

# Similarities of the Gryz of the Caucasian Peoples with the Turkish Peoples in the Ethnographic Traditions of Azerbaijan

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## Abstract

The article provides brief information about the territories, ethnic history and language of the Gryz, the heirs of the Albanian tribes, considered to be the main creators of medieval culture of Azerbaijan, as well as the Caucasus. Later, common traditions with the Turkish peoples were followed in the worldview, mythical imaginations, names and cultures of the Gryz. Thus, both the Turkish peoples and the Caucasian peoples have created a new synthesis in the course of history by combining the system of ancient beliefs with the Islamic way of thinking, and thus have kept their religious worldviews alive to this day in a unique way.

**Keywords:** Gryz, Turkish, generations, astral and cosmogonic beliefs, customs and traditions.

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## Azərbaycan'daki Kafkasdilli Halklardan Olan Krızların Etnografik Geleneklerinde Türk Halklarıyla Benzerlikleri

### Öz

Makale, Azərbaycan'ın, elavə olaraq Kafkazyanın antik və ortaçağ költürünün ana yaradıcılarından olaraq kabul edilən alban kabilelərinin mirasçılarından olan qızların yaşadıkları alanlar, etnik tarixi və dili haqqında qısa bilgiler verməkdir. Daha sonra qızların dünya görüşü, mitsel təsəvvürləri, isimləri və költürlərində türk halklarıyla ortaq gələnekler takip edilmişdir. Bəylece hem Türk halkları hem de Kafkas halkları, kadim inanç sistemi ilə İslami düşüncəyi birləşdirərək tarixin akışında yeni bir sentez oluşturmuşlar və bəylece dini dünya görüşlərini günümüze kadar canlı tutmuşlardır.

**Anahtar Kelimələr:** Krız, Türk, nesiller, astral və kozmogonik inançlar, gələnek ve görenekler.

### Introduction

Caucasian, Turkish-speaking, Iranian-speaking tribes living within the borders of Azerbaijan, as part of the Azerbaijani people, have established good working relations and are generally friendly neighbors. They share a long historical period together with little conflict. Like the various peoples living within the borders of Azerbaijan, the Gryz and our relatives, the Czechs, the Aliks, the Haputs, the Yerguks, lived side by side with the Azerbaijani Turkish for centuries and took an active part in the cultural and social life of Azerbaijan. Due to the fact that they live in the heart of Shahdag, the Gryz, Khinaligs and Buduks, grouped in the historical and ethnographic literature as "Shahdag ethnic groups" or "Shahdag peoples", live compactly only in Azerbaijan. The peoples living along the Shahdag plateau of the Greater Caucasus are distinguished as representatives of the Shahdag ethnic group or the Shahdag peoples. Shahdag is located in the territory of Gusar region of Azerbaijan along the Greater Caucasus. Due to its high, lofty, lofty origin, it is called Shah Dag, ie "the king of the mountains", "the highest".

These minority peoples are compactly settled in Guba region, one of the ancient and purest corners of Azerbaijan, in historical villages such as Gryz, Khinalig, Budug, Hapit, located between high mountain

ranges such as Shahdag, Tufandag, Baba mountain, Qibla mountain. Registered in the territory of Azerbaijan. The ancient beliefs, worldviews and traditions of the peoples belonging to the Shahdag ethnic group have been studied and it has been concluded that they share many common features. The cosmological beliefs, cults, symbols, ongons preserved in the names of generations, and similar traditions, give us reason to say that the ties of these peoples go back deep into history. Ongon - a sacred animal and its symbolized figure. Totem. An animal, object or being that is considered sacred and is considered to be descended from its off generation.

**About the geographical area inhabited by Gryz:** There are many ethnic groups in the Republic of Azerbaijan, regardless of their minority or majority, and there is a common interest among them. Mutual and comparative analysis of these ethnos in the context of all-Azerbaijani culture has a positive effect on the enrichment of national shades, the emergence of ethno cultural ties. Such ethnographic diversity has added a unique color to the spiritual culture of Azerbaijan and formed a common rich culture in the area. A number of ethnos registered in Azerbaijan are considered to be rare. Some of these peoples are registered on the ethno-map of the world only in the territory of Azerbaijan and are compactly settled here. (It should be noted that because of their settlement in the Guba region of Azerbaijan, in the bosom of Shahdag, in the historical and ethnographic literature, the Gryz, Hapits, Czechs, Aliks, Yergujs are known as "Shahdag ethnic groups" or "Shahdag peoples"). The first written information about the Gryz and other Shahdag peoples was given by a Russian officer of German origin, Gerber<sup>1</sup>.

Gryz ethnic group: In Azerbaijan, the Gryz live mainly in the Guba-Khachmaz region, which is ethnically and linguistically diverse. Apart from Khinalig village, the majority of Shahdag villagers started to move to Khachmaz, Shabran, Ismayilli, Gabala, Shamakhi, Zardab districts in 1830-1840. XIX century sources show that 39 villages were separated

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<sup>1</sup> Gerber, I.G. Description of the countries and peoples along the western shore of the Caspian Sea. 1728 - Moskva, 1958, p.80-82

from Gryz village at different times. In 1870, the migration of the Gryz to the plain area - Mushkur (now Khachmaz) region was accelerated and 58 Gryz villages were formed in the Mushkur region<sup>2</sup>.

