



## Traditions of birth, wedding and death of the Kazakhs

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### Abstract

Tradition is the whole of cultural signs, habits, knowledge, customs and behaviors that have survived from ancient times in any society or community, valued and passed on from generation to generation, with the power of sanction. There are certain characteristics that distinguish one particular society from other societies. These features are largely known as the cultural identity of the society. This identity of the society is based on what the society has lived and experienced throughout history. The Turkish nation, which is known for its customs and traditions, beliefs and practices, lifestyles, clothing, continues its existence by continuing this wealth from generation to generation. For the Kazakhs, who led a nomadic lifestyle for many years, the birth of a child and his/her upbringing is very significant. Celebrations starting from the birth of the child, wedding and death ceremonies, which are considered to be the most important traditions of the society, are among the life values of the Kazakh society. This study examine the ceremonies performed at birth and after the birth of a child, as well as the rites of marriage and death in the context of the Kazakh family structure. In this respect, the ceremonies held in the Kazakh family have also been determined in terms of adhering to the traditions within the moral rules of the society.

*Keywords:* Kazakhstan, birth, wedding, death

### Kazakistan Türklerinde Doğum, Düğün ve Ölüm Gelenekleri

#### Öz


Gelenek, herhangi bir toplumda ya da bir toplulukta çok eski zamanlardan günümüze kalmış olan ve değer verilip nesilden nesile aktarılan, yaptırım gücü olan kültürel işaretler, bağımlılıklar, bilgi, töre ve davranışlar bütünüdür. Bir toplumu diğer toplumlardan ayıran belirli özellikler bulunmaktadır. Bu özellikler büyük ölçüde toplumun kültürel kimliği olarak bilinmektedir. Toplumun sahip olduğu bu kimlik, toplumun tarih boyunca yaşadıkları ve tecrübe ettikleri üzerine oluşmuştur. Gelenek, görenek, töre, örf ve âdetleri, inanç ve uygulamaları, yaşam biçimleri, giyim ve kuşamları ile bir servet durumunda olan Türk milleti, bu zenginliklerini nesilden nesile devam ettirerek varlığını sürdürmektedir. Konar-göçer bir yaşam tarzını uzun yıllar sürdürmüş olan Kazaklar için, diğer milletlerde de olduğu gibi çocuk sahibi olmak ve onun törenlerle kutlanması ile çocuğun yetiştirilmesi önemli bir durum olarak günümüze kadar gelmiştir. Çocuğun ilk doğumunda başlayarak gerçekleştirilen kutlamalar, toplumun en önemli geleneklerinden biri olan düğün ve ölüm merasimleri Kazak toplumunun yaşam değerleri arasındadır. Bu çalışmada, Kazak aile yapısı bağlamında çocuğun doğumunda ve doğumundan sonra gerçekleştirilen törenler ile düğün ve ölüm merasimleri incelenmiştir. Bu açıdan Kazak ailesinde yapılan törenler toplumun ahlak kuralları içerisinde geleneklerine bağlı kalınması bakımından da tespitlerde bulunulmuştur.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Kazakistan, Doğum, Düğün, Ölüm

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## Birth

### Prenatal Rituals

There are three major transition periods (birth-marriage-death) for the individuals forming the society. Around these three important stages, in which each transition is divided into a number of sub-sections and steps, many beliefs, customs, ceremonies, rituals, religious and magical concise processes are clustered and they manage these "transitions" in accordance with the expectations and patterns of the culture they are in (Ölmez, 2008:127). Birth, the first of these transitional periods, has almost always been a period of happiness in human life. Families which have children gain a certain respect in social life and transition to a different social status. (Güleç Düzgün, Polat, 2019:199).

In terms of social value judgments, newborn baby is the light, future, happiness of the family and the most precious treasure of life. In addition to being the happiness and joy of every family, the child is also a common source of joy and happiness for his relatives, family, neighbors, village, city and other people. Because children are the future of society and an indispensable value. "At the same time, the child is a force in the family and society. In nomadic life, rural life and underdeveloped areas, the child is always an important value of strength and solidarity. Especially families in small communities and ethnic groups feel strong and stable relative to their population size. The common saying "a child fuels the fire in the family" also reveals the value judgment of society on this issue. (Örnek, 1977: 131).

