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A.T. TOLEUBAYEV'S ETHNOGRAPHIC LEGACY: ITS ROLE IN PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING THE CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL IDENTITY OF THE KAZAKH PEOPLE

The article examines the life, scholarly formation, and professional trajectory of A.T. Toleubayev as an ethnographer, highlighting his contribution to the development of national ethnographic studies and the scientific significance of his theoretical conclusions. Particular attention is given to the relevance of his research for addressing contemporary issues in Kazakh ethnography and strengthening cultural and spiritual identity.

The study employs a multidisciplinary approach combining historical-comparative analysis, historiographic review, ethno-archaeological interpretation, and biographical research. The research is based on the analysis of Toleubayev's published works, archival materials, field reports, encyclopedic sources, press publications, and interviews, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of his academic legacy.

The article systematizes and reassesses Toleubayev's ethnographic heritage through the lens of ethno-archaeological continuity and cultural identity preservation. It introduces previously underexamined archival and biographical materials into scholarly circulation and offers a new interpretation of his theoretical contributions in relation to the ethnogenesis of the Kazakh people and the preservation of national cultural memory.

The research evaluates the scholarly reliability and theoretical significance of Toleubayev's conclusions and categorizes the outcomes of his field investigations conducted in the Eastern, Central, and Southern regions of Kazakhstan. The study demonstrates the pioneering nature of his interpretations regarding ethno-cultural continuity and their relevance for understanding the historical development and ethnogenesis of the Kazakh people. It establishes that his professional competence, methodological rigor, and scholarly vision have had a lasting influence on the advancement of Kazakh ethnographic science. The article also presents new information on his research activity and outlines перспективные направления дальнейшего развития казахской этнографии.

Overall, the study underscores the enduring academic value of Toleubayev's legacy and its role in preserving and strengthening the cultural and spiritual identity of the Kazakh people.

Keywords: A.T. Toleubayev, Kazakh ethnography, ethnogenesis of the Kazakh people, field ethnographic research, ethno-archaeological continuity, cultural and spiritual identity, national cultural heritage.

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А.Т. Төлеубаевтың этнографиялық мұрасы: қазақтардың мәдени-рухани бірегейлігін сақтау және нығайтудағы рөлі

Мақалада этнограф А.Т. Төлеубаевтың өмір жолы, ғылыми қалыптасуы және кәсіби қызметі қарастырылып, оның ұлттық этнографиялық зерттеулердің дамуына қосқан үлесі мен теориялық тұжырымдарының ғылыми маңызы айқындалады. Сонымен қатар, оның зерттеулерінің қазақ этнографиясының қазіргі өзекті мәселелерін шешудегі және мәдени әрі рухани бірегейлікті нығайтудағы рөліне ерекше назар аударылады.

Зерттеуде тарихи-салыстырмалы талдауды, историографиялық шолуды, этноархеологиялық интерпретацияны және биографиялық әдісті ұштастыратын пәнаралық тәсіл қолданылды. Жұмыс Төлеубаевтың жарияланған еңбектерін, архивтік материалдарды, далалық есептерді, энциклопедиялық дереккөздерді, баспасөз материалдарын және сұхбаттарды талдауға негізделген. Бұл оның ғылыми мұрасын жан-жақты бағалауға мүмкіндік береді.

Мақалада Төлеубаевтың этнографиялық мұрасы этноархеологиялық сабақтастық пен мәдени бірегейлікті сақтау тұрғысынан жүйеленіп, қайта пайымдалады. Бұған дейін жеткілікті зерттелмеген архивтік және биографиялық материалдар ғылыми айналымға енгізіліп, оның теория-

лық тұжырымдары қазақ халқының этногенезі мен ұлттық мәдени жадты сақтау контекстінде жаңаша түсіндіріледі.

Зерттеуде Төлеубаев қорытындыларының ғылыми сенімділігі мен теориялық маңызы бағаланып, оның Қазақстанның Шығыс, Орталық және Оңтүстік өңірлерінде жүргізген далалық зерттеулерінің нәтижелері жүйеленеді. Этномәдени сабақтастыққа қатысты интерпретацияларының жаңашылдығы және олардың қазақ халқының тарихи дамуы мен этногенезін түсіндірудегі маңызы көрсетіледі. Оның жоғары кәсіби біліктілігі, әдіснамалық нақтылығы және ғылыми көрегендігі қазақстандық этнографиялық ғылымның дамуына ұзақ мерзімді ықпал еткені айқындалады. Мақалада сондай-ақ оның ғылыми қызметіне қатысты жаңа мәліметтер ұсынылып, қазақ этнографиясының одан әрі дамуының перспективалық бағыттары айқындалады.

Жалпы алғанда, зерттеу Төлеубаев мұрасының тұрақты ғылыми құндылығын және оның қазақ халқының мәдени және рухани бірегейлігін сақтау мен нығайтудағы рөлін айқындайды.

Түйін сөздер: А.Т. Төлеубаев, қазақ этнографиясы, қазақ халқының этногенезі, далалық этнографиялық зерттеулер, этноархеологиялық сабақтастық, мәдени және рухани бірегейлік, ұлттық мәдени мұра.

