



The Role and Significance of Islamic Traditions in the Social Life of Karakalpaks

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Аннотация: Қорақалпоқларда исломий диний байрамларнинг ўзига хос хусусиятларини Оилавий маросим ва урф-одатларда исломий анъаналарини таҳлил қилиш. Умумэътироф этилган асл диний байрамлар сирасига Рўза ҳайит, Қурбон байрам киритилиб, улар билан боғлиқ маросимлар ўрни.

Калит сўзлар: Никоҳ маросими, Исломиий анъаналар, Рўза ва Қурбон Ҳайит, Рамазон оғи, Ҳайт сейили, Пайғамбар.

Historically, the Karakalpaks lived along the Urals, then the Volga, the outskirts of Arol and the foothills of the lower basins of the Syrdarya. At the beginning of the 19th century, they began to settle down in the lower Amudarya basin, the south and south-west sides of the island. Karakalpaks were sometimes attacked by Kazakhs and Turkmens, and as a result, they became citizens of Khiva Khanate. In the middle of the 19th century, the Karakalpaks were under the rule of the Khanate of Khiva, and they lived on both banks of the Amudarya and in the lands flowing into the Aral Sea. Over the years, the khans have been immersed in their social life. In the 20th century, especially during the peak of atheistic ideology, Islamic rituals and traditions underwent a transformation. But despite the long reign of atheism, bans and persecutions, Karakalpaks have preserved their religious traditions.

Among such ceremonies, it is necessary to mention the practice of Islamic marriage (*nekeden ötio*'), naming (*nərestege at qoyyo*'), burial, sacrifice, fasting, five times prayer.

The marriage ceremony is called "neke" [1, p. 482] in Karakalpaks, and expressions such as "neke qyyo" and "nekeden ötio" are common among the people. This ceremony is performed when the bride is brought to the groom's house. A religious leader or school mullah (local mullah) usually conducts the ceremony. Neke suo'y (marriage water) is drunk during the ceremony. This tradition is reflected in the work of Karakalpak ethnographers: "the mullah recited the marriage prayer on top of a container filled with water (*neke suo'*) with silver coins. There were special grooves on both sides of the edge of the bowl. After the marriage ceremony, the mullah drank water from the opening of the vessel, first to the groom, then to the bride from the other side, and then to the rest of the participants of the ceremony. Usually water was not enough for everyone. For performing the marriage ceremony, the mullah was given the coins left in the container and a piece of cloth" [2, p. 72]. Today, only the bride and groom drink the wedding water, but this tradition has changed a lot. In particular, the poetic verse performed by the witnesses during the ceremony has been forgotten. There are also some changes in the practice of sprinkling the marriage water.

Currently, most of the young people who are getting married want to register their marriage in the registry office. But when the marriage is registered by the state, young people tend to perform the Islamic marriage as well. Another tradition associated with Islam is the naming ceremony, which is accompanied by the call to prayer (call to prayer). This custom is referred to as *aqeeqah* in Islamic sources. *Azan* is recognized as *fard* in Karakalpaks. There are cases where the child is named first, and the ceremony itself is performed much later. On the day of the ceremony, a feast is held, *pilaf*, *beshbarmoq* ("gurtik") are prepared, and the mullah is invited. During the ceremony, the baby is facing

south, the adhan is called three times in the right ear, the takbir is said three times in the left ear, and the name itself is said three times. [1,p.482] In Uzbeks, this ceremony is performed by saying the call to prayer and the child's name once in the child's ear. During the ceremony, a date is put in the child's mouth. [3, p.509] In Karakalpaks, the baby is given turshak or water with novvot, saying "the child's tongue is bolyp, sweet words benen shyqsyn!" (let the child's tongue come out first with a sweet word!) are said. After the ceremony, gifts (money or clothes) are given to the teacher.

Islamic traditions include celebrating the 63rd birthday. For Muslims, this date is considered sacred, because the Prophet Muhammad lived 63 years. After reaching this blessed age, a person tends to draw conclusions about the past life. In some families, this date is solemnly celebrated, and the tumanat is told to the guest, while others are limited to giving a party to relatives and friends. The celebration of this date is called "Prophet jasy" (Prophet's age) in Karakalpaks. Usually, on this day, animals (sheep, goat) are slaughtered, guests are given a feast, and the Qur'an is recited.

According to the custom of the peoples of Central Asia, if several people in a family pass away, the deceased is taken out of the window. Ethnographer scientist B.Kh. Karmisheva said: "So that there are no more dead people in this house, it was done so that 'let them enter through the door and exit through the hole.'" [63] It is believed that if the coffin is taken out of the window, the deceased will not be able to return home or find the way. [6,p.100] There is a similar custom among the Karakalpak people. That is, if several deaths occur in a household during the year, it is reported that the first coffin is taken out of the door, and the others are taken out of the window.

