

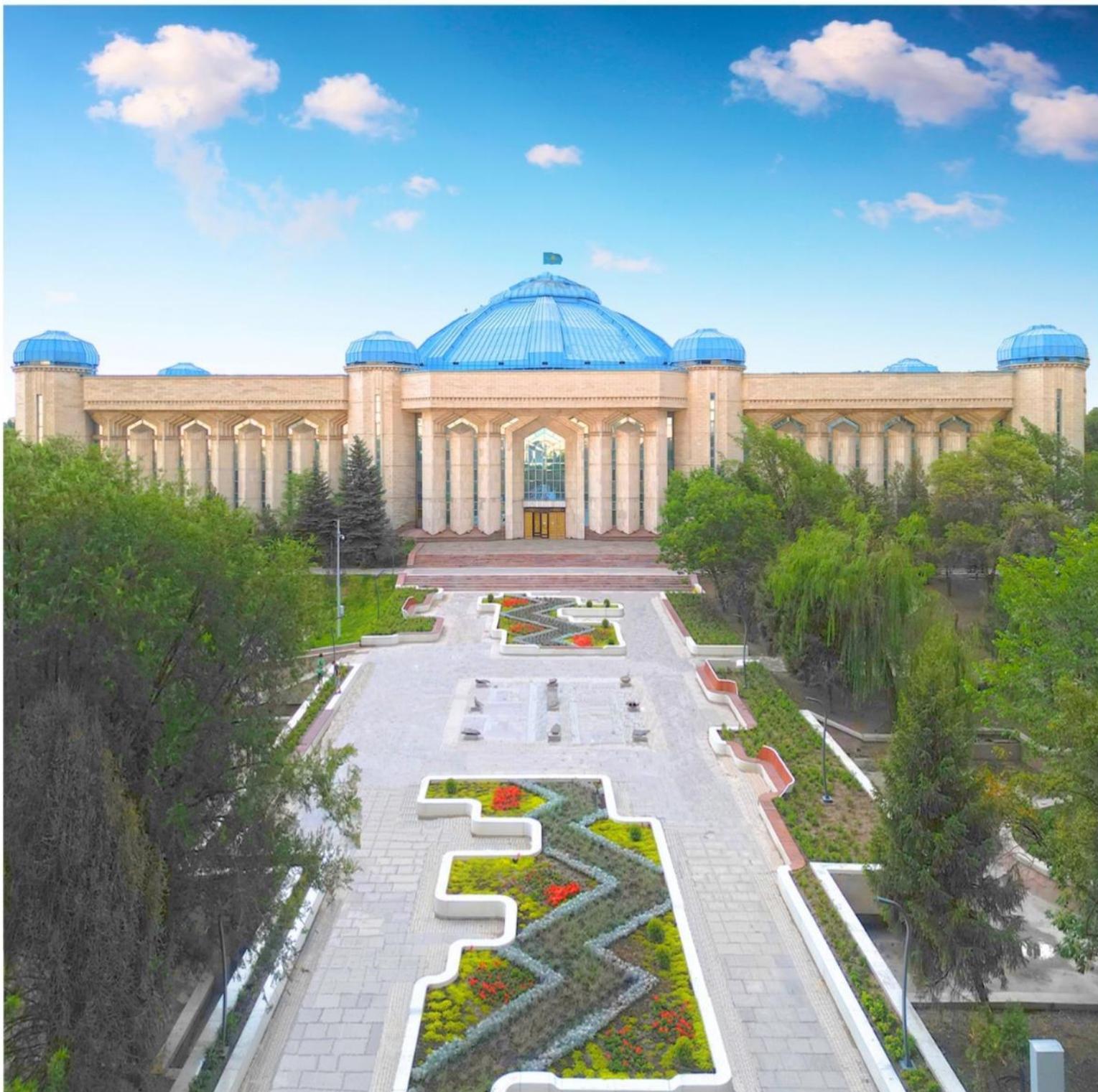
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**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS IN REVIVING FORGOTTEN
KAZAKH TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS***N. Almakhanova, A. Omirbekova*

