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## TRADITIONS OF THE KAZAKHS ASSOCIATED WITH A PREGNANT WOMAN, CHILDBIRTH AND UPBRINGING (COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH SOME OTHER TURKIC PEOPLES)

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**Abstract.** The article uses data collected by the author from all over the country. Based on the available data and were divided the Kazakh system of rituals associated with a pregnant woman, her childbirth and upbringing into three main stages: prenatal rites; childbirth customs; postnatal customs. The study revealed that the customs of the Kazakh people are connected with the customs of neighboring peoples, including the Turkic-speaking peoples of Siberia and Central Asia. In addition to the origin of these customs, their semantic meaning was analyzed.

The analysis of customs related to a pregnant woman, given in the article, makes it possible to identify the criteria that influenced and influence the position of a woman in the family and society, raising or lowering her status.

**Materials and methods.** In ethnographic studies, information about Kazakh customs related to childbirth is extremely rare, so the article materials are based on the authentic personal experiences of the author.

The main principles of the study were differentiated using some methods such: comparative-historical method: customs were studied depending on certain features (the time and place of the custom, the composition and number of participants, the main custom actions, the objects used in the custom, the meaning of the custom), and on the basis of them, common and special features were determined in the historical sequence. Also, the method of regularity: to consider the custom as the main component of the traditional worldview and system of life forms.

In the course of the research, approaches of observation and communication, widely used in the world sociological and ethnological sciences, were also used. The analysis of the traditions of the Kazakh people related to the birth of children by comparing them with the customs of the peoples of Siberia and Central Asia contributed to the differentiation of their genetic and cultural commonality. In the differentiation of the topic from a new point of view, the principles of objective and critical analysis and critical study developed at the present stage were the main ones. Problem-chronological, comparative-historical approaches were also used. In particular, the systematization of comparative data served as the basis for determining the relationship of an ethnographic group with an ethnically related group and the consequences of its influence.

**Key words:** Kazakhs, child, customs, traditions, food, birth.

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## ҚАЗАҚТЫҢ БАЛА КӨТЕРУ, БОСАНУ ЖӘНЕ БАЛА ТӘРБИЕСІНЕ БАЙЛАНЫСТЫ ДӘСТҮРЛЕРІ (ӨЗГЕ ТҮРКІ ХАЛЫҚТАРЫ ДӘСТҮРЛЕРІМЕН САЛЫСТЫРУ АРҚЫЛЫ ТАЛДАУ)

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**Андатпа.** Жұмыста көрсетілген этнорафиялық деректер еліміздің барлық аймағынан жинақталды. Қолданылған деректер негізінде қазақ халқының дәстүрлері жүйе болып жіктелді, ол әйелдің бала көтеруі, босануы мен бала тәрбиесіне байланысты үш негізгі кезеңді қамтиды: босануға дейінгі дәстүр, босану кезіндегі дәстүр, босанғаннан кейінгі дәстүр. Зерттеу барысында қазақ халқына тән бұл дәстүр көрші елдердің, атап айтқанда, Сібір мен Орта Азия аймағындағы

түркі тілдес халықтарының дәстүріне ұқсайтыны анықталды. Аталған дәстүрлердің пайда болуымен қатар, семантикалық мазмұнына талдау жүргізілді.

Мақаладағы жүкті әйелге қатысты дәстүрге жүргізілген сараптау жұмысы оның отбасындағы, қоғамдағы жағдайына тікелей ықпал еткенін және ықпал ететінін, дәрежесін көтеріп немесе деңгейін түсіретіні туралы сыни тұрғыдан талдау жасауға мүмкіндік береді.

**Материалдар мен зерттеу әдістері.** Этнографиялық зерттеулерде босануға байланысты қазақтың әдет-ғұрыптары туралы мәліметтер өте сирек кездеседі, сондықтан мақала материалдары автордың жеке тәжірибесіне негізделген.

Зерттеудің негізгі принциптері болып салыстырмалы тарихи әдіс қолданылды: әдет-ғұрыптар белгілі бір белгілерге байланысты зерттелді (әдет-ғұрыптың уақыты мен орны, қатысушылардың құрамы мен саны, әдет-ғұрыптың негізгі әрекеттері, әдет-ғұрыпта қолданылатын заттар, әдет-ғұрыптың мәні) және олардың негізінде тарихи дәйектілікте жалпы және ерекше белгілер анықталды. Сонымен қатар заңдылық әдісі: әдет-ғұрыпты дәстүрлі дүниетаным мен өмір формалары жүйесінің негізгі құрамдас бөлігі ретінде қарастыру.

Жұмыс барысында әлемдік социологиялық және этнологиялық ғылымдарда кеңінен қолданылатын бақылау және қарым-қатынас тәсілі қолданылды. Сібір мен Орталық Азия халықтарының салт-дәстүрлерімен салыстыру арқылы қазақ халқының бала тууына байланысты салт-дәстүрлерін талдау олардың генетикалық және мәдени ортақтығын ажыратуға ықпал етті. Тақырыпты жаңа көзқараспен саралауда қазіргі кезеңде дамыған объективті-сыни талдау және сыни зерттеу принциптері негізгілері болды. Проблемалық-хронологиялық, Салыстырмалы-тарихи тәсілдер де қолданылды. Атап айтқанда, салыстырмалы деректерді жүйелеу этнографиялық топтың этникалық туыстық топпен қарым-қатынасын және оның ықпалының салдарын анықтауға негіз болды.

