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THE ISSUE OF ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE KARAKALPAK BLACKSMITH'S TOOLS

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ABSTRACT:

Crafts related to metalworking on the territory of Karakalpakstan originated in ancient times, even when people learned to make copper and bronze objects. This is confirmed by archaeological materials. The ancient population of the Southern Aral Sea region in the second half of the II millennium BC used a number of locally produced items. This is evidenced by the unique discovery of a stone casting mold for casting a spear tip from the settlement of Dzhanbas-21 [Itina 1977: p. 131] and many metal products of various kinds, identified by archaeologists in settlements and settlements on the territory of Karakalpakstan. Ancient sources provide information about the use of various metals by the Sako-Massagetian tribes [Herodotus 1972: p. 79]. Folklore data, rituals and beliefs associated with the personality of the blacksmith, workshop and tools testify to the antiquity of the blacksmith craft among the Karakalpaks. The ancient traditions of the Karakalpaks in blacksmithing are evidenced, along with written sources, by local legends about the origin of blacksmithing, about the patron saint of blacksmiths Hazreti Daut, who passed on blacksmithing skills to the Karakalpaks and Uzbeks at the same time. Ethnonyms also testify to the antiquity of the Karakalpaks' occupation in blacksmithing. For example, the Karakalpak Kazayakly clan has a division "cop usta" (many craftsmen), whose representatives have been engaged in blacksmithing. The toponymy of Karakalpakstan also reflects the occupation of the population by blacksmithing, for example, the name of the village "Zangishi" — the village of manufacturers of stirrups.

INTRODUCTION:

The blacksmithing craft of the Karakalpaks was developed both in rural areas and in cities. The centers of blacksmithing as the production of metal products were the cities of Khojeyli, Cimbai, Kungrad. In addition, these cities were trading centers for the population of the lower reaches of the Amu Darya in the XIX – beginning. XX century . Until the beginning of the twentieth century, blacksmithing remained the most common of the crafts that produce metal products. The blacksmiths were called by the Karakalpaks – temirshi, who made a variety of metal products. They satisfied the needs of the population in household items, provided tools for handicraft and agricultural production, construction crafts.

The blacksmiths had individual workshops, which, like the shops (where the products were sold), were defined by the term "dukan". The city blacksmiths had a dukan workshop located in the bazaar, in the corresponding craft rows. Sometimes blacksmiths adapted an old yurt or a semi–earthen hut - a zhertole for a workshop. But, most often they built a separate room with a canopy and one window.

The workshop's equipment consisted of a forge (pesh), which is a small furnace with an open shallow shaft, it was used during the melting of metals in crucibles and heating of workpieces before forging.
The forge was laid out of mud bricks by the blacksmiths themselves. It towered above the floor level by 1 m 80 cm – 2 m, the width reached 1 m – 1 m 50 cm. On one side of the furnace wall, a hole was made at the base, where a pipe from an air-injection bellows was inserted. The korik air–injection fur was made from 7-8 goat or sheep skins. These furs were ordered by blacksmiths to tanners. The "korik" fur consisted of two cone–shaped bags, reinforced with tapering ends on a hollow wooden fork with a metal tip. The length of the leather sleeves of furs on average reached 120-150 cm, and the diameter of the widest part was 50-70 cm. When it was necessary to inflate the forge, at the direction of the blacksmith, his student alternately setting in motion the right and left bellows, provided a continuous supply of air to the forge [Ethnography ...1980: p.151]. Another type of blacksmith's fur was sewn from two pieces of bull (cow) skins to the upper and lower boards. Felt was sewn under the boards. The upper part of the bellows is solid without holes, the lower part is covered with boards only on two sides, a quadrangular hole is cut in the center of the felt for air access. A short metal pipe was attached to the tapering ends of the bellows, which was built into the wall of the forge. On both sides of the fur, wooden handles are attached, reinforced to wooden racks. At the end of the expanded lower part of the fur there is also a wooden handle, with a suspended metal bar – weight and a rope tied to a stick, which was attached to the ceiling with a hook. This device was held by the fur in a horizontal suspended position. A leather belt was tied to the other end of the stick, holding it, the horn pumped air into the horn. Some modern blacksmiths use a compressor instead of leather furs. There was a vat of water near the forge for the hardening process. In the middle of the workshop, opposite the forge, there was a felled tree trunk, which in some areas of Karakalpakstan blacksmiths called "sandalwood", an anvil "tos" was installed on it, a little further there were several log cabins with anvils of various sizes. According to the technical classification, the anvil is a supporting tool that served for the initial rough forging of iron and the final straightening of products. The anvil has a protrusion in the form of a horn on the front part, which serves to bend the workpieces on it at different angles. There are square and round holes in the upper part. The first is used for installing and fixing applied tools and devices on an anvil, and the second is for punching holes in workpieces. The lower part of the anvil has projections with which it is attached to a wooden log cabin with leather straps. The blacksmiths did not make anvils themselves, they bought them from merchants who brought them from Khiva, Bukhara, Turkestan or from Orenburg and other cities of Russia.

