

FORMATION STAGES OF FESTIVE RITUAL ACTION IN THE CULTURAL LIFE OF KAZAKHSTAN

¹A.B. Islambekov, ²M.B.Alikbayeva, ³Nezir Temur

ABSTRACT

This article reviews the basic formation stages of festive ritual action in the cultural life of Kazakhstan. Generations to generations of Kazakh have always revered and highly valued their national customs and traditions. It is difficult to describe all the traditions and customs followed by Kazakh people in one scientific work, thus a brief introduction to stages of festive ritual actions, beliefs and customs are dealt with in this article.

One of the main traditions of the Kazakhs, which has now become a feature of the national character, is hospitality. Hospitality, in Kazakh society, is considered the main duty - to receive guests from the bottom of the heart. The guest is the most important and most desired person in Kazakh society. It is customary to feed him the most delicious food and do everything to make him feel safe and comfortable.

The primary aim of the research is to identify the cultural value of transformed traditions by reviewing the historical background of festive ritual actions. However, the national identities that served as a basis for the occurrence of generalized rules and principles of public relations (tradition), fortunately, are confined not only to representatives of the Kazakh people. Therefore, the basic stages of festive ritual actions formation and widespread authentic customs, and traditions of nomads in the Kazakh steppe are widely studied by authors.

Key words: Tradition, Nomads, Culture, Life, Law, Guest.

^{1,2} Al-Farabi KazNU, Almaty, Kazakhstan

³ Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

Author-correspondent:
M.B. Alikbayeva,
alba_747@mail.ru

Reference to this article:

Islambekov A.B.,
Alikbayeva M.B., Nezir Temur.
Formation Stages of Festive
Ritual Action in the Cultural
Life of Kazakhstan // Adam
alemi. – 2023. – No. 2 (96).
– P. 42-47.

Қазақстан мәдени өміріндегі той мерекелік салт-дәстүрлік әрекеттердің қалыптасу кезеңдері

Аннотация. Бұл мақалада Қазақстанның мәдени өмірінде мерекелік салттық іс-әрекетті қалыптастырудың негізгі кезеңдері қарастырылады. Қазақтар әрқашан өздерінің ұлттық салт-дәстүрлерін ұрпақтан-ұрпаққа жеткізу мақсатында қастерлеп, жоғары бағалады. Қазақ халқы ұстанатын барлық дәстүрлер мен әдет-ғұрыптарды бір ғылыми жұмысқа сыйғызу мүмкін емес, сондықтан да бұл мақалада мерекелік салт-дәстүрлердің, нанымдар мен әдет-ғұрыптардың кезеңдері қарастырылады.

Қазір ұлттық сипатқа ие болған қазақтардың басты дәстүрлерінің бірі - қонақжайлылық. Қазақ қоғамында қонақтарды шын жүректен қабылдау басты міндет болып саналады. Қонақ - қазақ қоғамындағы ең маңызды, сыйлы және құрметке ие адам.

Зерттеудің негізгі мақсаты-мерекелік рәсімдердің тарихи негізін қарастыру арқылы өзгеріске ұшыраған дәстүрлердің мәдени құндылығын анықтау. Алайда, дәстүрдің жалпыланған ережелері мен қағидаттарының пайда болуына негіз болған ұлттық бірегейліктер, бақытымызға орай, тек қазақ халқының өкілдеріне ғана тән емес. Сондықтан авторлар мерекелік салт-дәстүрлерді қалыптастырудың негізгі кезеңдерін және қазақ даласындағы көшпенділердің кең таралған әдет-ғұрыптары мен дәстүрлерін зерттеп, мақалада ашып талқылайды.

Түйін сөздер: дәстүрлер, көшпенділер, мәдениет, өмір, заң, қонақ.

Этапы становления праздничного ритуального действия в культурной жизни Казахстана

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются основные этапы формирования праздничного ритуального действия в культурной жизни Казахстана. Из поколения в поколение казахи всегда почитали и высоко ценили свои национальные обычаи и традиции. Трудно описать все традиции и обычаи, которым придерживается казахский народ, в одной научной работе, поэтому в этой статье рассматривается краткое введение в этапы праздничных ритуальных действий, верований и обычаев.