**Тірек сөздер:** қазақтар, бала, салт, дәстүр, ас, босану.

**Сілтеме жасау үшін:** Тынайқұлова М.Е. Қазақтың бала көтеру, босану және бала тәрбиесіне байланысты дәстүрлері (өзге түркі халықтары дәстүрлерімен салыстыру арқылы талдау) // MUSEUM.KZ. 2023. №1 (1), pp. 112-123. DOI 10.59103/muzkz.2023.01.10

## ТРАДИЦИИ КАЗАХОВ, СВЯЗАННЫЕ С БЕРЕМЕННОСТЬЮ, РОДАМИ И ВОСПИТАНИЕМ ДЕТЕЙ (СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ С ОБЫЧАЯМИ ДРУГИХ ТЮРКСКИХ НАРОДОВ)

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**Аннотация.** В работе использованы этнографические материалы, собранные по всей стране. На основе имеющихся материалов и были разделены казахская система обрядов, связанных с беременной женщиной, ее родами и воспитанием на три основных этапа: предродовые обряды; родовые обычаи; послеродовые обычаи. В ходе исследования выяснилось, что обычаи казахского народа связаны с обычаями соседних народов, в том числе тюркоязычных народов Сибири и Центральной Азии. При этом помимо возникновения этих обычаев, было проанализировано их семантическое значение.

Анализ обычаев, связанных с беременной женщиной, приведенный в статье, позволяет выявить критерии, которые влияли и влияют на положение женщины в семье и обществе, повышают или понижают ее статус.

**Материалы и методы исследования.** В этнографических исследованиях сведения о казахских обычаях, связанных с родами, крайне редки, поэтому материалы статьи основаны на личном опыте автора.

Основные принципы исследования были дифференцированы с помощью сравнительно-исторического метода: обычаи изучались в зависимости от определенных признаков (время и

место проведения обычая, состав и количество участников, основные действия обычая, предметы, используемые в обычае, смысл обычая), и на их основе определялись общие и особенные черты в исторической последовательности. Помимо этого использовался метод закономерности: рассмотреть обычай как основной компонент традиционного мировоззрения и системы форм жизни.

В ходе работы также использовались наблюдения и общения, широко применяемые в мировых социологических и этнологических науках. Анализ традиций казахского народа, связанных с рождением детей, путем сравнения их с обычаями народов Сибири и Центральной Азии способствовал выделению их генетической и культурной общности. В дифференциации темы с новой точки зрения основными были разработанные на современном этапе принципы объективно-критического анализа и критического исследования. Использовались также проблемно-хронологический, сравнительно-исторический подходы. В частности, систематизация сравнительных данных послужила основой для определения взаимоотношений этнографической группы с этнически родственной группой и последствий ее влияния.

**Ключевые слова:** Казахи, ребенок, обычаи, традиции, еда, рождение.

**Для цитирования:** Тынайкулова М.Е. Традиции казахов, связанные с беременностью, родами и воспитанием детей (сравнительный анализ с обычаями других тюркских народов) // MUSEUM. KZ. 2023. №1 (1), pp. 113-124. DOI 10.59103/muzkz.2023.01.10

**Introduction.** Through the attitude to the woman in the family, the customs associated with the birth and upbringing of the child, you can see the people's perception of the world around them, the worldview of man. Traditional methods of socialization help children grow in the right direction, and today the use of traditional customs related to the upbringing of children continues.

Since the 1990s, interest in child-rearing customs and traditions has grown not only among ethnographers, but also in the CIS due to a number of social, economic, psychological and demographic factors that existed in the CIS countries, including Kazakhstan. After the collapse of the USSR, there was a decline in growth in society, an increase in the number of small families, an increase in child mortality, deteriorating health of the reproductive part of the country, drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution and other destructive processes have been revived. Modern scientists say that the solution to these problems must first be found in the family. In particular, they suggest using the traditions and practices of folk pedagogy. Traditions and customs of the children's cycle in the revival of lost cultural values are an effective way to cultivate an ethnocultural personality, through which the child learns the main types of actions that are important for the ethnos, responsible for the future of himself and the whole ethnos. In addition, ethnic traditions and approaches to socialization allow to determine the level of national development, the language situation in the family, the impact of economic, political and subcultural factors on it.

In many ethnographic literature, there are opinions that the customs associated with childbirth and its upbringing are gradually disappearing. However, the customs of the Kazakhs related to childbirth have not lost their relevance. In modern customs associated with the childbirth, we can trace its long-standing continuity: "many innovations and modifications pass through only the surface stages of customs and the preservation of its final essence is surprisingly and evenly distributed" [Baiburin, 1993].