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Abstract. This article examines Kazakh customs and traditions as a fundamental cultural code that has historically shaped national identity, moral values, and social order. Drawing on ethnographic, historical, philosophical, and religious perspectives, the study explores the structural and functional significance of customs (*adet*), traditions, and rituals in Kazakh society, emphasizing their role in education, intergenerational knowledge transmission, and the formation of national mentality. Particular attention is given to the interaction between Islamic values and pre-Islamic belief systems, demonstrating how their synthesis contributed to the emergence of a distinctive cultural model rooted in moral responsibility, social solidarity, and respect for communal norms. The purpose of this research is to examine the structural and functional foundations of customs and traditions and to determine their role and significance in the formation of national spirituality. The research highlights the evolution of Kazakh traditions from unwritten social laws to cultural practices that continue to inform contemporary identity, despite processes of modernization and globalization. Special focus is placed on the role of museum institutions and ethnographic exhibitions as mediators between past and present, capable of preserving and revitalizing both material and intangible cultural heritage. By contextualizing forgotten or declining traditions within their historical and symbolic frameworks, museums contribute to cultural continuity and youth education.

Research materials and methods. The article is based on a comprehensive range of sources reflecting the historical, ethnographic, and philosophical aspects of Kazakh culture and traditions. The research material includes scientific works on Kazakh ethnography, history, and spiritual culture, including studies by S. Kenzheakhmetuly, A. Zhunisov, and Sh. Ualikhanov, as well as scientific publications devoted to issues of national values, mentality, and the relationship between religion and traditions. Ethnographic descriptions of rituals and customs also played a significant role, including traditions related to family life cycles, social practices, and ceremonial activities that reflect both Islamic influences and pre-Islamic belief systems. Comparative analysis, historical method, regional research approach, and systematic collection and synthesis of materials. A phenomenological analysis of this structure allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which traditions contribute to the construction and preservation of national spiritual identity.

Key words: Kazakh traditions, customs, ethnography, intangible cultural heritage, national mentality, intergenerational knowledge, moral education, museum exhibitions, cultural preservation, heritage revitalization.

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ҰМЫТЫЛҒАН ҚАЗАҚ ДӘСТҮРЛЕРІ МЕН ӘДЕТ-ҒҰРЫПТАРЫН ЖАҢҒЫРТУДАҒЫ МУЗЕЙ ЭКСПОЗИЦИЯЛАРЫНЫҢ МАҢЫЗЫ

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Аңдатпа. Мақалада қазақтың салт-дәстүрлері ұлттық бірегейлікті, моральдық құндылықтарды және қоғамдық тәртіпті тарихи тұрғыдан қалыптастырған негізгі мәдени код ретінде қарастырылады. Этнографиялық, тарихи, философиялық және діни көзқарастарға сүйене отырып, зерттеу қазақ қоғамындағы әдет-ғұрыптардың (әдет), дәстүрлер мен рәсімдердің құрылымдық және функционалдық маңызын талдайды. Сонымен қатар олардың тәрбиелік мәніне, ұрпақтан-ұрпаққа білім жеткізуге және ұлттық менталитетті қалыптастырудағы рөліне ерекше назар аударылады. Исламдық құндылықтар мен исламға дейінгі наным-сенімдердің өзара ықпалы да қарастырылып, олардың синтезі моральдық жауапкершілікке, әлеуметтік ынтымақтастыққа және қоғамдық нормаларды құрметтеуге негізделген ерекше мәдени үлгінің қалыптасуына ықпал еткені көрсетіледі. Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты – әдет-ғұрыптар мен дәстүрлердің құрылымдық және функционалдық негіздерін қарастыру және олардың ұлттық руханияттың қалыптасуындағы рөлі мен маңызын анықтау. Зерттеуде қазақ дәстүрлерінің жазылмаған қоғамдық заңдардан бастап, қазіргі заманғы модернизация мен жаһандану үдерістеріне қарамастан ұлттық болмысты қалыптастыруды жалғастырып отырған мәдени тәжірибелерге дейінгі эволюциясы сипатталған. Сондай-ақ музей мекемелері мен этнографиялық көрмелердің өткен мен бүгіннің арасындағы байланыстырушы рөліне ерекше назар аударылады. Олар материалдық және материалдық емес мәдени мұраны сақтап, жаңғыртуға мүмкіндік береді. Ұмыт қалған немесе қолданыстан шығып бара жатқан дәстүрлерді тарихи және символдық тұрғыдан түсіндіру арқылы музейлер мәдени сабақтастықты сақтауға және жастарды тәрбиелеуге ықпал етеді.