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Этнографическое наследие А.Т. Толеубаева: его роль в сохранении и укреплении культурной и духовной идентичности казахского народа

В статье рассматриваются жизнь, научное становление и профессиональный путь А.Т. Толеубаева как этнографа, подчеркивается его вклад в развитие национальных этнографических исследований и научная значимость его теоретических выводов. Особое внимание уделяется актуальности его исследований для решения современных проблем казахской этнографии и укрепления культурной и духовной идентичности.

В исследовании используется междисциплинарный подход, сочетающий историко-сравнительный анализ, историографический обзор, этноархеологическую интерпретацию и биографический метод. Работа основана на анализе опубликованных трудов Толеубаева, архивных материалов, полевых отчетов, энциклопедических источников, материалов прессы и интервью, что позволяет осуществить всестороннюю оценку его научного наследия.

В статье систематизируется и переосмысливается этнографическое наследие Толеубаева через призму этноархеологической преемственности и сохранения культурной идентичности. В научный оборот вводятся ранее недостаточно изученные архивные и биографические материалы, а также предлагается новое толкование его теоретических положений в контексте этногенеза казахского народа и сохранения национальной культурной памяти.

В исследовании оцениваются научная достоверность и теоретическая значимость выводов Толеубаева, а также систематизируются результаты его полевых исследований, проведенных в Восточном, Центральном и Южном регионах Казахстана. Показан новаторский характер его интерпретаций этнокультурной преемственности и их значение для понимания исторического развития и этногенеза казахского народа. Установлено, что его высокий профессионализм, методологическая строгость и научное видение оказали долговременное влияние на развитие казахстанской этнографической науки. В статье также представлены новые сведения о его научной деятельности и намечены перспективные направления дальнейшего развития казахской этнографии.

В целом исследование подчеркивает устойчивую научную ценность наследия Толеубаева и его роль в сохранении и укреплении культурной и духовной идентичности казахского народа.

Ключевые слова: А.Т. Толеубаев, казахская этнография, этногенез казахского народа, полевые этнографические исследования, этноархеологическая преемственность, культурная и духовная идентичность, национальное культурное наследие.

Introduction

Abdesh Tashkenuly Toleubayev was far more than an ordinary scholar. He was born on 15 November 1953 in the city of Shaueshek in the People's Republic of China. After returning to his homeland, he entered the Faculty of History of S.M. Kirov Kazakh State University, now Al-Farabi Ka-

zakh National University in 1970. In 1971 following the establishment of the Department of Archaeology and Ethnology, he transferred to this newly opened specialty. During his university years (1971–1976), he actively participated in archaeological expeditions to Central Kazakhstan under the supervision of the first head of the Department of Archaeology and Ethnology, A.M. Orazbayev, and the eminent acade-

mician A. Kh. Margulan. From that period onward, the scholar organized and led numerous archaeological and ethnographic expeditions aimed at studying Kazakh communities living far beyond the borders of their historical homeland. After graduating with honours degree in Archaeology of the Faculty of History at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in 1975, he was admitted to the postgraduate programme of Miklukho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Alongside research in ethnography and archaeology, he pursued research work on the topic “Pre-Islamic Beliefs of the Kazakhs.” Distinguished scholars researching Central Asia and Kazakhstan such as S.P. Tolstov, T.A. Zhdanko, and G.P. Snesev were his scientific supervisors. Completing his postgraduate studies at Miklukho-Maklay Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the USSR Academy of sciences between 1975 and 1978, he successfully defended his candidate dissertation in 1979 and earned the degree of candidate of historical sciences. His dissertation topic fully aligned with his enduring scholarly interests, examining pre-Islamic beliefs of the Kazakh people at the intersection of archaeology and ethnology.

A.T. Toleubayev is recognized as one of the most significant and influential social scientists of the 21st century and studying his investigations and contribution to the development of Kazakh ethnography as a prominent ethnographer and professor is one of the topical issues nowadays. Examining the scholarly identity of A.T. Toleubayev not only reveals his place within Kazakhstani ethnography but also demonstrates the challenges faced by ethnographic science in that period and the ways of solving them.

By studying the academic path of the archaeologist and ethnographer, we can identify the formation and evolution of Kazakhstan's ethnography. Considering that the life and scholarly path of such a researcher are inseparably linked to the activities of an entire generation of Soviet and Kazakhstani ethnographers, as well as to the theoretical frameworks, perspectives, and developmental trends of ethnological schools of that era, the analysis of his research results and scientific views also requires examining the opinions and conceptual approaches of his contemporaries.

Literature review

A.T. Toleubayev is a scholar who made a significant contribution to the training of ethnology

specialists and to the formation of his own academic school. He brought together a cohort of major scientists in the fields of history, archaeology, and ethnology. Today, these specialists successfully continue their scientific and teaching activities in the country's higher education institutions and research organizations. In his research career A.T. Toleubayev's archaeological and ethnographic studies addressed a number of highly relevant topics, including: the origins and genesis of statehood, the study of ethnographic culture of the Kazakh diaspora, social stratification in Saks society, the problem of elite burial mounds, the geographical range of the spread of the Uysin culture, ethnographic studies of religion and the traditional worldview of the people. It should be noted that Toleubayev's professional-level research serves as a model within the field of ethnographic science.

