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**THE MODERN KYRGYZ FAMILY AND THE NEW POLEMICAL RELIGIOUS
IDENTITY**

БҮГҮНКҮ КЫРГЫЗ ҮЙ-БҮЛӨСҮ ЖАНА ТАЛАШ-ТАРТЫШТЫ ЖАРАТКАН ДИНИЙ
ИДЕНТИҮҮЛҮК МАСЕЛЕСИ

СОВРЕМЕННАЯ КЫРГЫЗСКАЯ СЕМЬЯ И ПРОБЛЕМА РЕЛИГИОЗНОЙ
ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ ВЫЗЫВАЮЩАЯ СПОРЫ

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THE MODERN KYRGYZ FAMILY AND THE NEW POLEMICAL RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Abstract

The Kyrgyz people have so old historical values related with family. These values are based on the lifestyle, customs, traditions, beliefs and rituals of the Kyrgyz people. All these rituals in a family, from the birth of a child to the burial of a person, are in accordance with Islam. This is what our ancestors left us as a legacy, aligning our national identity with Islam. However, after the collapse of the USSR, which adhered to atheism as an ideology and independence, our Kyrgyz family values have been rejected, especially by young people who have been educated in Arab countries. This is a time when the Arab concept of family, which does not fit our mentality, is causing chaos. In order to solve these problems, our article examines issues such as engagement rings, bride and dowry, wedding ceremonies, marital responsibilities of husband and wife, divorce, religion and adultery, and introduces important inventions and achievements. And we had so meaningful thesis and results in these themes as a suggestions.

Keywords: Kyrgyz, Arab, Family, Religious, Identity

Бүгүнкү кыргыз үй-бүлөсү жана талаш-тартышты жараткан диний иденттүүлүк маселеси

Аннотация

Кыргыз элинин үй-бүлөгө байланыштуу тарыхый баалуулуктары өтө байыркы доорго барып такалат. Бул баалуулуктар кыргыз элинин жашоо образына, үрп-адаттарына, каада-салттарына, ишенимдерине жана ырым-жырымдарына негизделген. Үй-бүлөдөгү баланын төрөлүшүнөн баштап адамдын көмүлгөнүнө чейин бардык ырым-жырымдар Ислам динине ылайык келет. Бул биздин ата-бабаларыбыз бизге мурас катары калтырган, улуттук иденттүүлүгүбүздү Ислам дини менен шайкеш келтирген, маанилүү нерсе болуп саналат. Бирок, атеизмди идеология катары тануулаган СССРдин кулашынан жана көз карандысыздыктан кийин, биздин кыргыздын үй-бүлөлүк баалуулуктары четке кагылды. Айрыкча, араб өлкөлөрүндө билим алган жаштар тарабынан бул иш жүзөгө ашырылды. Мына ушундан улам, азыркы учурда биздин менталитетке туура келбеген араб үй-бүлө түшүнүгү, кыргыз коомунда башаламандык жаратып жатканы белгилүү. Бул көйгөйлөрдү чечүү максатында, биздин макалада шариятта жана үрп-адатта кудалашуу, кыз узатуу жана сеп даярдоо, үйлөнүү үлпөт тойлору, күйөөсү менен аялынын үй-бүлөдөгү милдеттери, ажырашуу, дин жана ойноштук сыяктуу маселелер каралып, маанилүү ойлоп табуулар жана жетишкендиктер колго киргизилди. Жыйынтык катары окурманга конкреттүү идеялар жана сунуштар берилди.

Ачык сөздөр: кыргыз, араб, үй-бүлө, дин, иденттүүлүк

Современная кыргызская семья и проблема религиозной идентичности вызывающая споры

Аннотация Исторические ценности кыргызского народа, связанные с семьей, уходят корнями в глубокую древность. Эти ценности основаны на образе жизни, обычаях, традициях, верованиях и обрядах кыргызского народа. Все обряды, от рождения ребенка в семье до похорон человека, соответствуют исламу. Это важное наследие, оставленное нам нашими предками, которое гармонично сочетает нашу национальную идентичность с исламом. Однако, после распада СССР, когда атеизм навязывался в качестве идеологии, и обретения независимости, кыргызские семейные ценности были отвергнуты. Особенно это было реализовано молодежью, получившей исламские образование в арабских странах. В результате, арабская концепция семьи, которая не соответствует нашему менталитету, создает хаос в сегодняшнем кыргызском обществе. С целью решения этих проблем, в нашей статье рассматриваются такие вопросы, как сватовство, проводы невесты и подготовка приданого, свадебные торжества, обязанности мужа и жены в семье, развод, религия и прелюбодеяние в шариате и обычаях, а также представлены важные открытия и достижения. В заключение читателю предлагаются конкретные идеи и предложения.