Зерттеу материалдары және әдістері. Мақала қазақ мәдениеті мен дәстүрлерінің тарихи, этнографиялық және философиялық қырларын қамтитын кең ауқымды дереккөздерге негізделген. Зерттеу материалын қазақ этнографиясы, тарихы және рухани мәдениеті бойынша ғылыми еңбектер, соның ішінде С. Кенжеахметұлы, А. Жүнісов және Ш. Уәлихановтың зерттеулері, сондай-ақ ұлттық құндылықтар, менталитет және дін мен дәстүрдің өзара байланысы мәселелерін қарастыратын академиялық жарияланымдар құрайды. Зерттеуде салт-жоралғылар мен әдет-ғұрыптардың этнографиялық сипаттамалары маңызды орын алды, оның ішінде отбасылық-тұрмыстық циклге қатысты дәстүрлер, әлеуметтік тәжірибелер және исламдық ықпалдар мен исламға дейінгі сенімдерді қатар бейнелейтін рәсімдер қарастырылды. Мақалада салыстырмалы талдау, тарихи әдіс, аймақтық зерттеу тәсілі, сондай-ақ материалдарды жүйелі жинақтау және синтездеу әдістері қолданылды. Осы құрылымды феноменологиялық талдау дәстүрлердің ұлттық рухани бірегейлікті қалыптастыру мен сақтаудағы механизмдерін тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді.

Тірек сөздер: қазақ дәстүрлері, әдет-ғұрыптар, этнография, материалдық емес мәдени мұра, ұлттық менталитет, ұрпақ аралық білім беру, адамгершілік тәрбиесі, музей көрмелері, мәдени мұраны сақтау, мұраны жаңғырту.

Сілтеме жасау үшін: Алмаханова Н., Өмірбекова А. Ұмытылған қазақ дәстүрлері мен әдет-ғұрыптарын жаңғыртудағы музей экспозицияларының маңызы // MUSEUM.KZ. 2026. №1 (13), 95-103 бб. DOI 10.59103/muzkz.2026.13.11

ЗНАЧЕНИЕ МУЗЕЙНЫХ ЭКСПОЗИЦИЙ В ВОЗРОЖДЕНИИ ЗАБЫТЫХ КАЗАХСКИХ ТРАДИЦИЙ И ОБЫЧАЕВ

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются казахские обычаи и традиции как фундаментальный культурный код, который исторически формировал национальную идентичность, нравственные ценности и общественный порядок. Опираясь на этнографические, исторические, философские и религиозные подходы, исследование анализирует структурное и функциональное значение обычаев (әдет), традиций и ритуалов в казахском обществе, подчеркивая их роль в воспитании, передаче знаний между поколениями и формировании национального менталитета. Особое внимание уделяется взаимодействию исламских ценностей и доисламских верований, показывая, как их синтез способствовал формированию уникальной культурной модели, основанной на нравственной ответственности, социальной солидарности и уважении к общественным нормам. Цель данного исследования – рассмотреть структурные и функциональные основы обычаев и традиций и определить их роль и значение в формировании национальной духовности. В исследовании также рассматривается эволюция казахских традиций – от неписаных социальных законов до культурных практик, продолжающих формировать современную идентичность, несмотря на процессы модернизации и глобализации. Особый акцент сделан на роли музейных институтов и этнографических экспозиций как посредников между прошлым и настоящим, способных сохранять и возрождать материальное и нематериальное культурное наследие. Помещая забытые или утрачивающие актуальность традиции в их исторический и символический контекст, музеи способствуют культурной преемственности и воспитанию молодежи.