There are certain rules that the whole family follows in yo make for the birth to be successful and the baby to be born healthy. As a result of these rules, there are some beliefs and customs that are followed by people who want to have children, and those who want to, but do not succeed. From this point of view, for the first time we are faced with the practices of infertility treatment and conception.(Yalçın & Koçak, 2013: 25).

After marriage, a person establishes a new family and the best fruit of this family is the child. "Both members of the community, family and relatives want the new couple to have children in a short time. For this reason, the woman wants to have children in order to gain respect for herself and for her family to gain respect in the society. Infertile women are despised, oppressed and humiliated, especially in traditional sections. For this reason, women resort to some remedies and methods in order to become pregnant and give birth to a child. (İsmail, 2002: 36).

From the past to today's culture, infertile women have resorted to many ways to get pregnant. We see examples of this situation in Turkish narratives as well. These examples, in accordance with the influence of shamanism, as a result of the change in religious structure and cultural life over time, and also under the influence of Islam, the graves of important people were turned into tombs, and some of them were considered as awliya and turned into a plea for help. For example, in the epic of Manas, Yakup Han complains about the infertility of his wife and says: "It has been fourteen years since we married. I could not smell and kiss a child. This woman doesn't visit graves, she doesn't roll around with apples, she doesn't spend the night next to holy springs,"(Özarslan, 2003: 98) by this he emphasizes the importance of the symbol of fertility of the apple and apple tree and also be points out that a barren woman must visit willful people (SC1) in order to become pregnant. In addition, he complains that she does not wish for a child by visiting the graves and tombs of the saints. In all these practices, in the changing and transforming cultural world, we see that the same remedies are still used to get pregnant, and this constitutes an example of cultural continuity. "Mulla Gazi Khoja, who complained about the "lawless" customs of the Kazakhs, gives examples of the means that women of that period resorted to, saying: "If their women become barren, then they slaughter a ram and sit all night near one tree in a field, a well or near water "(Örnek, 1977: 131). In this situation, the ritual of tying cloth to a single tree, tying cloth to trees near the water and going to these places (tomb) that they consider as a prayer is still practiced in most of today's Turkish peoples (Korkmaz, 2006: 108).

In Kazakhs women who cannot have children resort to certain beliefs and customs. As a result of the compilation he made as an example of this situation, Yashar Kalafat said: "The relatives of

the future mother who do not have a child bring them to the imam. The imam reads the suras and saves the expectant mother who wants a child from the evil eye saying "Tu-tu-tu" (Özarlan, 2003: 98). In the Southern Kazakhstan region, there is a place with a cradle on the mountain, and relatives take the woman who wants to get pregnant there. They visit the tombs of Ahmet Yesevi, Arslan Baba, Gauhar Ana and the great saints in the western and eastern regions of Kazakhstan to spend the night and pray on their behalf. (Çetin, 2007: 73). However, according to tradition, for a proper Yesevi visit, Arslan Baba must be visited first and then come to "Kesene" (Tomb) in Turkestan (SC1).

### **Everything that is done to ensure that the child to be born healthy**

The woman who finds out she is pregnant takes some measures to give birth in a healthy way. These measures include both avoidance and practices carried out by magical means, and practices carried out by rational realistic means (Yeşil, 2014: 126). All these practices are carried out so that the child does not have a miscarriage.

Similar practices in order for a child to be born healthy were carried out throughout the Turkic world from the past to the present (Potapov, 2012: 64). For example, Kazakhs sold the child to one of the neighbors in order to deceive the spirit of death that roams the family. Again, in some regions, a child was hidden under a cauldron as he/she was born, and a totem called "ak eren" was placed in the cauldron and a baby made of barley flour was left next to him. In another example, as the child is born, the midwife takes the child in her hand and goes out, after visiting a few houses, she calls out from the window of father's house of the baby and says: "I brought a child from a foreign country. Will anyone buy it?" says. The deal starts. Baby's parents give as much iron as the weight of the child, thereby buying the child. Then they give the child a name, for example, Demir or Satıpalı, Satılymysh (İnan, 2006: 76).

