

ОБЫЧАЙ «УЧА» У КЫРГЫЗОВ. АНАЛОГИ ДАННОГО ОБЫЧАЯ У ДРУГИХ НАРОДОВ

“UCHA” TRADITION IN KYRGYZ CULTURE AND ITS HISTORICAL- ETHNOGRAPHIC COUNTERPARTS

KIRGIZLARDA “UÇA” GELENEĞİ VE BU GELENEĞİN TARİHİ- ETNOGRAFIK YÖNDEN BENZERLERİ

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РЕЗЮМЕ

У кыргызов и по ныне существует архаический обычай престижного распределения добычи под названием «уча» – букв. «крестец», «курдюк» или задняя часть туши барана, коня. Этот обычай распределения добычи широко распространены у тюркоязычных и тунгусоязычных народов Сибири. Сущность обычая «уча» заключалась в распределении части добычи своим соплеменникам. При обращении к охотнику: «шыралга» (по монгольски – шорлого), последний обязан был поделиться трофеем. Указанный возглас предусматривал выделение почетной части добытого мяса любому встречному. Охотник-кыргыз, встретив кого-либо едущим с добычей, при слове «ужа» брал заднюю ногу с частью позвоночника и шкуру, второй и третий встречный отрезали себе также лучшие куски мяса, в итоге охотнику не остается ничего. Аналогичный обычай под названием «уча бер!» (букв. дай крестец) был зарегистрирован у хакасов и алтайцев. Например, на Северном Алтае хозяин юрты преподносил лучшую часть мяса «уча» в дар шаману, «который, приняв, обрезывает мякоть, но не всю и дарит, кому захочет из почетных людей. Этот, отрезав себе, передает другому, обыкновенно старшему себя родственнику или чужому, который, отрезав себе, отдает всем находящимся, и тут же окончательно очищают кости «уча», не повреждая их. Архаический обычай «уча» и распределение доли под названием «кешик», бытовали и бытует у современных кыргызов. В кыргызском языке словом «кешик» обозначаются остатки пищи и питья со стола знатных и почетных гостей, которыми угощают молодых или соседей, а также сам гостинец от угощений на пиру. Таким образом, обычай «уча» возник в среде охотников и берет начало от охотничьих промыслов, ибо в «вступал в силу уравнительный закон, восходящий к нормам коллективного производства и потребления родового строя. У кыргызов существовал равный дележ добычи независимо от вклада любого члена охотничьей артели. В противном случае горные хозяева могли рассердиться и не дать удачи в следующий раз. По мнению ученых условия действия обычая «уча» возникли в период разложения родового строя и

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возникновения соседской общины, когда стало нарушаться исключительное право членов рода на родовые территории, представляется более достоверным предположение, что он возник при первобытно-родовых отношениях. В зависимости от дальнейших социальных условий обычай видоизменился, с течением времени где-то им стали пользоваться в определенных случаях все, независимо от родовой принадлежности, а где-то (например, в Хакасии) он полностью исчез.

Согласно исследованиям, обычай типа «уча» можно отнести к так называемой престижной экономике первобытно-родового строя, которая в зачаточном состоянии возникла еще у охотников того времени, но ее расцвет пришелся на неолитический период. Традиционные нормы поведения требовали неукоснительного дележа излишних продуктов, которые принимали форму дара, брачного выкупа или пищи, приготовленной для устройства праздника. Обычай «уча» гарантировал людям поддержку в случае нужды, ибо он обуславливал развитие взаимопомощи, совершенствовал системы брачных связей и установления социальных градаций.