Материалы и методы исследования. Статья основано на широком комплексе источников, отражающих исторические, этнографические и философские аспекты казахской культуры и традиций. Исследовательский материал включает научные работы по казахской этнографии, истории и духовной культуре, в том числе исследования С. Кенжеахметулы, А. Жунисова и Ш. Уалиханова, а также научные публикации, посвященные вопросам национальных ценностей, менталитета и взаимосвязи религии и традиций. Существенную роль сыграли этнографические описания обрядов и обычаев, включая традиции семейно-бытового цикла, социальные практики и ритуальные действия, отражающие как исламское влияние, так и доисламские верования. В статье использованы сравнительный анализ, исторический метод, региональный исследовательский подход, а также методы систематического сбора и синтез материалов. Феноменологический анализ данной структуры позволяет глубже понять механизмы, посредством которых традиции способствуют формированию и сохранению национальной духовной идентичности.

Ключевые слова: казахские традиции, обычаи, этнография, нематериальное культурное наследие, национальный менталитет, межпоколенческая передача знаний, нравственное воспитание, музейные экспозиции, сохранение культуры, возрождение наследия.

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Introduction. Every people possesses its own distinctive way of life, means of subsistence, customs, and traditions. All of these emerge and develop together with the people themselves, closely accompanying their historical evolution. As social life and economic conditions progress and transform, the everyday life, customs, traditions, collective consciousness, worldview, and

mentality of a people also undergo change. Practices that once emerged in a particular historical period and were gradually formed into stable, systematic patterns over a long time may begin to lose their original content. In their place, new forms and meanings arise that correspond to changing social and class-based demands. Thus, social and economic conditions and their development inevitably influence long-established ways of life, customs, and traditions, contributing both to their transformation into new forms and to the gradual loss of their former functions. The ethnic characteristics of the Kazakh nation are manifested through participation in a shared linguistic and cultural community, particularly in various elements of traditional and everyday culture [Abdrasheva, 2007] The Kazakh ethnos is characterized by the commonality of fundamental elements of material and spiritual culture, daily life, customs and traditions, and modes of production. Like other nomadic peoples, the Kazakh ethnos is distinguished by a strong tradition of intergenerational transmission of information. In this context, epic genres-such as numerous legends, folktales, *terme*, epic poetry, genealogies (*shezhire*), and other oral forms-play a particularly significant role.

One of the defining cultural features of the Kazakh ethnos at the level of family and social organization is exogamy. Marriages within one generation, one family, close kinship groups, and up to seven generations were strictly prohibited, reflecting a deep-rooted taboo against incest. Another distinctive characteristic that sets the Kazakh ethnos apart from other ethnic groups is its complex interethnic and hierarchical social structure, which permeated the entire social organism from top to bottom. Each tribe was divided into several hierarchically organized ethnic groups, as well as smaller units united by intricate systems of social relations.

At the same time, the Kazakh family, as the smallest unit of tribal society, fulfilled an essential social function: educating the younger generation in respect for traditions, moral norms, and behavioral principles, and reinforcing these values in their consciousness. Respect for ancestors and adherence to their traditions were intrinsic qualities cultivated within the family. According to tradition, it is impossible to imagine a Kazakh family without an *aksakal* (elder), who served as the main guardian and moral foundation of spiritual values. The *aksakal* was believed to be closer to the world of past generations and ancestors, and therefore enjoyed exceptional respect. As a wise and experienced figure, the *aksakal* represented not only an ideal leader among the Kazakhs but also among other Eastern peoples, embodying a model personality and serving as a bearer and transmitter of the collective ethnic ideal.

Discussion and results. Customs and traditions constitute a complex of practices that have been accumulated over centuries in accordance with each nation's religion and beliefs, way of life, and specific features of national social organization; they represent patterns of behavior established within a community and society. In everyday usage, they function as accepted norms of conduct that distinguish one cultural group from another and regulate social behavior informally, serving as mechanisms for ordering social actions. For a nation, customs and traditions have historically been grounded as laws of life and society, forming spiritual wealth in the collective consciousness as sources of moral guidance, education, upbringing, and rules of existence. Alongside strict observance of these requirements and norms, society also imposed sanctions, based on these same principles, on those who failed to respect or uphold them. In traditional Kazakh society, customs and traditions functioned as an unquestionable social law.

