

OSSETIAN WEDDING CEREMONY DURING THE PANDEMIC

Tradition is shaped by historical and economic living conditions, which change in the context of social transformations and external influences. In this study, we assume that tradition has a stable core and a “protective layer” that faces external challenges and reacts to changing conditions by producing innovations that often become part of tradition. This article aims to trace how tradition changes under the pressure of emergency situations, particularly pandemics. We consider the wedding ceremony in the context of strict sanitary and epidemiological restrictions related to the spread of the SARS-CoV-2. Ethnographic materials, including in-depth interviews collected by the author made it possible to identify preserved traditions and new ritual forms that developed in a short period. Preliminary study results allow us to conclude that a stable “core” was preserved, enabling the ritual to survive in dangerous conditions. The adaptive ability of the protective layer gave rise to certain updated models. Monitoring the described rituals will show if innovations have become part of everyday life, if they sparked a departure from obsolete traditions, or whether they were temporary and faded with the lockdown, possibly resurfacing afterwards.

Keywords: *Tradition, wedding ceremony, pandemic, lockdown, innovation*

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