

## Kazakh Linguistic Picture of the World and Terms of Kinship

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### Abstract

The core principle of the Kazakh kinship system is the concept of “Seven Ancestors”, a genealogic bloodline the knowledge of which was a necessary condition for the nomadic people to perpetuate their generation, preserve their traditions and culture. Relatives up to seventh generation were considered close relatives and collectively responsible for each other. According to the Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind the genealogical grid is universal and shared by all cultures (Dwight W Read:84). This implies that the space of genealogic reckoning is common for the whole mankind on the planet. But every culture is selective about labeling the sets of kin types by distinguishing them terminologically. Theoretically, any language is capable of creating an unlimited number of words, so that all kinship types could be terminologically identified but no language does this. Only those kin types were distinguished terminologically which society preferred as significant. Kin terms, in their turn, carry the cultural load about categorization of kin categories. They are culturally specific and convey cultural concepts. It is impossible to thoroughly investigate the Kazakh terminology of kinship in separation from Kazakh mentality and cultural traditions. Kazakh kinship terminology nomenclature is deeply embedded in social life and this gives grounds to state that they are socially determined and relevant. The survey conducted among 17-18 aged young people suggested that the kinship traditions are still strong in the Kazakh society and gives hope that they will persist for longer times in the future across generations thus promoting survival and reproductive prospects of descendants.

**Key words:** kinship; kin category; kinship terminology; national picture; consanguine; affinal; incest taboo.

### Introduction

Language is the most important way of formation and existence of knowledge about the world. It reflects and interprets reality. Through language we have the opportunity not only to penetrate into the modern mentality of the nation, but also into the views of ancient people on the world and society. According to E. Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, language is “the most massive and comprehensive of all known arts, a huge, anonymous and unconscious labor of

generations” (Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis).

Each language represents its specific picture of the world and in accordance with it a speaker of the language formulates his world outlook. The linguistic picture of the world contains all the information on the external and internal world and reflects the surrounding world in the system of concepts and categories of language. According to L. Weisgerber, language, in accordance with its internal form, conveys to its speakers a worldview, which is different from the

worldview transmitted by other languages. Recognizing this as the most outstanding opportunity that a language has, one can get a definition of it as a form of social cognition (Weisgerber, 2009: 119).

The fragment of any linguistic picture of the world contains significant information potential, including the entire spectrum of nationally-specific connotations (socio-cultural, historical, ethical, associative, and evaluative). The linguistic picture of the world is the worldview through the prism of language. The picture of the world reflected in each language creates the unique linguistic picture since every language has its own way of encoding the real world concept which bears a deep relation with national culture and national mentality (Linguistic Relativity, Wikipedia).

In 1972 in the preface to the book "Kinship Studies in the Morgan Centennial Year" Priscilla Reining, editor, wrote "there has been renewed interest in the nature of kinship and cultural assumptions concerning its basic features" (P. Reining: 2). Half a century has passed since the book was published and it is most likely that the interest in this topic will never subside because "the researchers have not yet learned how a people's kinship terminology enciphers the structure of their social universe, the code is not yet broken, the mapping of social order not yet understood" (Roger M. Keesing: 17). Research of kinship relations encompasses considering kinship terminology, understanding the complexity of man's communicative codes, marriage systems, behavioral roles and etc. In some societies to understand people means to understand the place of kinship in their lives.

This article is devoted to the research of the Kazakh kinship terms with the purpose to

identify how and in what ways this lexical group reflects the Kazakh national culture and mentality of the people. Kinship terms denominate the most significant relations between people which play vital survival role in the society. Kinship relations are crucial to the existence and perpetuation of harmonious and enduring social relationships. They ensure successful cooperation, solidarity and reproductive opportunities of the community (Coe: 16).

The research of kinship terminology is one of the best ways to understand the identity of the Kazakh nation, because it can provide ample information about how people organize their lives, how this domain of life finds reflection in language, why and for what reasons some kinship ties are terminologically distinguished and others not, how kinship terms regulate the norms of behavior, in what ways the kinship terms realize incest prohibition, why in some societies kinship terms are used as the main address terms, etc.

At present time Kazakhstan is no longer a nomadic kin based society. Today, it is a fast developing post-Soviet state with Presidential form of administration. During the last thirty years Kazakhstan has made considerable progress in political, economic and social life and has established a democratic state with a market economy. After 1991, the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan has experienced dramatic changes in all spheres of life. The Government has introduced economic reforms that aimed to transform the planned economy into market economy. The transformation period lasted for 10-15 years and this period was characterized by overall stress in the moods of the people and uncertainties of life. In such turbulent times social transformations could take place not only in the economic life of the country but in social life and on the minds of people as well. The kinship traditions could experience certain negative changes. It is

possible to assume that kinship relations could lose their organizing force the consequence of which might be the weakening of kinship bonds.