Ключевые слова: кыргыз, араб, семья, религия, идентичность

Introduction

There were some great empires in world history like the Chinese (Tang), Roman, and Persian empires that influenced on all of world history. In fact, there was also one of the great nation named Kyrgyz. Because the Kyrgyz people had to so old historical background, and effected to more nations with it's own beliefs, customs and traditions, and with nomadic lifestyle. After accepting Islam, the Kyrgyz people took the position in the Talas war that realized at the 751 with Arab moslems army against to Chinese empire (Golden, 2011, p. 59). In that days, preciely in 840-1212 the Great Kyrgyz Khaganate (Дашковский, 2009, ст. 13) took the so meaningful role in the formation of Central Asian identity. In this regard, the Great Kyrgyz Khaganate was a official religion is Buddhism and Manikheism at the begining, Tenirism and Islam in the middle ranges (Jusubaliev, 2007, s. 31-36). Also, after the collapse of the Khaganate, the Kyrgyz people accepted the Christianity without their wishing in the period of Russian Empire colonization in 18th -19th centuries (Morris, 2001, p. 521-538).

After the spreading the Islam in Central Asia in 7th centry, appeared the understanding of Islam named Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit in this region. And this understanding of Islam was widespread between Uzbek, Turkman, Tadjik, Kazakh, Kara-Kalpak and Kyrgyz people. In the Central Asia history were a biggest changes related with religion in the period of Chingisids and the Russian Empire colonization and occupation period (Kariev, 2016, s. 73-115). But all these Central Asian Muslims didn't give up of Islam. Even if in the USSR they were Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit Muslims. After the collopsing of the USSR all Central Asian people became an independent states like; Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kara-Kalpaksitan autonomy Republik, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic (D'Encausse, 1993, p. 16). After the independence, all these republics took different position to the religion themes in their political issues. The Kyrgyz Republic choose the democracy in all state affairs and religious subjects. Actually, in the area of our first president, Akaev entered the more religious ideologies against to the our religious understanding named Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit (1991-жылдын 16-декабры 656-XII №луу Кыргыз Республикасынын Дин тутуу эркиндиги жана дин уюмдары жөнүндө закону, <https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/891/edition/503471/kg>).

The Kyrgyz people who chose the Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit understanding of Islam were given important meaning in the family values as a their life style that old inheritance from ancestors. And they passed these values orally from generation to generation like the epic poem of Manas. Between these our family values there were so more beliefs and ethical values in to the family that absorbed the national and religious identities of each other. All these our family values were given to us in our customs, traditions, proverbs, quick words, fairies, and stories as precious as gold. All these family values are strictly controlled by all members of the Kyrgyz community. After the period of the Russian Empire and USSR that were against to religion, the Kyrgyz community weakened in knowledge about Islam, really. In return of this, after independence, more Kyrgyz young went to different Arab countries like Saudia, Egypt, Syria ect. for the education of Islam. However, they were not educated Islam, and learned the Arab lifestyle that was ideologized. After coming back all these young Kyrgyz students imposed to Kyrgyz community the Arab lifestyle, not Islam. And these ideologies are based actually on Salafiyya, Wahhabiya, Hizb al-Tahrir, and Ihvaniyya. As a result of the introduction, we'll research the modern Kyrgyz family sample and focus on the portrait of our own religious and national rights from the perspective of academic principles.

Today's Modern Kyrgyz Family Sample And Religious Identity

We'll talk on the today's modern Kyrgyz family engagement, dawry, wedding ceremony, the duties of a husband and wife, divorce, polygamy, adultery and religion from the perspective of Kyrgyz family and Islamic family understanding. Because all these themes were the reason the discussion in the Modern Kyrgyz community. Let's go to talk on these themes;

1. Engagement

The Kyrgyz people were importanted all engagement ceremonies as a holy part of family. And it was so meaningful step of the building of family. Engagement, in Kyrgyz tradition and customs, means that the parents of a young man and woman who is starting a family discuss and consult with each other. After all these engagement ceremonies, if agreed with others, then silver earrings for the girl and it means that the girl is owned (Камбарова, 2014, 206-207-б.). In other words, the engagement was implemented publicly, not secret between the members of the two families, and their relatives, also between villagers in our customs. With this way, we made the identification process of every members in our Kyrgyz community. So every one were know all members of Kyrgyz community. And this engagement custom in Kyrgyz society was absorbed into each other with our lifestyle (Осмонова, 2015, с. 188).