The Kazakh people considered the child as a great value and believed that the basis of family activity is the birth and upbringing of the child. It can be seen in folk folklore, especially in proverbs and sayings that every Kazakh family strives to bring a healthy child to life and raise it all their lives. For example, the proverb "A house with children is cheerful, a house without children is dreary" is a proof of this. Customs related to the birth and upbringing of a child are formed depending on the living conditions and religious views of the Kazakhs.

*Among the people, a person who does not have a child was called a "cunning head", such people could not sit next to their peers at celebrations.*

Not only the family but also all the relatives were interested in having more children, especially boys. This is because the social status in the tribe was determined by the large number of men [warriors], and the large number of brothers and relatives reflected the "prestige of the person in the environment".

That is why the Kazakhs have a whole set of rules of etiquette, customs and beliefs for pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period.

### **Discussion.**

The customs of the Kazakhs related to the birth and upbringing of children are among the least studied issues. References to the problem can be found in the writings of Russian travelers and tsarist officials, researchers who visited the Kazakh lands before the revolution. In particular, the following works contain information on the topic: G.N. Potanin's "Essays on North-Western Mongolia", published in 1881, G.E. Grumm-Grzhimailo's "Western Mongolia and the Uryan-Khai Region", I. Sivers and I.P. Falk's "Letter from Siberia", "The custom of the Kazakhs of Semipalatinsk region" by the author, who wrote under the pseudonym P., "A few words about the care of kyrgyz children" by I.S. Kolbasenko, who worked as a doctor in the Kazakh land. The works of Soviet era S.I. Rudenko's "Essay about the north-eastern Kazakhs' mode of life", H. Argyntbaev's "Kazakh family", A.T. Toleubayev's "The relics of pre-Islamic beliefs in the family rites of the Kazakhs (XIX - early XX century)" and some works published after independence, such as D.B. Eskekbayev's article "Family customs of Kazakhs of the East Kazakhstan region", are full of important information.

As mentioned above, in special ethnographic studies, information about Kazakh customs related to childbirth is extremely rare, so the article is based on the author's original materials. In order to collect data from the local population, the authors made several business trips to the regions of East Kazakhstan. In the course of the study, great attention was paid not only to the general description of the custom, but also to the identification of their similarities and features with other peoples. In the course of direct research, such regional centers and several settlements of the Tarbagatai region of East Kazakhstan as Zaisan, Aksuat, Shilikta, Kokpekty, Ayagoz were taken as a basis. The dates were adults and elderly people. Meetings with local ethnographers and historians were organized in district centers such as Aksuat and Akzhar to help supplement the collected information. The respondents were urban and rural families, mostly women. Interview materials are mainly from respondents born before 1940. The study focused on the preservation of ethnic culture, especially the degree of necessity of ethnic culture. During the interviews with informants, special attention was paid to their personal experience from their own life.

**Prenatal Customs.** The Kazakh people gave great importance to the birth and continuation of generation of two newlyweds. Therefore, when entering into marriage with each other, first of all, they paid special attention to the social status of bridegroom, that is, to a large number of his relatives. Kazakhs considered infertility a great misfortune for the family. In the popular understanding, there was a belief that infertility comes from the evil eye, especially the evil eye of infertile women, because of evil demons (demons, devils, black angels, etc.). Kazakhs from ancient times do not say in vain that. "A house with children is cheerful, a house without children is dreary". In this regard, from the first day of the bride's becoming a wife, she performed various customs with a sincere desire to get pregnant. For example, in front of a new bride, a child was planted, so that she could have a child earlier or she had to eat a part of abomasum that Kazakh called "having a boy". Kazakhs in Uzbekistan used to roll a boy, if they wanted them to have a boy or a girl, if they wanted a girl, over the first bed of a newlyweds. Kazakhs in Turkmenistan and Karakalpakstan, on the other hand, used to make bridal dolls, wrap a baby in a scarf and sell it to a bridegroom's relatives [Kalshabaeva, 2011:294]. This is also due to the notion of wanting a baby for newlyweds. The ritual of feeding the newlyweds with the legs of a freshly slaughtered animal was also intended to give the young bride a son [Snesarev, 1969:254]. It is still preserved by Kazakhs living in rural areas.

In addition, a woman who has not given birth to a child can steal the afterbirth of a woman in labor, say a prayer and hold it to her while it is still warm, or steal the woman's underwear. Then she has to bury it. There is a perception that woman whose afterbirth was stolen or her child may die. Therefore, it is best to ask for the afterbirth from the woman in labor, but women, usually did not agree to this fearing the superstition that after this they may not have children. Sometimes a woman who gave birth would give the umbilical cord to another woman who could not give birth. Some sources say that elder women used to fry the umbilical cord with meat and feed it to an infertile woman [Argyntbaev, 1973: 63]. When

placing a child in a cradle, kurt, butter, sugar, candies, and silver money, which are passed through the hole in the cradle, are distributed to children and women. Infertile women and young women who have not yet had children genuinely trust that and enjoy them. There is a tradition that when a child turns forty days old, women who are not pregnant yet take child's onesie. The bereaved parents went to famous saints, spent the night and asked for a child. According to the custom, when pregnant woman wanted to have a boy, she had to use her husband's cannon and trousers as a pillow. And if she wanted a girl she used red dress and some jewelry as rings, bracelets and earring as a pillow, according to the same custom.

