

## APPEARANCE OF SEMIOTICS IN KAZAKH MENTALITY

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**Abstract:** The article is dedicated to show mythical, archetypal structures of Kazakh mentality through traditional ornaments. It has investigated the importance of various national Kazakh ornaments in non-verbal communication as well. The Kazakh national jewelry is known to be different and each of them has its own specific names. Traditional ornaments best show the history of ancient Kazakh people, national customs and traditions passing from generation to generation. The history of ornament is the heritage of the Kazakh people since ancient times, transmitted from father to children, with its own history, traditions, beautiful artistic past that glorified nomadic people to the whole world. In this era of globalization, we hope that this traditional art will find its continuation. We wish the art that reflects national skills, wisdom and resourcefulness will finds its followers in the age of globalization. Our mission is to develop the heritage that can meet modern requirements by implementing innovate project that would reflect our ethnoculture in all its beauty.

**Keywords:** Semiotic; meaning; ethnoculture; traditional ornaments; the language of symbolism; non-verbal communication; artificial and ornamental patterns; national character; knowledge of the population; folk art.

### INTRODUCTION

Semiology is study of signs, which is raised in person's mind by impact of one thing to another. An American scientist Pierce has initiated comprehensive study and development of the concept "semiology". In his work "On the new list of categories" he was the first who classified them and provided a scientific explanation of their types and the origin.

A Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure in his book "Course in general linguistics" once has noted that language is above all a system of signs and that therefore we must have recourse to the science of signs" (F. de Saussure).

Since the early twentieth century new trends in science about semiology have emerged. For example, such scientists as R. Bahrt, Ju.S. Stepanov have defined semiology as "a science of objects, which have descriptive meaning" (Ju.S. Stepanov, 1983); E. Byuysens, L. Preto have considered semiology as the science of transferring information that meets the communication means. Yu. A. Shreider (1974), in his scientific work has noted: "Linguistic semiology studies natural language - the most important of sign systems operating in the culture, in terms of its commonality with other sign systems, M. Siefkes & D. Schops write about the Discourse Linguistics to Discourse Semiotics (Siefkes M.; Schops D., 2013). However, a language is a standard for the system of signs (Yu. A. Shreider, 1974).

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The Kazakh linguists since the twentieth century have also evoked a great scientific interest in signs: Kh. Zhubanov, K. Akhanov, T. Kordabaev, Sh. Mazhitayeva and others.

The national ornaments that we questioned today are some kind of signs for transmitting certain information.

National patterns are very diverse and deserve a special attention. Ornaments certainly reflect the outlook of Kazakh people.

Language system of symbols represents the phenomenon of nature: the process of cognitive and communicative action. From the point of view of semiotics a language can be divided into two types: natural and artificial systems. Natural language is used in everyday life and means communication between people, reflecting the concept of consciousness. The artificial language is created under human agreements, for example, mathematical symbols or language, computer programming language, language of the physical theories, traditional art, etc. Such artificial systems are mainly based on natural language, and are transmitted from generation to generation and code social and cultural information into verbal or symbolic semiotics. There are four main animals are shown on Kazakh ornamental works.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The influence of ancient nomadic tribes on Kazakh ornamental art can be found in scientific-historical files. The ornaments and patterns reflect their imaginary world of Kazakhs (Amanzholov, A., 1998; Kazhgaliuly A., 2004; Shaimerdenova N. Zh. & Avakova R. A., 2004; Taldybaeva, S. M., 2009).

Nowadays art-scientists know more than 200 types of ornaments and patterns. Basic ornaments can be divided into cosmogonical, zoomorphic, floral and geometric. The most ancient one is cosmogonical, and the most popular of which is salty circle that symbolizes the sun. They were often portrayed in mascots, on ceramic products and architectural decors (Mazhitayeva Sh., Kappasova A., Kapanova A., etc, 2015).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Kazakh ornaments are very beautiful and believed to have properties to repel evil prairie ghosts.

The study of Kazakh ornaments have been a subject for many scientists all over the world. Many great foreign and domestic scholars were interested in this research field such as A. Gyorgy (1907), E. Shneider (1927), M. Ryndin (1959), A. Margulan (1986), S. Kasimanov (1995), T. Basenov (1958), P. Agapov, M. Kadyrbayev (1979), Kh. Argynbayev (1987), J.J. Gertsuk (1998), Zh. Akimasheva (2004), E. Zhanpeisov (2010) and others.