Unfortunately, in these days, our young Kyrgyz moslems cosiety that under the influence of salafism, they are rejecting our national engagement customs, and they are saying all these ceremonies as a wrong, and they imposing the gratitudes from the boy and girl. As a result of this, the fanatic moslems boys and girls went to sharia nikah that meanings empty in the Kyrgyz secular Republic, without their parent's knowledges. Shortly, this our fanatic moslems youngs understanding of sharia nikah, it is like to "friendly" in Europe. And this was is leading us to so dangerous result like so more abortion chaos, leaving the partners, divorces, orphanhood of children to street life, engaging in prostitution or thelf out of nessesity. All these subjects are results of the religious understanding that not suitable to our Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit religious identity and all these so dangerous to our tomorrow's future.

2. Dowry (qalyn) and Mahr

The dowry institute was so meaningful in the Kyrgyz customs history. Dowry is all material thing that given to young and new family. Between the Kyrgyz society dowry was given from horses, caws, sheeps, goats, moneys (Kariev, 2021, s. 751). Also, dowry means material sourse, if not reach an agreement wife and husband for not stealing, going to wolrd in position, using it to children's healty and education, and used it another aims. And the prices of our dowry was a differently tradition in the different our regions and new husband material status. Before Islam in the Arab Peninsula wasn't any lawly status for women. In fact, women didn't have any rights. They were used as ordinary things, sex dolls, in short, they were deprived of all human rights. Only women who were leaders of some tribes or the wives of the leaders of tribes had some human rights (Holy Quran, Surah al-Nisa Ayat-4, 20-25; Surah al-Ahzab, Ayat 50; Surah al-Bakara, Ayat 229, 237).

After the advent of Islam, firstly human rights fulfilled, as a part of this prosses the women rights also legalized like mahr, wasiyyat, wakalat, ect. In the Holy Quran there are more ayats related with mahr and there are more hadiths that gived to us the practical portrait of the Prophet Muhammad (al-Sarakhsi, 1324-1331, v-3, p. 62). In this way the understanding of mahr is informed around the Arab lifestyle as a personal responsibility, not Kyrgyz society's public responsibility.

However, in the modern Kyrgyz society, clearly between fanatic Kyrgyz moslems youngs occured the understanding the mahr as trust and our own dowry / qalyn is wrong. Then, more Kyrgyz

young girls who are thinking the same thing asking from the boys who wishing get married so big money like arabian girls. We are discussing this theme so seriously as a sociological, and economical, and theopolitical problem in these days. This, however, means that a misunderstanding of a term, in short, has a meaning that leads to a national tragedy.

Therefore, in solving this problem, it is the demand of the times to consider the Kyrgyz concept of qalyn and the Arab concept of mahr as synonyms, which essentially serve the same purpose, and to promote a unified approach in this area in the public consciousness.

3. Wedding ceremony

The Kyrgyz people, who were engaged in animal husbandry, moved pastures according to the conditions of each season, looking for a source of water or a source of glacier, and lived a nomadic life. In such a situation, when there was no concept of a village or a city, in order to support each other, and share sorrows and joys equally, our rituals that related with traditions in Kyrgyz history are inevitably associated with religion. One of these ceremonies is a wedding. A wedding means announcing a good deed to the public, receiving blessings from the people for the good outcome of this matter, and performing rituals by religious experts. There are many types of weddings, as like a jentek wedding, a sunnat wedding, a muchol wedding, a marry wedding, etc.