Ключевые слова: «уча тартуу», шыралга, шоролго, кыргызы, монголы, тунгус, Буряты

ABSTRACT

There is an old Kyrgyz tradition named the “ucha tartuu” i.e. “sacral bone offer” which has been held by the Kyrgyzs since ancient times at feasts and receptions of distinguished, respected guests. This is the tradition of offering horseflesh, exactly a sacrum to the eldest guest of distinction or a very respected man. The sacrum is made from horseflesh. The Kyrgyzs slaughter a horse to show their respect to guests, cut it into pieces and then boil them. This ancient “ucha” i.e. sacrum tradition has been held and known as “nemat” among the Turkic-language ethnicities of Southern Siberia (Kuu- kiji, Kumandy, and Tuba) and in Tungus-languages, Evenks and Evens. “The Ucha tradition” has maintained a very significant role in Economic, Philosophical, Religious and Social life of Kyrgyz people. The main purpose of the “Ucha” ceremony is fair sharing of the hunters’ bags among the members of their tribes. Hunting, which was one of the main activities of social-economic structure, along with traditions and customs dealing with it, was of a great social, economic, religious and ritual significance amongst peoples and tribes living in a mountainous and forest areas, especially the Kyrgyzs. Also, there was another tradition called “shyralga” , i.e. “hunter’s gift” tradition which is related to hunting in the Kyrgyz culture. If one, who met a lucky hunter returning with a bulk of bag, called him saying “Shyralga”, according to the ancient tradition, the hunter would have to give a part of his gained trophy to the man. The imperative verb “shyralgala”, deriving from the noun “shyralga”, means “to wish luck to a hunter”. There were cases when even lucky hunters, who used to return home with a full bag, very often had to return with no piece because they were to share their bags, i.e. meat with those whom they met on their way home. Among the Siberian ethnicities (Evenks, Evens, etc.) there was a tradition to give the first met person an amount of meat from the hunter’s trophy, which would be equal to the person’s body and a part of the hunted animal’s skin if the hunter was lucky to capture a bigger animal, for example, a deer or an elk. This tradition is also common among Mongolian language ethnicities and it is named “shorlogo” in their languages. In Mongolian language, Buryats, the word “shorlogo” means “a piece of meat” or “sharing a piece of meat”.

The basic meaning of the “ucha” tradition actually involves providing social equity, fair food share in hardships, mutual support, and a show of support to people according to their social age status qualities (children, elders). It is of a particular significance for those who meet by chance in bad weather conditions as they could help each other with food. This tradition also regulates and provides special rules and norms of extra food delivery. It contributes to and maintains the existing social-economic structure, mutual assistance and marital relationships. The “ucha” tradition was the guarantee of assistance when people faced material hardship in their lives.

Key words: The ucha offering, Shyralga, Shorlogo, Kyrgyz, Mongol, Tungus, Buryat.

ÖZET

Kırgızların düğün yemeklerinde saygın misafirleri kabul etmede eskiden beri devam edegelen “Uça Tartuu” geleneği vardır. “Uça”, yılmın (at) sağrı kemiğinin yani kuyruk sokumu kemiğinin bulunduğu yerdir, hayvanın burası pişirilerek, saygın misafirlerin en büyüğüne veya şerefli bir misafire ikram edilir. Hayvanın burası çok lezzetli, yağlı ve yumuşaktır. “Uça” geleneği, Güney Sibirya’nın Türk Dili konuşan halklarında (Kumanlar, Tuvalar), Tunguzca konuşan Evenk ve Evenlerde “Nemat” adı altında yapıla gelmektedir. “Uça” geleneğinin, tarım ve hayvancılığa dayalı iktisadî, felsefi-dinî ve içtimai yönden derin anlamları olmuştur. “Uça” geleneğinin içerik yönünden temeli, savaşta kazanılan ganimetin aynı boydan olan insanların arasında eşit paylaşımına dayanmaktadır. Çiftçilik tarzının bir dalı olan avcılık ve ona bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan gelenekler, örf-âdetler; ovada, dağ-orman bölgelerinde yaşayan halklarda, boylarda, özellikle de Kırgızlarda çiftçiliğe dayalı iktisadî, dinî ritüelsel yönden derin anlamları olmuştur. Kırgızlarda avcılıkla ilgili “Şıralga” geleneği vardır. Avdan eli dolu olarak dönen avcıya birisi “Şıralga” diye seslenirse, eski âdetlere göre avcı, elindeki avdan bir parçayı o kişiye vermek zorunda kalırdı. “Şıralga” geleneğinde bu durum, “Avın bereketli olsun, rast gele” dileğinin anlamını vermektedir. Bazı zamanlarda avdan eli dolu dönen avcılarının evlerine eli boş gittikleri de olmuştur. Çünkü avcı, eve gelirken yolda karşılaştığı kimselere avladığı hayvandan verme mecburiyetinde kalmıştır. Sibirya halklarında (Evenkler, Evenler vb.) avcı, vurduğu iri hayvandan mesela geyikten, ilk karşılaştığı kişiye boy kadar et ve deri vermiştir. Bu gelenek, Moğolca konuşan halklarda da geniş olarak bilinmektedir ve Moğolcada “Şorlogo” diye adlandırılmaktadır. “Şorlogo”, Moğolca konuşan Buryatlarda “Bir kesimlik et” veya “Bir kesimlik eti paylaşma” anlamını bildirmektedir.

