

## **MATERNITY RITUALISM OF TATARS AS THE FUSION OF PAGAN AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF SYSTEMS (using the pre-natal stage example)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

For millennia, religious values were synthesized with folk culture. Tatar traditional culture is not an exception. The first work devoted to the study of Islam synthesis with the traditional culture of the peoples is the work of the famous Hungarian scientist J. Goldtsier "The cult of the saints in Islam (Muhammadan's sketches)". His judgments were developed later by the scholars G.P. Snesev [20], N.S. Basilov [6] who studied the ethnography of Central Asia peoples, as well as by Caucasus people ethnography researchers A.V. Avksentiev [3] and M.A. Aglarov [2]. From this point of view, a certain interest is provided by the sayings of ethnographers studying the Muslim peoples of Siberia, namely Seleznev A.G., I.A. Selezneva and I.V. Belich [16]. In recent years the attention of scholars was attracted by the collection of articles from Islam ethnographers "Devotees of Islam" due to its serious scientific opinions and the elaboration of themes, published under the editorship of such famous scholars as S.N. Abashin and V.O. Babrovnikov [1]. The doctoral dissertations by the philologists A.T. Sibgatullina [17] and A.H. Sadekova can be regarded one of the first works devoted to this subject in Tatar humanity [15]. In the future, the phenomenon of Islam synthesis with Tatar folk culture was studied in the collective monograph "The Muslim cult of Tatar saints: images and meanings" by the scholars of different humanities: R.K. Urazmanova (ethnographer), G.F. Gabdrakhmanova (sociologist) and F. H. Zavgarova (philologist) [19]. Interesting observations within the theme of this article can be found in the monograph "Circle of Life" written by the folklorists and philologists Z.M. Brusko, F.H. Zavgarova devoted to the folklore of family and household traditions of Kazan region Tatars [8]. Taking into account the abovementioned things, this article can be defined as the first experience, dedicated to the study of family and household traditions of Tatars, in particular, its pre-natal stage, from the positions of synthesis with the culture of Islam.

**Keywords:** family, culture, motive, Islam, ritual, prayer, belief, value, culture and homelands.

## **PAGAN VE DİNİN İNANÇ SİSTEMLERİNİN FÜZYONU OLARAK TATARLARIN MATERNİT RİTÜLİZMASI (doğum öncesi dönem örneği kullanılarak)**

### **ÖZ**

Bin yıl boyunca dini değerler halk kültürüyle sentezlendi. Tatar geleneksel kültürü bir istisna değildir. Halkların geleneksel kültürüyle İslam sentez çalışmasına ayrılmış ilk eser ünlü Macar bilim adamı J. Goldtsier'nin "İslam'daki Azizlerin Kültü (Muhammadan'ın eskizleri)" eseridir. Kararları daha sonra G.P. akademisyenler tarafından geliştirildi. Snesev [20], N.S. Basilov [6] Orta Asya halklarının etnografyasını ve Kafkas halkı etnografya araştırmacıları A.V.'yi inceledi. Avksentiev [3] ve M.A. Aglarov [2]. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, Sibiry'a'daki Müslüman halkları inceleyen etnografların sözleriyle Seleznev A.G., I.A.'ya belirli bir ilgi duyulmaktadır. Selezneva ve I.V. Belich [16]. Son yıllarda akademisyenlerin dikkatini, ciddi bilimsel görüşleri ve temaların hazırlanması nedeniyle İslam etnograflarından "İslamın Adanmışları" nın makalelerinden S.N.'nin ünlü ünlü akademisyenlerinin editörlüğünde toplanmasıyla çekti. Abashin ve V.O. Babrovnikov [1].

Filologlar A.T.'nin doktora tezi. Sibgatullina [17] ve A.H. Sadekova Tatar insanlığındaki bu konudaki ilk eserlerden biri olarak kabul edilebilir [15]. Gelecekte, Tatar halk kültürüyle İslam sentezi fenomeni, farklı beşeri akademisyenler tarafından "Tatar azizlerin Müslüman kültürü: imgeler ve anlamlar" adlı kolektif monografide incelenmiştir: R.K. Urazmanova (etnograf), G.F. Gabdrakhmanova (sosyolog) ve F. H. Zavgarova (filolog) [19]. Bu makalenin konusu dahilindeki ilginç gözlemler, folklorcu ve filolog Z.M tarafından yazılan "Yaşam Dairesi" monografisinde bulunabilir. Brusko, F.H. Zavgarova, Kazan bölgesi

Tatarlarının aile ve ev geleneğinin folkloruna adanmıştı [8]. Yukarıdaki hususları göz önüne alan bu makale, Tatarların aile ve hanehalkı gelenekleri, özellikle de doğum öncesi aşamasında İslam kültürüne sahip sentez konularından araştırmaya adanmış ilk deneyim olarak tanımlanabilir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** aile, kültür, motif, İslam, ritüel, namaz, inanç, değer, kültür ve ev halkları.