The name of the topoformant "oba" formed on the basis of migration is also expressed in the Gryz language as "uba" and means "village", "country". V.V.Radlov also explains the word "village" as a country, family, migration<sup>3</sup>. Mirali Seyidov notes that "Oba" has a protective spirit, cult, ongon [Seyidov, 1989, p. 267]. In the epos of Kitabi-Dada Gorgud, the heroic epos of the Turkic peoples, "village" is reflected in the form of unity of country, homeland, people<sup>4</sup>. So "village" is a word of Turkmen origin.

**About the ethnic history of the Gryz:** Gryz, Budug and Khinalig villages located in the hills of Babadag, Tufandagh, Shahdag in Guba region and these ethnic groups living there have passed a long and historical way as a part of the Azerbaijani people as a result of many ethnic processes. As a result of a number of historical events and displacements, some ethnic names have been replaced by current ethnic names. Although they were known by the names of their villages, it was possible to investigate their ethnic identities by the names given to them by themselves and other neighboring peoples. So, we must pay attention to the description of the components in the names of the Gryz peoples. The ethnic self-name of the Gryz is in the form of "qerez" and "qerezler". Another source states that "qqaraz" called themselves "qqarazar" (Gryz), and that the Khinalis called them "hoddad" (hoddud). It is noted that this ethnonym, the meaning of which is unknown to the Khinaligs themselves, means "place of hodd". The Budug people call the Gryz "gerad / gerez", which means "the place of gerez/hers"<sup>5</sup>. According to another source, the Gryz call the buds budugar, the jacks cheger, and the hapits habudar. The haputs

<sup>2</sup> Mahabbat Pashayeva, Traditions and beliefs of Azerbaijanis, dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of History - Baku, 2013. p. 52

<sup>3</sup> Radlov, V.V. Experience of Turkish dialects. Volume 1, part 2. St. Petersburg: - 1893. p. 1157

<sup>4</sup> Hamid Arasli. "Kitabi-Dada Gorgud", Baku: 1978. p. 179

<sup>5</sup>Qamarshah Cavadov, "Minority ethnic groups of Azerbaijan in Astana of the XXI century", Azerbaijan, 18 June 1998. p. 5

refer to the Gryz as harad, the buds as harad, and the aliks as harad <sup>6</sup>. In the abstract of S.Sadiyev's dissertation "Experience of research of Gryz language" it is noted that with small phonetic changes it is known among Alik and Jack inhabitants, aliks call them horud, Czechs call them herud, and the suffix "ud" is one of the suffixes of Gryz language<sup>7</sup>.

The Gryz language: As noted, the languages of the Haputs and Gryz are linguistically close and form a genetic unit.

Q.V. Topuria also notes that Gerez oykonimi should be considered as the ethnic name of Gryz <sup>8</sup>. It should be noted that the Gryz call their language "qerez mez or kryisa mez", and their villages "kereze kum or kryisa kum". The key to the explanation of the ethnic origin of the Gryz is related to the fact that the Haputs, the inhabitants of Haput, say "everything" in their names<sup>9</sup>. However, some studies also note that the Gryz are the heirs of the Jigb tribes. Academician Ziya Bunyadov also noted that the Gryz called themselves "jigb" <sup>10</sup>. Jigb is from the Turkish word cegit, which means "brave". Other neighboring nations and Gryz call themselves "brave Gryz". It can be thought that the jigb used here is not a tribe, but a nickname.

**General information about Gryz language:** According to the genealogical classification of Caucasian languages, Avar, Lezgi, Dargin, Lak Tabasaran, Sahur, Rutul, Budug, and Gryz, grouped under the Dagestan group of Caucasian languages, are related languages and have the same root. The Gryz language and its dialects, included in the Lezgi subgroup of the Dagestan group of the Iberian-Caucasian language family and known as the Shahdag group, played an important role in the history and culture of Azerbaijan. Even from our research in Turkish sources, the two ethnolinguistic languages spoken

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<sup>6</sup>Giyasaddin Geybullayev, To the ethnogenesis of Azerbaijanis (historical-ethnographic research, Baku, 1991, p.92.

<sup>7</sup> Saadiev Shamsaddin. Experience of research of the Gryz language, Baku, 1972, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Giyasaddin Geybullayev, K The origin of crises, DAN Azerbaijan. SSR: 1985, № 3. p.84

<sup>9</sup> Geybullayev, a.g.m. p.85

<sup>10</sup> History of Azerbaijan, (from ancient times to the XX century): Baku, 2014, p. 23

in Azerbaijan, such as Khinalig, Budug, Gryz and Udi, are included in the Lezgi subgroup <sup>11</sup>.