The wedding of the Kyrgyz people is an important ceremony passed down from generation to generation for centuries and has rich traditions, inimitable customs, and unparalleled values (Акматалиев, 2022, 256-259-б). The ceremonies performed at weddings among the Kyrgyz people are to entertain the public, to offer food to the public, to receive the blessings of the people, and to express the importance of public identification (Polat, 2008, s.155-164). Of course, giving a wedding party to the public requires a lot of money. That is why, especially those who have little knowledge of religion, adhere to the opinion that this ancestral tradition is completely wrong. This understanding of them reflects only their opinion, not based on any belief, but on their material situation. Therefore, some of the younger generation refuse to hold weddings and are increasingly choosing to live in secret Islamic marriages between a girl and a boy. As a result of this, as well as the lack of any official documents, many young women and men are divorced, living on the streets with their children, or resort to theft due to the lack of a breadwinner (guardian), or commit suicide due to psychological trauma. For this reason, we must contribute to the preservation of the traditional concept of weddings in Kyrgyz religious identity, as a tradition that has become ingrained in our religious identity, even if it is not a religious command, provided that waste is not allowed. In other words, in order to preserve our national identity as Kyrgyz, we must first preserve the Khanafit-Maturidit-Naqshibandit concept, which is our religious identity. We must stay away from theopolitics that come from other countries and follow different religious ideologies.

4. The Duties of a Husband and Wife

According to the traditions of the Kyrgyz people, who have a history, culture, traditions, customs, and nomadic lifestyle that is no less than that of the Arab people, each person in the family has their own duties. A number of social duties, such as ensuring the safety of the family, taking care of them no less than the rest, taking care of their health, building a house that provides shelter, and educating children, were assigned to the man who was the head of the family. The Kyrgyz people divided these duties according to the physiological abilities of the man. And the house mistress was responsible for keeping the house clean, preparing food, washing clothes, educating children, and preparing household chores such as milking, churning butter, buttermilk, and kurut. In other words,

work outside the home was assigned to the man, and housework was assigned to the woman. Shortly, the burdens, joys, and sorrows of the family are shared equally between the husband and wife (Кариев, 2025, 41-50-б).

However, in the concept of family based on Arab people, all work is assigned to the man, and the woman's duty is limited to fulfilling the man's sexual desires. She does not perform tasks such as cooking, cleaning the house, washing clothes, breastfeeding, raising children, and raising livestock. Instead, the man hires a maid from outside. In fact, in Sharia, or rather, in Arab customs, it is said that a woman is not obliged to breastfeed her child. This is probably why, in the Arab concept of family, the factor that binds a husband and wife to each other is considered to be only the issue of sex (Qadri Basha, 2007, p. 78).

In the current Kyrgyz society, young people who understand the traditional understanding of Islam and the Kyrgyz way of life as incorrect, especially in family matters, have accepted the concept of family in the Arab mentality as a commandment of Sharia, and are undermining the family responsibilities of men and women in the Kyrgyz tradition mentioned above, and are undermining the Kyrgyz concept of family. In these family issues of 2020, more young Kyrgyz women, based on this concept, have refused to do housework and have abandoned their own culture, traditions, and customs. This is the most dangerous thing for the future of the Kyrgyz nation! That is why we must adhere to our own centuries-old family responsibilities rather than the family in the Arab concept of family.

5. Divorce

In Islam, both marriage and divorce are very easy. In other words, if the consent of the girl and the guy is required, the marriage is considered valid. And if the two of them disagree, the man can say “three divorces” at once, and the marriage is terminated. This, however, was implemented as a reaction to the Sharia law based on Arab customs. Because, in that days did not consider the consent of the girl, and was sold her, or gave her as a gift, or made her a slave (Ali, 1992, v.5, p. 535; Altıntaş, 1990, 207-208).

In Kyrgyz tradition, marriage and divorce were not easy. In addition to the consent of the girl and the guy for marriage, the parents, relatives, clan, neighbors of both parties also expressed their gratitude for this act, and the couple's social, public, and cultural insurance was also provided at the expense of tomorrow. In the case of divorce, it was not just considered a matter between husband and wife, but also discussed between their families, and between two tribes, and the final word of the elders is accepted as the decision (Гредоков, 1889, ст. 90, 92; Добросмыслов, 1904, ст. 51, 54; Малышев, 1902, ст. 8).

Divorces are a very relevant problem in modern Kyrgyz society. According to statistics, one in five families divorces. For a developing country, this indicator is a very big and dangerous problem. The reason for this, as mentioned above, is the incorrect understanding of Sharia by young people. At the same time, we also have a serious problem in the field of education, where we are unable to convey the true and correct Islamic rules to the people. This can only be solved by conveying to our people the correct understanding of religion, namely, the traditional understanding of Islam that is consistent with our way of life, especially the Khanafit-Maturidit-Naqshibandit understanding. Because in this understanding the rules of religion and our tradition are intertwined, and the family is an institution that further strengthens it.