“Uça” geleneğinin temel anlamı, sosyal eşitliği, zor hayat şartlarında yiyeceği eşit olarak paylaşmayı, kendi aralarında yardımlaşmayı, özellikle güçsüzlere yardım etmeyi sağlamaktır. Hayatın zor şartlarında aniden karşılaşılan insanların birbirlerine yardım etmesi (yiyecek-ıçecek) elzem bir hal almıştır. Fazla olan yiyecek-ıçeceği paylaşmanın geleneksel kuralları, sosyo-ekonomik düzeni saklamayı, sosyal yönden yardımlaşmayı ve nikâh ilişkilerininin sağlam olmasını sağlamıştır. “Uça” geleneği, insanoğlunun hayat şartlarında maddî yönden zorluk ortaya çıktığı zaman yardım edici bir garanti unsuru olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uça tartuu, Şıralga, Şorlogo, Kırgız, Moğol, Tunguz, Buryat

Every nation has its own unique culture, traditions, and shaped customs. Through learning traditions, national rituals it is possible to investigate material and moral values of ethnos, agricultural setup, and also fauna and flora of these or those areas. Moreover, traditions and rituals which are related to traditions have ethnic character and they can give us clear information about the evolution of philosophical- religious ideologies of ethnos (ethnic groups).

In Kyrgyz tradition there is a custom “Ucha tartuu” (giving a horse’s talebone according to the age and honor of a guest) especially during feasts and while receiving honorable guests. This is the tradition of serving slaughtered horse’s meat for devoting to good purposes, and boiling meat separately, then serving elders or honored guests. “Ucha tartuu” is considered as a culmination point in the Kyrgyz culture in the receiving guests. Honorable guest (man) who is given “ucha” at first tastes the meat, and then shares it with other participants and honored members of the celebration. As we know, honorable guest who has given “ucha” from celebrations or feast will share “ucha” with his relatives and neighbors after returning home. “Ucha” and traditions, rituals which are related to it have sacral meaning. This ancient tradition occurred not only in our culture, but, there is evidence that this tradition occurred in north Altaic groups (Kuu-Kiji, Kumandy, and Tuva), stated Christian missionary, ethnographer V. I. Verbitski in his work dated back to the 19th century. Also this ancient tradition has been kept in Tungus language speaking nations (Evenk, Evenki) under the name “nemat”.

Ichkilik Kyrgyz tribes considered “ucha” as the back side or backbones of sheep or goat. According to Ichkilik Kyrgyz’s traditions (Leylek, Batken, some region of Nookat, and Kadamjay), Uzbek Kyrgyz (regions where situated Ichkilik Kyrgyzs), Tajikistan (Murgab, Jergetal Kyrgyzs), and for Van Kyrgyzs in Turkey “ucha” is known as backside or backbones of sheep and goat, and it is the respectful food served to honorable guests as a sign of respect. For example Ichkilik Kyrgyzs said that they give “ucha” to men and chest of sheep or goat to women as a sign of respect (Yudahin: 811). As Chokon Valikhanov stated there is evidence that “ucha” was the respectful food for Northern Kyrgyzs among other dishes at the table during his journey to northern Kyrgyz in 19th century. So, from this statement backbone of the sheep or “ucha” was being considered respectful food for Issyk-Kul Kyrgyzs which is given to men.