The dialects of Gryz and language analysis: As it is known, Jack, Alik, Yerguc and Haput are considered to be dialects of Gryz and they are related peoples. In addition, only Budug, Khinalig and Gryz from the Shahdag peoples were recorded in the “North-East Caucasus” section of the map of the Caucasus compiled on the basis of 1995-2009 sources, as well as in each of the maps compiled in previous years. Since the main proof of the existence of an ethnic group is language, we would also like to show this similarity by the similarity of words in their vocabulary: **cheese** - nis ^ i (nici) in Gryz, nisi (nisi) in Lezgi, nisu (nisu) in Budug, nusi in Dargin (nusi), nissi in the Sahur language, nisa in the Jamalin language, Jesus in the Udi language; **dog** - khoar (hvar) in Gryz, xu (hu) in Tabasaran, chorus (chorus) in Budug, khoay (xvaj) in Jamalin, xvaa (hvee) in Sahur, xya (xja) in Dargin; pıkra (pykra) in the Udi language and in the Khinalig language; **horn** is in the form of kech / kach in Gryz, karch in budug, karch in lezgi, kkaç / gach in saxur, q'a'ns' in udi, **apple** (jeç) in Gryz, ich (ich) in Lezgi, yeç (jeç) in Budug, e'ss' in Udi language, miç (miç) in Khinalık language, mizç (mizç) in Samalin language, eç (ech) in Sahur language, ghinç / q'inç (glinch) in Dargin language, dilindəivç in Lak language, gech in Avar language, gech, in Tabasaran language viç; **flame** - cha (cha) in Khinalig, mtsa in Abkhaz, - tsa in Gryz, tse in Chechen, tsa in Avar, tsay in Lezgi; **moon** - in the Lezgi language - varz, in the Dargin language - baz, in the Kabardino language - maze, in the Abkhaz language (e) mze, in the Georgian language sermon, **corn** - in the Kabardino language h'e, in the Adyghe language h'e, Chechen / Ingush k'ı / muq , lak- h'a, dargin - muhi, in the Lezgi language - muh ', in the Gryz language - nail, in the Budug language - mux, in the Udi language -mu and so on. The number of such samples can be further increased. The kinship of languages indicates that they have the same root. Historically, as a result of certain social and economic reasons, related dialects, which were separated from one root, gradually developed and led to the

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<sup>11</sup> Ogurlu Y. Peoples and languages of Dagestan / New idea magazine, p. 2 ISBN: 11308-9412

formation of independent languages that are related to each other <sup>12</sup>. Ikhilov shows that Lezgi, Tabasaran, Rutul, Sahur, Aghuls are peoples with relationship with Khinalig, Udin and Gryz, and at the same time they are the oldest inhabitants of Azerbaijan <sup>13</sup>.

**Similar features of the Gryz in the ethnographic traditions with the Turkish peoples:** To some extent, the ancient history, living conditions, life experiences, and beliefs of people who have lived in ceremonies and traditions for thousands of years can be observed. These ceremonies are unique, reflecting the past, spiritual culture and worldview of each nation. In general, there are more similarities than differences between ethnic groups.

The Gryz themselves are consist of different clans and generations. However, there are some tribes whose names reveal interesting facts, especially the antiquity of these peoples and traces of Albanian culture, pre-Islamic beliefs, and show common beliefs and historical ties with the Turkish world. Here, people's cosmogonic, animistic beliefs, totemistic ideas about different animals have shown their impact on people's lives and thoughts. The ancient Azerbaijani tribes in the early Bronze Age associated their creation with animals and plants, including oxen, deer, goats, wolves and trees, and worshiped them as a totem<sup>14</sup>.

According to Y.M.Lotman, "whoever can name his ancestors, that nation exists politically"<sup>15</sup>. The Kechiyar, Chjabani and Gamay tribes, which are of the Gryz lineage, are one of such tribes. As well as the symbols of sun worship, there were a number of totems. In ancient times, the goat was considered the totem of the sun god on earth. Over time, he became one of the leading participants in mythology and ceremonial games as a real image <sup>16</sup>. Jews, Turkish peoples,

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<sup>12</sup> Mammadov N, Akhundov, A.A Introduction to linguistics, Baku, 1966. p. 45

<sup>13</sup> Ikhilov Mixail. M. On the question of the origin of the peoples of the Lezgin group. Makhachkala,-1969, p. 105

<sup>14</sup> Avsharova İrada. "The symbol of the tree of life in the material and cultural samples of the Bronze Age of Azerbaijan" // Archeology and Ethnography. History and its problems, 2014. № 4, p.288

<sup>15</sup> Lotman Yu.M. The meaning of concepts on modeling end and beginning in artistic texts. Tapry 1966, p. 69-74

<sup>16</sup> Rahimli İlham, History of Azerbaijan theater, Baku, 2005. p. 10

Indians, and Greeks have various beliefs, customs, and rituals related to the image of the goat in the mythical meetings of many ancient peoples.