There is a considerable body of memoirs about the prominent professor, doctor of historical sciences, ethnographer A.T. Toleubayev and extensive articles written by his students about his life, professional activity, teaching, and scholarly work. These include the articles by D.B. Eskekbayev “Dala kezgen galym” (Eskekbayev D.B., 2003: 19–23); Sh. Azmukhambetov “Tsar'-Kurgan», Arheolog A.Toleubayev o raskopkakh «Tsar'-kurganov» Chiliktin. doline Zajsan. r-na VKO” (Azmukhambetov Sh., 2005: 13–18); B.K. Kalshabayeva “Gylmynyn' shykkan shyn'yna ...” (Qalshabayeva B.K., 2013: 7–12); B.K. Kalshabayeva “Belgili galym, ulagatty ustaz A.T. Toleubayev 60-tyn' belesinde” (Qalshabayeva B.K., 2013: 237–242); S. Nasiretov “Altyn adam” men on alty kalashyk tapkan galym (Nasiretov S., 2017: 18–22); and A. Erzhanqyzy “Shygystagy on'dy ister” (Erzhanqyzy A., 2019: 30–31). Brief information about Abdem Tashkenuly Toleubayev's biography and scientific pursuits is also presented in the national encyclopedias Kazakhstan (Kazakhstan: Natsional'naia entsiklopediia, 2006: 222.), Scientists of Kazakhstan (Qazaqstan galymdary, 2013:448), and East Kazakhstan Region (Shygys Qazaqstan oblysy: Entsiklopediia, 2014: 848). In addition, televised interviews such as the program “Dara Zhol” on channel Khabar (Dara zhol – Abdesh Toleubayev), the Informburo interview on Channel 31 (Abdesh Toleubayev), the Al-Farabi channel's educational program “The Scholar's Perspective” (Galymnyn' pikiri:), the “Altyn Dingek” program on Bilim TV (Altyn din'gek – Abdesh Toleubayev), as well as other broadcasts, constitute valuable sources of information for studying the work of the ethnographer A.T. Toleubayev.

Zeinola Samashuly remarked: "Kazakhstan does not lack archaeologists. One of them is Abdes Tashkenovich. He enabled a profound and comprehensive understanding of the formation of a broad ethnological perspective within historical phenomena. This is one of his distinctions. He did not confine himself to a single scientific field. Today, across the entire CIS, the science of ethnoarchaeology is beginning to take shape. Yet in our country, ethnoarchaeology appears to have emerged much earlier, during the time of A. Margulan. Abeken' continued that tradition. Another scholarly achievement of Abeken' is that when there was only an assumption that a state might have existed two and a half thousand years ago, he was the one who discovered evidence and demonstrated it. When we speak of a 'king,' what lies behind that word? There must be a king of a state. And what is a state? It must have a defined system and structure, social, political, ideological system and then an economic system. He classified all of these aspects systematically with the help of the valuable findings discovered in Shilikti. He proved that a state had existed not two thousand five hundred, but two thousand eight hundred years ago. Abeken' was a scholar who studied the worldview of the Kazakhs prior to the Islamic period. Owing to his profound research, he was able to reveal the details of each artefact and make them 'speak.' The religious beliefs, ideology, the worldview hidden behind them couldn't have been uncovered by anyone else but an ethnographer like Abeken. Therefore, Abeken's remarkable scholarly achievement is that, on the one hand, he pushed back the timeline of these socio-political issues for 2800 years, and on the other hand, he interpreted and explained all of them to the public, particularly their religious rituals, burial rituals, worldview, the concept of the four cardinal directions, the celestial sphere, the underworld and the earthly world, analysing and explaining each of them separately." (Dara zhol – Abdes Toleubayev)

From the second half of the twentieth century to the present, the works of both domestic and foreign scholars have played an important role in the study of Kazakh ethnography and cultural heritage. The primary aim of ethnographic research has been to analyze, from a scholarly perspective, the historical formation of the Kazakh people's material and spiritual culture, their social structure, systems of everyday life and customs, and the foundations of their worldview. The scholarly legacy of A.T. Toleubayev formed a new stage in this field of research. By integrating ethnographic data with archaeologi-

cal, anthropological, and folkloristic materials, his works sought to demonstrate the integrity and continuity of Kazakh culture. His studies, such as "Qazaq halqynyn' dastyrlı duniyanymy men tyrmys madenieti", "Etnograficheskie osobennosti kul'tury Central'nogo Kazahstana" revealed the regional characteristics of ethnocultural processes. Whereas earlier research (S. Mukanov, Kh. Argynbaev, O. Zhanibekov, A. Margulan, and others) primarily focused on describing customs and traditions, dress, household items and economic types, A.T. Toleubayev viewed these materials as key to understanding cultural and spiritual identity. He proposed an approach that examines ethnographic data through the lens of historical consciousness and the development of national distinctiveness. Foreign scientists (E. Said, C. Geertz, P. Bourdieu, and others) have approached ethnography as a method for analyzing systems of cultural symbols, whereas Toleubayev interconnected these theoretical conclusions with the traditional worldview of Kazakh society, thereby introducing the concept of interpretive ethnography into the national scholarly space. Today, his ideas are being examined in close relation to issues of cultural heritage stability under conditions of globalization, the preservation of ethnic identity, and the sustainability of the national cultural code. In this context, contemporary researchers (M. Zhumabekova, B. Qaiyrken, G. Tursynbayeva, etc) are analysing Toleubayev's works from the perspectives of cultural studies and anthropology. Overall, a review of the literature demonstrates that A.T. Toleubayev's ethnographic research not only enriched the data base of Kazakh ethnography but also established the theoretical and methodological basis for preserving national identity. He presented ethnography not merely as evidence of the past but as an essential instrument of cultural and spiritual renewal of contemporary society.