Of course, separation of meat is differentiated region to region in Kyrgyz culture. These differences were shaped as a result of economic condition of life, and the development of totemistic- sacral beliefs. For instance, according to the traditions of Western Pamir and Chon Alay buyrak (kuymulchak) served as esteemed piece of meat to women, and backbone of sheep doesn’t serve to guests. However, in Nookat region – kuymulchak, and in Leylek region ucha is esteemed piece of meat (3; 101) Most of right and left wing Kyrgyz and Western Pamir Kyrgyzs give kuymulchak of the sheep to women from kuda side (relatives of the bride or groom), according to their ages. At the same time among left wing Kyrgyzs (for example Basyz) and Naimans from Chon Alay didn’t put meat into kazan when guests arrived. According to tradition karchyga (backbone) remained to householders. This tradition also has totemic, ritual-magic meaning. You will be told more about this in the following parts of the article. Karchyga means “bird of prey like a hawk”. For example, there is saying like “Elder people know traditions; hawk knows sono”. Sono- is the kind of drake. The author of this article met exciting story during his expedition to Tuva at 2003. Tuvas treated to meat of sheep to historians from Kyrgyzstan,

Republic of Khakassia, and Novosibirsk (from Russia). According to explanations of local Tuva people “uja” (in Tuva language) of sheep is considered as respected food. “Karchyga” and “kuymulchak” (tailbone of the goat or sheep) of sheep offered the most respected members of guests. According to Tuva tradition if respected member of guests be woman and man, the man kept “karchyga” part of the “uja”, and kuymulchak offered to women. In order to prevent bleeding to spinal part of karchyga, they put stick. Nowadays, this tradition of Tuva also used in Kyrgyz from Leylek (kesek and teyit tribes). Of course, these ethnographic parallels create scientific curiosity.

Nowadays, Khakass and Tuva nations gave the name to decorated table as “ucha salarga”. This term means “ucha” or “ucha tartuu”-offering and serving the meat in Kyrgyz language. For example according to tradition of Sayan-Altay turks, ucha and chest bone of cattle should be put into “kazan” (a deep pan for boiling meat) in wedding ceremonies and other special days. As for the Tuvas, boiled meat or “ucha” of sheep and kuymulchak should be put in the very middle of table, and then shared by “bokolchu” (the person distributing the meat) according to ages of guests, after all offered to children. According to Khakass tradition “ucha” named hospitality lasts two days. By these parallels, we can see similarities between this tradition and Ichkilik Kyrgyz’s traditions. Unfortunately, the meaning of this tradition underwent through some changes nowadays.

Here we should give special attention to the commonness between Altay and Tuva nations. As V. V. Radlov emphasized due to Altay traditions “karchyga” and “kuymulchak” are considered as valuable food for respected guests.

When the famous ethnographer N.P. Dyrenkova took part in the Kyrgyz wedding, she pointed out that there are “jiliks” (jilik-the special bones of the animal with meat that have a particular cultural meaning according to the bone), “ucha” and the chest bone- “tosh” of the sheep. In such solemnity “ucha” and “tosh” were given to the male relatives from the mother’s side and they by-turn gave the “tosh” to their nephews. After that they started the meal and it lasted in a very respectful sequence. In this parallels we can see the deep ethno genetic ties between the Siberian and Kyrgyz people. The “ucha” tradition among North Siberian people was mentioned in the researches of F.Y. Kon, G. Grumm-Grijimailo, L. P. Potapov, V. Dulov, S. Vainstein, V. Y. Butanaev.

“Ucha” tradition had a wide practical, economic, philosophical, religious and social sense. The main purport of this tradition was in sharing the prey with tribe mates. According to the science people the origin of this tradition lies in the dying out of tribal (communal and societal) ties between ancient tribes or in the formation of communal hearth. It is well known from the scientific sources that the animal herding comes from hunting, the agriculture and crafting comes from the gathering the plant food. It is clear that hunting have played a significant role from the ancient communities till the recent times. The recent researches have proved that one of the branches of the agricultural setup and the traditions and customs, belief in exorcism followed by it possessed a pervasive sense among the fields, mountains and forests inhabitants; especially among Kyrgyz had an industrial, economic, religious and ritual meaning.