Symbolism, traditions, and their meaning: As it is said among the Turkish peoples, the goat is a sign of the sun and its heat. In the peoples of the ancient world, the goat was associated with the underworld, the sun and was considered sacred<sup>17</sup>. Also, in order to prevent damage to crops during prolonged rains, small wooden dolls with human figures (mostly women) were made to stop the rain, and children sang door-to-door songs despite the rain. This doll is also called "godu" in Gryz, which means the sun god, the sun itself. The godu was wrapped in a red cloth and described as a symbol of the sun.

Al-Albasti, who is associated with shamanic beliefs that the goat is closely related to the sun (fire), is also depicted as a blonde girl, sometimes a goat, who roams alone in a number of Turkish-speaking nations. Its yellow, blonde color probably indicates the connection of "al" with fire and the sun.

It is known that in some ancient peoples, as well as in the chain of Turkish-speaking tribal associations, yellow (red, ocher) color was considered the color of the sun and its earthly attribute wood<sup>18</sup>.

(In general, the belief of Al-Albas (ti) -Al wife in the Turkish peoples was imagined in three directions - with water, in the form of an animal (goat, cow, bull) (zoomorphic), an anthronomorphic image in human skin.)

We will see other means of qam-shaman so the trace of its name in other Gryz tribes. In general, in the Turkish mythological system, the family is considered to be a part of the heavens, a fire symbol that protects the family hearth and gives life to children, and the fire, which is considered to be a part of the heavens, has the power to protect

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<sup>17</sup> Seyidov Mirali. "Summer holiday", Baku, 1990, p. 33

<sup>18</sup> Seyidov Mirali, Thinking about the ancestral roots of the Azerbaijani people, Baku, 1989. p.74



against all kinds of troubles. The cult of fire, which exists in connection with the sun, is also found in the Sumerians<sup>19</sup>.

The goat is also a symbol of fertility and spring. Due to the harsh climate in the geographical area where the village of Gryz is located, there is stagnation in the winter, in the spring the villagers return from the winter and begin to farm with the revival of nature. Therefore, on the holiday of Novruz, which has a very ancient history, the kosa represents winter and the goat represents spring, and spring encourages people to work. "Spring Holiday" - Novruz is a holiday celebrated by many peoples, including Lezgins, called "Yaran Suvar". Until recently, the goat-playing ceremony was widespread on this holiday, which lasted from March 21 to April 4. During the spring holiday, goats were decorated and played in the streets so that he could share his courage with everyone<sup>20</sup>.

Also, on the eve of the spring holiday, the Lezgins would turn to the gods and use the power of words, magic and sorcery to ensure that their efforts were not in vain and to avoid natural disasters.

Among these gods is the war god Tseh, who accompanies national heroes and warriors and protects them from evil forces [internet resource]. In the Gryz language, the goat is also called "tseh" (s'eh), so the totem in the "Goat" lineage is a symbol of the sun, which we consider sacred, the abundance of writing, as well as war. So, one of the heirs of the Albanian tribes living in Azerbaijan, one of the Gryz tribes, the Kechiyer (Goats) tribe, has left traces of the Albanian worldview in its name. These examples also show that the relations between peoples and cultures are committed to the common traditions of all-Azerbaijani culture; the overlap of traditions shows their Albanian roots and the fact that these peoples are the inheritors of a single spiritual culture.

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<sup>19</sup> F.Bayat. From the spirit. Folklore and ethnography, 2004, № 3. p. 22

<sup>20</sup> Pashayeva, Sahiba,. Common ceremonies in Lezgi and Azerbaijan "Azerbaijani multiculturalism: prospects for the development of religion and language policy". Materials of the international conference: Baku: September 8-9, 2016. p. 168-170

It is a fact that the sun symbols on the villages of Shahdag, as well as the Abu Muslim Mosque, and the names of the tribes represent the sun symbols, is proof that the historical roots of these villages date back to antiquity. A number of rich and ancient traditions of Albanian culture can be clearly seen in the material culture of the Shahdag peoples. It is known that Albanian ethnic groups worship the forces of nature, the sky, the moon and the sun, and there are astral beliefs, certain symbolic signs about the forces of nature, the remains of the Abu Muslim Mosque in Gryz and the walls of the mosque in Khinalig, as well as tombs in Shahdag. The syncretism of belief systems can be seen in the image on the headstone found in the village of Khinalig: The tombstone contains a crescent symbol, Arabic inscriptions, as well as floral and zoomorphic images typical of Albanian headstones. This headstone depicts two birds protecting the tree of life, a bowl of water at the top of the stone, and a tree of life rising above the side of the stone, in addition to the crescent symbol. As can be seen, this plot, which bears traces of traditions and mythical worldviews with very ancient roots related to the tree of life, continued to live in the structure of classical ideologies<sup>21</sup>.

Such beliefs have preserved their influence in the beliefs and traditions of the Shahdag people in various forms. Also, beliefs about the crescent and sun cult found in tombstones as a result of archeological excavations in different regions of Azerbaijan, certain symbolic signs about natural forces, floral and zoomorphic images indicate that the traditions of ethnic groups coincide with the traditions of Azerbaijani Turks and are heirs of a common spiritual culture. gives.