For example, wedding rituals, *Nauryz kozhe*, bridal farewell ceremonies, hospitality feasts (*konagasy*), *shashu*, and the custom of *erulik* are regarded as established traditions. Customs and traditions possess significant didactic, educational, and communal value. Through tradition, one can observe the historical continuity and development of a people's social relations, culture of daily life, professional practices, moral norms, behavioral patterns, systems of upbringing, and spiritual activities passed down from generation to generation [Kenjeakhmetuly, 1994] The richness of customs and traditions reflects the richness of culture itself. In social relations, *adet* (custom) refers to processes that standardize rituals and procedural practices associated with everyday life and

traditional observances, integrating norms, requirements, and conditions performed within the framework of national consciousness. Closely associated with the concept of ritual (*ghuryyp*), this phenomenon is often expressed in a more complex conceptual form as customs and rituals (*adet-ghuryyp*). Over many centuries, although the form of certain customs may change, their core content remains constant. At the same time, cultural phenomena introduced from outside a given ethnic group-originating in other peoples and societies-may gradually become habitual and assimilated into the existing system of customs. Traditions may arise both externally and internally within a nation, appearing initially as individual normative practices that remain in use over three or four generations. As they come into harmony with national consciousness and aesthetic sensibilities, they are gradually culturally and socially appropriated, entering the broader conceptual domain of tradition and becoming firmly established. In this sense, traditions correspond to the nation's inherent spiritual-cultural and socio-practical essence. Spiritual values encompass humanity's accumulated knowledge, worldview principles, philosophical concepts, moral norms, and political understanding-that is, all elements associated with the spiritual achievements of civilization. The significance of spiritual values can be realized by each individual as a social subject through personal cultivation. Spirituality itself represents the measure of benevolence, morality, compassion, and kindness within an individual, manifesting as the conceptual understanding of personal existence. In other words, it reflects each person's formation, development, life goals, and chosen way of living. Customs and traditions constitute a complex, deeply rooted structure formed over centuries, enriched during each historical era and supplemented in response to the demands and conditions of modernity [Valikhanov, 1985] In this regard, the observation by Sh. Valikhanov-who noted that it is extremely difficult to determine which legends originated in ancient times, which religious concepts they stem from, and under whose influence they evolved due to the existence of contradictory interpretations-aptly reflects the complexity of identifying the evolutionary structure of customs and traditions.

In the life of the Kazakh people, customs and traditions have always occupied a special place. Scholars emphasize that since the formation of Kazakh society as a nation, two elements have been treated with particular care: language and customs. This perspective further confirms that these structures represent vital existential and worldview values. Mentality can be observed through the behavioral patterns, everyday life, and historical-cultural worldview that characterize the spiritual essence of an ethnos. The ethnic definition of mentality (from the Latin *mens*, meaning mode of thinking or a particular spiritual disposition of the mind) does not pertain to a single individual but rather represents a system of psychological and axiological orientations inherent to the collective consciousness of an entire people. National mentality not only provides spiritual strength and resilience in everyday life but also enables individuals to perceive complex phenomena by placing trust in their surrounding environment, while remaining attentive to aspects that transcend the visible, routine world. In this context, the preservation, interpretation, and exhibition of customs and traditions-particularly within museum spaces-serve as essential mechanisms for sustaining national mentality and reviving the traditional cultural code in contemporary society.

Today, although the names of certain customs and traditions have changed, there are regions where their essence has been preserved without distortion. In particular, in the western and southern regions of Kazakhstan, Kazakh customs and traditions continue to be practiced in everyday life without abandonment. Among the traditions that have been preserved are *at tuldau* (ritual marking of a deceased horse), kneeling to ask forgiveness, *aksarbas* vows, *aunatu* (ritual rolling of a child), giving *baigazy* (a gift for a new possession), tying the threshold (*bosaga bailau*), allocating inheritance shares (*enshi beru*), welcoming new neighbors (*erulik beru*), collecting aid (*zhylu zhynau*), expressing a ritual request (*kalau aitu*), and sealing the cauldron (*kazan shegeleu*).