Researchers of metalworking crafts of the Central Asian-Kazakh peoples classified blacksmithing tools into supporting, percussion, lining, as well as auxiliary tools [Sulaimanov, 1982: pp.21-27]. The blacksmiths made all the necessary tools themselves, except for anvils. The supporting tools include anvils of various sizes. Percussion instruments include hammers that have different sizes, they are called "balga" or "shokkish", depending on the size of this instrument, the words "big" "ulken balga (shokkish)", "small" "kishkene balga (shokkish)" were added. The blacksmiths also called the jackhammer "sokky". Hammers were divided into several types depending on the operations in which they were used and the shape of the working part – kese shokkish, shynlaitugyn shokkish, taga tagatugyn shokkish. The working ends of forging

hammers were made transverse, square, convex, longitudinal, flat. The handles of the hammers were made 40-60 cm long, slightly thickened to the free end. The handles of the hammers are made by the craftsmen themselves from hard wood here (mulberry – Morus alba L.), erik (common apricot – Armeniaca vulgaris Lam.).

Lining tools are those tools that are placed under the blows of a jackhammer (sokky) or a hammer (shokkish, balga), as a result of which these tools are embedded in the workpiece to full or incomplete thickness or forces due to plastic deformation to take a given shape. The lining tools include forging chisels – keskish, shapkysh. They perform various operations related to metal cutting. Chisels were made of high-quality solid iron, with hardening of the cutting part. The cutting part of the chisel had various shapes – longitudinal, transverse, notched. Depending on the purpose, chisels were made of various shapes and sizes. Punchers and beards are used for punching through holes of various shapes – round, square, oval. To punch the product, a metal device with a hole is placed, called a "hole". Lining tools are subdivided for hot processing and for cold processing. For hot processing, a metal handle is attached to these tools, others do not have them, they are held with hands or forceps. The blacksmiths used the core tool to mark the details by drawing indentations. It is a steel rod with a conical tip. Blows to the core are applied with a hammer. This tool is used in the manufacture of horseshoes. In addition, the tools of the blacksmiths were drills and drills (burgs) used for drilling and re-drilling. The cutting part of these tools was made of steel, hard alloys. The blacksmiths used a soldering iron (daneker), which was used during tinning and soldering to heat parts, flux, molten solder and apply it to the contact point. The working part of the soldering iron was heated by a flame in the furnace.

The blacksmith's auxiliary tools include various kinds of tongs and forceps (kyskysh), which are used for grabbing, holding and rotating the workpiece. Forceps and tongs had different shapes depending on their purpose – uslaitugyn kyskysh – tongs for holding, ulken kyskysh – large tongs, zhumyr kyskysh – tongs for holding metal having a round shape, tongs for holding flat iron. Scissors (kaishi) for cutting metal rods, tinplate, table and hand vises (iskenge), awls (biz), crucibles for melting solder (gulpuda), files of various shapes and sizes (egeu), rasps, which were necessary for processing the surface of soft metals – all these tools were available from Karakalpak blacksmiths. Each blacksmith had a shape (kalip), a nail mill (shege kalip), a whetstone was used for the production of tools and agricultural equipment – a ball tas, kayrak tas. With the help of such a set of tools, master blacksmiths produced all kinds of items necessary for the economic life of the people. Many tools, as we pointed out above, were made by blacksmiths themselves, and they received some of the tools from their mentors.

In the traditional view of the Karakalpaks, blacksmithing tools have the ability to protect a person from troubles and evil spirits, i.e. they were endowed with a certain sanctity. For example, it was not allowed to step over tools, blacksmiths over an anvil, it was strictly forbidden to sit on it. It was not allowed to step on hammers and other tools. It is believed that only the blacksmith himself or one of his descendants who are chosen by him as an heir or have a penchant for this business can touch and use them. The masters did not give their tools to strangers. According to one of our informants, there was a case when one of the friends of a famous blacksmith, jokingly, imperceptibly took a hammer from him. However, he brought him

back the very next day, as he was unable to sleep all night.