There was also a “shyralga” tradition among Kyrgyz people. When the person who met a hunter with rich prey said “shyralga” the hunter had to give a part of the prey to that man by the old tradition. The person who got the meat said: “shyralgala”. “Shyralgala” means “I wish you to have a successful hunting and luck” (Yudahin: 922). In some cases there occurred situations when hunters successfully provided the chase came home empty-

handed due to this tradition. Among Siberian people (Evenk, Even etc.) if the hunter procures for example a moose or reindeer he gave to that person who asked the meat equaled to his body weight. This tradition has been widely spread among Mongol people and they call it “shorlogo”. “Shorlogo” among the Mongol speaking Buryat people means “a piece of meat” or “sharing a piece of meat”. In such case hunters portioning the bag answered “ogno”, which meant “we agree!” the person or wayfarer who said “shorlogo” took his share by the tradition (Abramzon: 105-112). The origin of the term “shyralga” or “shorlogo” is as likely as to be rooted not in the milieu of Turkic and Mongol languages but in the Altay (pre-Altay) language. There is also an interesting social phenomenon among Sayan-Altay people concerning “ucha” tradition. The hunter who chased alone had right to take for a while the other hunter’s tethered horse saying the word “ucha”. The hunter, whose horse was in a rest had to give it to that one who asked it with the word “ucha” even if he didn’t know the least. And of course the hunter who took the riding horse had to return it to its owner. Thus, this rule of sharing the owned thing appeared after the formation of the neighborly community, because, the agricultural phenomenon differs from the collective hunting and sharing the prey by the end.

This tradition is termed as “uja” among Khakas people and as “nimat” among the Tungus language speaking Evenks. The scholars stating that the origins of this tradition is rooted in the neolith era say that “ucha” custom first was spread on the wild animals (deer, moose, roe) then on the hunted felled animals (Veitstein:59). Ucha law has been originated from the totemistic beliefs of people and the tradition of mutual assistance. As it is known, totemic belief does not mean to prey just to animals, but also to rocks and stones, trees and plants and other inanimate things. The people, who are felt their weakness in front of the natural phenomena performed special rituals in order to have a successful hunting. If the hunting had a pleasant result they performed a rite of sharing the gained bag with the “owners” of the rocks, mountains and forests, because the animals were the property of the mountain “owners” and were in the distinct control of the spirits of the sky and the earth (Butanaev: 20). In the perception of Sayan-Altay Turkic people the mountains and rocks used to be in the kinship relations with the human being. For example one of the ancestors of the primary grandsons of Enisey people—Hakas married the daughter of mountains proprietor. That is why they expressed their respect by bowing to the mountains and calling them “fathers”. If the personal character of the hunter was good and he respected mountain people, as a result he owned “kejik”. “Kejik” among Tuva and Hakas people means “bag”, “luck” and nowadays it is called “keshik” among Kyrgyz people, which means “the prey from the feast, from the good event”, or the notion of giving “keshik”. So if the Nature was treated respectfully it did not spare its “keshik” in the form of a wild animal for the people.

This tradition is called “sartyh” among Siberian people. For example, if the older person gives his “ustukan” (the particular bone with meat) to younger one, the later shared milk and meat with his mates. By-turn the most respectful food was offered by the young person who hand-rounded meat to the oldest person among those who sat at the cloth (tablecloth). Amidst the Tungus language speaking Evenks and Evens, the most important parts of the bag were offered to the older people. There was also a fell of the animal included to those parts (Sirina: [www. do.gendocs.ru/docs/index-301843.html](http://www.do.gendocs.ru/docs/index-301843.html)). Amidst the Kyrgyz-rooted yellow Uyghur people (Saryg Ugur) in ritual purposes the head and the fell were presented to “shamans” (voodoos that also called “bakshy”) as it was noted by S.E. Malov (Butanayev-Butanayeva: 75).

The deep meaning of the “ucha” tradition covered the notions of social equality, sharing the food in hard times, mutual assistance and supporting the vulnerable groups as young children and old people. It was a necessity of mutual help and support between those who happened to meet each other in the sharp conditions of the nature (giving food and nutrition). The traditional norms of sharing superfluous food and strictly keeping this social-economic array provided maintenance of social mutual assistance and conjugal bonds. “Ucha” tradition was the guaranty of assistance in case of hardships in the everyday life needs.

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