

participation and entertaining character.

Traditions and customs of Kazakh people reflect national identity. They reflect the specifics of the philosophy, psychology and educational features of the nation.

The centuries-old experience of the mankind development has shown that traditions do not disappear by themselves without a trace; they disappear together with their carriers, if there is no link between generations. An outstanding educator G. N. Volkov said: «When national features die in children, this means the beginning of the death of the nation».

Considering folklore as a source of the ethnic pedagogy, the authors of the textbook suppose that acquaintance with the Kazakh people folklore will help young readers to learn more deeply the history of the Kazakh people, the basics of the national education; and the described national customs and rituals will become the «golden core of the inner world» (S. Kenzheakhmetuly) of the younger generations.

1.13 Read the text

Traditions and Holidays

Folk celebrations play a great role in cultural life of Kazakh people and they are dedicated to the most important events in life - wedding, birth of a child, funeral etc.

Traditions and customs associated with guests

The main tradition of Kazakhs, which eventually transformed into a feature of national character, is hospitality. In the Kazakh society, there is an unofficial law voiced in ancient times, which says «Meet a guest as the God's messenger».

Guest is a very important person in life of Kazakh people. Hospitality is considered as a sacred duty in the Kazakh society. At all times, the steppe inhabitants did their best to please their guest. Therefore, each traveller knew that he or she would be welcomed anywhere in Kazakh land.

Hosts work hard to be hospitable to their guests, preparing a full table of food. It is considered very honorable if the guest comes with his friends and relatives who are ready to share his meal - barmagyn zhalau. Sometimes the head of the family invites young people to share food with elderly people - aksakals. It is considered as the demonstration of the highest respect to the guest.

Travellers in Kazakhstan are most likely to be encountered with the traditions, associated with guest reception. Here are some examples of them: «Konakasy» - a custom associated with treating of a guest. As it was

mentioned above, Kazakh people since ancient times have been famous for their hospitality. They always reserve the tastiest food for guests. Guests are divided into three categories: 1) «arnay konak», a specially invited guest; 2) «kuday konak», a random stranger (uninvited); 3) «kydyrma konak», an unexpected guest. All these guests, despite of their type are offered a rich table - «Konakasy» [VisitKazakhstan.kz, Official tourism website of Kazakhstan].

«Konakkade» is a tradition under which a host has the right to ask his guest to sing a song or play a musical instrument (of course, as long as a guest is known for his or her talent), thus ensuring some fun and joy during the feast.

«Erulik» - if new settlers came to a village erulik was arranged in their honour, i.e. a small celebration that allowed newcomers to adapt quickly to the new location. Also, the custom erulik includes assistance in settling of the newcomers, when neighbours provide them with firewood, drinking water, etc. for the time being.

«Toy dastarkhan» is a special form of celebration, organized for holiday or during it. Sports competitions, music, singing competitions (aitys) and horse riding competitions are organised in addition to the gatherings during Toy dastarkhan. Very often, dishes of Kazakh national cuisine are served during such occasions.

Traditions and customs associated with presenting gifts

Guests have very often to receive or give presents; in addition, there are often times, when gifts should be given in some special occasions according to the traditions. Some examples are given below.

«Suyinshi» is a custom according to which a traveller or any other person who brought home a good message (news) receives a valuable gift from the owners in gratitude. Sometimes before telling good news a person says «Suyunshi» or «what would you give me for Suyinshi?», thus implying that he or she has something great to tell.

«At mingizip shapan zhabu» is a high honour. According to the tradition, a respected visitor, who may be an akyn (a poet), a hero, batyr (warrior) or other very respected man receives a gift from local residents: a horse and a splendid shapan in recognition of their merit.

«Baygazy» is a tradition of presenting a gift to a person, who acquired a new valuable thing.

People, coming back from distant travel, trip, trade, bring to fellow countrymen, neighbours, close friends, children big or small gifts - «bazarlyk». Such gifts are accepted as a kind relation, a sign of attention and as souvenirs.

When a child reaches age 5-7 years, his grandfather or parents

present him a foal, dating it for trimming or going to school. It is called «byasire-tai». The boy starts taking care and training the foal with all responsibility. Due to it he gets shepherd business skills, and gets use to work. Byasire lifts boys spirit, adapts him for life.

«Zhienkuryk» is the gift to a daughter's child. Children of a daughter are called «zhien». Traditionally, the daughter's child must receive his «zhienkuryk» (gift). Nagashy (mother's relatives) should not reject «zhien» and should fulfill his three requests. «Zhien» is never abused and is always shown care.