The names of traditional ornaments are: ram's horn (*koshkar muyiz*), camel's trail (*tuyie taban*), a bird's beak, (*kus tumsyk*), a camel's neck (*tuyie moyun*). Such forms show that the illustrated animals had the crucial role in the daily life of Kazakh community. Nomadic people used them to prepare things they need in everyday life (clothing, furniture) and through variety of ornamental expressions they showed national outlook of that historical period. As N.Zh. Shaimerdenova and R.A. Avakova believe that the Kazakh decorative illustrations have been served as a certain national outlook since the ancient times. They denoted cosmogonic notions, the way people understood the world, through a variety of patterns like flowers in the shape of the moon or the stars. "Thus there we can see amazing patterns, which vividly and brightly exhibit imaginative world of Kazakhs. The ornaments and patterns preserved the old tradition of the ancient pastoral tribes. They were mostly of cosmogonic motifs: *ayshyk gul* - moonflower, *zhuldyz gul* - star flower; *shykkun kun* - the sunrise; zoomorphic motifs; *koshkar muyiz* - ram's horns, *maral muyiz* - deer antler; contours of animals, floral motifs: stems, leaves, flowers, fruits and others of geometric shapes" (N.Zh. Shaimerdenova & R.A. Avakova, 2004).

The ornament is traditionally symmetry (Akataev S., 1994. p.48). The most common type of ornamental patterns in Kazakh handicraft is associated with nature of camels (*tuyie*) which can be frequently found. Camel ornamental patterns are of certain values and bear some concepts. D.S. Bolisbayev has viewed that the camel's trail ornament stands for the sign of a long way out, a journey which is behind the door. Another ornament which looks similar to the camel's eyes symbolizes a kind of good luck charm (Bolisbayev D.S., 2007).

In the ornamental carpets the elements of camel, ram's horns, horse were often changed. The wavy patterns resembled the caravan of camels that travel around desert regions and steppes. Abstract wavy – rhymes can be seen in Kazakh riddles, for example, one can feel and admire the coming camel from remote area through a long distance. This depicts the way camels move along. The same tradition has been kept in work with ornaments. Traditional ornamental patterns imitate the surrounding nature, domestic and wild animals, for example, ornamental patterns commonly used *ram's horn*, *tusk of the beast*, *hooked nails*, *some animals' limbs*, just resemble the way they are, in the shape of zigzag. Carpet, felt, baskurs, korzhy (handmade bag) and other things from the daily life were depicted with creativity and imagination. The picture of a tiger which is ready to attack its enemy, the caravan travelling across a desert has been greatly reflected in the writing of people of that time. M. Alibekov once wrote the ancient culture of Kazakh people, the foothills of the ancient Turkic languages and their writings, many historical facts were brightly visualized in national ornamental handicrafts (Alibekov M., 1991).

The phraseological unit "*Don't outstep one's rope*" has an archetypal prototype (Kenesbayev S., 2006). In ancient times "*ala zhip*" is used in following cases:

(1) when a person died, all his things - horse, clothes and dog with a rope were buried with him. According to beliefs of ancient people a dog with a rope guard his soul, that is why a dog considered as one of 7 treasures. If a dog is man's friend, "ala zhip" is a thing which transfers you to another world. Also there is a belief that ala zhip, that is motley thread makes people alive.

By the way ritual of ala zhip is lasting to these days, for example in "Tusau kesu" - when a child starts to walk people bind it on child's legs. Tusau kesu is fulfilled by honorable, respectable man. The ritual of tusau kesu means a first step of child to this World. Cutting a rope means an important steps to child's life.

In Kazakh ornaments "Ala zhip" (Figure 1) can be found in syrmarks, tosek ayak, kebezhe: in black and white, red and green, yellow and blue colored strips (Kaidarov, A., Ahtamberdiyeva, Z., & Omirbekov, B., 1992).