The anvil was very revered by blacksmiths. According to the Karakalpaks, it had the ability to heal people. As a master blacksmith from the Karauzyak district told us, a mute boy came to his workshop, applied his tongue to the anvil, thanks to which he was cured and began to speak. The sick worship the anvil, walk around it three times. On the night from Thursday to Friday, fried tortillas – shelpek are left in front of the anvil. During the field research, we talked with hereditary artisans-craftsmen who told us that they constantly feel an invisible connection with supernatural forces present in their workshop. In addition, their neighbors reported that at night in an empty forge, hammers could be heard, the hissing of bellows, as if someone was working.

In archaic and traditional cultures, symbolic and utilitarian aspects of human activity were not dissected. Any thing could serve both utilitarian and semiotic purposes at the same time. Depending on which properties of the object were actualized (utilitarian or symbolic), it could acquire one or another semiotic status [Bayburin, 1991, pp. 34, 36].

The semiotic nature of the instruments is manifested in the rite of initiation into the master. Ustaz gives his disciple, upon completion of his apprenticeship, one of his instruments. The tools of the master teacher are of great importance to the student. According to the views of the Karakalpaks, the donated tools have the grace that this or that craft activity carries. Using these tools, a student who has studied a craft will soon become a real master, such as his teacher.

Researchers associate the sacredness of the tools and equipment of the master craftsman with the widespread idea among the peoples of Central Asia that crafts were given to people by the prophets, by the Almighty. Inventions of craft tools are associated with the names of prophets and saints. For example, in the blacksmithing craft, the invention of forceps (kyskysh) is associated with the name of the biblical prophet David – Hazreti Daut, who was the patron saint of metal workers. According to legend, God endowed Hazreti Daut with miraculous power. He did not burn his hands when working with metal. One day, God took away Daut's miracle ability. Daut's hands began to burn. Then Daut, offended by God, turned to him. God replied that he was proud and told him to bow down to the dog (iitke tazhim et). Daut looked at the dog lying at the threshold of the forge, his front paws crossed. According to this model, Daut-paygambar invented tongs with crossed halves, with which he could hold red-hot iron and process it with a hammer.

To this day, there are religious beliefs associated with their occupation among modern artisans-blacksmiths. Field materials indicate that among modern artisans, the image of the patron of the art of metalworking Daut-paygambar remains stable. Along with the mythical patron, as the researchers note, among the Central Asian peoples, a significant place in the legends and inheritance is given to real masters identified with their ancestors – aruak. "Sometimes a generic ancestor acquires the characteristics of a cultural hero who taught people certain technical skills," the researcher emphasizes [Tokhtabayeva, 2005, p. 213]. The reports of our informants indicate that those people who had special qualities became masters, they were endowed with supernatural abilities. Aces of their business are people who have "aruak", "arch". "Aruak" in translation from the Karakalpak language means spirit, soul, ghost, ghost, and the word "arch" means back. In this case, the term "arch" can be explained by the fact that supernatural forces are behind the master. The terms "aruak", "arch" are synonymous concepts,

denoting supernatural higher powers, allegedly accompanying marginal personalities. According to the masters themselves, they are energized, supported by the spirits of the patrons of crafts, the spirits of deceased artisans. Field materials show that in the professional environment of modern Karakalpak blacksmiths, the presence of an ancestor-a blacksmith remains an equally important factor in the recognition of merit and promotion in the professional environment. To engage in a craft with a special gift of "aruak", "arch" and to be a craftsman without such abilities are polarized concepts, standing far apart. According to the ideas of the Karakalpaks, a person endowed with special qualities, sacred abilities, can become a real master. The fame of such masters extends far beyond the village or city where he lives. And after their death, their names were even more magnified, their memory was preserved from generation to generation. People commemorated them, and the disciples performed prayers and sacrifices in their honor.

Thus, the ethnographic study of blacksmithing tools reveals the deep roots of the development of blacksmithing among the Karakalpaks, testifies to centuries-old traditions that reflect ethnocultural ties with neighboring peoples. In addition, the materials given in this article speak about the high development of the material and spiritual culture of the Karakalpak people.

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