Materials and methods of research

In order to achieve the purpose set in the article, two main research methods were employed: theoretical methods that include documentary and historical ones and empirical methods, such as analysis and expertise. Based on these methods, a comprehensive examination of his works concerning the ethnography of the Astrakhan and Orenburg Kazakhs, customs related to childbirth and child-education, marriage rituals, funeral and commemorative practices of the people passed away, the heroic tradition, beliefs associated with animal husbandry

and yurt, nature worship, spirits, peris, shamanism, and healing magic was conducted and a wide range of sources was consulted in the process. Moreover, the ethnographer's research conducted in the eastern, central, and southern regions of Kazakhstan and his conclusions reached were assessed. The research works written by ethnographer A.T. Toleubayev in the course of studying Kazakh ethnography were organized into a coherent framework and compared with other relevant research studies.

In determining the scientist's contribution to the study of Kazakh ethnography, specific research methods and planning procedures were applied. In particular, the scholar's key activities in researching and promoting the material and spiritual culture of the Kazakh people were described, prospective measures required for the future development of Kazakh ethnography were analysed and their potential outcomes were predicted applying forecasting method. Additionally, an evaluative approach was employed to assess the scholarly work currently being carried out by the researcher. Direct communication was established with A.T. Toleubayev and his students, through which a substantial amount of new and valuable information regarding his contributions to the field was collected.

In this study, the biographies of individuals were presented in chronological order, and comparative study, analysis, and synthesis of empirical materials were used to determine the extent to which historical circumstances, the social environment, and academic schools influenced his formation as an identity and scholar. The use of the above-mentioned methods ensures the scientific reliability of the research based on data base. The key findings and conclusions of the article may serve as a factual foundation for the field of Kazakh ethnography. Moreover, the analyses, comparisons, conclusions, and newly introduced data presented in the article can be used in writing works on history, archaeology, and ethnology. On the basis of the scientific work A.T. Toleubayev developed in the process of studying Kazakh ethnography, interest in cultural heritage may increase and the number of researchers working in this field may increase. The informational content of the article is intended for ethnographers, archaeologists, folklorists, historians, as well as readers interested in the history of traditional culture of the Kazakhs.

Discussion and results

Abdesh Tashkenuly is one of the first Kazakh ethnographers who studied the ethnography of Ka-

zakhs living abroad. In 1983–1984, under his supervision, an expedition was organized to investigate the ethnography of the Kazakhs living in the Orenburg, Astrakhan, and Omsk regions, as well as in the Altai Territory of the Russian Federation and extensive scholarly research was conducted. In the result of studying the Kazakh diaspora, the work "Orynbor Qazaqtary" was published. In this regard, it is significant to refer to one of Abdesh Toleubayev's recollections: "The monuments may have stood for a thousand years before this, and they may stand for another thousand. But ethnography is not like that; let us repeat, it is the memory of the people. Generations change, and with them antiquity fades. Monuments themselves fall into two categories: movable and immovable. There was a time when money was considered an immovable monument. At that time, the chairman of the Society for the Protection of Monuments was Änuar Älimzhanov. I went to see him and explained that it was necessary to collect ethnographic materials from among the Kazakhs living in Orenburg. Searching for treasures among the people means identifying movable monuments, that is recording everything from oral folklore to ancient narratives that have survived only in memory. Finally, in 1983 I went to Orenburg with about twenty students. We visited three districts and learned that around 120,000 Kazakhs lived there. Unfortunately, it turned out that the residents did not know any modern Kazakh songs except "Saulem, saulem, saulemsin". We later discovered that no newspapers or journals from Kazakhstan reached them at all. If only a single transmitter had been installed in Karabutak district of Aktobe, the radio and everything else would have reached them, but this had never been done... Yet, there must be some historical peculiarity or natural law, perhaps an inner secret of cultural self-preservation, that allows remarkable archaic elements to survive even in such environments. Sometimes I think that even today there are many things that should be written down and preserved from the younger generations and their daily life. Let's say, when I visited the Kazakhs of Aksay on the Tibetan Plateau and saw their condition and museum there and the museums in China, I came to this very realization. I acquired a number of valuable things from that region and it was no less significant than my findings in Shilikti..."

After returning from Moscow in 1979, he accepted an invitation from O.A. Zholdasbekov and took a position at the Department of Archaeology and Ethnology at nowadays Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. From this period onward, his

teaching and scholarly activities became closely connected with KazNU and its Department of Archaeology and Ethnology. Beginning in 1979, A.T. Toleubayev worked at Al-Farabi KazNU as a senior lecturer (1979–1980), associate professor (1981–1988), department head (1989–2005), professor (2007–2008), and once again as department head from 2008 to 2011. Since September 2011, he has worked as a professor of the department, having led the collective for a total of 21 years (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 9).