While some traditions remain widely practiced among the people (such as *aidar tagu*, *konak kade*, *bastangy*, and others), many others are gradually being forgotten. In particular, there are numerous customs unfamiliar to today's youth. The traditions inherited from our ancestors were

always applied for benevolent and constructive purposes. Therefore, knowing them and, when appropriate, implementing them in everyday life remains both meaningful and valuable. For example, the custom known as «*Biz shanyshar*» clearly reflects the Kazakh people's care for children and the deliberate steps taken to secure their future.

Biz Shanyshar (The Awl-Sticking Custom) In earlier times, Kazakhs hosted guests without expecting any payment. For this purpose, they prepared special guest dwellings, kitchens for cooking meals, attendants, and even transport in advance. Failure to properly host a guest could result in public reproach or even fines. For instance, if meat was served without removing the sinew or glands, the host was required to compensate the guest. One of these complimentary meals was lunch (*tüstik as*). In summer, Kazakhs ate lunch when the shadow of a stick disappeared and the sun stood directly overhead. Travelers who arrived at this time would sit with the host, drink tea, eat, and then continue on their journey without staying overnight. However, those who came for «*biz shanyshar*» behaved differently: they refrained from conversation, placed their saddles together in one spot, and did not depart after lunch. In such cases, the host slaughtered livestock specifically for the guests. The visitors would then leave silently the following day around midday. Typically, elderly men arrived as such guests. After their departure, the household members would immediately understand the unspoken message. They would beat out the felt carpet (*syrmak*) and search for the whetstone. Upon finding an awl (*biz*) stuck into the carpet and discovering the whetstone missing, the meaning became clear. This symbolic act conveyed the message: «Our son has come of age, your daughter has reached maturity. We have a worthy son; you have a beautiful daughter. Let us become in-laws.» If the household with a daughter did not request the return of the whetstone, the elderly men would later return to formally propose marriage [Nurmuratov & Sagiqyzy, 2006]. In general, the whetstone is a tool associated with men, while the needle belongs to women. The whetstone is used for sharpening, while the needle is used for embroidery and clothing. By sticking an awl into the felt carpet, the elders symbolically indicated the presence of a son in their household and expressed the wish for kinship. Taking the whetstone signified a proposal for marital alliance.

«After religion, the most powerful instrument of the Kazakh people is their customs and traditions» states Alikhan Bukeikhanov. Indeed, beginning from the era of the Türgesh Khaganate and later the Karakhanid State, virtually all aspects of Kazakh life-everyday practices, traditions and customs, ritual behavior, and even patterns of speech-began to take shape within the framework of Islamic law (Sharia). The legal codes known as *Zhargý* (including the *Zheti Zhargy*), compiled during the reigns of Esim Khan, Kasym Khan, and Tauke Khan, were likewise grounded in the Qur'an and the Hadith Throughout its history, the Kazakh people have endured innumerable hardships. They waded through floodwaters in heavy boots, endured bloodshed and suffering, and repeatedly faced the harsh winds of adversity. They crossed deserts in despair and passed through fire in agony; yet, each time they fell face down upon the earth, they rose again with the help of God. For this reason, the ancestors upheld the belief that «God's word is sacred» remaining steadfast in worship, prioritizing divine approval, comforting the grieving, and supporting those in distress. They shared both their wisdom and material sustenance without hesitation. The Kazakh people have long been united in assisting the defenseless and protecting the vulnerable, acting collectively and decisively in the pursuit of benevolence. This, indeed, represents the true character of a Muslim.

Regrettably, values such as respect for neighbors, faithfulness to entrusted responsibilities, and loyalty to one's word-values that are increasingly eroding today-were regarded by earlier nomadic generations as divine commandments and formed the foundation of their moral code [Orazbekova, 1993]. The saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), «One who is not trustworthy has no faith; one who does not keep his promise has no religion» was rendered in Kazakh proverbial wisdom as «there is no betrayal of a trust» and «a man's promise is his honor». In this way, hypocrisy and duplicity were firmly rejected. If one traces the origins of Kazakh

customs and traditions, one inevitably arrives at Islam. Alongside adherence to what Islam commands and avoidance of what it prohibits, many instructive traditions emerged, shaped through the application of Qur'anic verses, Hadith, and Sunnah practices in response to diverse social circumstances.