From the moment, a young wife realizes that she is pregnant, she gets treated with kind and caring. The Kazakhs paid great attention to the firstborn, from the moment of conception to his birth. It is said that if the first child is born safe, the next child will be safe and sound. In general, Kazakhs forbid young brides to go out at night with their heads bare, walk alone to the water in the evenings, go to the house of the dead, and so on. In the absence of the husband at home, the mother-in-law or sister-in-law stays with pregnant woman overnight. There is a common belief among Kazakhs that pregnant women are attracted to demons, fairies and black angels. It is said that their conspiracy could harm the unborn child. Well-known ethnographer H. Argynbayev states in his work that "in order to protect against the above-mentioned dangers, the bride's family hangs various weapons, whips, axes, wolf's mouths, eagle beaks" [Argynbayev, 1973:87]. Such scenes are also found among the Kazakhs of Central Asia. In addition to the above, Kazakhs, especially in Uzbekistan, often use fumigation with adyraspan grass and even hang this grass in the bride's room. Although the origins of these superstitions go back a long way, their meaning, as mentioned above, is that they are used to cast out demons and that a person who smells *adyraspan* (grass of the genus *Nitrariaceae*) won't get sick. After teaching prayers to the mullah, the talisman (often called the "arc" "tumar") is placed on a throne with salt, pepper, herbs of adyraspan, sewn in triangular shape, peephole, and so on. When wearing a peephole in an odd number of 5 or 7, the mullah's prayer gets sewn into a triangle, which is filled with salt, pepper, adyraspan herb, and sometimes a piece of paper with the words from the Koran [Kalshabaeva, 2011:295]. It is believed that all this will protect the young bride from harm and demons.

When the bride gets pregnant, her uncles and aunts tell her mother-in-law: "the bride's belly is full of white *airan* (sour milk) and she got grateful". In order to announce her pregnancy to family and relatives, the holiday "kursak shashu" is held. Guests bring a lot of different treats and the purpose of the holiday is to find among these treats the one that will please the pregnant lady. Since ancient times, Kazakhs predicted child's gender, according to the dish that the bride will choose. For example, it is said that "women who crave the meat of wild animals, bears, tigers, and wolves give birth to boys, and they will become great heroes and thinkers". It is said that "if there is a craving for sweets, there will be a girl". The mother of the people's heroes of the XVI century Orak and Mamai, grandmother Karaulek spoke about this as follows:

When Mamayzhan conceived,  
After eating meat of wolf and lion  
My craving intensified.

Experienced mothers fold the hem of the dress to prevent the bride from losing her baby. With the superstition that the child may be born prematurely, the bride did not hold any sharp object (knife, needles, scissors). A month before giving birth, pregnant woman's lunar cycle begins. At this stage, the expectant mother does not have to work a lot, fearing that the baby will wrap around the umbilical cord. In the practice of elderly mothers, if there is a girl, she moves from the left, and if there is a boy, he moves from the right.

A pregnant woman does not eat the delicious food she brings to someone's house from her table, saying that in this case she will "have a girl". A pregnant woman does not cut her hair. It is believed that such behavior reduces the happiness of the unborn child, he will be born with disabilities, and shortens the limbs. All these customs and rituals are still performed in the Kazakh families.

**Birth-Related Customs.** When a pregnant woman begins to go into labor, the village women begin to gather in the house, and the woman performs various rituals for easy childbirth. With the aggravation of contractions, rope is stretched inside the house. The woman's hair is combed, all the buttons are

unbuttoned, the chest and baskets are opened. The next thing to do, when a woman's contractions become more frequent, the mother-in-law immediately begins to prepare a dish "zharys kazan", from specially preserved meat. Tea is put on the pot, milk is boiled. At the same time, they periodically burn the knife in the cauldron and say "whether the black cauldron boils first, whether the girl gives birth first". All of this is the result of the desire to have a quick delivery, to "compete" with the cauldron, boiling tea and milk or give birth before the meat is cooked, as if the knot was unraveled [Argynbayev 1996: 58]. This, of course, is a kind of relief of contractions. A similar custom is also found in the Khakass. For example, a woman who is in labor had her hair combed out, her dress hem torn, and all her chests and boxes opened.

A pregnant woman is often given birth by country mothers with many children who have extensive experience, "light hands".

Kazakh women usually gave birth at home in a hanging position. In addition, throwing sheep fat into the fire, they asked Umai Ana to ease contractions of the woman in labor. The influence of religious concepts, such as the fire worship, which was before Islam, can be seen from the throwing sheep fat into the fire. In the culture of the Turkic peoples Umai Ana was considered the patroness of young children and women.