In 2009, at the initiative of the department head and by decision of the university rector at the time, academician B.T. Zhumagulov, the Center for Archaeological and Ethnological Research was established. On 28 October 2013, by order of the rector, academician G.M. Mutanov, the Archaeology and Ethnology Research Institute was opened within the structure of the university. The position of director was once again entrusted to the distinguished scholar and skilled academic organizer A.T. Toleubayev. During the period in which A.T. Toleubayev headed the department, both the number and the quality of archaeological and ethnographic expeditions organized by the university increased significantly. Among them were several long-term expeditions initiated and led personally by A. Toleubayev, which have been operating continuously for many years. These include the East Kazakhstan Archaeological Expedition (established in 1989) and the “Üygentas–Öyzhailau” Expedition (established in 2007). The general overview of A.T. Toleubayev's expeditionary work is as follows:

- 1971–1975: Participated in the Central Kazakhstan Archaeological Expedition led by A. Margulan and A. Orazbayev.

- 1976–1988: Conducted ethnographic expeditions and field research in nearly all regions of Kazakhstan.

1983–1984: Studied the ethnography of the Kazakhs living in the Orenburg (1983) and Astrakhan (1984) regions of Russia (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 10).

A. Toleubayev conducted extensive research across many regions of Kazakhstan through ethnographic and archaeological expeditions. Beginning in the 1980s, he worked in the Aksuat, Tarbagatai, Zharma, Ayagoz, Urjar, Makanshy, and Abai districts of Semey region, where he identified, documented, and excavated ancient archaeological monuments.

Since 1989 up to the present day, he has organized and led the East Kazakhstan Archaeological

Expedition of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. In the districts located along the northern slopes of the Tarbagatai Range, as well as in the Kalba and Shyngystau regions, he discovered more than 500 previously unknown archaeological complexes dating to the Bronze and Early Iron Ages, of which over 60 were excavated and studied. As a result, it was established that these areas also contain Begazy–Dandibay and Uysin cultural monuments, that these regions maintained cultural connections with other archaeological zones, and that they possess distinct cultural and ethnic characteristics.

It should be noted that the content of the research conducted in the Tarbagatai foothills, particularly in the Shilikti valley, has been especially successful in revitalizing our national historical and cultural memory. Since 2003 A. Toleubayev has been studying the Shilikti Saka royal burial monuments in the Zaisan district. It was here that he uncovered the third “Golden Man” discovered on the territory of Kazakhstan. Among the finds were 4,303 gold ornaments cast in the shapes of argali, ibex, deer, wolf, bear, lynx, eagle, and five-pointed stars.

A.T. Toleubayev is one of the most famous researchers in the country and abroad. His archaeological and ethnographic studies have focused on the following areas:

- traditional Kazakh religious beliefs and associated rituals, worldview, folk customs and practices, and the ethnography of the Kazakh diaspora;

- Bronze Age and Early Iron Age monuments of the eastern regions, as well as the cultural and socio-political history of the Saks, Uysins, Huns, and ancient Turks.

Professor A. Toleubayev is among the first ethnologists to initiate the study of the ethnography of the Kazakhs living outside Kazakhstan. In the 80s and 90s of the 20th century, under his direct organization, participation, and guidance, several ethnographic expeditions and scientific field trips were carried out in Orenburg, Astrakhan, Omsk, and the Altai Territory of the Russian Federation. The ethnographic research group led by A. Toleubayev has been collecting data on traditional Kazakh culture from various regions of the country, including the Kazakh people living along the Syr and Irtysh rivers that are historically regarded as vital cultural arteries in Kazakh steppe. In recent two years, his articles and research reports have shown that he has gathered valuable materials concerning the history and ethnographic culture of the Kazakhs living in China.

A. Toleubayev's ethnological research has been published in two monographs, one album-book

and numerous scientific articles. His archaeological and ethnological studies are based on materials gathered through his own fieldwork and expeditions among local communities and are written through in-depth analytical interpretation. The most of A. Toleubayev's published works are distinguished with their novelty. He is a scholar who is not afraid to challenge established old views and to formulate new scientific hypotheses.

The works devoted to archaeology and ethnology of the distinguished archaeologist-ethnographer A. Toleubayev have been received very well by scholars both in Kazakhstan and abroad. He is the author of eight monographs, three scientific and scientific-educational books, three secondary-school textbooks on the history of Kazakhstan and more than two hundred scientific articles. In addition, he has supervised the training of more than ten candidates of science and has served as scientific supervisor for two doctoral dissertations.

His archaeological and ethnographic research has addressed the following key topics: the origins and genesis of statehood, the study of ethnographic culture of the Kazakh diaspora, social stratification in Saka society, the issue of elite burial mounds, the geographical range of the spread of the Uysin culture, ethnographic studies of religion and the traditional worldview of the Kazakh people.

A. Toleubayev's archaeological and ethnological investigations deepen and expand our understanding of ancient and medieval history and of ethnographic cultural heritage and are found among the works that foster the development of Kazakh national consciousness and patriotism.

A.T. Toleubayev has a substantial body of research on nature worship, spirits, peris, shamanism and healing magic. Nature and the surrounding environment have played an essential role throughout all stages of human evolutionary development. The relationship between human and nature appears to have been even more complex in the early periods of peoples history. In those eras, human was an inseparable part of nature and in many ways, under its control and dependent upon it.

Under conditions in which human productive forces and social development were at a low and limited level, certain beliefs emerged based on blind faith in the existence of beings in the surrounding world that were far more powerful than humans themselves. The dangerous and unexpected events arising from nature such as lightning, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and solar eclipses gave rise in hu-

man consciousness to religious and fantastical notions, images and characters.