The laws referenced here are those of the *Zheti Zhargy*. Building upon the five-section *Zhargy* applied under Kasym and Esim Khans, Tauke Khan expanded the code by adding two further sections, forming the comprehensive *Zheti Zhargy*. Kenjeakhmetuly presents this material under the title «Steppe Laws» on page 84 of his book *Kazakh Customs and Traditions*. The *Zheti Zhargy* was adopted toward the end of the seventeenth century through the collective participation of Tauke Khan, Anet Baba, Khozhabergen Zhyrau, and the renowned biys Tole, Kazybek, and Aiteke, and it has survived to the present day as a valuable cultural and legal heritage. The frequent presence of provisions aligned with Sharia within this legal code serves as clear evidence of the extent to which the authors relied on the Qur'an and Hadith and demonstrates their deep understanding of Islam.

There exists a clear continuity and harmony between Islamic values and Kazakh customs and traditions, both of which retain great significance today. This is because the primary source of ancestral Kazakh customs and practices is Islam. In particular, the Sunnah and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) became embedded as customary practices and occupied a central place in Kazakh culture [Religion and Tradition, 2013]. Nevertheless, it would be an overstatement to claim that all ancient traditions fully correspond to Islamic Sharia. Some customs originate from pre-Islamic Tengrist beliefs and have retained their symbolic value to this day. Harmonizing such practices with Islamic norms remains a complex issue, as certain elements do not fully align with Islamic doctrinal boundaries. Islam began to spread into the territory of present-day Kazakhstan in the early seventh century as a result of Arab expansion into Central Asia. Despite this, several pre-Islamic customs have continued to survive. For instance, in Kazakh social life, long-standing matrimonial traditions such as *besik kuda* (cradle betrothal), *kalyn toleu* (bride price), and *amengerlik* (levirate marriage) have persisted. Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions in family and kinship relations formed an integral part of believers' everyday lives. Funeral rites, memorial ceremonies, weddings, and circumcision rituals were widely practiced. In southern regions of Kazakhstan, where Islam became particularly influential, the celebrations of *Qurban Ait* and *Oraza Ait* assumed special prominence. Many pre-Islamic customs and rituals—such as *tasattyk*, *besik kuda*, *karsy kuda*, *süiiek zhangyrtu*, bride abduction, and the payment of bride price—became widespread and were often perceived by some Kazakhs as Islamic traditions. The intersection of such practices with Islamic principles can be illustrated by the example of *tasattyk*, a sacrificial ritual performed during times of drought. The tradition of invoking rain is rooted in ancient Turkic beliefs associated with sacred stones, known historically as *jede*, *tash*, *yada*, *ede*, *suu tash*, or *zhai tash*, concepts that remained prevalent from the early Middle Ages until the late nineteenth century. Today, this practice continues in rural areas, where farmers invite local imams to conduct *tasattyk* rituals during periods of drought and crop failure.

For centuries, the Kazakh people have preserved and protected universal human values. Therefore, the high spiritual level at which Islam has been embraced and promoted within Kazakh society is not surprising. Such values were transmitted through poetry, narratives, proverbs, and, most importantly, through customs and traditions. In this context, the documentation, interpretation, and presentation of these traditions—particularly within museum and ethnographic spaces—play a crucial role in safeguarding the continuity of Kazakhstan's spiritual and cultural heritage. In the context of rapid globalization and cultural transformation, museum institutions have emerged as one of the most effective platforms for preserving, interpreting, and revitalizing traditional cultural codes [Valikhanov, 1985]. For Kazakh society, where customs and traditions historically functioned as unwritten law, moral compass, and social regulator, museums serve not merely as repositories of material artifacts but as spaces of cultural memory and identity reconstruction. Through

ethnographic collections, ritual objects, oral histories, and multimedia narratives, museums translate intangible heritage-customs, beliefs, and social practices-into tangible forms accessible to contemporary audiences.

