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Original article

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THE “WE DRESS THE TAJIK WAY!” CAMPAIGN: PRO ET CONTRA

In present-day Tajikistan, special attention is paid to the appearance of its citizens. In 2018, two illustrated manuals on recommended clothing were published: instructions for students and teachers, and special instructions for girls and women. Every spring since the early 2020s, the “We dress the Tajik way!” (“Тоҷикона менӯшем!”) campaign, initiated by the Committee for Women and Family Affairs, has been held in the country. From March 1 to May 31, female residents are encouraged to wear national costumes made of satin and adras fabric, as well as dresses with colorful embroidery known as chakans. News reports of ladies in traditional costumes marching in an organized manner along the streets in various parts of the country are shown on state and regional television channels, as well as websites of universities. The author will study the arguments both for and against this initiative, find out which population segments are most affected by it, and outline the difficulties in turning the original concept into reality. The article will also deal with problems such as what clothes are considered “alien” in modern Tajikistan, and how affordable and comfortable the recommended national clothes are. Another matter of interest is the media coverage of the campaign, and Internet users’ reaction to it.

Keywords: *Central Asia, post-Soviet Tajikistan, ethnography, culture, national dress*

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