The Turkic peoples had their own peculiarities in understanding the patrons of women. The Yakuts believed that the patroness of women, whom they called "Aiyhyt", would help a woman in labor and a child. In their understanding, she leaves the house three days after the birth of the child. There was a belief that the Teleuits' "Mai-ene" and Kachins' "Ymai-ene" protected the child, when he is in the cradle. Among the Kumans, Umai-En protects a person for the rest of his life. N.A. Alekseev believes that "despite such differences, these ethnic groups have a common origin-the cult of patroness of women and children" [Alekseev, 2008:266-67]. A.I. Gogolev also supports this idea in his research [Gogolev, 2008:492]. Especially among the ancient Turks, Umai was a protector of women, children and warriors. In the ancient Turkic language, Umai means "the place of the child, the womb of the mother". In Yakut mythology, Umai's role is played by Aiyhyt. Its name comes from the ancient Turkic word ai, which means "mother". However, the term Umai is pronounced in the form "imai" and means "womb" in Altaians and Western Buryats.

As the woman's contractions become more frequent, one or two children begin to pace around the woman in labor and saying "Is he here? Is he here?". When there is a little time left before the birth of the baby, the woman holds on to the rope and kneels, two women support her holding by the armpits, and the third woman holds her belly and pushes her to herself by strongly hugging her. This is called "bel tartu" ("pushing the belly").

I.S. Kolbasenko, who worked as a doctor on the Kazakh land in the XIX century, says that the "bel tartu" method in Kazakh practice really helps to give birth to a child quickly [Kolbasenko, 1890: 35-41].

When pushing the belly also does not help, and labor becomes difficult, all women are evicted from the house and men enter. Because, it was believed that there was a devil among women. Villagers gather around the house, shouting and shooting guns. Then a shaman is called. The inability of a woman to give birth is explained by the concept of "pressing" or "eyes blacking", that is, a demon sitting on her chest prevents childbirth. According to Alibayeva Shamshan, in this case the woman is taken to a place where there is a blacksmith fur. In the work of A.T. Toleubayev, it is said: "Sometimes a blacksmith fur was put next to a woman in labor. This can be expressed in the sense of cleaning the air of this place. But in reality, its meaning is different. In the ethnography of the peoples of Central Asia, there was a concept of "the owner of the shop". The purpose of this ritual is to purify the body of the woman from demons" [Toleubayev, 1991: 66]. Akhmetovna Zhamby says about "the owner of the shop": "the owner of the shop was created by the prophet Daut. There is nothing stronger than "the owner of the shop". "My father, Ahmet Igisinovich, was a blacksmith who made rifles. I still take 3-4 tablespoons of iron in water when I get sick".

Another way to ease contractions - is putting a pregnant woman on the carpet, while four people sway her from four sides and put a bowl on her stomach, ash and coal poured into cold water and it's pressed to her chest and back. Women knocked at the door, entered and said: "the country has moved, the enemy has reached, you know, hurry up". If young children and girls entered the house, elder people teared the hem

their dresses. The Khakass' customs: if a young girl came to the house of woman in labor, somebody tore the hem of her dress and women who have not had children yet were not allowed to enter, and they were called "tuyukh idektig", which meant "closed hem" [Butanaev, 2014: 57].

According to the source Akhmetovna Zhamby, when she could not give birth, she brought soil from the head of the young cemetery and sprayed it three times. This is of course the belief based on the spirits' support. Her mother Kalisa Ibatovna was a healer. In this region falling under the evil spirit is called "darked eyes". When "eyes get darked", Kalisa Ibatovna reads a prayer to the woman four spoons of black water and drinks it. Then she will be healed.

When the baby comes out backwards, the woman in labor is put on the carpet, gently shaken and asked the question: "is it in right position?", "is it right?".

If after the birth of the child the afterbirth did not come out, then the Western Kazakhs used to say "caught a cold" and put the rope under the girl heated it. The author's article, written about the Semipalatinsk Kazakhs under the name P., says: "in such cases, a woman puts on leather pants, rides with a guy on horses, crosses mountains and steppes together with him. If a woman comes alive from this, but loses consciousness, the Shaman will slap her face with a slap and say, "thank God" [P. 1878: 23-46].

Postpartum Customs. As soon as the child is born, one of the children runs to their father and relatives in order to announce the good news and asked suyinshi for that. To find out whether it was a boy or a girl, they asked: "horseman? or embroiderer?". If suyinshi is not given quickly, that child can steal someone's headdress and leaves them bareheaded.

According to Akhmerova Ushe, they used to say "a shepherd suyinshi came if a boy was born, and if it's a girl they said "a horseman suyinshi came". Khakass' prohibited telling child's gender as soon as he or she was born, saying that "evil spirits can harm child." Relatives and neighbors asked with a hint: "What is the catch?" "A shooter born or a seamstress?". Households also answered indirectly that "a duty was born" (that is, a boy, because he was a taxpayer as a man), "a shooter was born," "a seamstress was born" (meaning that is a girl).

As soon as the child was born, the relatives wrapped him in the headscarves of elders. It meant that he will live a long life. After giving birth, a woman was wrapped around her belly, covered with a blanket to her belly, and holy books were hung over her [P. 1878: 23-46]. Some of the women stayed there for the first night, lit candles, and protected her in the hope that the devil would not come. This is called shildehana or "guarding". In the belief that a young woman and a newborn will be attracted by evil forces, shildehana first appeared in order to protect and "secure" the baby from demons. Over time, it turned into an entertainment party. Later, on the evening of the woman's birth, the village youth gathers, and girls and boys sing song and play various games till dawn. Sometimes shildehana lasts up to three days.