Museum exhibitions play a crucial mediating role between past and present by contextualizing traditional practices within their historical, religious, and social frameworks. As demonstrated in the preceding discussion, Kazakh customs and traditions are deeply rooted in both Islamic values and pre-Islamic belief systems, forming a complex and multilayered cultural structure. Exhibitions that accurately reflect this syncretism allow visitors to understand traditions not as static relics, but as dynamic systems that evolved in response to social, environmental, and spiritual needs. In this sense, museums contribute to the deconstruction of superficial or folklorized perceptions of tradition and promote a more nuanced academic understanding. Particularly important is the educational function of museum exhibitions for younger generations, many of whom are unfamiliar with lesser-known customs such as *biz shanyshar*, *tasattyk*, or traditional mechanisms of social responsibility and ethical conduct. By presenting these traditions through interactive displays, reconstructed ritual scenes, and explanatory narratives, museums facilitate intergenerational knowledge transmission-historically achieved through oral tradition-within a modern institutional framework. This process not only revives forgotten practices but also reinforces values such as trust, communal solidarity, respect for elders, and moral accountability, which remain socially relevant today.

Furthermore, museum exhibitions contribute to the reinterpretation of traditions in contemporary cultural discourse. Rather than advocating the uncritical restoration of all past practices, museums provide a reflective space where traditions can be evaluated, contextualized, and reimagined in accordance with present-day ethical, legal, and social norms. This approach aligns with academic perspectives that view tradition as a living cultural phenomenon rather than a fixed historical construct. As such, museums function as active cultural agents, ensuring continuity while enabling adaptive transformation. The integration of ethnographic research, historical analysis, and exhibition practice positions museums at the forefront of efforts to revive and sustain Kazakh traditional culture. By safeguarding both material and intangible heritage, museums play a vital role in preserving national identity, strengthening cultural self-awareness, and transmitting the traditional cultural code of the Kazakh people to future generations.

Conclusion. The Kazakh people are among those who have historically attached profound importance to child upbringing and, more broadly, to the moral formation of the individual, having developed effective principles and normative frameworks for education and socialization. An examination of national spirituality reveals that Kazakh philosophy and culture possess a rich potential for transmission to future generations. In analyzing national mentality, this study has addressed religion, language, customs and traditions, social structures, as well as philosophical and psychological dimensions [Zhunisov, 1992]. Despite the passage of centuries, the spiritual unity of the nation, grounded in historical continuity, has retained its value and continues to be actively examined in contemporary scholarship. The movement of essential national values toward universal human ideals within Kazakh culture originates primarily from deeply rooted moral principles. The centuries-long history created by the Kazakh people represents an invaluable treasure for present and future generations. This heritage is particularly precious due to its embodiment of faith, moral instruction, customs, and traditions. As inheritors of this educational and spiritual legacy, it is incumbent upon us to engage critically with it, to comprehend its inner meanings, and to transmit those elements that remain relevant and instructive for the upbringing of today's youth. Young people must not only be informed about their past but also be capable of interpreting it through the lens of contemporary realities and integrating it into their own cultural identity. It is evident that a people who lose their language, religion, and traditions face the risk of cultural dissolution. The traditions discussed in this study represent only a small portion of the vast cultural heritage that demonstrates the nobility, wisdom, and foresight of the Kazakh people. Numerous sacred customs,

rituals, and social practices that reflect national dignity and ethical refinement remain insufficiently studied or have fallen out of practice. The revival and reintegration of forgotten traditions lie within our collective responsibility. Rather than perceiving traditions as remnants of the past, they should be regarded as living witnesses of ancestral knowledge and experience.

In this context, museum institutions and ethnographic research play a decisive role in preserving, interpreting, and revitalizing traditional culture. By transforming intangible heritage into accessible educational and cultural narratives, museums serve as essential instruments for intergenerational transmission. Ultimately, customs and traditions function as powerful tools of moral education, shaping values, identity, and continuity within society. Their preservation and reinterpretation are therefore not acts of nostalgia, but necessary conditions for sustaining national identity and cultural resilience in the modern world.

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