Одной из главных традиций казахов, которая сейчас стала чертой национального характера, является гостеприимство. Гостеприимство, в казахском обществе, считается главной обязанностью - принимать гостей от всего сердца. Гость - самый важный и желанный человек в казахстанском обществе. Принято кормить его самой вкусной едой и делать все, чтобы он чувствовал себя в безопасности и комфорте.

Основная цель исследования - выявить культурную ценность трансформированных традиций путем рассмотрения исторического фона праздничных ритуальных действий. Однако национальные идентичности, послужившие основой для возникновения обобщенных правил и принципов традиции, к счастью, присущи не только представителям казахского народа. Поэтому авторами изучены основные этапы формирования праздничных ритуальных действий и широко распространенные аутентичные обычаи и традиции кочевников в казахской степи.

Ключевые слова: традиции, кочевники, культура, жизнь, закон, гость.

Introduction

Today, the Republic of Kazakhstan is a developed and prosperous state with a modern Constitution and modern norms of law. Along with the laws, the Kazakh people honour and observe their traditions. Kazakh traditions originate in the depths of centuries, in the customs of nomadic tribes. The Kazakh people take great care of their traditions and skillfully follow them in the modern world. While in one family, young children easily use and master computers and speak English, their grandmothers still wear national outfits and jewellery, so even despite the modern way of life, and widespread digitalization, there is great mutual understanding and love in such families. Traditionally, a child from infancy is taught restraint and integrity when communicating with adults, wise people with life experience.

The development of culture and cultural potential is among the key development priorities of many peoples and States of the world. One of the most important criteria for success is the level of cultural development, the availability of an effective infrastructure of cultural institutions and mechanisms that ensure the preservation and enrichment of national and world cultural heritage, the creation, broadcast and consumption of high-quality cultural values, fruitful cultural

exchange and spiritual and creative self-realization of the individual [1]. "Tradition" is a word from the Iranian-Persian language that once entered the Kazakh language. It is equivalent to the Latin word "tradition", and the Kazakh word "custom". The meaning of these words is uniform – the values, principles, norms, and rules of life passed down from generation to generation, from father to son, that is, the moral, educational, spiritual and humane worldview thoughts, words and actions of the former, used by the latter as their "mother" (Arabic word "Miras") in everyday life. This is where the Kazakh word "ritual" comes from [2]. Consequently, tradition is the transmission of customs and rituals from previous generations, aimed at the spiritual world of a person and acting as a means of reproduction, repetition and consolidation of generally accepted social relations not directly, but through the formation of the moral and spiritual appearance of a person developing in accordance with relations [3].

Nomadic life has created specific forms of folk fun and entertainment performances. For example, the general emotional uplift in people was caused by the upcoming migration from winter quarters to summer quarters. People congratulated each other and invited them to visit, because they had to leave in different directions, and everyone exchanged kind parting words.

The very preparation for the migration (the order of dismantling the yurt, and packing things) was accompanied by certain rituals and songs. The nomadic journey from winter quarters to summer quarters, usually 250-300 kilometres long, was presented as a long journey with short-term stops, during which various games and fun events were arranged. Especially festive was the time when the nomads arrived at the summer camps (zhailau). Carefully observing customs and rituals, people put up yurts. A joyful atmosphere reigned everywhere: it seemed that the very air of the spring steppe was saturated with songs and jokes. There was an exchange of dastarkhans between the yurts, and the steppe dwellers exchanged cheerful jokes. Having settled down by tribal affiliation, people alternately invited each other to visit [4].

Methodology

The extended research is based on sociocultural historical and qualitative methods: Kazakh national cultural traditions are the continuity of the accumulated experience of ancestors, which is necessary for modern Kazakhs for a more efficient life and allows them to make fewer mistakes. Kazakh customs maintain an invisible connection of epochs through the preservation and transmission of the model of social relations and spiritual qualities of Kazakhs. However, Kazakh national traditions are changing under the pressure of modern technologies of life, and this is an objective reality.