The practice of naming a child to protect the him/her from evil spirits and to keep him/her healthy is similar throughout the Turkic world (Durmuş, 2010:6-8). This is due to the fact that the Turkic peoples who lived together in the past continued to exist in different geographic regions and shared common belief systems in the past.

The Kazakhs have a tradition of "akika"<sup>2</sup> for a deceased child. According to this tradition, families in which children have died slaughter goats or sheep if the child is a girl, and sheep if the child is a boy. They cook meat very well and call the elders. Guests eat meat, trying not to touch the bone with their teeth. Bones are buried somewhere, especially in a cemetery. (Nazarova & Temenova, 2021:185). This process is called "akika" (SC4).

The Kazakhs people have treasured children for a long time, and they associated the joy and well-being of the family with the child, saying "Бесіксіз үйде береке болмаған" (There is no abundance in the house without a cradle). Despite the noise from the children, Kazakhs did not dare to somehow complain about their number, saying "Балалы үй – базар, баласыз үй – қу мазар" ("In a house where there are children, it is fun and noisy, but in a house where there are no children, quiet as a graveyard. If someone was asked about the number of their children, they preferred not to say anything definite, saying: "Шүкір, кішкентай жаман қаралар бар ғой" (Thank God, there are many disobedient). Parents want their children to get married when they grow up and want grandchildren right away, saying "Балам – балым, Баланың баласы – жаным." (My child is my honey, The child's child is my soul). In response to the bow of the newly arrived bride, the elders make dua saying "Көп жаса, үбірлі шұбырлы бол, қарағым!" (Live long, get a house and children soon). This shows how important generation and children are in Kazakh culture.

In the past, the Kazakhs used some practical methods to protect their newborn children from the evil eye and evil genies, and keep the newborn alive. They called their child the names of

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<sup>2</sup> The hair on the head of a newborn is called Akika in Arabic. Since the child's hair was shaved on the day of the Akika sacrifice, the sacrifice was also called Akika.

animals whose meat could not be eaten, or words with a bad meaning. These beliefs and traditions are rarely found in modern Kazakh society (SC1).

**They are:** Итбай (Dog), Кішібай (Puppy), Итемген (Dog), Бишай, Кетерші, Қосқұлақ (Lop-eared), Шаманбай (Witch-doctor) ... etc.

In order for the child to be rich, the word “бай - bai” is added to the names, meaning rich, as well as the word “бек - bek”, meaning “Mr” in English: Altynbek, Maldybai, Abai, Ainabek.....etc.

In order for the child to be brave, valiant and prosperous, Kazakhs call the children the heroes of their epics: Arslan, Batyrbek, Kaharman, Alpaymysh, Chengizhan, Telekhan, Telebai, Telebi, Kazybekbi, Aitekebi, Targin, Kamber, Kapalan, Kochak, Alibek .....etc.

On the other hand, they call their daughters names that are translated into the Kazakh language as bright, beautiful, moon, star. For example: Almagul, Aisuluu, Ainasuluu, Nursuluu, Asem, Akkyz, Araisha, Botagoz, Ravshan, Akerke, Cholpan, Gulnaz, etc.

To be a gentleman, worthy and generous, children are called by the names Zhomart, Mirzabek, Kaiyrzhan...etc.

To be smart and intelligent children are called Akylbek, Danabek, Esbol, Asylzhan, etc.

And children who are born on holidays like Eid al-Adha, Nevruz, Ramadan or some special day, they are called names that are associated with the meaning of this month and day. For example: Meyrambek, Meyramgyul, Orazbay, Navryzbay, Dzhumabay, Beisenbay, Meshitbay...etc.

If children born in families do not live, but die one after another, or children of the same sex are born in a row, the following names are given: Toktar, Tursyn, Iztelev, Tolegen, Ulzhan, Mynzhasar ... etc.

In addition, if children of the family are born after many years, the child is called Kudayberdi as a way of gratitude to the creator.(Cenikoğlu, 2009:192).