The cult of nature had an important place in the Kazakh religious worldview. For the Kazakh community, which lived freely and intimately within nature, the natural world was perceived, on the one hand, as a formidable and fear-inducing force, and on the other hand, as a nurturing and protective power like a caring mother, that sustained both the livestock and people's life (Toleubayev A.T., 2013:17).

The culture of the Kazakh people, who spent most of their lives in the open environment and developed a deep connection with nature, has a vast array of beliefs, rituals, ancient philosophical reflections and customary practices associated with them. They, on the one hand, arose from fear and caution toward the destructive and unpredictable forces of nature; on the other hand, emerged from the desire and aims to influence these forces through beliefs, rituals, acts of veneration, and supplications (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 18).

A.T. Toleubayev outlined the main principles of Tengrism as follows:

1. The supreme deity is the Blue Sky – Tengri. In Kazakh understanding, this became closely intertwined with the notions of Allah and God. Therefore, in the worldview of ordinary Kazakhs, these terms do not differ from one another (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 21).

According to A.T. Toleubayev, although the ancient Turks believed that the earth, water, animals and even insects had their own tengri, they could not be equated with Supreme Sky Tengri. The Turks had the concept of the One Tengri, if it is not mistaken. All other deities were tengriye, i.e. the spirits or masters of the earth, water, animals, etc.

2. According to Tengrism, there is nothing in nature without an owner or without consideration. Everything has its owner and everything must be considered. Tengrism is a set of laws, principles, and beliefs regulating the relationship between humans and the living as well as the "non-living" nature that surround them. These laws and principles were commonly embodied in the form of taboos, prohibitions, superstitions, traditions, rituals and customs, becoming an essential component of ethnic consciousness. For every member of the ethnos, it is a duty to observe these customs exactly in the way they had been passed down from their ancestors.

3. As Tengrism emerged and developed within a nomadic-patriarchal society, it placed significant emphasis on the cult of ancestors, particularly on ob-

ligations and moral debts to the spirits of deceased ancestors in its general principles and its ritual and ceremonial traditions.

4. Tengri is equivalent to the concept of Allah in Islam. It has no specific image and represents an abstract entity.

5. In this religion there is no intermediary, coordinator, or mediator between Tengri and human beings, unlike the divine found in the major religions. There might be a thought whether baqsy (shaman) serves such a role. No, baqsy does not perform this function. In general, Tengri does not contact with an individual person. Tengri is always connected with a collective. In a nomadic-patriarchal society such a collective is necessarily a kin group, a lineage, family line or tribe. Thus, there is no direct relationship between Tengri and an individual, Tengri's favor or wrath toward a person is linked to whether that person's kinsmen and clan members follow Tengri's right path and observe ritual practices. Overall, collective or communal responsibility is far more demanding and obligatory than individual responsibility.

6. In Tengrism, the idea of dualism built upon opposition is highly developed. The entire world consists of good and evil, white and black, day and night, and other similar dualistic oppositions (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 22).

7. The religion Tengrism had its own calendar, which was based on the movement of the Moon in relation to the Earth. The Moon occupies a special place in Tengrism and is even more significant than the Sun in the nomadic people's worldview. In addition, the 12-year calendar of the followers of Tengrism has been in use at least since the era of the ancient Turks. This calendar is closely connected with the physical and biological rhythms that recur every twelve years in nature and in all living beings.

8. In the nomadic societies of Eurasia, statehood emerged very early, and their forms of statehood differed greatly from those of sedentary peoples. According to Tengrism, head of the state is the earthly representative of Tengri, chosen by Tengri himself, and he is responsible for ensuring that people on earth follow Tengri's laws.

9. According to Tengrist cosmogony, everything from the Blue Sky to the Earth, the Moon, the Sun, and the realm of the stars are individual *tengriye* (deities), they all are interconnected and these concepts are largely similar across many Turkic peoples.

10. According to the demonology of Tengrism, whole nature is soul owner, spirits owner. These spirits are generally divided into two categories:

harmful and harmless. Even harmless, protective spirits must not be antagonized, in such cases they also may become dangerous. Conflicts between humans and harmful spirits are resolved by baqsy, tauip, and other witch healers treating through magical means. Later among the major Turkic peoples who adopted Islam, the monotheistic aspect of the Tengri concept became increasingly pronounced. In the religious consciousness of the people, the Supreme Tengri that is the Blue Sky God became intertwined with and merged into the notion of Allah.

In the Kazakh worldview, there exists the concept of the seven realms (*zhety galam*). In ancient times, this term reflected the people's early mythological understanding of the universe. According to this concept, the figure seven represented the seven fundamental directions. Four of them correspond to the four corners of the world – east, west, south, and north, while the remaining three consist of the upper realm – the Sky, the middle realm – the Earth and the lower realm – the Underworld. In general in the mythological consciousness the interweaving of the horizontal (flat) world and the vertical world is considered a natural phenomenon (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 23).

The Zher-Su (Earth–Water) deity gradually evolved into the concepts of “ancestral land,” “ancestral homeland,” and “ancestral territory” and this is closely connected to the ethno-social and ideological values arising from the Kazakh community's deep veneration of ancestral spirits. The connection between the Jer–Su cult and clan, tribe-based ancestor worship is also reflected in the rituals of burying prominent clan leaders, warriors, and biys along the borders of clan and tribal territories. According to Kazakh customary law, the ownership of a particular area of land and water by a specific clan or lineage was determined by the presence of the graves (burial sites, cemeteries) of their ancestors on that territory. Thus, the Jer–Su deity, like other sacred powers, was gradually pushed out of the religious consciousness of the people, yet its echo survived in the enduring custom of showing deep respect and reverence for the land they lived on and water they drank (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 26).