Traditional Values in the Kazakh Nomadic Society

The nomadic lifestyle has left its imprint on the spiritual world of the Kazakh steppe, worldview, customs and traditions. Over the long history of the development of Kazakh culture, a rich spiritual heritage has been formed. Like many nomadic peoples, Kazakhs are characterized by the oral transmission of information through myths, legends, epics, and shezhire. The nomads jealously guarded their cultural traditions and practically prevented the influence of

cultures of other ethnic groups, thereby preserving the spiritual basis of the trait, which we can observe nowadays.

The nomads' life was conditioned by difficult living conditions: human adaptation to a harsh climate, changeability of pastures, lack of water sources, threats of enemy attacks, and care for livestock. The difficulties of the nomadic lifestyle also influenced the upbringing of the younger generation.

The Kazakh family had a multi-level structure, usually, people of several generations lived together - grandparents, fathers and mothers, unmarried uncles and aunts, and children. The impact of the elderly on the upbringing of the younger generation in Kazakh society is great. Traditions developed over centuries have been passed down from generation to generation.

The attitude to the child in the Kazakh family is very reverent, and the firstborn got a special position. It is a great joy, a holiday. The Kazakh people, who paid special attention to the upbringing of children, fully preserved their traditions and customs. The traditions and customs associated with the child continue to be passed down from generation to generation to this day. These are *suyunshi*, naming, putting the baby in the cradle, *shildehana*, cutting fetters/*tusau kesu*, circumcision, saddling a horse, seeing off, piercing a girl's ears, etc. Many rituals based on centuries-old experience and ancient beliefs are associated with the birth and upbringing of children. *Shildehana dasturi* – toy (holiday), arranged at the birth of a baby. During the day, friends and relatives come with wishes; they say "*kutty bolsyn* (congratulations)". In the evening, the audience has fun, sings songs, plays the *dombra*, and treats themselves. *Shildehana* is a holiday in honour of the newborn. *Tusau kesu* is cutting the fetters. This ritual is performed when the baby takes the first steps. His legs are tied with a thin colourful cord or rope woven from grass, which is trusted to be cut by an energetic person with many children. The ceremony is accompanied by songs and wishes for the child to stand firmly on his feet, and confidently go through life. The ritual ends

with the toy (a party) [5].

The next customs related to marriage: Kuda tusu, syrga salu, and kuyryk bauyr zhegizu are customs that have come down to our days, have been preserved and are widely spread. The Kazakh people are famous for their hospitality. Kazakhs say "Konak kelse, kut keledi" and have always kept all the most delicious for the guests. It was very important to meet and escort the guest. In the family, almost everyone was courted by a guest, who served him. "Kudayy konak (respected guest)" is a person who stops at any house on the road. He is greeted with special honour, and before leaving he is presented with a special gift.

Wedding traditions in Kazakh society are a huge series of rituals that begin with matchmaking and do not end even after the wedding night. Also, there are a lot of unwritten rules and customs. And naturally, one of the most important events in the life of any Kazakh. In the past, early marriages were often concluded when the girl was 13-14 years old, and the young man was 14-15. There were also unions concluded between families even before the birth of future spouses. Sometimes there were abductions of the bride if her parents were against the wedding.

Today in Kazakh society, some wedding traditions have lost their force due to changes in moral principles, as well as the presence of criminal penalties, for example, for kidnapping a bride. Other customs are being revived from oblivion. But the so-called "Adat" has always been observed in society - a ban on marriage between representatives of the same genus who have a kinship relationship at least up to the seventh generation. Therefore, many Kazakhs know their ancestry up to the seventh ancestor. The "Adat" also includes the rule of age difference: the bride cannot be older than the groom by more than 8 years, and the groom cannot be older than the future spouse by more than 25 years. A wedding is a great exciting event in a human being's life. It bestows the beginning of family life and since the wedding ritual has existed for a long ago, many interesting rituals are associated with it.

So, now let's look through the following customs and wedding traditions of the past time. Agreement between parents - "kyz aittiru". Parents started looking for a bride for their sons long before adulthood. They travelled to villages, got acquainted with worthy families, and learned about the heredity of girls. And if they found a suitable girl, they expressed their desire to become matchmakers to her parents. Sometimes, there was an agreement between good friends to matchmaking future children to each other, and this was called "bel kuda". There were other types of agreement about the future wedding. And there was also an alternative in the form of "kyz koru", where a young man could choose his own future wife, but this was allowed only to the sons of very noble families, and famous heroes.