One of the ancient traditions of the Caucasian Albanians is the presence of unnamed tombstones, which we find in the ancient cemeteries in the villages of Khinalig and Gryz. According to the information given in Gryz village, 7 graves are located here. This is one of the arguments showing the antiquity of the village. Also, floral and zoomorphic images were observed in the tombstones of Gryz, as well as other Shahdag villages. As we know, long before the spread of

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<sup>21</sup> Pashayeva Mahabbat, Traces of ancient Albanian tribes in Azerbaijan, Multiculturalism 1 / 2016. p. 86

Christianity and Islam in Azerbaijan, there were sun temples and various monuments of the religion of fire worship. Fire-worship is one of the manifestations of the worship of the Sun, that is, one of its manifestations, which has gained the status of an official religion, with its own rules and rituals<sup>22</sup>. Although Christianity spread in Caucasian Albania at a very early age, according to the Albanian historian Musa Kalankatli, in the 7th century there were still people among the local population who worshiped ancient gods (Albanian History, I, 14). It is known from the grave monuments which located in different regions of our country, as well as in the territory of Shahdag peoples, that the ancient Albanian ethnoses worshiped the sun, moon and sky, and the heirs of these ethnic groups have preserved a number of rich and ancient cultural traditions. Also, the discovery of crescent and solar-shaped to grave covers from archeological monuments in different regions of our country - Dashkasan, Shamkir, Nakhchivan, Sheki and a

number of other regions - led to the belief in the cult of the Moon and the Sun. Shows that it existed in the third millennium. We are witnessing the traces of the ancient Albanian beliefs of the cult of the Moon and the Sun in the population of the north-western region of Azerbaijan, especially in the Christian traditions of the Udi people. The Udis call Sunday "Sun Day" and watch the sunrise as a family on that day<sup>23</sup>. In the middle of summer, the Udi celebrates the Vartivar holiday, which is decorated with cross-shaped ornaments symbolizing the sun from wild flowers, and bears the traces of the ancient Albanian holiday in honor of the Sun<sup>24</sup>. The ancient Greek scholar Strabo noted at the time that the Albanians worshiped the gods Helios (sun god), Zeus (god of the sky) and Selena (goddess of the moon), a temple near Iberia<sup>25</sup>. Translated by Musa Yashar Saglam, Dümezil Georges states that the cult of the moon is valid in the beliefs of all Caucasian

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<sup>22</sup> Yagubgizi Matanat, Tolerance and multiculturalism in the folklore of Azerbaijan (on the basis of folklore samples of the peoples and ethnic groups living in the Sheki-Zagatala region), Baku, 2016. p. 33

<sup>23</sup> Bezhanov M. Brief information about the village of Vartashen and its inhabitants, Tiflis, 1892, p. 249

<sup>24</sup> Pashayeva, a.g.e., p. 86

<sup>25</sup> Sources on the history of Azerbaijan, ed. SS Aliyarli – Baku, 1989, p. 18

peoples, and that the name of the moon goddess in the South Caucasus I noticed that it bears a resemblance to the name of the folklore hero Titus<sup>26</sup>.

However, in fact, the symbols of the cult of the Moon can be found in the mythology and beliefs of many peoples. We see that the remnants of such beliefs are preserved in the culture of the Shahdag peoples, as well as in the names of their descendants.

Like the Kechiyer clan, we see in the description of the Cjabeni tribe that the traces of the Albanian worldview live on in all its vitality. Chjabu, which means purely in Gryz, means yellow (yellowish gray), and heni means bull, ie "yellow bulls". For the cattle-breeding Gryz, of course, the bull was a productive, strong, invincible animal species. In

ancient Azerbaijan, there was a special, native attitude to the bull and deer, which were symbols of spring, goodness and prosperity, and a large number of works of fine art were dedicated to them. It is no coincidence that some games and performances feature the image of a bull.

In the ancient game of kos-kosa, the ideas of abundance, blessing, and hard work for spring were propagated by folk "actors" who acted in the image of a bull and its face mask.

Especially when cattle moved to the plateau, they used goats and oxen in the transportation of goods on difficult mountain roads. The bull was considered to be the main means of transportation among the peoples of the Shahdag group of the Guba district (Khinaligs, Gryzs, Budugs)<sup>27</sup>. From ancient times, such animals have been considered sacred among the livestock-raising tribes. Both the peoples of the Caucasus and the Turkish tribes, the Huns and the Mongols have always worshiped the bull totem. These facts are proved by the bull paintings on the slopes of Gamigaya, one of the highest peaks of

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<sup>26</sup> Musa Yashar Sağlam, Georges Dümezil. Mythology of Caucasian peoples. Translator Musa Yaşar Healthy. Ankara, 2000. p. 6

<sup>27</sup> Mustafayev A.N. History of material culture of Azerbaijan (typological research on the basis of ethnographic materials), Baku: Baku University, - 2009, p.206

the Lesser Caucasus Mountains and in the rock carvings in Gobustan, which play an important role in the study of the ancient history of the Azerbaijani people. The sanctification and totemization of some animals by many peoples as their ancestors is an event that is still preserved in certain names and beliefs. VI Avdiev writes that bull worship is more widespread in the Caucasus and the East. The reason for this is that it plays an important role in the economy and in the life of the peasant people<sup>28</sup>.

