

ANNOTATION
On the PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) Thesis
Named “Tradition as a Philosophical Concept”
under Specialty 6D020100 - Philosophy
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Thesis Subject Relevance. The history of the Kazakh people that have entered the third millennium as a nation with its own sovereign state has arrived at a new level. Kazakhs applied a lot of efforts and endeavors to such a great achievement as creating their own state; in fact, it has been the many-century dream of all Kazakh nation. Yet, in the era of globalization, the overall and very relevant goal resides in non-admitting the elimination of national values that serve as the major core and support of the state along with preserving the authentic national identity.

This thesis focuses on the philosophical analysis of the role that traditions play in the development of a person, a group, a nation, a state, and the entire human society. The thesis defines the place of traditional values, which originate from the existence, worldview, nature, and background of the nation, being carried through generations, in the life of the mankind.

Since a tradition constitutes a value emerging from a human mindset, its philosophical nature has an extraordinary importance in our life. Traditions are historically formed spiritual treasures passed from one generation to another, being a way of preservation and transfer of experience and knowledge. They show the original distinctness and the true uniqueness, nature and authentic identity of the nation among other world civilizations. The viability of a tradition lies, above all, in the preservation of its significance and relevance in the course of upbringing younger generations. The matters of traditions have not been the subject of any specialized research within the domestic philosophy; though they have been somewhat touched upon in the humanitarian sphere. The in-depth consideration of a tradition through the prism of philosophy becomes a very important objective in the times of globalization. It seems obvious that any member of a constantly changing society is concerned with the question of how to combine traditions with the demands of the time since the latter is known to move on.

The context of globalization attaches more and more actuality to the matters of the philosophical research of progressive traditions which have successfully survived after centuries, and also to the definition of their historical value and revision of the philosophical meaning of a tradition. All above-said speak for the relevance of the thesis subject.

Should values passed to us by previous generations be buried in oblivion, losing their significance, it will become impossible to give rise to a new mature cohort. In this regard, it is especially noteworthy to cite Lao Tzu: “To prevent spiritual and moral decay of the society, each person should absorb national spiritual values”. Therefore, each and every nation should strive to preserve their authentic values.

1. Researching a tradition from a philosophical perspective means defining the goals and objectives, the mission, and the rules of the worldview of ancestors. Life

experience of the ancestry serves as an example for future generations and is carried through time as traditions in the conscience of descendants.

2. A nation that disregards its national values and that has no deep-rooted traditions which it could develop and improve cannot move forward. The idea of Mangilik El resides in the national integrity, peace and harmony in the society supported by the respect to national values and traditions.

3. The era of globalization attaches a lot of accent to the national aspects. Nowadays, our society faces very complicated and challenging transformations. In pursuit of everything new, we should never forget that we can lose our national identity, our language, and our spirituality when unobserving folk traditions or treating them as something obsolete and unnecessary. And this is a dangerous way to go.

4. Philosophical studies to discover the essence, the meaning, and the genesis of traditions are needed to ensure the adequate attitude of the society towards conservative virtues. Philosophical studies should act as a basis to find a right path in making a distinction between the fundamental and the extrinsic, the valuable and the secondary, the apparent and the disputable, and between the necessary and the unnecessary.

5. A tradition is a very extensive and broad notion with a sophisticated meaning that embraces many cultural and spiritual values which come to us throughout centuries and which we must pass to future generations along with worldview approaches, national beliefs, collective customs, and so on and so forth. The need to select only viable and practically useful traditions, promoting the consolidation and integrity of the society as well as intergenerational continuity, makes a vivid argument to support the relevance of our research.

Degree of the Scientific Development of the Thesis Subject: The matters of traditions constitute one of the field which has been only recently started to be explored by the local philosophy; though the entire history of philosophy has comprehensive and extensive researches of the prominent world thinkers and scholars. The earliest studies in the field of traditions are referred to the name of Johann Gottfried Herder who was the first one to attach the status of a philosophical notion to a tradition in his famous *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Humanity*. According to Johann Gottfried Herder, as long as the humanity exists, it will maintain traditions which form on the basis of relations and views of a person and the world. One may also note a whole bunch of philosophy scholars who considered the aspects of traditions, either directly, or indirectly, in their works. In particular, Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Thoma Aquinas, Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, Maximilian Weber, Edward Burnett Tylor, Rene Guenon, Karl Popper, and others, carried out detailed and thorough studies of a tradition in the context of a value closely related to vital activities of a human being. According to Rene Guenon, a reputable French philosopher, a tradition is the teaching given to the mankind by the Supreme Being, while the word “tradition” means to transfer, to inform, to bring together. The theme of a traditional society and a new society was mentioned by Karl Popper in his theory of the open society where he considered a

new society as an open community and a traditional society as a closed one. Speaking of the supremacy of a tradition in a closed society, the thinker refers the latter to the oriental type of a culture, while an open society is defined as the industrial and post-industrial culture of the western type in which a critical rationalism prevails.