Among the Kazakhs of East Kazakhstan, there is a belief that if a woman gives birth when the moon is full (in the moonlight), then it will be a girl, and if she gives birth when the new moon is born, then she will give birth to a boy. Girls' name "Tolganai" among Kazakhs is associated with this belief [Toleubaev, 1991:121].

For a woman who has just given birth, sheep is slaughtered and cooked. It is called "kalzha". The difference between kalzha and daily eaten meat is that it is meat of cattle specially raised for young mother and baby. The girl who gave birth was given broth to drink and this meat was given to eat until the child was forty days old. A woman who did kalzha correctly does not lose her teeth, her joints do not sag, she gets strong quickly and gets involved in household chores. The neck of a sheep slaughtered for kalzha was given to a young mother and she had to take all the meat from the bone without using her teeth, then a stick was passed through the bone and hung on a kerege. It is a superstition that a child's neck will quickly strengthen. There is a superstition that the meat of kalzha can not be eaten by men, and if it happens their hair will fall out. As the saying goes "A man has to taste an award, a woman has to taste a kalzha", the women of the village won't be offended if they do not get to try the head part of kalzha, but they might get upset if they do not try the spine part. The reason for this is that all women were passionate about having a child. Therefore, there was a superstition that if they try the spine part of kalzha they woman will have a child faster, as a woman who kalzha was prepared for. If they are not



getting it, they will just sit there and stare at that part of the meat and were saying something like “Look at the humiliation...” [Zhunusov, 1992: 21]. All the meat of sheep slaughtered for kalzha, except the spine part, should be eaten by the woman who gave birth by herself. Otherwise, her belly will not tighten quickly. She wouldn't be able to get involved in the household of nomadic life quickly. In the same way, the Altai tolengids preserve the cervical spine of the kalzha sheep with the ritual “the neck will quickly strengthen” [Snesarev, 1964:52].

When slaughtering, after draining the blood, liquid blood is fried in fat, so that the waist of the woman in labor quickly strengthens [Shatynova, 1979: 115].

The newborn is bathed in a foam of boiled kalzha meat, then his umbilical cord smeared with soap and greased with back fat, at the end baby is stuck. The umbilical cord is kept or sewn into the child's clothing as an amulet. It is also present in the Altai Kazakhs [Konovalov, 1986: 141]. Then bathed in salted water. From this, the child's body matures and strengthens quickly.

After the umbilical cord is lowered, it is rubbed with a mixture of different herbs mixed with fat. Wealthy Kazakhs sew shirts and blankets for their children, and poor ones wrap them in very soft camel wool, similar to cotton. A shirt worn until the age of forty days is called a “dog shirt”. It is sewn as soon as the child is born. According to Akhmerova Oshe, after forty days, the “dog shirt” is tied around the dog's neck. It means “let the dog have a spirit and be strong”. Then the dog gets feed.

On the third day, the baby is placed in a crib. On this day, villagers gather and slaughter a sheep. Placing child in a cradle entrusted to a respected older woman with many children. For this, rural women gather, cook meat and brew tea. After the cradle woman puts the cradle equipment in order, she picks up the kurt, butter, bausak, sugar, candy, silver money brought in honor of the child and passes them through the hole in the cradle. The other one collects them from the other side of the hole and distributes them to the children and women around. Infertile women, young women who have not had children yet, sincerely rejoice and taste give treats. Then the cradle is fumigated with fire and the child is placed in the cradle.

According to Akhmerova Oshe, when placing a child in a cradle, a belt, a bridle, an elder's takiya, a whip, a knife, a mirror, a comb, and a ring are attached to the cradle. While the child is sleeping, everything except the mirror, the comb and the knife is removed. The rest is left so that the child does not get afraid. And the cradle is covered with seven things.

*I.S. Kolbasenko, who worked as a doctor on the Kazakh land at the end of the XIX century, named the main advantages of the Kazakh cradle:*

Convenience: for example, a Kyrgyz (Kazakh) wife can sit on a pillow or blanket placed in front of the bed, holding the cradle in front of her; In such a cradle, a woman can breastfeed a child even while riding a horse.

The under child area will never be wet, there will be no smelly smells and most importantly, there will be absolutely no sores, such as eczema, which is often found among sedentary people [Kolbasenko, 1890: 36].

In general, for the Kazakhs, who lived a nomadic or semi-nomadic life, the comfort of the cradle is undeniable. The cradle was left and passed from child to child. The cradle of the deceased child was not used, it was taken and left at the cemetery.