### **Бесик Той - Besik Toy (celebration of the birth of a child)**

One of the ceremonies performed after the birth of a baby in Kazakh culture is the "besik toy". "Besik toy" is considered one of the most important day in the child's life. (Edelbay, 2012). After the baby's umbilical cord dries up and falls off, this "toy" is held and relatives come with gifts. Before putting the baby in the cradle, the cradle must be cleaned with juniper or harmala grass accompanied by this song:

“Alas, alas,  
Survive the moon,  
Year after year,  
Here comes the boy,  
The Lord has given goodness,  
The light widened the sun.  
Let our garments be filled with grain,  
Let our mouths be filled with bread,  
Let it be as sweet as the baby of a fox  
Alas, alas!” (Cenikoğlu, 2009).

To protect the baby from being frightened and jinxed, materials such as eagle feathers, beads from the evil eye, amulets, an eagle hoof are hung on the cradle, and a wedge or penknife is placed under the pillow (Akhmatalieva, 2000: 113). Grandmothers also give bata (pray). During “besik toy”, five, seven, sometimes nine types of bedspreads are thrown on the cradle. This ritual is done so that the baby sleeps well, calmly and regularly, and when he grows up, so that he will become rich, generous and benevolent. The covers covered on the cradle are given to the grandmothers

who came to the celebration. It is a belief that their prayers are accepted. The woman who places the baby in the cradle is given a separate gift called a besikke with the words: "May your hands be light, may our bride be blessed in your way." (Nazarova & Temenova, 2021:186).

### **Circumcision ceremony (Sundet Toy)**

The rite of circumcision of boys among the Kazakhs is performed at the age of 5-7 years. It's called Sundet Toy. Circumcision is usually done during the summer and autumn months when schools are closed. If a son is born in a family after many years, a strand of hair is left from the top of the head and braided from the day of birth. This tradition is called "Aidar". (Nussipkhan, & Öger, 2021:92).

To protect their son from the evil eye, Kazakhs carry this belief and continue the "Aidar" tradition. "Aidar" hair is cut before the circumcision ceremony and kept at home as a souvenir. It is known that this belief was also spread among the Mongolian and Manchu peoples, as well as in communities related to the Turks. In Central Asia, before the adoption of Islam, our ancestors, who belonged to the faith in the god of heaven, left a lock of hair on the tops of their children, and sometimes they braided or lengthened it into one braid so that God would touch this braid. (Alyar, 2020).

All friends, relatives and neighbors are invited to the circumcision ceremony in Kazakhs. On this occasion, invitations with a picture of the child to be circumcised are printed and distributed. The father or adult elder brothers prepare the child to be circumcised by holding his arms and feet. After the ceremony, the boy's entourage and his friends jokingly say that he has now become a Muslim. The one who circumcise a child is given a sheep, a foal, heifer or money as a gift. (Cenikoğlu, 2009:198).

### **Wedding**

Some of the old beliefs preserved in Kazakh families structures and discovered historical documents prove that the Kazakhs are a very ancient Turkic tribe. It can be seen that the Kazakh Turks are closely connected with their traditions and customs, and therefore they pay a special attention to the family issue. This particular interest is also reflected in the Kazakh word "Family is a small state". Due to the patriarchal family structure, the Kazakhs, who have switched to a nomadic lifestyle for a long time, have very strong family relationships and family ties. For this reason, according to the Kazakhs, the family is also regarded as a sacred father's hearth. According to the Kazakhs, marriage is a very important contract in a person's life. Therefore, many customs and beliefs have formed around marriage ceremonies. These beliefs and customs of the Kazakhs have both Islamic and pre-Islamic features. (Erkul, 2002: 62).

Spiritual culture, customs and traditions have always been updated, and sometimes radically changed throughout history; examples include religious beliefs, wedding ceremonies, funeral rites, social and economic relations. Kazakh folk culture as a whole was subjected to constant renewal and development. Kazakh Turks have preserved and passed from generation to generations such values as a strong family, kinship, fidelity to tribal traditions, love and loyalty to their people and country. Kazakh proverb says: "Know your people while your father is alive, and know your land while you ride a horse." With this saying, the elders introduced their children to the people and lands that they owned (Tinay Uulu, 2000: 72).