Wedding

At the celebrations different games are arranged: horse races - baige, wrestling, different tournaments fulfilled on horseback, kokpar - snatching the goat's carcass one from another. Valuable prizes are prepared for the participants of these games.



Among wedding rituals singing different songs are still popular, for instance «zhar-zhar», «syngsu» and «betashar». Any wedding ceremony in the Kazakh society is anticipated by kudalyk (matchmaking).

Before the wedding, matchmakers come to the bride's house. Their task is to agree with the closest relatives of a girl on her marriage. During courtship, father of the bride receives gifts from the guests that serve as a deposit. If negotiations are successful, the father, in turn, presents a coat to the main matchmaker. This custom is called «Shege Sapa». Preparation of «kuyruk bauyr» - a delicious dish from the liver and broad tail fat also testifies to the successful completion of courtship.

The next stage of the ceremony is to send off of the bride - Kyz uzatu. In the evening before the Kyz uzatu matchmakers come to the bride's house again. Early in the morning, the bride with matchmakers is sent to the groom's house.

Solemn ceremony of meeting the bride in the groom's house is called kelin tusiru. The main element of kelin tusiru is called Betashar - a traditional performance of a song with instructions and wishes.



Betashar, Otkai Mai Salu

Betashar, or removing the bride's veil, was an important ritual. A specially invited poet was in attendance; someone familiar with the bride's father-in law, mother-in law, and all the groom's relatives. At the Betashar toi, he would be required to mention details of their character, position, and peculiarities. As each participant was mentioned in the poet's song, the bride was required to bend and greet by making salem. There were slightly different versions of Betashar, but its main purpose was to allow everyone to see the bride. In one version, the poet would take his dombra and sing: Hear, people, now I take off the bride's veil I wish you happiness, dear bride,

if you show bad temper, your sisters-in-law would pursue you.

So be patient and not petulant

Your dastarkhan (table cloth) must be spread to any person who enters your yurt.

If aksakal, the oldest man visits you, pour warm water.

Be polite and tolerant with your neighbor don't be idle, try to be clever in your needle work,

Respect your father and mother-in law.

You're so beautiful and white as an egg don't be lazy, get up early and feed your husband When elders come to your house, you should rise be simple and kind,

Do not gossip with the women.

Grandfathers bless her, she entered the yurt with her right feet; she'll bring happiness to this house:

Believe me !

She was blessed by her folks.

Now dear bride, come here.

Look how many people want to see you through away your veil; greet and bow to this crowd.

The bride was required to bow when she heard each name of her future husband's relatives. Poets all sang the Betashar on their own way, but

the meaning of all of them was similar. The bride was instructed to be polite, loving, kind, generous, industrious, and to respect people. After Betashar, the bride would step over and bow to the shanyrak. Then she would sit in a screen. Before stepping over the yurt threshold, the mother-in-law would throw some fat into the fire at the center of the yurt. This tradition remained from ancient times, and is still practiced today. Throwing fat into the fire on this occasion was to remind the new bride that as a hostess running her own household that she must remember to be always ready to receive guests. Throwing fat on the fire made it burn hotter; reminding her that she must always be generous with visitors.

Traditions and Customs Related with the Child's Birth

When a child is born it is a great event for each family. First shildekhana, then putting a child on the cradle, tusau kesu - when a child starts just to step, sundet toi - if a child is a boy, til ashar - at the age of six or seven, etc.

Shildekhana

The second celebration of new life in the Kazakh tradition was called the Shildekhana, and this gathering also included the participation of many young people. All participants wear their best clothes and rode their horses to the event if they had one. Elders came to give the «Bata», or blessing. Invited participants ate, had fun, and sang songs to the tune of the dombra, a traditional two-stringed instrument. Young people playing this instrument were expected to compose and improvise songs during the singing.

Zharys Kasan

Zharys Kasan is a celebration on behalf of a long-expected and desired baby. Children have always been highly prized by the Kazakhs. Kazakhs have always been known as a very generous people. For example, when an unexpected guest came to the house, the host would often butcher the only horse he owned in honor of the visitor. The same practice might be followed if the household was blessed with a child.

At koyu

Kazakhs attach a great importance to this solemn ceremony. They try to give the baby a beautiful name, or a name of a famous person, in order for the child to become like that famous person. This custom is entrusted to be performed to respected people, who give the newly-born baby their bata (blessing) right away. However, parents avoid to give their children names of chief and sainted people. In old times babies often were given names depending on the situation at which they were born. For example, if a child was born in Nauryz month, he was named Nauryzbai, if during ait, then Aitbai, during the haymaking time Shoptibai. If there were born girls only, they were given such names as Ulbolsyn, Ultugan, Ulmeken (ul means a boy), hoping that next child is going to be an heir.