Jerzy Szacki, a Polish philosopher, recognizes a tradition to be a virtue, and Talal Asad, an American thinker, considers a tradition to be a tendency carried forward from one generation to another. Edward Shils associates formation of traditions with experience. Shmuel Eisenstadt, a sociologist from Israel, believes a tradition to be an integral part of a society. Studies and conclusions of the above-listed thinkers were used as primary sources.

As to the Turkic world, the sphere of traditions was the subject of philosophical endeavors reflected in the works of Al-Farabi, Mahmud al-Kashgari, Yusuf Balasaguni, Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Ahmet Iugineki, who analyzed a tradition as a code of rules applied to various aspects of life and treated as the basis for upbringing and as a commonly shared human value aiming to improve individual traits of a personality.

Turkic nations considered traditions to be spiritually favorable human deeds; only virtues thought to be useful for human existence were recognized as traditions. The worldview of Turks takes a tradition as a well-developed and perfect rule of proper living.

In an effort to determine the relation between a tradition and succession, Hegel developed a concept on the current use of optimal moments from the past only, and related the preconditions of the societal development with the past times of a human. When revealing the role of succession in the formation of a tradition, Eleasar Baller, Boris Breinstein, Vyacheslav Kairov, Vladimir Plakhov, Ivan Sukhanov considered a tradition as a formed notion, and they associated its permanent ability to move from one generation to another with succession. The book of G.B. Nuradin "Civilization: Tradition and Succession" covers the continuous succession between a tradition and a civilization.

Definition of the correlation between a tradition with all virtuous things is reflected in the sociological disquisitions of Henry Thoreau, teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, and works of American scholar Martin Luther King.

In the 1960s, the value-based content of the notion of a tradition was given a very important place in the works of Polish sociologist Jerzy Szacki, American sociologist Edward Shils, and French philosopher and art expert Paul-Michel Foucault.

The key ideas within this field of social sciences were considered as a model in research papers of such well-known scientists as M.Azhenov, K.Bikenov, A.Tabyldiyev, K.Zharykbayev, S.Kaliyev, T.Alizhan, S.Kenzheakhmetuly, and others. Upon achievement of independence, philosophers of Kazakhstan who set a course towards the national philosophy, also turned their attention to the matters of traditions. Thus, in their works, domestic scientists considered national matters, i.e. the matters of national mentality, language, authenticity, religion, and spiritual values. Let us name some of them: A.Kh.Kassymzhanov in the book "Space and

Time of Great Traditions”, Zh.M. Abdildin in “Abai – the Genius and Humanist”, A.N. Nysanbayev in “The World of Spiritual Values of the Nations of Kazakhstan”, G. Yessim in “Sana Bolmysy”, T.Abazhanov in “Kazakh Ruhynyn Filosofiyasy”, D.K. Kishibekov in “National Idea and Ideology”, T.Kh.Gabitov in “Kazakh Madenietinin Ruhani Kenistigi”, M.S. Orynbekov in “Pre-Philosophy of Proto-Kazakhs”, Zh.Moldabekov in “Kazakhtanu zhane Zhanaru Filosofiyasy”, S.E. Nurmuratov in “Ruhani Kundylyktar Alemi: Aleumettik-Filosofiyalyk Taldau”, A.R. Massalimova in “Cultural Anthropology”, A.Kassabek and Zh.Altayev in “Kazakh Filosofiyasynyn Tarikhy”, T.Burbayev in “Ult Mentaliteti”, G.Telebayev in “Historical and Philosophical Culture and Tradition of Existence”, A.T. Kulsariyeva in “Intellektualdyk Aleuetten – Intellektualdyk Ultka”, A.A.Kuranbek in “Kazakh Filosofiyasyndagy Dastur men Zhanashyldyk” / 19th and Early 20th Centuries/, and others. Certain works and research findings of the listed authors, most relevant to this study subject were used for the development of the thesis, having been included as the reference sources.

The Object of the Thesis Research– traditions and their role in the development of the society of modern Kazakhstan.

The Subject of the Thesis Research – philosophical analysis of the matters of traditions.

The Goal of the Thesis – research of a tradition as a philosophical issue.