Among the Kazakhs, when a young man and young woman like each other, they first inform their families about their intentions. A member of the woman's family goes to the girl's house to inform her parents of their intentions and seek their approval. This outgoing ambassador is called Zhavsy. The Zhavses inform the girl's father that they want to marry. If the answer is positive, they say "Kudalyk Berik Balsin! (Let our matchmaking bear fruit)" and dress Zhavsy in national clothes and thereby give their consent. (Toleubayeva, 2019).

After obtaining prior approval, the groom's side goes to ask for the hand of the young woman from her family. If her family agrees, then the groom's side puts gold earrings on the bride as an engagement gift. Gold earrings for the bride should be worn by a woman from the man's relatives.

This custom is called "Kuda Tusu". During this engagement, the mother of the girl is given a certain monetary gift called "sut akysy" ("payment for milk"), agreed by the parties. Besides or instead of money, livestock is also given in the form of cows, horses and sheep. In addition, the groom's family gives money and various livestock to the girl's family and it is called "kalym", and the bride's family, in turn, gives household appliances, a bedroom set and all the necessary accessories for arranging the newlyweds' home and it is called "sep" (Çetindağ, 2007: 220).

The Kazakhs, in addition to the official marriage, also have a religious marriage ceremony called "Neke". However, according to their tradition, boys and girls within seven generations are prohibited from marrying each other. This ban on marriage, born of tradition, in some regions of Kazakhstan persists for up to twelve generations. They are forbidden to marry each other (SC1).

Official marriages are sometimes held in wedding palaces, and sometimes in cafes by special mobile registry office employees in the presence of invited guests. As the young couples enter the wedding hall, their friends play games and jokes. For example, girls wait at the door and do not give way, preventing the groom from entering the door; they ask him for a tip or tell him to sing a song, a ballad or play the dombra, etc. If the groom is unable to fulfill these requests, the bride can do the specified tasks instead (SC2).

All expenses for wedding celebrations are covered by the male side. While weddings were traditionally accompanied by the dombra, today it can be seen that this national instrument is gradually being replaced by polyphonic Western instruments. According to the Kazakh tradition, the bride, before leaving her father's house, says goodbye at home to her mother, father, brothers, sisters and close relatives in verse. These verses are called "Kostasu" (SC3).

### *Kostasu*

Aveden uşkan buldırık,  
Kubıladan sokañ ızgırık.  
Catka ketip baramın,  
Caratkan son kız kılıp.  
Atası caksı kul bolmas,  
Anası caksı kün bolmas.  
On caktan ketip baramın,  
Kız erkelep ul bolmas,  
Canımdağı kınım av,  
Sinliler men inim-av.  
Cıl aynalıp kelgenşe,  
Koş aman bol künim-av! (SC4).

Traditional meals are eaten at large ground tables called dastarkhan in marriage ceremonies among Kazakhs. The head part of the dastarkhan is called "tor" and the lower part is called "tomen". Elders, veterans and honored guests sit in the "Tör". The most famous of the national dishes on dastarkhan is the meat dish called five fingers "bes parmak" (SC4).

At weddings, they usually slaughter a horse or a cow, divide it into parts and cook the meat very carefully. Then there is the traditional order of dividing the meat between the guests, this ceremony is called "tabak tartu". Kazakhs have many types of "tabak tartu", and the main ones are: "bas tabak", "kos tabak", "siy tabak", "zhay tabak" and "zhastar tabagy". Bas tabak is the main, the first important tray with meat. Kos tabak - a special tray with meat for matchmakers. Siy tabak is an additional tray with meat, where you can put any parts. Zhai tabak - a standard tray with meat. Zhastar tabagy - a tray with meat for young people. Besides there are a lot of other traditional order of dividing the meat (SC2 & SC4).

Kuda Tabak is served to male matchmakers and includes horse meat, beef and lamb. Tail and liver are prepared separately. It is prepared by cutting the liver into slices with fat tail fat and mixing with onions, cream or buttermilk. It is customary to cut off the ear of an animal and give it to the grandchildren, and cut off the tongue and give it to the daughters.

