

The transformation of Kazakh people's traditional etiquette

Kazakh people's traditional etiquette has not been the subject of special study till the present time, although fragmentary mentions of various etiquette rules and descriptions of some standards of behavior are available in many ethnographic writings in traditional Kazakh culture. Therefore, a comprehensive study of various sides of Kazakh people's etiquette, identifying its traditional specific features, both all-Kazakh and regional, analysis of their transformation in modern conditions in various districts of Kazakh people's inhabitancy is essential scientific task.

The selection of traditional culture of behavior in the subject of a certain work gives opportunity to reveal a number of aspects of spiritual culture and public life, which are often invisible to the ethnographer and to see well-studied phenomenon in a new light, including them to a system of moral-ethical considerations and etiquette.

Considering modern ethnic culture of Kazakh people, we can say that it contains both new and traditional features. The traditional culture of Kazakh people, including studied etiquette began to transform in the direction of unification and simplification as a result of modernization process. Modern regional differences in the culture of their communication is subject to these processes. The traditional etiquette is fully observed by the Kazakhs of Mongolia, who kept some archaic forms of etiquette norms (for example, greeting forms). The norms of traditional etiquette continue to define the behavior of Kazakh people, especially the older generations in rural areas of Kazakhstan. The culture of communication of Kazakh people living in Russia and Kazakh citizens in Kazakhstan is increasingly losing traditional features and approaching to European standards.

In this article we briefly reviewed the specific etiquette norms existing among the Kazakhs in situations of greeting and saying goodbye, in receiving guests, in family relationships. The analysis of these norms show that common features appear among them, the culture of communication of Kazakh people is based on it and can be called the basic principles of Kazakh etiquette. These are the principles of tolerance, respect of older people and sexual differentiation. One of the main features of traditional Kazakh culture is paying deference to the older people. The principle of seniority is characteristic for traditional societies, where genealogy attaches great important. "The seniority" had a broader meaning than "eldest by age" in traditional Kazakh culture. Besides the age, it depended on the status of the tribal group to which belonged man, his social status, gender, family ties and

position in the family. “The seniority” is postponed to the people, who hold prominent positions in modern Kazakh society. “The principle of seniority” is observed today, but in a modified form, in all etiquette situations: greetings, feasts and family relations.

The features of male and female behavior (gender differentiation) is fixed in traditional Kazakh etiquette. The sex differentiation, which was also reflected in the norms of communication is characteristic for traditional society. The etiquette behavior was emphasized not only by dominance men, but also gender differentiation. The housings of Kazakh people, as other nations were divided into male and female; things, tools of labor of the opposite gender declared taboo by etiquette. The male and female etiquette verbal expressions, for example, greetings were differed.

Currently traditional etiquette norms, emphasizing the primacy of men increasingly replaced by Europeanized etiquette norms. The etiquette, demonstrating the gender differentiation, not related to relations of domination/subordination is losing more and more. There is no division to male and female in rural and urban houses, tabooing the things of the opposite gender; the difference between male and female formulas of greetings are gradually blurring. One of the important principles of communication of Kazakh people is a principle of tolerance, indulgence towards others. An important sign of tolerance of the guest and his respect to the hosts was taking meal in the house, where he came. If he did not take meal, it was perceived as an expression of displeasing. The intermutual invitations to guests were considered as demonstration of the tolerance. The refusal gave evidence about extreme degree of the disrespect. Patience towards the guest has survived to this day. No matter what time comes the guest, the hosts must show him all honor he deserves. A peculiar manifestation of the tolerance is the custom of avoiding objections in the family. The husband’s parents will never make objections directly to the daughter-in-law, they will better criticize their daughter in the presence of daughter-in-law, and she must understand that these comments relate to her. This standard is kept in many traditional families, mainly in rural areas.

The materials collected and analyzed in this study allow to conclude that by the end of the last century more or less stable model of communication culture of Kazakh people has been formed. Its characteristic feature is a combination of elements of the modern (urban, European) and traditional (archaic, oriental) cultures.

The basic principles of traditional Kazakh etiquette, despite its transformation have preserved in the modern norms of communication (though smear or become less

clear, depending on the environment – urban, rural and district – southern regions, Mongolia and north). The principle of respect to older people has preserved. The principle of seniority will be reduced to respect to older people with increasing democratization of family and social relations.

The principle of tolerance as having universal value has been maintained. It takes less formalized forms and expressed in not specific etiquette rules, but in the spirit and atmosphere of communication. The biggest changes were in the principle of the gender differentiation, which is associated with an increasing assertion of women's equality.

Today there is a great interest to the traditional etiquette in modern Kazakh society, a tendency to the recovery of some etiquette rules is proposed. This is clearly connected with the rise of national consciousness of Kazakh people after acquisition of the Independence by Kazakhstan and desire to study their traditional culture.