We see that in the early days, some Turkish tribes worshiped some water, some animals, some celestial bodies, and sometimes all of them.

It is thought that the first part of the Qamaylar (Qamayar) clan, one of the other Gryz clans, is associated with the word gam "shaman". In Musa Kalankatli's "History of Albania", the name of a person in Albanians is mentioned as Gama or Shama. In Azerbaijan, first Christianity and then the spread of Islam weakened the belief in the religion of grief-shaman, and the word grief was able to preserve itself in the names of individuals, tribes or places with some small differences. Although shamanistic views have been forgotten with the adoption of Islam, the preservation of the word gam in the name of one of the Gryz tribes (gamayar, ie gamaylar), as well as the existence of traces of some views on shamanism, rightly suggests that the tribe is associated with grief. Thus, in the article "qam" in the Gryz language" described in separate examples, "qamayı", "qamayu", "qemeyu" "qemeyi"<sup>29</sup>. It is also clear from the translations such as "lost its prestige", "lost everything", "rusted", "useless".

The word "qam" is still in the name of Gaumata, who rebelled against the Persian rule in Media in the 6th century BC. Gaumata is actually the ancient Persian spelling of the name Gam-ata (shaman

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<sup>28</sup> Avdiev V.I. The Caucasus and the Ancient East Moscow: Bulletin of the Moscow University 1948. № 4, p. 5

<sup>29</sup> Süleymanov Shikhbala, On the word "qam" in the Gryz language, Shafag. - 27 June, 1998,. p.3- 4

father). Gaumati is mentioned in the inscription on Bisutun rock in 521 BC as the head of mags (shamans)<sup>30</sup>.

In our opinion, the suffix "-ay, -ey", which is the second part of the word "Qamayer", is a suffix added to the words related to the Gryz language. For example: bey-father, dey-mother, milay-uncle, shitay-uncle, kheley-aunt, mey-aunt and so on. As we know, lineages are also an indicator of a patronymic based on the principles of relationship and generation. The suffix -ar, -er at the end is one of the plural suffixes in Gryz. However, the article "About the theonyms of Azerbaijan" shows that Butay, whose root is associated with but, buta, Buddha, whose root is associated with ho // go or qut, Khuday, whose

root is associated with gam (Gambay is actually from here and influenced by folk etymology). It is incorrect to explain this by dividing it into blood and the components "bay") are anthroponyms formed from mythonyms<sup>31</sup>.

It is known that Turkish-speaking peoples calls the shaman as qam. Like ancient peoples, the first myths view of Turkish peoples and later stepped side by side and mingled with it, in the center of qam and sham's meeting – stands The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, in short, the cosmic objects, the World Tree and the zoomorphic ongons. Therefore, the sons of Oguz Kagan were called Sun, Moon, Star, Sea and so on they represented the universe<sup>32</sup>. Thus, although the ideology of gam-shaman belonged to the Turks, it also spread to the Gryz on the basis of coexistence. Representatives of this tribe live in Gryz village, Gryzdahna, Siberian village of Khachmaz region, Niyazabad, Palchigoba and a number of villages.

Branches - (Budagar) - The meaning of this lineage is purely in Gryz. The element "bu" means "great" in Gryz, for example, words such as "bubey" (great father, - grandfather), budey (great mother, - grandmother), and "dag" is also expressed in Azerbaijani means mountain. The belief in the mountain cult of the Shahdagli, who lived

<sup>30</sup> Geybullayev Giyasaddin, Ancient Turks and Armenia, Baku, 1992, p. 62

<sup>31</sup> Adilov M.N. About Azerbaijani theonyms, Science and Life, - 1987. № 8, -p. 27

<sup>32</sup> Seyidov Mirali, General view of gam-shaman and its sources, Baku, 1994, p. 32

around Tufan Dag, Qibla Dag and Baba Dag, was a tradition rooted in the ancient beliefs of the Albanian tribes.

In mountain Turkish peoples, arutos-udug is a sacred beginning, a protector, evokes evil and the mountain spirit gives a person good qualities - courage, bravery, shamanism, childish spirit<sup>33</sup>.

Through the study of traditions, weddings and mourning ceremonies, various beliefs, to reveal local, specific features, to analyze the traditions and views of other peoples living in the native land along with the Azerbaijani Turks, and on the basis of the analysis

of all-Azerbaijani traditional culture, historical heritage we will try to confirm the existence of deep roots. These similarities in the material and spiritual culture have created conditions for all peoples living in Azerbaijan to become closer to each other.