At the beginning of the 21st century, some traditions have changed due to the propaganda carried out by religious leaders among the population. As a result of the clarification work, funeral rites, as well as events in shrines became more organized (polytheism, heresy). Fasting, Hayit, Kurban Bayram are included among the recognized original religious holidays, and the rituals related to them are of great importance. In Islam, the month of Ramadan (Ramadan in Arabic) is the greatest and most virtuous month of the year. Events and religious ceremonies performed in this holy month have been combined with various local traditions and views for centuries and have reached the present day.

The intention to start fasting in Karakalpaks is announced one day before Ramadan fasting. On the eve of fasting, traditional ceremonial breads - shelpok or baoyrsak - are baked in oil in all households. This ritual is called "smell emission". According to the views of the Karakalpaks, the spirits of the ancestors come to their homes when the smoke is released and are satisfied with the smoke emanating from the food. In Islam, opening the mouth is called Iftar (Arabic), and the population uses expressions such as "iftarlyq" and "ao'yz ashar" (opening the mouth). It is written in the holy book of Islam: "O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you" (Baqara, verse 183) [7, p. 429] The fast lasts for 30 days, and some people fast for an additional 6 days. Those who have not fasted for several years, or those who started fasting for the first time during nawqiran, should fast for some more time as 58 kaffarat "kaffara (Arabic)" in addition to the obligatory one month fast. 70 days after the fasting of Ramadan, the next major Islamic holiday, Qurban Hayt or Eid al-Adha, is celebrated. Feast of Sacrifice or Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice in Arabic). It is also known as "big Eid" among the people. The word "sacrifice" itself has a Turkish origin [8, p. 748]. Although there are great differences in the religious traditions of different peoples, including the ritual of sacrifice, the essence of these traditions is the same. Ancient people made sacrifices in order to avoid natural disasters, primarily floods, earthquakes, and droughts. In interviews with elders during the field research conducted in the territory of Karakalpakstan, the sacrifices made in cases of water shortage were mentioned several times. 1998-2001 was a period of severe trials for the farmers of Karakalpakstan. Crops were damaged due to lack of water. According to the informants, there were more sacrifices at that time, and rain was prayed for.

Animal sacrifice became an important element of Islamic rituals. According to tradition, the dried meat of the slaughtered animal is divided into three parts. This meat is distributed among the orphans, relatives and family. In Karakalpaks, during the celebration of Kurban Bayram, food is prepared from the meat of the animal, and a feast is given to neighbors and relatives. Usually, on the days of Eid al-

Adha, this type of hospitality is organized by rich families. Relatively less wealthy families slaughter goats, turkeys or chickens and entertain neighbors and relatives.

When describing Eid al-Adha, it is necessary to dwell on the pilgrimage. Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. Mecca and its surroundings are visited during Hajj. A few days before Eid al-Adha, pilgrims go to Mecca and Medina.

Before leaving for Hajj, pilgrims give alms to Prophet Muhammad and past ancestors, i.e. alms on the path of religious faith. Among the Karakalpaks, there are cases of people who have performed the Hajj gaining miraculous powers. The clothes and belongings of people who have returned from Hajj are blessed. For example, people took the things of Suyin Eshon (19th century) as "good luck".

At the end of the 20th century - at the beginning of the 21st century, the religious holidays celebrated by the Karakalpaks embodied various ideas. Some of the traditions that existed in the 20th century have been forgotten by the beginning of the 21st century, and "Hayt seyili" (Hayit seyli) is one of these traditions. However, most of the rituals associated with Islamic traditions (aoyz ashar, pitr, elimination of the elderly, "Qadir Keshesi") have been preserved among the population and are being transformed and adapted to the new era.

The family customs of the Karakalpaks included ceremonies such as the birth and the first period of the child's life (naming, circumcision), as well as the wedding (nekeden ötio'), the prophet's age, burial, Sapar month, Derioshana. Based on the results of the research, it should be noted that Islamic traditions have been transformed, adapted to modern conditions and preserved. The best preserved form of these traditions can be seen in the families of clerics and religious leaders.

Religious holidays such as Roza and Kurban Hayit have not lost their importance even today. Eid holidays, which have been celebrated for centuries, are distinguished from other religious holidays by their colorfulness and wealth of ethnographic material.

Conclusion: The religious holidays held in the Karakalpak region at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century included various ideas. Some traditions that still exist in the 20th century have been completely forgotten by the 21st century. One of them is Hayt Seyli (Hayt Seyli). However, most of the ceremonies related to Islamic traditions, such as "Aoyz Ashar", "Pitr", "Bayramda Jasy Ulkenlerden Khabar Alyo", "Qadir Keshesi" are preserved among the people and are adapting to the conditions of the new era as a result of transformation.

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