## INTRODUCTION

A family was and remains one of the major institutions in the structure of society. It is historically the first system of interpersonal relationships, developed due to the need of basic human need implementation. At the same time, due to the family institution humanity continues to perform functions, aimed at procreation, endowed with traditional values. Family rituals of the Tatar people, as one of the brightest and at the same time, the conservative parts of people spiritual culture, attracted the attention of travelers, missionaries, academic researchers still in the eighteenth century (Pallas, Miller, George), who provided their observations about the customs, rites and beliefs of Tatar people in their travel notes, treatises and historical and ethnographic works.

The XIX-th century marks a new period in the gathering, publication and the study of the Tatar ceremonial art. A number of interesting information related to the ritual culture of Tatars can be found in P.A. Shino work "Volga Tatars" [21]. In the context of our theme, we cannot ignore K. Fuch's works, who made a great contribution to the study of Kazan province Tatar peasant life and culture [20]. In his book "Kazan Tatars in the statistical and ethnographical aspect" one may find some interesting observations concerning the family and household traditions of Tatars. During this period an active research was being performed by the Tatar educator K. Nasyyri, who was interested in "Beliefs and rituals of the Kazan Tatars, formed without the impact on the lives of Sunni Mahometanism" [12]. During the second half of the XIX-th and early XX-th centuries "The society of archeology, history and ethnography", created at the Kazan Imperial University started to conduct special ethnographic research, in which the themes and ritual of Muslim Tatars ritual culture were often addressed. In our view from the standpoint of the declared article topic, M.P. Pinegin's [13], G.N. Akhmarov's [4], Y.D. Koblov's articles are particularly interesting [11]. After the October Revolution the Communist atheistic ideology began to dominate in the studies of people ritual culture and folklore. This ideology strongly prohibited to study the mechanisms of religion and popular culture interpenetration. Naturally, all this led to a complete disappearance of the scientific school rudiments and the lack of scientific methods and tools providing the objectivity of judgment.

At the end of the twentieth century the writings of Tatar dialectologists started to appear [7], which accumulated a large body of texts relating to the ritual Tatar culture. Despite a different focus, one can meet interesting facts which tell in a greater or a lesser extent about the influence of Islam on the ritual culture of Tatars during a careful study of these texts.

In line with our theme the works of the scientist folklorist M.H. Bakirov deserve a special attention. In his book "Tatar Folklore" a serious attention is paid to the folklore of family and household Tatar rituals, where they monographically and in a fragmented way talk about the role of Islamic culture in the system of these rituals [5]. Summing up a brief excursion into the historiography of folklore study of Tatar family and everyday rituals, let's note that the works of the aforementioned scholars act as the basic material of our research subject, but at the same time they do not exhaust the full depth of the problem concerning the presence of Islamic culture motifs in the system of family and household rituals of Tatars, in this case, its first / initial stage - birth rituals.

The object of an article study is the puerperal rites of Tatars. The subject of the study are the Islamic motifs presented in the context of the Tatar birth ceremonies. The purpose of the article is the identification of Islamic motifs and their functions in the system of Tatar birth rituals. The material of the study are the texts of interviews with the representatives of the Tatar folklore held by the article authors in the settlements of different municipal districts of the Republic of Tatarstan.

## ISLAMIC MOTIFS IN THE PRENATAL PHASE STRUCTURE OF TATAR MATERNITY RITUALS

The maternity rite among Tatars, keeping the overall scheme for the Turkic peoples, is the part of a multi-component long series of rituals. In ethnography, folklore, linguistics the rituals associated with childbirth, can be divided into three stages: prenatal, natal and post-natal stages. This classification is supported by such birthing ritual researches as I.V. Popovicheva [14], T.Yu. Vlaskina [9] and F.S. Bayazitova [7]. In this article we will try to pay attention to just one of birthing ritual stages - the natal one.

Not pregnancy can be considered as the initial phase of puerperal rites, but the period far preceding it, which dates back to the juvenile and children's years of future spouses, as many premarital customs and regulations have a direct relation with the preparation of young people for the role of parents. The fundamentals of the future adult life start to be founded in a family since childhood. At the age of 5 - 7 children begin to play a role play with the dolls "gailøle" (family game), "tuyly" (wedding game), "øyle" (house game) where the main plot of action is presented by life situations of Tatar Muslim family. The games always demonstrate an image of a mullahs, who performs the same functions as in reality in the game story of family life: reads a sermon, desires welfare to his family, makes nikah, comes to celebrate religious holidays, names a newborn with a Muslim name and cures (øshkerø).