Objectives aimed at the achievement of the thesis goal:

– identification of disquisitions and philosophical views of science-oriented thinkers on traditions within the history of the philosophical thought;

–analysis of philosophical considerations on the notion of a tradition in the Turkic worldview;

– discovery of the relevance and importance of a tradition as a phenomenon emerged as a result of a natural need;

– determination of the role of succession for the formation of a tradition;

–revelation of the philosophical nature of a tradition and its place in the life of the mankind along with the analysis of the virtuous character of a tradition;

–revelation of the philosophical aspects of a tradition such as “the good” and “the boon”;

– value-based meaning of a tradition and its role in the establishment of the Kazakh society as a civilized state;

– study of the dynamics of changes within traditions in the context of globalization and lives of generations;

– discovery of meanings of the spiritual modernization and reconstruction of traditions;

Theoretical Basement of the Thesis. Theoretical concepts and ideas of the paper have been based on the works of western scholars, such as, J. G. Herder, Plato, Aristotle, Th. Aquinas, F. Bacon, Th. Hobbes, J. Locke, G. W. F. Hegel, R. Guenon K. Popper, E. B. Tylor, O.Spengler, as well as Turkic thinkers, such as, Al-Farabi, M. al-Kashgari, Y. Balasaguni, Kh.A. Yasawi, and A. Iugineki.

Works of the domestic philosophers and culturology experts were also used. The work on the thesis involved a lot of materials that reveal the essence of the notion of a tradition.

Methods and Methodological Basement of the Thesis. Hermeneutic, empiric, anthropologic, and theoretical methods of research were applied as the methodology basement of the thesis research. It should be noted that in the course of research the notion of a tradition has been, first of all, studied in an existential manner. The research activities involved such methods as: description, observation, comparison, induction, deduction, text analysis method, structural analysis, and systematization.

Scientific Novelty of the Research Topic.

The national science has sufficient studies focused at the problem of a tradition. Yet, our research, covering the matters of a tradition from the philosophical perspective, serves as the commencement of a very noble initiative characterized by a very high degree of responsibility. The following scientific results have been achieved within the research:

- for the first time in the history of the national science a tradition has become a subject of research;

- an effort to determine the correlation between traditions and innovations has been taken by analyzing the works of world thinkers in the field of philosophy, and namely, in regard to traditions. A science-based concept has been formulated on the fact that the old and the new are not on the opposite sides, but, to the contrary, constitute the interrelated, complementary, and equally weighed phenomena;

- the nature of a tradition emerged as a result of a natural living need has been established when defining the basics of the formation of national traditions as supported by the study of the past and contemporary history of the Kazakh people;

- A succession-based and value-based role of a tradition, where the succession is defined as the connecting and converging link for the transfer of traditions from one generation to another, has been analyzed;

- Being a Kazakh is a burning issue in Kazakhstan. The philosophical nature of a tradition for the establishment of a nation has been revealed, and also the place of a tradition in the life of a citizen has been analyzed with the virtue included as an internal part of a tradition;

- Analysis of the national traditions has established that a tradition is a value that serves a human and aims at a human's well-being, while the good is a form of how a tradition is expressed;

- By defining the value-based up-bringing with the substance laid on traditions, the value has been considered as the form of the tradition assessment;

- The role of the notions of “the old” and “the new” have been defined in the consciousness of the present-day generation, supported by the analysis of the root causes and consequences of certain spiritual misperceptions;

- The necessity to deny archaic traditions to be replaced with progressive national folk traditions has been identified, and their cultivation is the demand of our time in the context of globalization;

Scientific Results Submitted for the Defense:

1. Traditions are recognized as a value closely related with the human worldview and human nature. By analyzing various sayings of thinkers, it has been concluded that traditions constitute a phenomenon that brings progress into the life of the mankind. Thus, this phenomenon is very important and absolutely necessary; yet, when selecting the novelty we should not reject the old which has served as the historical cornerstones for everything new. Many thinkers considered the matters of traditions as a dialectical relation between the old and the new. Following traditions which contradict to the spirit of the time equals to self-blocking; however, rejecting everything traditional and value-based as well as total striving for the new only make up another delusion. The relation of traditions and novelty should be perceived not through the contraposition, but in the prism of their interrelation, integrity, and interaction with each other.

2. Turkic traditions are based on the principles of humanism, tolerance, and love of life. Those principles become especially important aspects in the formation of value paradigms in the societal consciousness. Turkic traditions are demonstrated in the concepts of “virtue”, “goodness”, “unity”, and “honor”. The Turkic society recognizes traditions as a historical example and credo, or a position that each person should take from the history of the past. According to Turkic thinkers, only those values that have become commonly shared by the humanity should be recognized as progressive traditions.

