



Traces Of Archaic Religions In The Modern Way Of Life Of The Peoples Of The Ferghana Valley

Rahmonali Begalievich Bekmirzaev

Lecturer, Fergana State University, Fergana, Uzbekistan

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ABSTRACT

In this article, based on the analysis of scientific ethnographic literature and field research, traces of ancient pre-Islamic religious beliefs in the modern life of the Kyrgyz people living in the Fergana Valley are explored.

KEYWORDS

Fergana Valley, Kyrgyz, ancient religious beliefs, shamanism, Islam, religious transformation, religious syncretism, fortunetellers, fortunetelling on stones, forecaster on a lamb's shoulder blade.

INTRODUCTION

Ethnocultural processes taking place in the Fergana Valley and the current state of interethnic relations are of strategic importance, affecting the security of the entire region. The scientific need for a new stage in historical development lies in the need for a deep and comprehensive study of the influential ethnopsychological and ethnosocial components of the culture of each nation. Therefore, today we need a separate objective assessment of interethnic relations, the

development of interstate and interethnic harmony, identification of existing problems, elimination of their roots, prevention of threats to the future of the region and forecasting the prospects for the future of Central Asia. Following factors influencing interethnic relations in the Fergana Valley, which today has a multiethnic status, are interpreted as the following factors: the factor of interreligious relations in the Fergana Valley; the problem of interreligious tolerance; the degree of

influence of the Islamic factor on the aggravation of interethnic relations; the negative impact of radicalization in Islam on interethnic relations requires a deeper study of the model of conflict between Islam and the ancient pre-Islamic religious beliefs of people.

MAIN PART

The study of the pre-Islamic religious beliefs of the inhabitants of the Fergana Valley has always aroused great interest among specialists. The pre-Islamic “complex of religious beliefs” prevailing among the Kirghiz has a very complex multi-stage nature due to the unique ethnic history of the Kyrgyz people [1: p. 182]. The analysis of pre-Islamic religious beliefs and traditions of the Kyrgyz people is reflected in the works of many prominent ethnographers. In particular, some comments were made on the topic under consideration by V.V. Barthold [4: p. 119], F.V. Poyarkov [12: p. 32], S.M. Abramzon [1: p. 290-300], S.U. Duchembiev [10: p. 267-275], T.J. Bayaliev [5: p. 67-170], A. Baybosunov [2: p. 58], I.B. Moldobaev [11, p. 17] and others.

The system of religious worldviews in the national culture of the Kyrgyz people has gone through a complex syncretic evolutionary process in combination with Islamic religious traditions based on ancient religious ideas and monotheistic teachings. This process is explained by the fact that in Kyrgyzstan ancient religious worldviews coexisted and coexisted in a state associated with Islam, the existence of certain beliefs, rituals and views based on cults that do not belong to the traditions of Islam [5: p. 161]. The syncretic features of ancient religious beliefs, which are still preserved in the way of life of the Kyrgyz people, are clearly reflected in the traditional way of life of the Kyrgyz living in the Fergana Valley, such as identifying disease, prediction and fortune-telling.

According to ancient religious beliefs, shamans-healers and fortune-tellers can be seen in the Kyrgyz language under different historical names. “Тамырчи” [tamirchi] is a doctor who diagnoses and treats a disease depending on the state of a stroke [14: p. 201]. “Сынчы” [sinchi] is a fortune-teller looking at a person's face [14: p. 182]. “Тукурчу” [tukurchu] is a doctor who cures spit when bitten by a poisonous snake or insect [14: p. 265]. “Далчы” [dalchi] is a fortune teller looking at a ram's shoulder blade [13: p. 183]. “Жылдыз санап” [Jyldyz Sanar] is a fortune teller who predicts the future of a person by the position of the stars. Although this term is not found in the work of K.K. Yudakhin, ethnographic data are presented showing that the fate of a person depends on his star [13: p. 280].