The Sun, the Moon, and the stars are sacred celestial bodies, and the Kazakhs have venerated them since ancient times.

Among the ancient nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples of Kazakhstan, the Sun cult had started very early. In later periods, the Sun cult gradually evolved into the fire cult. People strongly believed in the purifying and protective power of fire. When

driving away misfortune or evil influences, they performed rituals of purification (*alastau*) and healing (*ushyqtau*) with fire. The Kazakhs would never spit or relieve themselves into fire. There also existed a belief that the fire of hell, which torments the sinful, is located in the Sun (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 27).

According to the wise and experienced elders, the Kazakhs considered sunrise and sunset unfavorable time for beginning any type of work. During the period between *ekinti* (time before sunset) and *aqsham* (evening), people didn't cry out loud, sigh heavily, sleep, or sew clothing. It was believed that work done at an improper hour would bring no success (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 29).

The Kazakhs also have a superstitious belief of throwing butter into a burning fire and interpreting the future by observing the flames. If the flame burns brightly, it is regarded as a sign of good fortune; if the flame turns dark or smoky, it is taken as a sign of misfortune (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 30).

In the life of nomadic peoples, the Moon as a sacred celestial body played an extremely important role. In the early there was a lunar calendar consisted of a cycle lasting ten months.

The Kazakhs compared the Moon's 28-day cycle to the human life course. Human is also created from nothing, is born, grows, matures and then gradually begins to age, weakens, deteriorates and ultimately passes away.

When a person greeted the Moon, he would bend one knee and bow three times. If it was summertime, he would then pluck a handful of fresh grass from the ground and throw it into the fire. If the person's home was far from the place where the salutation was performed, he would pick a single blade of grass and tuck it behind the ear. The Kazakhs also greet the Moon when it becomes full and perfectly round. Looking at the Moon, they utter a wish and then pass their hands over their face. This expressed a wish that the soul be as bright as the Moon and the words be as full as the Moon. (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 31).

By looking at the newly born Moon, the Kazakhs predicted the weather for the coming month. If the crescent moon stood upright or close to upright, this form was believed to be unfavorable for the Moon itself but favorable for a farmworker. If the Moon appeared lying on its back, this was considered favorable for the Moon but unfavorable for farmworker.

The Kazakhs treated certain long-lasting skin diseases, internal disorders and psychological ailments during the period of the new Moon.

In people's belief, any work begun the new Moon was born would yield a good outcome. Therefore, people offered prayers to the Moon, saying: "New Moon, forgive the sins of the dead, fulfill the wishes of the living, rise giving them joy and grant them happiness." the sick people would ask the new Moon to relieve from disease and misfortune. According to folk belief, a person who had warts on his hands could appeal to the new Moon praying, "The Moon, take my wart and give me back my hand," and it was believed that this wish would be fulfilled (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 32).

People believed that a lunar eclipse was a punishment from Allah for the increasing sins of people on earth. Therefore, it was necessary to recite the Quran and ask the Moon for forgiveness. It was also assumed that the eclipse occurred because Iblis, desiring to rule the heavens due to the abundance of human sin. For this reason, early Kazakhs held that Iblis was grasping the Moon with his hands and refusing to release it and to frighten Iblis and free the Moon from his grip, people would raise their voices, shout loudly, and strike iron objects against one another, trying different actions (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 33).

In Kazakh understation of calendar the star Urker (the Pleiades) occupied an important place. There exist numerous superstitions and highly accurate weather predictions are associated with the Pleiades. According to these beliefs: "Every month with Urker is winter"; "The earth will not warm until Urker descends to the ground"; "Sheep are shorn when Urker descends"; "When Urker rises, the broth will be rich"; "As Urker rises, the grass grows and the wheat forms its head." The Kazakhs said that if "Urker falls into water (that is, if it appears above a lake or river), the winter will be severe"; if it "falls onto dry land, the winter will be mild". They also believed that when Urker begins to rise from the horizon, rainfall increases and wind blows; if precipitation is abundant, the year will be prosperous and livestock will thrive, whereas scarce rainfall foreshadows drought and a poor supply of fodder (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 35).

Before taking the long road or moving from one place to another, the Kazakhs paid close attention to the rising of the stars. It was believed that one should not set out when a new star is just beginning to rise. Otherwise, the stars were thought to say: "Bilmegenge bildiremin, bile tyra bilmegendei bolyp keshse, buldiremin (If someone travels without knowing, I will let them know; but if he travels knowing it but pretending to be unaware, I will bring

misfortune)". According to the materials collected in the field when the stars were positioned "unfavorably" for travel, superstitious Kazakhs would walk forty steps in the intended direction and then return (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 35).