A good preparation for marriage is the joint participation of young boys and girls in the parties, entertaining events where not only a simple communication takes place, but also the choice of a future wife or a future husband. Most clearly, this orientation can be seen as an example of such forms of newlyweds pastime as "Kichko uen" (literally: evening game), "aulak øy" (the house without an adult supervision), where young people get to know each other, where the ideals of a good husband and a good wife are cultivated, a decent adult life of a man through playing forms, Takmaki. Marriage is considered as a necessary condition for the birth of children among Tatars. In this regard we can observe the elements related to the delivery ceremonies in a wedding ritual. It is, first of all, good wishes, that come from the older generation representatives: parents and relatives "May Allah give healthy children; may Allah makes so that they had a full skirt of children; may Allah will cover envious eyes by a curtain and let this couple always be radiant to each other; Let you have a long married life, even if you will be destined to educate children in faith" [Note 1].

The presence of Islamic values during the prenatal stage, can be seen also in the regulation of the sexual life of spouses. It is associated with the religious norms and concepts, cultivated to Muslim Tatars since childhood. The prohibition of sexual relations can be regarded as one form of regulations during the holy fasting of Ramazan, Ramazan gaete and Gaete Korban holidays. The standard in this case is fixed by the system of beliefs designed to reproduce healthy offspring by spouses. "One cannot sleep with a husband in our Islamic holidays. And it is impossible during Uraza and Kurban. This is a great sin. It is still impossible even if you have a husband. Allah considers it as a sin. If you had sex, it is considered dirty. You have the thoughts and ideas not with Allah, but with a husband or a wife. And it is prohibited. We were very afraid and husbands knew it. Glory be to Allah! We have not sinned. There were probably those who did not comply with these rules. Why do crippled and sick children appear? They said that the children conceived during Muslim holidays are born crippled. We were very afraid of this. We do not know and we can not know the ways of God's punishment, no one knows it. We were said about it prior to marriage. A woman keeps order in a family. If a wife knows than a husband also knows. Holidays like Eid are very great holidays, they suppose to pray during these days, thoughts should be about prayers" [Note 2].

All this is dictated by the desire to extend the existence of a kind with a healthy offspring. And according to the canons of Islam it is a direct duty of every human being to give birth. Therefore, the birth of a child in a Tatar family is taken very seriously. If during the first year of married life a woman's pregnancy does not occur, it can refer to a knowing woman (imche, uky belgøn, røten belgøn, ukymyshly / a healer who is able to read Islamic books, who knows the verses of the Qur'an and Islamic law) with the request to help to get rid of infertility. The acts, which a healer uses, are aimed to ensure pregnancy. The most common ritual for the attainment of fertility until the mid of the twentieth century was the rite of "chylmæk fat" among Tatars (to put on a clay pot literally). For this a clay pot was heated and applied by a lighted cloth to a woman's abdomen: Previously a pot was put on. If you stay childless it's a shame. Nobody wants to has the name of "childless offspring". So when your daughter is married you wait and you worry until she is pregnant, brings sadyaka and asks to read a prayer. When a son gets married, you also worry. If a daughter in law is pregnant, it is a great joy. You wish that a child was born at time. If he is not born in time, then the pot is applied. Some invite a healer to their home, some go to her by themselves. But a knowing woman should do

everything. Then, not everyone wants to learn everything. They hide from others. Pots are put on in a bath. A healer brings pots. Why these pots are used by ordinary women? Nothing is done without a Bismillah, without a prayer. Everyone can not do this on his own, we need a woman with pure thoughts. There is not only a pot put on there, but a woman's abdomen is also massaged. One must also be able to do this. You have to know the procedure, not everyone can do it. If it was put on correctly, then a woman will become a pregnant one for sure. If everything is done with the help of Allah, of course. Therefore it is necessary to say Bismillah, read the verses of Koran. Without God nothing is done. Everything is the will of Allah" [Note 3].

The ritual use of a clay pot is dictated perhaps by the bond of this subject with the myths of fire and soul. As is known, in many pagan traditions of Volga peoples a clay pot was used as a symbolic deputy of fire, as a repository of soul and spirits. The actions of the "healer" / imche əbi in the described above ritual may have the following meanings: representing the soul of fire, the symbol of which is a lighted cloth, the performer of the ritual / imche puts her soul into the womb of a childless woman, thus simulating the birth of a new soul - a child. All this is consistent with the laws of imitative and contact magic characteristic of pagan traditions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The prenatal stage of Tatar puerperal rites is a system of rituals and norms dictated by ancient pagan ideas, expressed in beliefs. At the same time, the modern Tatars consider the pagan element through the prism of Islamic values. Therefore, today we can say that the prenatal stage of puerperal rites is a fusion of pagan and Islamic worldview systems.

## SUMMARY

Based on this study we can conclude about the prospects of the proposed technology as a scientific tool for the analysis of folk traditions related to Islamic culture.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors acknowledge that the presented data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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## Notes

1. Written by the article author Akhmetzyanova R.H. (1919)., Khaydarova M.N. (1912), the residents of Ullya village of Vysokogorsky District of RT in 2006.
2. Written by the article author from Gataullina O.H. (1927), the resident Verh village at Kibyakovo Tyulyachinsky Vysokogorsky region of TR in 2009.
3. Written by the article author from Shakirova N.H. (1929), the resident of Turkash village at Kukmorsky region of RT in 2012.