If the child did not get up, various superstitions were performed. For example, in this case, the next child is breastfed by another woman who is breastfeeding for the first three days. Regarding the situation, the source said: “My mother gave birth to six daughters, but all of them didn't get up. When I was born, they put me in a crib and left me at the neighbors' three times. I survived thanks to this. My father was named Akbuzau because all other children of his parents had died (the child was given ugly names if children before him died). These superstitions came true”. Sometimes a newborn baby is “sold” in such a situation. The child is took out of the sign of the top of the door and parents said three times that they had “sold” him. Buyers also said “we bought” three times. Buyers become godparents of the child. Then the parents buy him again or take the child out of the door and let him in through other door (zhabyk). The name Zhabykbay came from this. Yakuts have a similar custom of “kidnapping” a child. According to it, the child is wrapped in the skin of a fox or rabbit, tied to a rope and pulled through the chimney of

the house. It is believed that such rituals are born out of the idea that demons cannot pass through a sign or chimney. Buryats, Altaians, Yakuts also have similar rituals associated with child's not getting up. For example, in Buryats, a child is kidnapped by poor relatives and raised and returned at a certain time. In Yakuts, without telling the parents, the closest relatives kidnap a child and replace it with a puppy or other animal. And the stolen child is given to a woman who has many children [Belilovsky, 1894:102].

And all these rituals are born of the concept of "delusion", in which a child is taken away by a demon, so if a child is sold, kidnapped, or replaced by a puppy of a dog, the demon will not know where the child is, but will take the puppy instead.

"If a woman's children die, as soon as the next child is born it is passed through nine women with many children and the umbilical cord is cut by a man with an axe, if a woman does not have a son, a born child is bathed by women who have many sons, and a woman who does not have children should imperceptibly step on the shadow of a mother with many children" - says the source. Khakassas have the same thing, when child didn't get up, an old woman with many children was brought and the child was passed through her legs. Here, the transfer of a child through a woman's legs was associated with the image of the birth of a child, thus misleading the demons who were chasing the children of this family [Toleubaev, 1991:73].

There was a notion that if two women have to give birth at the same time, then one should not see the labor of the other, because in this case, the child of the second woman may have a scabies or an illness. So they should not see each other until they give birth. If they do see each other, then after their children turn forty days old, the women were tied with a rope to each other and they had to put food and offer it to each other in this position. Otherwise, they were afraid of having a scabies. This superstition was called "kottestiru" [Katran, 1996:120].

Forty days after the birth of a child, the ritual of bringing him out of the forties is performed. The bringing him out of the forties is handed over to the most respected old woman of the village. Forty shelpiks were fried that day, fresh water was taken early in the morning, and forty kumalaks of sheep, forty coins, etc. were added to it and the child was bathed in that water. It reflects the idea that a young child should be rich and happy in the future. His hair and nails are cut off and sewn into the child's clothes as an amulet. A ring, a tableware, a silver ladle and other gifts were given to a person who bathed a child and cut his hair and nails. And the dog shirt is tied around the dog's neck, as mentioned above, with the idea that "the dog will become strong" or that all the danger is transferred to the dog through this shirt. This dog is then fed.

As in the Zhetysay region, the customs of "porridge" and "liver feet" are not found in the East of Kazakhstan, which are performed when a child begins to crawl and sit.

When the child begins to walk, his threads get cut. This custom is called "tusau kesu". The child's legs are tied with string, and a bowl of food is placed on either side of the child's legs. This thread is cut with a knife or razor by a fast, respectable woman with many children in the village. She throws the cut thread out of the house; the woman who cut the thread was given a gift. After that, all guests are served meat; after the meat, a blessing is made and good wishes are expressed to the child, such as longevity, health, happiness, wealth, etc.

As for the fact that a bowl of food is put on both sides of the child's legs in this information, it is due to the fact that the Kazakh people give a special value for food. For example they say "You are not older than food", "Throw food at someone who throws stones". Food is a symbol of prosperity, abundance, wealth. That means, baby's first step in life should begin with good food and kindness, in order to live in prosperity and wealth in the future. Cutting threads is the beginning of a person's life journey, so it is a ritual based on the belief that he will start it successfully.

Custom of cutting threads is also found in other nations. For example, the Kyrgyz perform this custom through "tushoo keschi toi" [Abramzon, 1949: 39].

When the child turns three years old, another celebration is held and the child is put on a horse and saddle. Due to the plight of the poor they put their children on a horse at the age of 4-5. On this day, cattle is slaughtered and all the inhabitants of the village gather. The women bring *kurt* and *irimshik* (dairy produce), throw them at the entrance of the house and say good wishes, such as "congratulations

on your joy”.

After that, the women are placed in a separate house from the men, the food is served, after dinner everyone goes out to see a horse race, after the race the men leave and only the women and the most respected people of the village remain. Then the women take the child out of the house, and the most respected elder puts the child on a horse with a young man. He gets covered with a *shapan* (men`s robe) for that. The young man with the boy rides around the entire village. The people of the village give him gifts, ones give a saddle, ones give a horse, ones give kurt and irimshik depending on the situation. After that, when village will move to another place, the child will ride a separate horse without his mother.

Usually, a chosen foal is the same age as the child, so that they can grow up together and be close. When a child is fit to ride a horse, the horse is quite tame “like a pet”.

Kazakhs were very wary of the evil eye. According to the informants, in case of the evil eyejinx, the insole of the right foot is cut off. Uakile Tokusheva tells about the evil eye: “When my son was three years old, he was jinxed when we were visiting relatives. When we got home, my son got very sick. My husband went and cut off the ears of the sheep of that house, burned them, put them in warm water, and bathed our son in that water”.