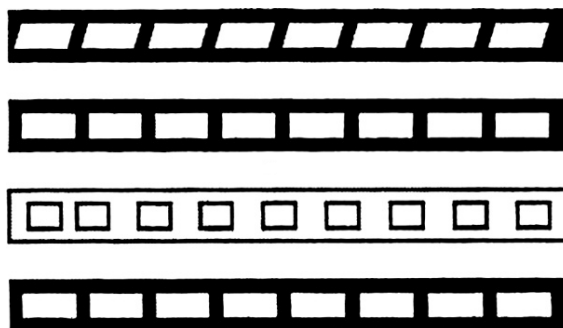


Figure 1: "Ala zhip", "ala kurt" ornaments

"Ala zhip" ornament has a several names: *kyzyl kurt*, *kara-ala kurt*, *bunak*, *buyn ornek*. A. Maukarauly tells about principle of writing ornaments and in such way he confirms that Kazakh ornaments have own language, deep meaning and a mystery. The author defines 60 names of various ornaments which can be found on surface of kebezhe - sandyks, terme baskurs, also on the yurt's door, in women's clothes and including carpets. They are: Ai, Alakan, Bastyrma, Bunak, Zhem, Yrhak, Iyk, Alakan, Kazmoiyn, Kiyksha, Kos myiz, Kus tumsuk, Kerege koz, Orkesh, Tis, Tos etc. (Maukarauly 2002, 119). Such kind of ornaments and patterns have their own significance: actually ornaments and patterns express Kazakhs' beliefs, initial forms of religion - totemism (respect and idolize animate and inanimate things and animals), fetishism (idolize natural phenomenon, bodies of animals), animism (idolize ghosts), shamanism (witchcraft) connect with beliefs and it can be seen by symbols.

The "Ala zhip" is also used for shashak bau. Shashak bau is a cord of yurt, which is situated on both sides of the door, also can be bound to uyk. The reason of binding 2 ala zhip - shasak bau to uyk is explained in such way: (1) the marriage between men and women are decided by the heaven; (2) ala zhip - (shashak bau)

connects heaven (blue) with earth; (3) ala zhip -ala kurt -ala kaskyr. The earth, water, kok ala zhip are connected by a cord.

The ornament which is situated in central part of Kazakh syrmak has its mystery.

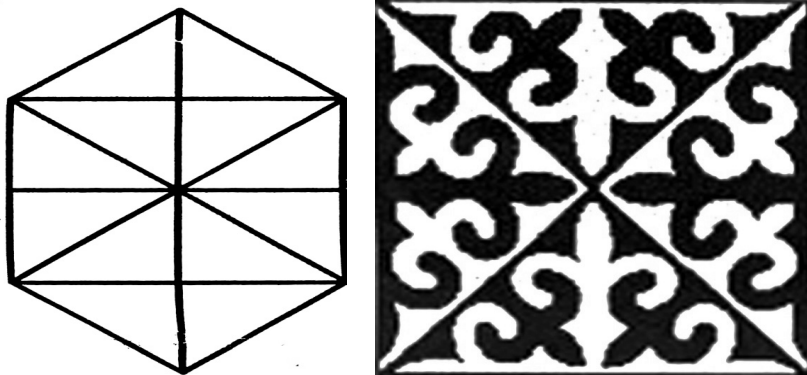


Figure 2: The ornament of syrmak “Tukym- sharsy”

This square is a centre of whole composition (Figure 2). There is situated in central part of square, it is a bundle of syrmak. It represents eternal life. It is a destiny of human between heaven and earth.

In Kazakh mentality idolizing a wolf reminds legend about wolf in totem of Turkic peoples. In kazakh ornaments the head of wolf represents as “ala bas” and “ala kurt”. Such kind of ornaments are used for kiyz and syrmaks (for oriental carpets):

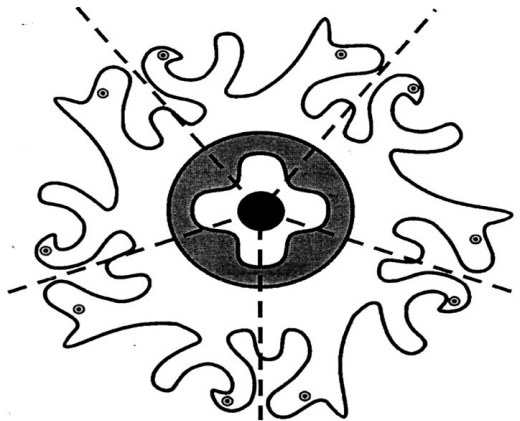


Figure 3: Wolf's head and cocks

This ornament shows a boundary between life and death. There is a life, there is a death, there is a death, there is a life. According to the opinion of A. Kazhgaliuly there is represented fight between death and life. There you can notice cock's head

inside of the wolf's mouth. The wolf is swallowing a cock. This ornament surrounds by heads of 5 cocks and 5 wolves (Figure 3).