“Төлгө” [tolgo] or “төлгөчы” [tolgochi] is a fortune-teller who predicts something with stones before starting any work [14: p. 247]. “Төлгө” - Fortune-telling is also called “төлгө салуу” [tolgo saluv]. The environment, events in nature and human behavior are explained by the ability to see and predict future reality using certain objects, events and other signs. Fortune-telling is based on the location of forty-one stones, sheep's spades and other objects, as well as on the location of the stars in the sky. Field records in the Fergana Valley show that Kyrgyz corn growers in the valley often used 41 grains of corn for divination. [6]

Information about “Төлгө салуу” (“fortune-telling”) has also been preserved in the oral tradition of the Kyrgyz people. For example, in the epic “Manas” you can find a description of the events associated with the fact that the hero of Manas, a warrior named Kara Tolok [3: pp. 685,791], always guessed. An example of this is the information that the wife of the hero Manas, Honiki, the fortune teller princess Manas, the old horse of Toyto, before joining

the race. When Manas's son Semetei was 12 years old, his mother, Honiki, added Toytori to the races in the hope that he would be as brave as his father. If Toytori wins the race, Semetei will be as brave as his father. Toytori's old horse wins the race, it becomes clear that Semetei's father is as brave as Manas, and Princess Honiki is happy with his son's fate. For this reason, the Kyrgyz phrase “төлгөсү төп түшүү” [tolgosu top tushum] is interpreted in the sense that it coincided with the intention and fortune-telling [14: p. 247].

On the basis of ethnographic field records, have been studied methods and procedures for the use of fortune-telling by Kyrgyz fortune-tellers (“төлгө салуу”). The number of tarot stones is forty-one. The discovery of the fortune with forty-one stone can be explained by the religious views on the prophet Daniel and the associated cult of belief in the magic of the number 41.

In the prayer that the fortune-teller says before the start of fortune-telling, we become witnesses of the process of transformation of ancient religious ideas into traditional views of Islam, namely: “Bismillahi rahmani raiym baygambardyn badyshsyn, baygambarymydyn tulgususuun. Menin colum emes, Gozel atamdin colu, Shaimardan pyrimdin colu! Menin colum emes, Umai ene, Batma Zuuramdin colu! Achk aytyp, ak suuilø, kyrktyn biri he is a columa tush! Bashyn toguz, ayagin segiz maitegerek tush! He is columda Rahman, sol columda dushman turgan bolso, kirktyñ biri ong columa unap tush!” [8].

Translation: “In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Merciful. You are the King of the Prophets, you are telling of Prophets. Not my hand, the hand of Father Gozel, the hand of Saint Shaimardan! Not my hand, the hand of Umaye's mother, the hand of Batma Zuura! Say it openly, say it transparently, one in forty falls

on my right hand! Fall with nine heads and eight legs! If I have Rahman (Allah) in my right hand, and an enemy in my left, then one of forty will fall on my right hand! ” The image of the goddess Umai, the patroness of children and women, which is present in the ancient religious beliefs of the Kyrgyz in this prayer, is a vivid example of the harmony of Islamic traditions [1: p. 184].

The shrine of Guzal ota is one of the sacred places of the population of the valley, located between the mountains to the south of the village of Toshtepa in the Kadamjai district of the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan. The cult of Guzal ota is embodied in the Kyrgyz valley as the patron saint of cattle and shepherds (like a father-shepherd among the Uzbeks) and a symbol of healing. People believe in sacred black stones to heal eye diseases in the area of the shrine. In addition, the stones used in divination were also collected by fortune-tellers with the intention of entering this area. This shrine is also a sacred site for the Uzbeks living in the area. It can be seen that the cult of Guzal ota is also in harmony with Islamic views.

For fortune-telling, the thrown stones were placed along three parallel lines in two directions. After that, fortune-tellers counted the created images of stones in different directions (parallel, round, enveloping, single, drawing lines connecting the corners, from bottom to top and from top to bottom) and predicted the future of a person by their sum. The Kyrgyz "pushers" divided the place of intersection of three parallel lines in two directions into nine cells and named each cell (place) by their traditional names. The name starts on the right: 1-cell - "right eye"; 2-cell - "head"; 3-cell "left eye"; 4-cell "right hand"; 5-cell - "heart"; 6-cell "left"; 7-cell "right leg"; 8-cell - "victim"; 9-cell is called the "left foot".