When a child gets sick, a shaman or a doctor is called, but the shaman does not make a dhikr, but just gently plays his kobyz. If a child had a stomach ache, the shaman chewed cloves or garlic and sprayed it on the child; after slaughtering a black sheep, he beat the patient with its lungs.

If the doctor noticed a pulse on the child`s forehead and veins, and decided that the child is sick from the mother`s milk, then the mother didn`t eat for three days, just drank fluently [Oserov et al., 1992, 59].

Among Kazakhs, there is a notion of “dog disease” or “dog touch” associated with children illness. Its medical name is rachitis. It is said that the cause of the disease is related to the dog. Many sources in East Kazakhstan say that “dog disease” can be caused by jinx. When a person with a “dog” meets a child, he transmits the disease to him. The disease was treated by immersion in water with a dog`s skull, or by bringing child to the place where dog died and lying on that place, then child was not supposed to turn back when leaving that place. Some hung the dried skull of a dog on the right side of the door.

Ethnographers-travelers, who visited the Kazakh steppes in XIX-early XX centuries and got acquainted with its life, wrote with great surprise that the children of nomadic Kazakhs rarely suffer from abdominal diseases. Of course, this is due to the strict attitude of the Kazakhs to the cleanliness of the child and the food that the child eats.

Adoption in the absence of a child is also a common occurrence in Kazakh society. Currently, there is also the adoption of a child of a close relative in case of an absence of a child. Adoption – taking a child of a relative or someone else`s, in the absence of their own child or when their children are constantly dying. Adoption in Kazakh society is a long-time tradition. A family without offspring enters into an agreement with one of the closest relatives and adopts one of their children. The adoptive parents gather the village elders and relatives for a celebration and receives the blessings of the elders. On that day, the boy held the middle bone in his hand, and both sides swore in public and made a promise to each other. Giving middle bone to a child in front of whole village means that the adoptive parent sees him as a native child, recognizes him as an heir, and determines the mutual gratitude of both parties.

**Conclusion.** In conclusion, we can say that the elements of traditional culture continue in the customs and rituals of the Kazakhs related to pregnant women, childbirth and raising children. All the customs described above were created for the health and well-being of the child who came to life and his family. In spite of the fact that many rituals are associated with magical elements, but they have an effective basis. A variety of customs and traditions in honor of the child strengthen the connection of the child and the mother with society and the community.

Rituals related to childbirth were a transitional period for both woman and child. Birth-related customs have shown a gradual transition of the child from nature to culture (placing in a cradle, giving name, circumcision, cutting of hair, cutting threads). Nevertheless, the custom of the traditional culture of the Kazakhs has been preserved, but the features that have developed under the influence of foreign culture are also enough.

Many of the traditional customs concerning the child have survived to this day and have not lost their importance. Elements of wishes for the well-being of the mother and child in the written ritual verses are still relevant at the present time. Mythological knowledge of Kazakhs, cult worship became the norm of etiquette, (for example, methods of traditional medicine, attitude to pregnant women, moral qualities of behavior and so on). Among the respondents, a high degree of use of national (placing on ashamai), religious (calling azan and naming) and ritual (tusau kesu) elements of ethnic culture was revealed. In child-related rituals, special attention is paid to the first stage of childhood, which involves the use of traditional methods of medicine to preserve the health of the child and mother, as well as magical methods that protect against “evil eyes” (jinx). The traditions of the Islamic religion, such as “circumcision”, are also preserved, and relatives of the woman bring the baby a cradle and a sheep for “kalzha”. The tradition of adopting children by people who do not have children still exists. Usually a relative’s child gets adopted. However, at present parents do not agree to give the child to a relative who asks for it. That is why today adoption from orphanages is very common.

According to our materials, traditional normative principles are preserved in modern family relations: elements of family etiquette are still preserved, such as respect for elders, adults are called “grandmother” (“azhe”), “grandfather” (“ata”), “mother” (“apa”), “brother” (“aga”), “sister” (“apai”). The Kazakh religious worldview is also used in the upbringing of children, especially after Kazakhstan seceded from the USSR and gained independence (going to the mosque, reciting the Quran, fasting in Ramadan month, praying). Research materials have shown that the ethno-cultural position of parents today is higher than in the USSR era. It was found that 80% of rural and 60% of urban residents are familiar with the elements of ethnic culture (fairy tales, lullabies, legends), and in such families children grow up absorbing ethnic culture from an early age. An important indicator of a child’s involvement in ethnic culture is knowledge of the national language. Among urban residents, the use of the Russian language is more common than use of Kazakh, and in rural areas there are no people who would not know the Kazakh language.

Comparing child-related customs with other Turkic-speaking peoples, we found that there were many similarities with other Muslim peoples (calling azan, naming, cutting hair etc.). Kazakhs have a lot in common with other Turkic peoples. This is especially true in comparison with the Siberian peoples: elements of shamanism, totem animal worship, etc. As we can see, the customs associated with childbirth are very similar among the Turkic peoples and differ only in individual elements. Their history is not limited to a century. However, they turned out to be so viable that many of them have survived to this day in a somewhat improved form.

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