Besik Toi

The arrival of new birth also involves another celebration called Besik Toi. For babies, the tradition of Besikke Salu was practiced and involved placing the baby in the cradle for the first time.



Special foods are prepared, and all the relatives, neighbors, and nearby children are invited. Guests to the feast brought «Shashu», or candies, kurts, and coins. The baby's cradle is made by a special master carver. Only women who have conceived their own children are allowed to place babies in their cradles, and any woman who would place a friend's baby in this place of honor must sew and present a new Itkoilek to the baby's mother.

Kyrkynan shygaru - a ritual performed on the fortieth day after birth that includes bathing baby in 40 tablespoons of water, and the first haircut and nail cut and other rituals.

Kyrkynan Shygaru

Tusau kesu - when a baby begins to walk, he undergoes another ancient rite - the hobbles cutting. A hobble of rope round a child's legs is tied. It looks like a figure -of - eight. The child has to make a few steps and then the hobbles are cut with a knife (or scissors) by the most respected guest, one whose life is a worthy example. By cutting the hobbles the guest blesses the baby to go through his own life more successfully.

Sundet Toi

If the baby was a boy, four or five was the age for circumcision and another toi. It was one of the remarkable days of a boy's life. Again relatives and friends of the family gathered, ate, and had fun.

All the above mentioned traditions, except Sundet, were celebrated in honor of both son and daughter.

Kulak Tesu

Every four-year-old girl had her ears pierced, and a silk thread was put into the holes. Later on it was replaced by small silver earrings.

The ear-piercing was regarded as an obligatory peculiar practice for the girls, having the same importance as boys' circumcision. That is the reason why people say «kulak tesu - kyzdyn sundeti». When a girl becomes adult enough to get married, she wears earrings with reproductive motives expressed in the shape of the sun, stars, or new moon, and various pendants have the form of seeds, petals, and grains.

Traditions and Customs Associated with Mutual Aid

Helping each other has always been highly valued by Kazakhs and is very important in a Kazakh community. Therefore, there are a number of traditions, which are associated with mutual aid. Some of them are listed below.

Asar

A family, which has to perform an urgent and sometimes a hard work, has a right to ask relatives, friends and neighbours for assistance. At the end of the work, a rich table is laid as a gratitude for those, who helped.

Zhyly

is a tradition associated with the provision of material, moral and financial assistance to people affected by natural disasters (fire, flood, etc.). All supporters, not only relatives are entitled to help the victims. Many things can be given as donations - livestock, building materials, clothing, money, etc.

Belkoterer

means to treat the elderly with respect. Delicious and most importantly - soft foods such as kazy, zhent, cottage cheese are cooked for the elderly. Typically, this responsibility rests on children or close relatives, the less likely neighbours. Belkoterer tradition is an example of caring for the elderly.

Shulen taratu

is the charity. In the past, rich «biis» and «bais» helped the poor, gave out to the livestock, money, property, and food. The charity was mostly shown in autumn, before the hard and severe winter, after the cattle's reproduction. Prosperous people did it not for the profit, but for a simple human thanking. They thought it their debt to take care after other. Though the poor sometimes talked bad about biis and bais, but nevertheless admitted their authority and accepted their aid.

National holidays

There are many national holidays celebrated in our country such as Nauryz, Oraza ait, Ramazan ait. Oraza ait and Ramazan ait are religious holidays, Ramazan ait is right after the holy month Ramazan. Oraza ait is celebrated during three days certain period (70 days) later after Ramazan ait.

Nauryz is the New Year Day by oriental calendar, it is the beginning of spring, its awakening after winter sleep. On this 22nd of March day and night are equaled, people congratulate each other, lay festive dastarkhan and prepare Nauryz kozhe which consists of 7-9 ingredients. Universal merry-making, national games, traditional horse races, and various amusements accompany festivities.



There are many Kazakh national games such as kyz kuu, audaryspak, kumis alu, kokpar etc. In kyz kuu young girls and fellows take part in. The girl on the horse does her best to gallop from the young man. If he succeeds to overtake he earns a kiss, if not she lashes him with a whip. Audaryspak requires skills both in hand-to-hand fighting and in trick riding. Winner is the one that brings his adversary down of his horse. The essence of kumis alu is that while galloping at full speed a young man should pick up a silver ingot off the ground. Nowadays a handkerchief replaces the ingot. The most popular game is Kokpar. In ancient times an alive goat was used, nowadays a symbolic carcass is used.