6. Polygamy

In general, the concept of monogamy was dominant in the history of Turkic peoples. Only the Kyrgyz people, such as the *biy*, *manap*, *datka*, *kashka*, had two wives (Kariev, 2022, p. 98-109). But in general, the common people had only one wife. That is why, in the Kyrgyz understanding, a couple was considered a part of their natural destiny, and they considered a second wife as a protest against fate. This concept became the main traditional way of life of the Kyrgyz even before Islam (Абрамзон, 1990, 169-б).

However, the concept of God, the concept of family, and the concept of woman in the Arabian Peninsula contributed to the emergence of polygamy in that region, even to its formation as a normal phenomenon. At the same time, as a society where slave ownership was widespread in the Arabian Peninsula, this concept also caused the widespread spread of this concept and the absence of any restrictions (Ceylan, 2018, s. 152).

That is why Islam first limited women's human rights to more of four wives at the same time, in the sense of imposing a limit on this, which had no limits at all. From the perspective of Islamic law methodology, this is a commandment that the number of four should not be exceeded. However, the fact that some Arabs understood taking four wives as a commandment and turned it into a way of life also had a negative impact on other Muslim communities. However, the meaning of taking four wives was only done if the wife he took was barren, or unable to bear children, or for some political reason, or for some social reason. In short, taking four wives is not a command in Sharia, but rather a permission given for the above reasons (*Holy Quran*, Surah al-Nisa, Ayat-3).

In today's Kyrgyz society, young people, influenced by the aforementioned Arab understanding of Islam, have accepted the traditional Arab concept of polygamy as a commandment of Sharia, and are either unable to properly maintain their first wife, or unable to live openly with their second wife, or making their two wives fight with each other, or unable to provide their children with a proper and adequate education. This also shows how dangerous a religious understanding that does not correspond to our traditional understanding of religion is for the Kyrgyz community from the perspective of religious and national identity.

7. Adultery and Religion

In today's Kyrgyz society, unfortunately, the number of young people who use Islam as an instrumentalism and adhere to the Arab lifestyle, namely polygamy and the concept of a frivolous family, is growing. Honestly, in the twenty-first century and in a secular country, the marriage of a mullah / sharia nikah has unfortunately become a cause of adultery in our society, and many families are being destroyed. Because a man whose economic situation is not good, who cannot properly support his first wife, and who cannot properly educate his children, enters into a mullah marriage / sharia nikah with another woman just for the sake of sexual intercourse, or cannot provide her with the maintenance required by Sharia, or cannot properly support his first wife, or cannot manage both wives together, or cannot take care of the education and health of his children, and in the end, he leaves both families and enters into a third marriage with another woman.

The Kyrgyz Republic is a secular country. However, the above situation does not correspond to any Sharia law or any secular law. That is why, in order to put this phenomenon in order, we need to restore our religious and national identity. Because, in our Khanafit-Maturidit-Nakshibandit understanding of religion, as mentioned above, it is not allowed to use religion as an instrument for adultery, to act against the destiny written by God. If necessary, this situation should be considered within the framework of the law and urgent measures should be taken depending on the situation.

Otherwise, our Kyrgyz family concept and institution, which has been strong for centuries, is rapidly collapsing due to these and other reasons and is rapidly losing its family values. As a nation, the Kyrgyz people should not allow this catastrophe.

Result

No matter what religion, it is fundamentally about preserving social order, law, peace, and justice. However, since Islam was revealed to the Arabs, they also imposed their way of life on other peoples as Islam, which undermined the national identity of the people of the world. In fact, the national identity of the Kyrgyz people has become inextricably linked with Islam. In today's kyrgyz society these themes start being actually. Actually, the actually subjects related with family like: engagement, dowry (qalyn) and mahr, wedding seromony, wife's and husband's responsibilities, divorce, polygamy, adultery and religion. In these days more young Kyrgyz Muslims are turning away from our values and going to the Arabian family understanding that inappropriate to our mentality. They are understanding all these as a part of Islam, and this situation is having a negative impact on our religious identity, named khanafit-maturidit-nakshibandit, and worries us about our future. Therefore, we can say Islam respects and does not oppose the lifestyle of every nation, allowing the preservation and appreciation of the national and religious identity of the Kyrgyz people.

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