Matchmaking - "kuda tusu" - the process was not easy, and it took place in several stages. First, the first matchmaker, who was called "zhaushi", came to the girl's father and offered to create an alliance. If he received the consent of the bride's father, he gave a horse, and the girl's father, in turn, put a festive shapan on the matchmaker. The young man's father and close relatives are going to matchmake a girl. In the case of obtaining consent, various rituals and customs related to this tradition are performed. Thus, the boy's father came to the girl's father, and the main matchmaking took place "kuda tusu", when the fathers of the families met directly - they ate together from the same dishes, and exchanged various gifts. And also, at this stage, a kind of wedding contract was already concluded. In the end, there was a third visit of matchmakers, which was called "bata ayak", where all the details of the future wedding were discussed: date, amount of expenses, dowry, and so on. And also, at the end of the matchmaking, the groom's relatives sent a "kalyn mal" - a gift in the form of cattle or horses: for poor families, there was a norm of 5-6 cows, and the rich could send a herd of thousands of horses.

The first meeting is "kynamende", "uryñ kelu" or "kyz kashar"- after all the matchmaking rites, the future groom could visit his future wife for the first time. To do this, he had to send a gift "oli tiri" as a sign

of respect for the bride's family, after which he could come to the village where the girl lived. According to custom, the groom came in the evening when it got dark, allegedly secretly, but the next day there was a general youth fun with dancing and songs, Young people got to know each other, and the girl also gave her lover a handkerchief as a sign of her purity.

Wedding at the bride's house – "uzatu toy". On the appointed day, the so-called "bride's wedding" took place at the bride's house, where she said goodbye to her family. Usually, at least 15-20 the groom's relatives came, and the groom himself was dressed in the best clothes so that everyone would immediately know who he is. At this time, the bride had a "saukele kigizu" ceremony, when the bride's headdress "saukele" was solemnly dressed on her. Everything was being prepared for the departure of the bride to a new family: the bride's dowry was shown, the wedding yurt was dismantled, and all properties were collected. And there were also many small accompanying rituals, which were accompanied by the exchange of gifts. On this day, the girl said goodbye to her parents and relatives. Various equestrian games were held in the village, choral singing was arranged, etc. Here, before the main wedding in the groom's house, the first joint night of young people was held, which was also accompanied by special rituals. The next day, early in the morning, along with the sunrise, the girl was sent with a caravan of dowry to the groom's house, she sang a farewell song "Koshstasy Zhar", and the youth sang "Zhar-Zhar" in response. During the departure, the girl was forbidden to look back at her parents' house.

Wedding at the groom's house – "kelin tusiru". When the caravan with the bride arrived in the village, she was left at some distance from the groom's house so that she would be accompanied by local girls, and everyone would see her. Along the way, the bride was showered with "shashu" - sweets, and coins. The threshold of the house was supposed to be crossed with the right foot, with a bow, so that her "saukele" almost touched the ground. Then the betashar ceremony was held when the bride showed her face in front of all the

guests. The groom's mother kissed her and took off her veil. The veil was cut into many rags, and a vessel for koumiss was tied with them, which was the wish of having many children. After that, a wedding feast was arranged, at the end of which the groom's mother took off her "saukele", and put on a "kasaba" hat, which meant the transition to the status of married women.

The day after the wedding, the wedding ceremony "neke kiyu" was held in the groom's house. The bride and groom and two witnesses came to the mosque and sat down in front of a mullah holding a bowl of water with coins at the bottom of it. The mullah read a prayer, and the bride and groom drank from the cup. This was repeated three times. Then the witnesses drank from the cup and took coins from there. Thus, the bride and groom became husband and wife [6].

At the end of all the main wedding ceremonies, the young wife went to visit all her husband's relatives, carrying gifts with her. There she was tested in every possible way, checking her politeness and upbringing. The young husband went to his father-in-law's house and also brought various gifts. In addition, various rituals were held, contributing to the rapid adaptation of the girl to the new home. The girl could visit her parents' house only a year later.