The Kazakhs had many superstitions related to weather and natural phenomena. Some of these were based on their meteorological experience and knowledge, while others were based purely on superstition. For example the predictions like "Ai qoralansa arbandy sajla, kun qoralansa kuregin'di sajla (If the Moon is haloed, prepare your cart; if the Sun is haloed, prepare your shovel)"; "Keshki Kun qylaqtansa, qatynyn' ul tapqandaj sujin. Erten'gi kun qylaqtansa, elindi zhau shapqandaj kujin (If the evening Sun has corona, rejoice as if your wife had given birth to a son; if the morning Sun has corona, grieve as if enemies had attacked your people)"; "Zhyldyz shaqshiyp tyr eken, erten' ajaz bolady (If the stars appear sharp, tomorrow will be frosty); "Zhyldyz zhyypyqtap ketipti, boran bolady (If the stars twinkle intensely, there will be a blizzard)".

The Kazakhs interpreted the appearance of a comet as a sign of impending disaster, often associating it with the mass death of livestock caused by severe weather. In understanding of the Kazakhs rooted in superstition, a comet symbolized a short lifespan.

According to Kazakh traditional belief, the Milky Way (*Qus joly*) was named so because it served as a guiding path showing the route of birds.

The Kazakhs also believed in the purifying and protective power of the stars. Perhaps for this reason, the felt, carpet, or blanket used for covering a deceased person was left under the night sky with the thought, "Let the stars see it, let the wind cleanse it".

People believed, the stars in the sky were paired with human beings: when a star fell, a person would die; when a new star appeared, a child would be born. There was also a notion that if, on the wedding day of newlyweds, the stars in the sky were dense and numerous, the couple would live in harmony and have many children (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 36).

According to Kazakh belief, thunder is the neighing of the heavenly horses. Some people explain that angels chasing away demons shoot them with fiery arrows. In our view, this tradition does not arise from fear of unexpected natural phenomena but rather from the wish for abundance of milk and flourishing livestock (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 37).

Moreover, the first spring rain is a rain of blessing (*shapagat jauyny*), so people would offer a

prayer having removed their headwear and hoping to receive the grace of the Supreme Tengri. In the understanding of pastoral communities, thunder and rain signify wealth and prosperity, for after them the earth softens and warms, grass grows abundantly, and livestock flourish [16, p. 38].

It was believed that if a rainbow appeared in winter, the year would be blessed: the people would be live peacefully, livestock would increase in number, harvests would be plentiful, and life would be prosperous (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 41).

As the Kazakh people lived in close harmony with nature, they interpreted and predicted changes in the environment through distinctive natural processes and striking phenomena observed within it. Most of Kazakh meteorological knowledge and forecasting is based on centuries of keen observation and empirical insight. For this reason, most of these practices can be regarded as forms of traditional folk science. At the same time, folk meteorology also includes a considerable number of predictions based purely on similarity magic and popular superstition. In general, distinguishing clearly between these two categories is not always easy (Toleubayev A.T., 2013: 60).

Conclusion

This article, devoted to the study A.T. Toleubayev's contribution to the science of ethnography, analyzes the scientist's biography, professional career, and scientific pursuits, provides an overview of his research conducted within Kazakh ethnography and considers his academic conclusions.

Professor A. Toleubayev is one of the first ethnologists to initiate the study of the ethnography of the Kazakhs living outside Kazakhstan. In the 1980s and 1990s, under his direct organization, participation, and guidance, several ethnographic expeditions and scholarly field trips were carried out in Orenburg, Astrakhan, Omsk, and the Altai Territory of the Russian Federation.

A.T. Toleubayev is among the most prominent scholars in the republic and is well known among researchers abroad. His archaeological and ethnographic studies have addressed the following issues:

- the traditional religious beliefs of the Kazakhs and the rituals associated with them, their worldview, folk customs and rituals and the ethnography of the Kazakh diaspora;
- Bronze Age and Early Iron Age monuments of the eastern regions, as well as the cultural, political and social history of the Sakas, Uysins, Huns and ancient Turks.

Professor A. Toleubayev is among the first scholars to study the traditional ancient religious beliefs and worldview of the Kazakh people. Before him, the distinguished scholar S. Akatayev had studied this topic specifically from a philosophical perspective. A. Toleubayev's distinctive feature in researching traditional Kazakh culture lies in his approach where he does not merely describe particular customs, but seeks to uncover their underlying worldview and historical essence, that means, he digs into the genesis of ethnographic culture.

In recent years, the ethnographic research group led by A. Toleubayev has been collecting data on traditional Kazakh culture from the Kazakh people in every region of the country, including along the Syr and Irtysh rivers, which have long served as vital lifelines of Kazakh life. His articles and research reports from the past two years also indicate that the group has gathered valuable materials on the history and ethnographic culture of the Kazakhs living in China.

The scholar's archaeological and ethnological research is based on materials he personally collect-

ed during fieldwork and from local communities, and his works are written in the result of deep analyses. Many of A. Toleubayev's published studies are distinguished by their novelty. His archaeological and ethnological investigations ultimately deepen and broaden our understanding of ancient and medieval history as well as ethnographic cultural heritage and they are valued as the works that contribute to the formation of Kazakh national consciousness and patriotism.

The scholarly life of A.T. Toleubayev constitutes an integral part of the history of Kazakh ethnography. Analyzing the results of his research, his views and conclusions inevitably evokes considerable interest for the historical sciences, as it positions him as one of the figures founded Kazakh ethnography. Studying his scientific legacy allows us to understand the development of ethnography in Kazakhstan and the questions and challenges that emerged during its formative stages. It should be noted that there are still the issues raised by a cohort of leading Kazakh ethnographers on these questions.

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