Figure 4: "The fight between death and life"

If we divide this ornament into 5 segments, we can notice the alteration of death and life. The ornament the dog's tail (it kuirygy) is often used on the surface of symmaks to denote the respiration and redevelopment (Figure 4).

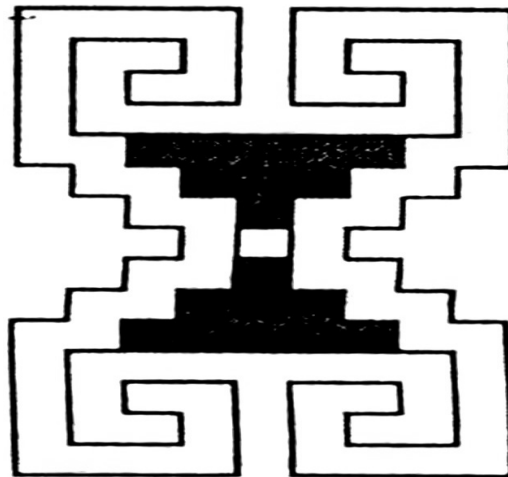


Figure 5: "The it kuirygy"

This ornament is showed in the book "Kazakh urta" by M.C.Mukanov (M.C.Mukanov, 1981; 165). Everyone knows that a dog plays an important role in human's life. Human always valued them, because dog is faithful friend in two Worlds. In "the dog's tail" ornament is featured a man following dog with pied rope. There are lots of proverbs and sayings about dog: "A dog needs a host, a bird needs a food", "Even a dog respects its owner", "When there is a dog, there is a silence," "A good dog never shows it's death", "No all meats are tasty, no all dogs are best" (Figure 5, Figure 6).

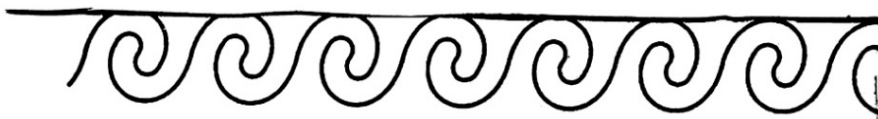


Figure 6: The variant of "The it /dog/ kuirygy"

Humanity is close to death. He can't escape death, that is why a destiny of inhabitants of the heaven and earth can never escape wild animal's claw who implements god's behest.

According to the words of A.Margulan "The kazakh" which has such ornaments often can be found in Gandji-kazakh regions (A.Margulan, 1986). Gandji is a kazakh region in Azerbaijan. These ornaments remind of syrmak's ornaments. The ornament "eki zhiiek" on the carpet is basic and initiation. On a basical rim is featured threshold shape of a great mountain. Every threshold shapes have red triangles inside. There are roles which make them equal. The meaning of these ornaments: even they are situated opposite, but complement each other (Figure 7; Figure 8).