Here are the interpretations given by fortune-tellers:

1. [Besheneshi beshten beshiktege bala syuyuyungyondoy]. The fortune-telling stone is five, so it is assumed that soon you will be as happy as a child lying in a cradle.
2. [Bosořosu bekem]. It is interpreted as a strong house, completely healthy, everything is normal.
3. [Senden kuchtuv]. This was interpreted as indicating a strong opponent.
4. [Yuryogu oyunyuyoshta]. (5-cell "heart") - a heart sign predicting that soon the heart will rejoice at something.
5. [Ushul kishige bash iyib jatat]. It is interpreted as future affairs are dependent on this person (9-cell "left leg"). [8]

When interpreting fortune-telling, the Kyrgyz nomads relied on conclusions drawn using simple mathematical logical operations. It was believed that numerical supernatural forces magically influence human life and the future. It was from these sides that fortune-telling was interpreted. However, we do not know how these fortune-telling stones were placed. According to the respondents with whom we spoke, this is an internal "revelation" of innate abilities inherited from our ancestors. Many of them inherited this ability from their ancestors - "emchi" (fortuneteller) or "adopted" it under the influence of spirits due to serious diseases that occurred at a certain point in their lives. In this they are helped by the spirit of their ancestors, which is passed on from generation to generation [7]. This means that elements associated with animistic images have survived in the modern way of life of the Kyrgyz.

The Kyrgyz of the valley also have interesting ethnographic information about the religious views of the sheep on the shoulder blade ("koydyn dali") and the interpretation of fortune-telling through it. Most of the

respondents in the field study reported that the soft bone at the top of the scapula should be cut with a knife during sheep slaughter. If this is not done, it can become a powerful magical weapon, and with it you can perform various actions of black magic, and when cut with a knife, these spells will be reflected, making it incapable of invoking evil forces. Among the Uzbeks living in the Fergana Valley, there is also an opinion that it is forbidden to eat a shovel. The idea among the population that there are supernatural magical powers in the humerus of a sheep belongs to the archaic elements of ancient cults associated with the traditional farming methods of the peoples of the valley.

After the lamb is cooked, it is removed from the meat with a knife, without touching the shoulder blade with the teeth. The peeled spade bone is dried over a fire. Depending on the transparency and opacity of the bone, the resulting images during the cleaning process on the bone, this year's harvest is predicted to be plentiful or low, the condition of livestock: disease and death, drought, humidity, hunger, price, war or peace.

If there is blood on the barriers of a sheep's shoulder blade, there will be anxiety, and if the curtain is clean, there will be peace in the wind. Those who were able to predict that it would be expensive if the bone marrow had upward cuts and cheap if the bone marrow had downward cuts. In ancient times, many ordinary Kyrgyz could also make these prophecies. However, this work was usually done by many shamans. Such fortune-tellers are called «dalichi» [8].

An analysis of the data studied in the scientific literature shows that today the archaic features of the ancient pre-Islamic religious beliefs of the Kirghiz have been strongly preserved in comparison with the indigenous

population of the valley. However, analysis of field materials showed that the older population is more aware of such religious views. According to surveys conducted among young people, most of them do not have any information at all about objects related to fortune-telling, or ideas about fortune-telling. Young people who have ideas began to view this as an un-Islamic practice of "Kyrgyzism". From the conclusions of the studied ethnographic materials, it can be noted that the transformation of ancient ideas into "pure Islamic beliefs" is a continuous process in the layer where the Kyrgyz of the valley have close ethnocultural ties with sedentary Uzbeks and Tajiks with strong Islamic traditions.

CONCLUSION

Although the ancient religious beliefs of the Kyrgyz tribes living in the Fergana Valley were converted to Islam between the 17th and 19th centuries, the ancient traditions of divination associated with shamanic ideas did not completely disappear. The archaic features of the ancient traditional traditions of divination of the Kyrgyz living in the Fergana Valley have survived to this day, despite significant changes under the influence of globalization, first in Islamic culture, and then under the conditions of Soviet colonial policy.

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