis of the traditional culture of upbringing that functioned in Chechen society in the 19th and early 20th centuries shows that it was an important part of the spiritual culture of the Chechen people and had a rich arsenal of means and methods of upbringing the younger generation. The traditional culture of upbringing ensured that the representatives of new generations successfully mastered the complex of knowledge, skills, etiquette norms that were required for entering the social and ethnic space of the Chechen ethnic group.

7. Conclusion

As the materials presented in this article demonstrate, the moral education of the younger generation was recognized by the traditional Chechen society as the primary task of the family, coworkers, of the whole society. This is evidenced by various monuments of oral folk art (proverbs, legends, heroic poems, illi, etc.), reflecting the popular attitudes to the compulsory assimilation by the younger generation of socially recognized and approved standards of behavior. Traditional etiquette regulated the behavior of all members of society depending on gender, age, family and social status.

It seems to us that it is the performance of the traditional culture of upbringing that suggests that the experience of previous generations should be taken into account in modern Chechen society. Modern

education, of course, cannot and should not rely only on past experience. It is necessary to carefully study the ethno-pedagogical experience, reflect on its lessons and take them into account when building modern educational strategies. It should be emphasized that the focus on traditional folk culture in many ways remains a defining feature of the sociocultural processes taking place in Chechen society till the present time.

References

- Akhmadov, M. (2002). *Nokhchini glilakh - ozdangalla*. [Chechen traditional culture and ethics]. Grozny: Terek.
- Bgazhnokov, B. Kh. (2011). *Ethnography of the Circassians*. Nalchik: Elbrus.
- Elmurzaev, S. Ch. (1964). *Chechen folklore*. Grozny: Chechenizdat.
- Gardanov, V. K. (1964). Hospitality, priesthood and patronage among the Circassians (Circassians) in the 18th century - first half of the 19th century, *Soviet ethnography*, 1, 17-32.
- Kovalevsky M. M. (1887). *Law and custom in the Caucasus*. Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole.
- Karpov, Yu.Yu. (2001). *Women's space in the culture of the peoples of the Caucasus*. Saint Petersburg: SPBSU.
- Khasbulatova, Z. I. (2018). *Family and family rituals of Chechens in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: A historical and ethnographic study*. Moscow: Iiu MGOU.
- Khadzhiev, A. I., Yakovlev, N. B. (1930). *Culture and writing of the mountain peoples of the North Caucasus*. Vladikavkaz: Kavkaz.
- Kohn, I.S. (1983). *Introduction Ethnography of childhood. Traditional forms of raising children and adolescents among the peoples of East and Southeast Asia*. Moscow: Nauka.
- Mafedzev, S. Kh. (1991). *Intergenerational transmission of the traditional culture of the Circassians in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries*. Nalchik: Elbrus.
- Nikishenkov, A. A. (1999). *Traditional Etiquette of the Peoples of Russia (19th- beginning of the 20th century)*. Moscow: Etnos.
- Oshayev, H. D. (1960). On the history of the Chechen heroic – epic songs. *Bulletin of CHINII. History*. Grozny, 2(1), 164-175..
- Smirnova, Ya. S. (1983). *Family and family life of the peoples of the North Caucasus: The second half of the nineteenth – twentieth century*. Moscow: Nauka.
- Solovyova, L. T. (1995). *Georgia: Ethnography of childhood*. Moscow: IEA RAS.
- Tangiev, A. Kh. (1990). *Light of national consciousness*. Grozny: Vainakhs.
- Tishkov, V. A. (1964). *Woman and freedom: Ways of choice in the world of tradition and change*. Moscow: Etnos..