3. The nature of a tradition emerged as a result of the natural need has a critical role in the traditionalism, since all traditions are formed on the basis of the natural environment of a respective society, its living conditions, and climatic features. Traditions are the basis of the national worldview that defines the course for future generations. You can gain the understanding of the essence of the national existence and human traits only through learning the nature of their traditions. Traditions come from natural needs, though not limited thereto; their spiritual and sacral sense is extremely deep-rooted.

4. Succession defines the relation between traditions and epochs, being the manifestation of unity and continuity. In case the succession is broken, a tradition ceases to exist in the life of the mankind. Thanks to succession, every generation can pass their form of existence, character, behavior, and practical experience of ancestors along with their attitude to the world and culture of the nation to their descendants. In order to preserve our nationhood and become the Mangilik El (the Eternal People or State), we have to secure this unbreakable succession between national values and generations. Succession of traditions allows keeping the unity between the past and the future, while striving for new beginnings.

5. The internal nature of progressive traditions is good. The notion of the good is measured by the highest ethical norms of human traits. For centuries, various human societies formed different levels of traditions based on the good. The internal nature of traditions and their virtuous values allowed their surviving through numerous challenges of time as they still exist in the modern world. Understanding and acceptance of progressive traditions and their deep-rooted internal contents by contemporary generations may help in navigating to the proper route in the prosperous future of the nation.

6. Good traditions fill our life with harmony and serve for the benefit of people. Virtuous features of traditions carry their useful function for spiritual and cultural needs and unity of the society. Kazakh folk traditions have always been working for the human well-being. Starting a family, children upbringing, hearth and home, and many household and working traditions represent worthy deeds, inextricably entwined with the life of the nation. The form of implementing a tradition lies in the virtue.

7. A tradition is a collective memory of the society and culture. The time neither returns, nor repeats; yet, the rules and principles served as the basis for various events recur, and, therefore, certain events are taking place on a continuous basis. *Время не возвращается и не повторяется, но правила и принципы.* These are traditions. Upbringing, serving an example, reference elements are basic points for recurring traditions. Traditions form educational values of a person, such as: kindness, morality, mercy, goodness, honesty, fairness, spirituality, generosity, responsibility, pride and dignity, humaneness, succession, and so on and so forth. The form of assessing a tradition lies in the value.

8. These days Kazakhs are neither steppe nomads as they used to be, nor oppressed people, but the nation creating their innovative country. As of now, we cannot help but worry about the detachment of the contemporary youth in terms of the determination of national values. One of the reasons resides in the excessive enthusiasm about the western civilization caused by the time of globalization. When creating our own unique civilization that would be in harmony with its nature, we need to preserve the interlink of traditions based on the national spirituality and national patriotism with the life of new generations. Reviviscence of consciousness and renaissance of traditions in the globalizing environment can form the intellectual generation.

9. In his program article “Course Towards the Future: Modernization of Kazakhstan’s Identity, the Leader of the Nation pays a special attention to the necessity of preserving the inner core of the national identity, national authenticity, national culture, national traditions and customs, and national spirit.

Presently, when Kazakhstan has set the course towards innovative transformations, we have to make efforts to keep our traditional values that have a long history of existence. We have to adapt them to a new environment of the modern world. It is necessary to reconstruct traditions, cleaning them from obsolete elements which impede development, and, thus, form the system of progressive and innovative traditions.

Practical Significance of the Thesis. Theoretical and applied significance of the thesis paper is directly associated to its relevance and scientific novelty. Key concepts of the thesis can be used when developing works on various spiritual and worldview matters, when preparing scientific papers on research and study of the traditional culture of the Kazakh nation, and also when compiling specialized courses on the philosophy of traditions within university programs. Concepts and philosophical considerations contained in the thesis are especially important for raising spirituality, patriotism, and love to the Motherland within young people who live in the ever globalizing world.

Publication and Approbation of the Research Outcomes.

All in all, 10 scientific articles have been published on the thesis subject, of which: 3 articles – in the magazines recommended by the Committee of Control in the field of education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (magazines: Adam Alemi, Al-Farabi Atyndagy KazUU Khabarshysy); 1 article – in the Romanian European Journal of Science and Theology included into the Scopus citation database; 2 articles – in the collection of scientific conferences held in Kazakhstan; and 4 articles – in the collections of scientific conferences held abroad (2 conferences in Ukraine, and 2 in Russia).

Thesis Structure and Volume. The structure of the thesis complies with the goals and objectives of the thesis research. The research paper consists of the introduction, four sections, nine subsections, conclusion, reference sources list, and annexes.