PECULIARITIES OF TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS SYNCRETISM OF THE ABKHAZIAN COMMUNITY IN ADJARA

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Abstract - We believe that the issue of national self-awareness should be viewed not only in a historical-cultural context, but also in a socio-cultural context, as it is particularly pertinent to different peoples today. Abkhazian emigrants who settled in Adjara were predominantly Muslim, which played a crucial role in their adaptation to the local population. Religion has played an enormous role in the Abkhazian people's history.

Until the end of the 20th century, Abkhazians living in Adjara displayed signs of their traditional religion, pramonotheism, according to which the infinite God "Antsea" is above the world and man. This religion is a system of religious beliefs, laws, and rituals that developed in Abkhazia as a result of historical evolution.

The peculiarity of Abkhazian ethnic culture is the attribution of sacred qualities to individual objects of nature, such as mountains, rivers, floodplains, and trees. The close relationship between Abkhazians and nature has shaped their perception of various good and destructive, evil spirits and events.

The belief in the pre-Islamic period was not as widespread among Abkhazians living in Adjara as it was in Abkhazia. However, until the twentieth century, elements of the previous monotheistic religion remained among the Adjara-dwelling Abkhazians.

The elder of the Cholokva (Cholokava) clan in the village of Adlia (Adjara) performed the common ancestral ritual "Anihara" every year on the New Year (January 13-14) and when spring arrived. Representatives of all generations who shared a common ancestor typically participated in the religious ceremony. Young women were not permitted to take part in the ceremony, but older women were permitted to do so. Also, according to tradition, representatives of the Agirba clan have been performing religious rituals in the "Abkhazian forest" in Adlia since the 1860s. The ritual required wine, tikan, and corn flour to make ghomi.

Abkhazians paid special attention to the trees, which we discussed previously. Therefore, only the heart, liver, etc. of the slaughtered animal were skewered with nuts. During the ritual, to attract the attention of the Creator-God. First, the family patriarch removed the meat from the skewer, and then the rest of the family sampled it. Following the ritual, the celebration commenced. Several ritual dishes, including boiled meat, ghomi, adjika, and "pure" sugar-free wine, were served on the festive table. Typically, all the food was prepared by men in close proximity to the place of worship. It was considered a bad omen to bring the meat and skin from the ritual sacrifice into the house. The mentioned ritual traditions were also practiced by the Chambas, Agirbas, and Kaitambas, among others.

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It should be noted that the majority of Abkhazians in Adjara were adherents of Islam, particularly its Sunni trend, and respected the traditions associated with this trend.

The wife is a Christian and the husband is a Muslim or vice versa; however, they respect each other's religion and do not oppose the religion chosen by their children.

On the basis of the collected data, it is possible to conclude that religious syncretism occurred without opposition in Adjara-dwelling Abkhazian families. There was no difficulty with the confessional issue. A Christian woman who married into the family treated the family's religious traditions with great reverence and spoke proudly about them.

On the modern stage, the religious beliefs of the Adjara-dwelling Abkhazians are a synthesis of two fundamental world religions, Islam and Christianity. In families that include members of different faiths, both Islamic and Christian holidays are frequently observed. On the tables of Abkhazians living in Adjara, we may encounter both "Halva," the main dish of the Muslim holiday, and "Pascha," the Christian holiday dessert.

On the basis of this, it is possible to assert that the past monotheistic, orthodox, and Islamic traditions have merged with the traditional life of Abkhazians over the centuries, which was passed down from generation to generation in the form of religious culture, which served the vital interests of the people and contributed to their economic, economic, and cultural development.