In the past, the Gryz preferred to be related to each other in the family, which was due to the tribal structure of their origin. However, as mixed marriages are on the rise, it is common for Azerbaijani Turks, as well as other ethnic groups, to marry. Endogamy - that is, in the Shahdag ethnic groups, which prefer to marry relatives from their own tribe, the ortakuzen (between aunt's daughter and aunt's son or cousin and cousin's daughter) and kroskuzen (cousin and aunt's son or cousin's daughter and aunt's daughter) lasted until the periods. According to A.B. Gubatov, this habit is due to the fact that in the past they led a somewhat closed lifestyle<sup>34</sup>. One of the characteristic features of the wedding ceremony of the Shahdag peoples was the "Bey ceremony" and the custom of "Make a Shah" during this ceremony. The groom is called "bey" in Gryz and the bride is called "sis". In the Guba-Khachmaz region, fresh fruits, mainly apples and pears, were hung on the branches of the Shah, which were decorated in different forms in different regions of Azerbaijan. A fried rooster was hung on the middle vertical branch of Shah.

After the groom's praise, the groom's uncle gave a special reception to the groom. In the "definition of the groom (praise)",

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<sup>33</sup> Seyidov Mirali, a.g.e. p.204

<sup>34</sup> Gubatov Alakbar, In the family of brotherhood with the people of Azerbaijan. Baku, 1991. p. 29

which is a special stage of the wedding , one of the close relatives placed in front of the groom, handed khoncha with painted eggs, various sweets, as well as a decorated red-rooster hanging from the top. It is clear that the horn is a symbol of greenery, the growth of the rooster, the reproduction. Also, the custom of the Shahdag people to hang a rooster from a branch decorated at weddings is a remnant of the Sun cult. In general, the rooster has a special place in the wedding ceremonies of the minority peoples of the Sheki-Zagatala region as a symbol of the sun and fertility, as it announces the birth of the sun. For example, the Udis sent a fried rooster and 3 eggs to the bride's house, the Avars brought the bride to the groom's house with a live rooster, and so on<sup>35</sup> .

After the "groom's definition", the rooster was cut and fried, and the groom was entertained with the participation of the right and left. As can be seen, the traces of the cult of the Sun are also reflected in the ancient household traditions.

This branch is called "dar", which means tree in Kyrgyz. According to ancient beliefs, branch decoration is also a symbol of the tree of life. Therefore, branches that did not bear fruit were not decorated. Although the concept of the tree of life associated with the religious ideas of the Early Bronze Age tribes has lost its original essence, it is still preserved as an attribute in wedding ceremonies. According to LY Sternberg, the Turkic peoples living in Siberia consider the tree as the main factor of their life, and among the religious attributes of shamanism, the beliefs about the tree and the tree occupy a leading place<sup>36</sup>. Stones or water were thrown at the bride. The custom of throwing water after a walker still lives in Azerbaijan, as well as in other Turkic countries. It is believed that throwing water behind a passenger helps the road to be successful<sup>37</sup>. Traces of this custom and belief can also be found in the Bilgamish saga.

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<sup>35</sup> Pashayeva Mahabbat, The ancient land of Azerbaijan is Khinalig . Baku, 2006, p. 19.

<sup>36</sup> Sternberg Lev Yakovlevich, Primitive religion in the world of ethnography, Moscow-Leningrad: - 1936, p. 212

<sup>37</sup> Shahverdiyev Bakhtiar, Traces of ancient mythical ideas, folklore and some customs of Azerbaijani Turks in the epos "Bilgamis". Folklore Institute of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. p. 32



In Shahdag villages, it is customary to bring the groom to the wedding, especially after the wedding day. Pirs play an important role in various beliefs and traditions in Shahdag villages. The village of Gryz is located in an area rich in pirs, but there is a pir here, and we owe it

to ourselves to provide information about it. Thus, the grave of a Turkish soldier is located in the so-called "Red Pir". According to the villagers, the Turkish soldiers arrived in the time of Gryza Suleyman bey (the only Gryzli bey with the title of bey). Suleyman Bey slaughtered bulls and gave a reception on the occasion of their arrival. A Turkish soldier who took part in the battle died in the area, so the local soldier buried him there. From that day on, the people accepted it as a shrine. During the holidays, like other shrines, the Red Pir is visited and prayers are said for the soul of the soldier.

There is also a horse grave in the village of Gryz, which Kyrgyz people first visit during the holidays. After the horse died after returning to Mecca seven times, the owner of the horse wrapped him in a shroud and buried him in a plain called Surumey in the village. The horse brought its owner three times and then the villagers to Mecca. It should be noted that such a horse grave also exists in Budug village. This horse also took its owner to Mecca, and since it was the only horse that survived, the villagers shrouded the horse and buried it a short distance from its owner's grave. In general, the burial of horses is very common in the Shahdag people. It is also seen that Turkic-speaking peoples built tombs or tombs for famous horses. There are many facts about the custom of burying horses of Altai tribes living in Altai, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. This custom existed in the Scythians, Saks, Massakets, Sarmatians, and later in the Huns and Oghuzs<sup>38</sup>.