Some interesting facts about Nauryz:

1. Between 1926-1988, Nauryz holiday was not officially celebrated in Kazakhstan (Kazakh Soviet Socialistic Republic those days)
2. In 2009 - 3 days of Nauryz holiday, starting 21th of March, were officially announced bank holidays in Kazakhstan.
3. September 30, 2009 - Nauryz was included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO;

since then, 21 of March is announced International Day of Nowruz (Nauryz).

1.13.1 Answer the questions:

- 1) What folk celebrations are fulfilled when a child is born?
- 2) Can you tell when «zhar-zhar», «syngsu» and «betashar» are sung?
- 4) What is tusau kesu?
- 5) What national games do you know?
- 6) Who takes part in the game kyz kuu?
- 7) What kind of holiday is Nauryz?
- 8) What national dish is prepared at Nauryz?

1.13.2 Fill in the prepositions:

- 1) Nowadays the ingot is replaced ... a handkerchief.
- 2) Nauryz kozhe consists ... seven ingredients which is considered be a holy number.
- 3) Folk celebrations are dedicated ... the most important events ... life - wedding, birth ... a child, funeral.
- 4) Putting a child ... the cradle is one ... the customs concerning a childbirth.
- 5) The girl ... the horseback does her best to gallop ... the young zhigit.
- 6) ... the national celebrations different games are arranged.
- 7) The essence ... kumis alu is that while galloping ... full speed a young man should pick . a silver ingot . the ground.

1.13.3 Put the sentences into the Passive Voice:

- 1) Organizers of the national events or supporters prepare valuable prizes for the participants of the games.
- 2) While galloping at full speed a young man should pick up a silver ingot off the ground.
- 3) On the 22nd of March people congratulate each other, lay festive dastarkhan.
- 4) At the celebrations organizers arrange horse races - baige, wrestling, different tournaments fulfilled on horseback, kokpar.
- 5) People celebrate Ramazan ait right after the holy month Ramazan.
- 6) Kazakh people celebrate Oraza ait during three days certain period (70 days) later after ramazan ait.
- 7) Parents organize tusau kesu when their child starts just to step.

1.13.4 Were you attentive when reading about traditions and customs associated with guests? Talk to your partner what these words or word-combinations mean:

- 1) barmagyn zhalau;
- 2) aksakals;

- 3) Konakasy;
- 4) kydyрма konak;
- 5) Konakkade;
- 6) Erulik;
- 7) Toy dastarkhan;
- 8) kудay konak.

1.13.5 Discuss with your partner traditions associated with mutual aid. What do these word or word combinations mean?

- 1) Asar;
- 2) Belkoterer;
- 3) Zhyly;
- 4) Shulen taratu.

1.13.6 Complete the sentences

- 1) The ceremony of uncovering bride's face -
- 2) When a baby begins to walk, he undergoes an ancient rite -
- 3) The participants of this game struggle for the goat's karkass - .
- 4) In this race all participating men try to catch a girl -
- 5) The hunting bird's master - -
- 6) A gift to a daughter's child -
- 7) Horse race -
- 8) Snatching the goat's carcass with one from another -
- 9) Wedding ceremony is anticipated by matchmaking called in

Kazakh society

- 10) The custom when father of the bride presents a coat to the main

matchmaker is called . .

11) A delicious dish from the liver and broad tail which testifies to the successful completion of a courtship is called

- 12) The ceremony of sending off the bride from her own home -

13) The ceremony of meeting the bride in the groom's house is called . .

1.13.7 Discuss with your partner: what do the following words and word-combinations mean?

- A) Suyinshi;
- B) At mingizip shapan zhabu;
- C) Baygazy;
- D) Shildekhana;
- E) Besikke salu, besik toy;
- F) Kyrkynan shygaru;

- G) Tusau kesu;
- H) Sundetke otyrgyzu;
- I) Kulak tesu.

1.13.8 What have you learned about the ceremonies and rituals related to a marriage? Explain what these word and word-combinations mean.

- A) Kudalyk;
- B) Shege Sapa;
- C) Kuyruk bauyr;
- D) Kelin tus iru;
- E) Ashamayga mingizu;
- F) Bastangy.

* * *

Like other cultural groups, Kazakhs have inherited from their forefathers various forms of entertainment and games. As you will observe, most of these cultural forms were based on life situations, national peculiarities and the intent to teach succeeding generations to be healthy, strong, brave, smart, observant, resourceful, resilient and humane.

Entertainment is one of the branches of Kazakh national culture. Here we will briefly describe some of them.

1.14 Read the text

Entertainment, national games



Kumis alu

Kumis alu

The sport called «Kumis alu» is a very ancient game. Thousands