Kudagiy Tabak is a dish served to female matchmakers, which includes cheek bone, horse meat sausage, belly, large intestine, horse, beef, lamb.

Betaşar (Face View) Tabak consists of breast meat, abdomen, salty intestine, coccyx, mussel spine. The neck spine is one of the most valuable treats given to the young bride.

Kuvey (groom) Tabak consists of Brisket, forefoot shinbone, rib, backbone meat, sausage, sausage made from horse's large intestine, scapula, mutton. Breast meat is one of the most valuable treats offered to grooms in Kazakhs.

During the wedding dinner, a large amount of tea with milk is drunk; this is among the Kazakh eating and drinking culture. In addition, baked goods called bavırsak fried in oil, kurt (a type of cheese), irimşik (a type of cheese) are also eaten. (SC4).

## Death

Death is one of the most mysterious and frightening events in human life. There has been death since the creation of man and this is a cruel truth. People are afraid of dying, but they also know that death is an inevitable event and they are helpless. (Ünal, 2017: 340). Every person thinks about death throughout his life, especially in his old age, and tries to be prepared for death at a certain level. (Yalçın & Koçak, 2013: 22). For this reason, death is an important phase of transition periods and it is a threshold at which a person makes a step into a different world. (Gün 2022: 229).

Funeral ceremonies are an integral part of every culture. Many ceremonies, beliefs, traditions and customs have been formed around death, which is one of the important transitions in human life. Funeral ceremonies in Kazakhs are practiced in accordance with the religion of Islam for more than hundreds of years. However, it is possible that the funeral ceremonies practiced in Kazakhs also carry the beliefs belonging to the pre-Islamic Shamanism period. (SC4).

In the Kazakh tradition, the news of death is not given suddenly, with all its bitterness. The news of death is announced in poetry (cir-öleng) accompanied by music. Welcoming the newborn child with poetry and music, Kazakhs bid farewell to the deceased with music and poetry and bury him. These poems in which the news of death is reported are called "Yestirtu" (SC4).

This is how Jandosuly Keldibek announces Chokan's death to Chyngyz:

- Ulı ölmegen ruda cok,  
Kızı ölmegen Kırım 'da cok,  
Katını ölmegen halıkta cok,  
Ağası ölmegen aymakta cok,  
İnisi ölmegen elde cok,  
Akesi ölmegen alemde cok,  
Şeşesi ölmegen pende cok,  
Akkuv uşıp kölje ketti,  
Duvadak uşıp şölge ketti,  
Kuday bizge bir gauhar tas berip edi,  
Onı iyesi özi aketti,  
Cokan degen balanız,

Berimiz baratın cerge ketti ...

Today, it is seen that Kazakh Turks have carried their beliefs, customs and traditions related to death, from pre-Islamic times to today, by mixing Islamic customs among them. The most common of these is the giving of meals to crowded guests after the death event. It is possible to see similar ones in some towns and villages of Anatolia.

Kazakhs avoiding the use of the word death for the deceased said, "Kaytis boldy" meaning "passed away". They soothe the family and loved ones of the deceased with words: (SC1).

The dead can't be brought back

May the rest be healthy

Rest in peace,

May he find a place in heaven.

The grieving lady, whose husband died, untangled her hair, tears her face-eye, and draws blood to express her sorrow; In ancient Turks, a child whose father died, would cut and bleed with a knife, starting from his right ear to his left ear, to show his orphanhood. She, her mother, and her sisters wear a black headscarf throughout the year, starting from the day of the death of the head of the family, to show their pain concretely (Çetin, 2021).

According to the Kazakh tradition, " Zhoktau" is said from the day of death until the end of the year. Zhoktau are poems in which goodness, merits and similar features of the deceased are described in sad language and crying. When sympathetic relatives heard the death, they came to the village with the name "Oh, brother", fell on their faces, mourned and mourned (SC1).