**Life cycle practices:** There are differences and similarities in mourning customs in Shahdag ethnic groups, as well as wedding customs. This is mainly due

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<sup>38</sup> Geybullayev G.A From the history of formation of Azerbaijani Turks, Baku,- 1994. p.19

to the fact that they belong to Islam and follow its laws. Mourning traditions are especially noteworthy because they reflect the ancient

beliefs, worldview and spiritual culture of the people. As with the entire Muslim population, in accordance with Islamic tradition, the Qur'an is recited at the funeral and the relatives of the dead are greeted.

Here, as in other regions, it is customary to hold 3, 7, 40, after the funeral. However, in the village of Gryz, as well as in the village of Jack and Alik, no alms were given on the first day, and for three nights the villagers would gather in the huzr house for comfort and bring cooked food. The custom of bringing cooked food to the mourning house is also present in Turkish customs. In Gryz, mourning is called "lohun". Also, after the first Friday, he would slaughter an animal at the place of mourning from the relatives of the mourner and give it to him on Thursday. Everyone who could not attend the mourning would be given a share of the charity and sent home. The relatives and neighbors of the mourner also prepared food in advance at home, took guests from far away places to their homes, gave them ehsan (in Gryz, ehsan is called "novla"), and created conditions for them to stay. For forty days the mullah would come in the morning and evening, pray and recite the yasin. On the fortieth day, the owner of the huzr would bring a pimp and shave the faces and hair of those who kept the pimp, and he would pay for the pimp's labor.

The 52nd day of the deceased is also celebrated in Guba-Khachmaz region. On the 52nd day, as in the 40th ceremony, the Quran was recited, halva was cooked, and alms were given. In addition, on the 52nd day, to appease the spirit of the deceased, the owner of the huzr called a mullah and two or three elders to cut a rooster and cook it. It had to be a rooster for at least a year. A mourning ceremony was held on the 52nd day of the deceased in Gazakh, Sheki-Zagatala region of Azerbaijan. This custom is practiced in many regions of Turkey, even Anatolia<sup>39</sup>.

Along with the archaic elements of the mythical worldview in funerals, beliefs about death and the hereafter, we see that under the

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<sup>39</sup> Pashayeva, a.g.e., p. 19

influence of Islam, more and more similarities are formed with the Azerbaijani Turks. In this regard, the role of *pir* and *pir* in the beliefs and worldview of the village community, which exist in the village of Gryz in our past traditions, such as *chillachikharama*, *nazrutma*, and the rituals held in connection with the *pir* are especially noteworthy. The word *çile* in Turkish means suffering. In general, to fall into the trap means to suffer a certain hardship, to gain weight<sup>40</sup>. Forty days passed after the wedding and the birth, and spells were performed to free the bride or child from falling into the chill. A person who has no children, who has no children, who comes from a mourning party (as well as the bride going to the funeral for 40 days) could unknowingly fall into a trance. Based on the information we received during our visit to Shahdag villages, we learned a number of methods of extracting *chilli*. When the baby was forty, they would pour forty spoons of water, recite Surat al-Ikhlâs, and soak the baby in that water. If the child falls forty, the next Wednesday the sick child is dug underground and taken out of another excavated place. Instead, they break eggs by putting eggs, a piece of bread, charcoal and a piece of iron. It is believed that evil spirits avoid bread and metal. In some places, a piece of bread and a metal object (usually scissors in the open position) were always placed under the baby's head<sup>41</sup>. Or when a child was forty, they would take soil from the cemetery, add it to the water and soak it in the water, bring a rope from seven houses, wrap it around the child's feet, cut it in the middle and take it out. Although these ideas about primitive religious beliefs have been around for a long time, they are still being fulfilled in a sense. When the child was forty, candles were lit on the edge of the cradle. This custom is called "whistling" in Gryz. It is clear from the proverb about the belief in the number 40, "Man is a guest with forty rooms," that people have a special belief in the magical power of the number 40<sup>42</sup>.

**Conclusion** - All these similar points allow us to conclude that they have always originated in the same land, in the same tradition and in

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<sup>40</sup> Bunyadova SH.T. Medieval Azerbaijani family, Baku, 2012, p. 141

<sup>41</sup> Geybullayev G.A Family and marriage in Azerbaijanis. (XIX century and early XX century. Part II), Baku,- 1994.p.277

<sup>42</sup> Kalafat Y., Turkish Folk Beliefs from the Balkans to Greater Turkestan. II. Ankara. 2007, p. 114.

the same worldview. It should be noted that the religious worldviews, beliefs and mythological thoughts of the Turkic peoples, as well as the Shahdag peoples, are not spontaneous, but thoughtful, interconnected, and it is clear from these examples that the Turkic peoples living in Azerbaijan, as well as other ethnic peoples Common traditions with the peoples of the world tell of their ancient historical and ethnogenetic ties. As a result of our research, we are witnessing that, despite the passage of time, many of the beliefs preserved among the peoples have been preserved to this day and are still alive today. Thus, the study of the ancient religious and mythical worldviews of the Shahdag peoples, who are an integral part of the Azerbaijani people, confirmed the existence of deep roots of Azerbaijani spiritual culture, historical heritage, as well as the unbreakable ties between Sumerian-Turkish-Azerbaijani culture.

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