Conclusion

Modern Kazakhstan is going through a period of national modernization. The process of national-cultural modernization implies a change of cultural paradigm. The revision of previous concepts and the return of forgotten traditions and customs are characteristic features of the cultural life of modern Kazakhstan. If in the past all wedding ceremonies lasted for 3 days (and sometimes more), now all this fits in one day. Some customs and rituals are sometimes skipped. The girls' wedding dresses are similar to the popular white dresses, but the "saukele" remained the main attribute of the bride. Today, the Kazakh wedding has become similar to an ordinary European wedding, but people are trying to preserve the traditions of their ancestors.

The traditions and customs of the Kazakh people passed down from generation to generation, are of great importance in educational terms for future generations. Our task is to promote these traditions and customs, the rituals of our ancestors at our own level, and, without losing meaning, pass them on to future generations.

References

- 1 The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. CONCEPT of cultural policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. – Astana, 2014.
- 2 Aliyev O. Traditions are centuries-old heritage // Sovereign Kazakhstan. – Astana, 2021.
- 3 Кенжеахметұлы С. Қазақтың салт-дәстүрлері мен әдет-ғұрыптары. – Алматы, 1994. - 34 б.
- 4 Сулейменов А. Как развлекались казахи в старину // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://e-history.kz/ru/news/show/32009>. 2020. (the date of referring: 15.02.2023)
- 5 Узақбаева С.А. Халықтық педагогикадағы эстетикалық тәрбие. – Алматы, 1993.
- 6 Wedding Traditions in Kazakhstan // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.advantour.com/kazakhstan/traditions/wedding.htm>. 2023. (the date of referring: 15.02.2023)

com/kazakhstan/traditions/wedding.htm. 2023. (the date of referring: 15.02.2023)

Transliteration

- 1 The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. CONCEPT of cultural policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. – Astana, 2014.
- 2 Aliyev O. Traditions are centuries-old heritage // Sovereign Kazakhstan. – Astana, 2021.
- 3 Kenzheahmetuly S. Qazaqtyn salt-dasturleri men adet-guruptary [Kazakhs traditions and customs]. – Almaty, 1994. - 34 p. (in Kaz)
- 4 Sulejmenov A. Kak razvlekalis kazahi v starinu [How Kazakhs had fun in the old days] // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://e-history.kz/ru/news/show/32009>. 2020. (the date of referring: 15.02.2023) (in Russ)
- 5 Uzaqbaeva S.A. Halyqtyq pedagogikadagy estetikalyk tarbie [Aesthetic education in folk pedagogy]. – Almaty, 1993. (in Kaz)
- 6 Wedding Traditions in Kazakhstan // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.advantour.com/kazakhstan/traditions/wedding.htm>. 2023. (the date of referring: 15.02.2023)

INFORMATION ABOUT AUTHORS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Alibek Islambekov</i> | PhD student, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, email: alba_747@mail.ru , ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6711-6479 |
| <i>Marzhan Alikbayeva</i> | Senior Lecturer, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, email: marzhan.alikbaeva@kaznu.kz , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7228-663X |
| <i>Nezir Temur</i> | Professor, PhD, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey, email: ntemur@gazi.edu.tr , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8052-1927 |
| <i>Әлібек Батырұлы Исламбеков</i> | PhD докторант, Әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан, email: alba_747@mail.ru , ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6711-6479 |
| <i>Маржан Башановна Аликбаева</i> | аға оқытушы, философия ғылымдарының кандидаты, Әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан, email: marzhan.alikbaeva@kaznu.kz , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7228-663X |
| <i>Незир Темур</i> | профессор, PhD, Гази университеті, Анкара, Түркия, email: ntemur@gazi.edu.tr , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8052-1927 |
| <i>Алибек Батырович Исламбеков</i> | PhD докторант, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Алматы, Казахстан, email: alba_747@mail.ru , ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6711-6479 |
| <i>Маржан Башановна Аликбаева</i> | старший преподаватель, кандидат философских наук, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, Алматы, Казахстан, email: marzhan.alikbaeva@kaznu.kz , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7228-663X |
| <i>Незир Темур</i> | профессор, PhD, университет Гази, Анкара, Турция, email: ntemur@gazi.edu.tr , ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8052-1927 |