Elegy (zhoktau) examples from Kazakh epics Alpamiş, Kapılan etc. is seen. Also, the elegies of Buhar's Abılay Han, Kazıbek Bi's daughter Kamka, Abay's son Ebiş's wife Mangış are also famous.

*Example: Zhoktau of Kengirbay Bi:*

Altı atası bay ötken,

Altı atañğa cük artkan.

Cedi atası bay ötken,

Cedi atañğa cük arktan.

Üyde sunkar tiletken,

Kiyada sunkar tiletken.

Altayı kızıl tülki alğan,

Paşanı bözdey cırttırgan,

Cibekti cünder tütürgen.

Konak kelse, -kon degen,

Koy semizin soy degen:

Cıncırlı kavğa tarttırğan,

Kayınnan astav şapttırğan.

Kaptatıp cılkı capttırğan ... etc.

The tombs of Kazakh Turks are large in the form of a cupola, sometimes domed, and the name of the deceased is written on the wall, depending on the ancient belief in the "cult of ancestors".



On the third, seventh, fortieth, centennial and anniversary of the death of the deceased, they give food at the tables called *dastarhan* to the guests who come to condolences, have them read the Qur'an and hold various ceremonies.

Third day: They believe that the soul-spirit of the deceased flew away from the house after three days.

Seventh day: The soul-spirit of the deceased visits his house for the first time on the seventh day.

Fortieth day: The body of the deceased lying in the grave remains intact for forty days, and in the following days it tends to decompose.

Centenary: The soul-spirit of the deceased comes to his house a second time on the hundredth day, in the form of a swallow.

The anniversary: While the corpse, which started to deteriorate after a year, that is, forty days, is slowly disappearing; it is now believed that "his real life in the afterlife has begun".

Shokan Velihanov states in his article titled "The Remains of Shamanism Among Kazakhs" that some of the Kazakhs' beliefs and traditions regarding death are practices that come from the religion of Shamanism.

### **Conclusion**

It is seen that Kazakhs, who have a wide geography as their home and have a very deep-rooted history, are respectful and loyal society to their beliefs and traditions such as birth, wedding and death. Despite being exposed to many pressures during the Soviet Union period, they managed to keep their cultural heritage and values alive.

The Kazakhs, who occupy a special place among the Turkic tribes, have adhered to their customs and traditions throughout history, preserving "betrothal, bride price, engagements and weddings", which are an important part of the culture of marriage, adhering to customs and traditions for years. Although there are some differences in wedding traditions in villages and cities, in essence, there are no cardinal changes. As in any society, the weddings of wealthy families among the Kazakhs are more magnificent. Weddings held in villages and cities are more traditional than weddings in the city. Social solidarity and kinship ties are very strong in Kazakhs and they share the sad and happy days of life together. Kazakh people protect their customs and traditions. This culture continues in its developed form and has been an important factor in the continuation of the young generation's love and respect for their history and civilization as well as their own customs and traditions. Kazakhs have given importance to the institution of family since ancient times and thought that marriage was a must in order to smoke the furnace built by the father and lit by the mother. The belief in "smoking the father's hearth" in the Kazakhs leads us to the "patriarchal" family structure in the Turks. Although various types of marriage were seen in Kazakhs, the most acceptable one was to be given the bride price and to go to the pastor and take the girl. Although the tradition of kidnapping continues today, this situation is not welcomed by the society.

The Kazakhs, who strictly adhered to wedding traditions, also adhered to the traditions of the funeral rite and attached great importance to the phenomenon of death, which is an important transitional stage in life. For this reason, various beliefs and customs have formed around the event of death. Thanks to these customs, social solidarity arose. Regardless of the financial or social status of the deceased, he was given great attention in accordance with Sharia and customary customs. The deceased is washed, wrapped in a shroud, a funeral prayer is performed, a condolence tent is set up, food is distributed to guests for the repose of the deceased, prayers are said, the Koran is read. In addition to prayers for the comfort of the deceased in the grave and for going to heaven, meals are arranged, alms are distributed, charity and good deeds are performed. Although they all have common features with the customs of the Muslim Turkish communities, there are some other customs that are unique to the Kazakhs.

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