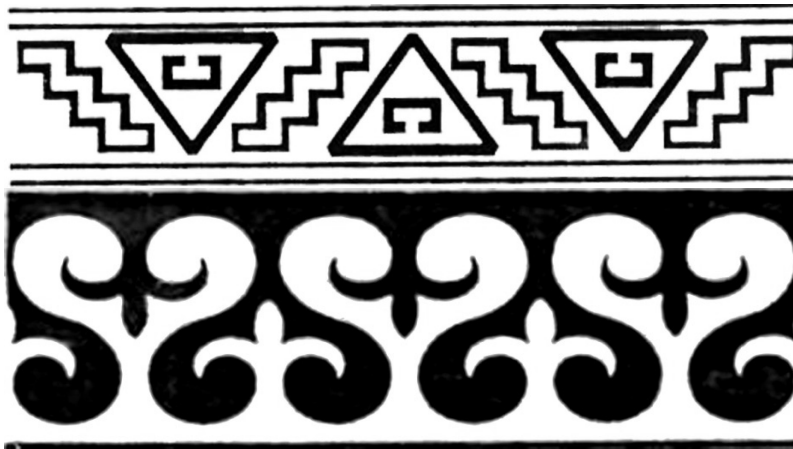


Figure 7: "Zhiiek" ornament

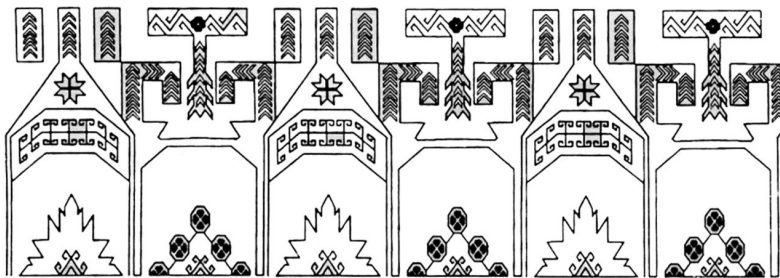


Figure 8: Ornaments on Kazakh carpet

Kazakh people use not only animalistic, geometrical ornaments, also a plants which has a floristry to decorate ornaments. Existence of ornaments similar to flowers, leaves, roots are proved by T.Baskenov's investigation (T.Baskenov, 1957).

Kazakh people expressed joy and sorrow by animals, birds, the moon, stars, the sun, mountains, stones and other natural creature and gave a meaning to them.



Every ornament is based on a particular content.

According to researchers: Earlier in times there was a tradition when a lovely shawl of the young woman with images, which include a bird, a star with a shining beam, given to a young man made him happy. A Kazakh girl when was too shy to talk to a young man could express her sympathy in this way. “The ornaments could speak louder than words (Mazhitayeva, Kappasova and Kapanova etc, 2015 ).

New enterprises currently engaged in the manufacturing traditional ornamental crafts are well developing today (Customs and traditions of Kazakh people.).



Figure 9: Modern style of ornaments

## CONCLUSION

In this way major of architects were decorated by ornaments. The proof of them various of zoomorphic, floral, geometric ornaments in Turkestan “Kozha Akhmet Yassay”, the mausoleum of “Alasha khan”, “Zhoshy khan” located between rivers Kara Kengir and Sary Kengir, “Aisha biby”, “Babadja khatyn” in Taraz, historical monuments, domes, Mazars.

Thus Kazakh ornaments have mythical, archetypal structures based on Kazakh mentality. They feature ancient images of totem and the illusion of space thinking. Such a social and mental information are transmitted to generation by semiotics approach. The peculiarity of mentality are showed not only by verbal form. One of them ornament art which transmits a social and mental information to young generation by semiotics approach. There is imaged archetypal, unconscious



information. In traditional art carpets, *kiyz*, *syrmak*, *alasha*, ornaments are transmitted kazakh mythological knowledge, life experience, religious beliefs, concepts related to space. For instance, in “*orkesh oiu*”, “*tuye koz*”, “*kus tumsuk*”, “*tuye taban*”, “*tukum*”, “*it kuyrigi*”, “*ala zhip*”, “*ala kurt*” are imaged Kazakh people’s outlook and “*ala kurt*”, “*bunak*”, “*tukym*”, “*kara-ala-kurt*” ornaments are featured Kazakh totem about wolf, beliefs and myths.

Ornaments have sacral. For example, striped worm ornament shows relations between sky and growth, top world and lower world, light and darkness. “Stripped tread - funic cord, this combination is guarantee of relation between the sky and blue. Also changing ornaments of *syrmak* describes that life proceeds.

These kind of ornaments show relation between sky and growth, also describe myth and information about destiny, life (life market), life and death (head of wolf and cocks ornament) of person who is between them.

We talked about ornament history which could acquaint to whole world our nomad people by its specialty, exactly: by history, fashionable and beautiful road, culture and customs which are transfer from father to son, from generation to generation and which is the eternal inheritance from ancient century of Kazakh people. But in shadow of globalization we should not lose our art which was by example of national skills, resourcefulness and wisdom. Ornaments which are eternal inheritance from our past life and relating with our material culture are transfer of images which were born from environment with the heart bit and by getting full of mind of people. Our today’s duty is by making modern, by updating in production goods to enter in ethno culture by developing this inheritance. There are a lot of types of ornament for carpet, *syrmak*, dish, furniture. It means that ornament came to our today life not ready like know. Ornaments were born from environment with the heart bit and by getting full of mind of people. Pictures of animals, flowers and leaves were not given in their first image, but were given by especial manner and changing to the ornament. That shows national knowledge, skills, resourcefulness and wisdom.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declare that the present paper has no competing interests.

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