**The objective of this research** is to enlarge our understanding of the kinship terms through the consideration of the core principle of the Kazakh kinship system “Seven Ancestors”(Zhety Ata), analysis of the impact of changes in family structure on the meanings of kinship terms, interpretation of the terminologically distinguished kinship ties from the point of Kazakh mentality and culture, examining the attitude of the younger generation of the Kazakhs towards kinship traditions via experimentation.

## 2.Methods

Significance of kinship terms cannot be understood if the terms are viewed as nothing more than statements of genealogic relationship. In doing this research we used the descriptivemethod of analysis of empirical data by considering the core principle of the Kazakh kinship system of “Seven Ancestors”( Zhety Ata). Next we analyze the changes in the meanings of some kinship terms caused by the changes in the family structure. Further we take up the interpretation of the principles of naming kin categories and give our answer to the question why some kin categories are lumped together under one term. In this research we try to substantiate the reasons why the Kazakhs terminologically distinguish numerousaffinalkin categories.

An important part of this research is the on-line survey conducted among 17-18 years old young people with the purpose to find out their attitude towards the kinship traditions. Why young people? During the last 30 years many economical and sociocultural changes have taken place in Kazakhstan. It is well known that young people are very responsive to the radical changes in the society. Andy Furlong and Fred Carmel point out that “if the social order has changed and if social structures have weakened , we would expect to find evidence

of these changes among young who are at crossroads of the process of social reproduction”( A. Forlong: 3).

The reason for choosing anon- line survey was that this method of gathering data creates a non-intimidating environment for respondents. A non-intimidating survey environment ensures the respondents to give meaningful opinions, comments and open and honest feedback. It should be noted the methods we have used to do this research proved to be appropriate and successful so that helped us to receive the unbiased data.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. The “Seven Ancestors” concept

Knowing of the principle of “Seven Ancestors” (Zhety Ata) has always been an obligatory tradition for the Kazakhs to follow. The “Seven Ancestors” concept is a genealogic patrilineal bloodlinethe knowledge of which was a necessary condition for the nomadic people to perpetuate their generation, preserve their traditions and culture. It is a unique heritage of the Steppe people, their history and ideological basis for education of the younger generation of Kazakhs and a unique genealogic map thanks to which healthy offspring was created. The collective memory of the main events of history was woven into this genealogic tree (Bazarbayeva:482).

Knowing one’s ancestry is, what Pierre Bourdieu would call, cultural capital.(БурдьЕП:60-74). It has value in itself, and at the same time allows to realize basic social capital –those social ties that a person is endowed with in a generic society. These are the social ties not only through patrilineal lines, but also matrilineal and wife’s. The Kazakh kinship system encompasses three kinship communities. Kazakh proverbs in this regard read: “Zhigittingushzhurty bar:

ozzhurty,nagasgyzhurty, kainzhurtyz’ – “The Kazakh man has three clans: the clan of the father, the clan of the mother and the clan of his wife”, “ Kuyeu-zhuzzhyldyk, kudamyngzhyldyk”- “Son-in-law-zhuzzhyldyk, kuda- myng – myngzhyldyk” "Kuyeu - zhuzzhyldyk, kuda – myngzhyldyk"- " Son-in-law for a hundred years, matchmaker - for a thousand " ( this proverb means that the wife giver tribes and wife taker tribes maintain peaceful relations during thousand years), “ Akengolse de , kozinkorgenolmesyn” –“Even if your father dies, may those who knew them not die”, "Zhaksyakenyngatybalagakyrykzhylduk"- “The name of a good father feeds a bad son for forty years”, ”Ata dankymenkyzotedy-matadankymen –box otedy”- “A girl gets married thanks to the glory of her ancestors, textile is sold thanks to the high quality of its fabric”.

Relatives up to seventh generation were considered close relatives and collectively responsible for each other and marriages between them were prohibited in order to avoid incest and inbreeding. Such marriages were fraught with genetic, physiological, psychological diseases. This unwritten law was based on the observation of nature, animals and was an age – long experience of our ancestors. They were looking forward to the future. They cared about the reproduction of healthy generation, and preserving the healthy genetic pool of the nation. The Kazakh forefathers tentatively guessed that the biological consequences of the incest relationships are the birth 17%-40% of offspring who might suffer diseases compared with children born from non-consanguineous relationships (Aoki,2004). According to the etiquette accepted in the Kazakh culture before betrothal ceremony, before concluding the engagement of bride-to-be and groom-to be **Kudalar**(*fathers on*

*both sides*) make inquiries about the tribes the young peoples’ families come from.

In Kazakh culture not knowing one’s roots is considered the sign of ignoramus. Knowing seven ancestors has lots of teachable moments for the younger generation and a powerful educational significance. It should be noted that nowadays there is a growing interest in family history all over the world.

The mode of blood distribution through seven generations:

Seven generations above EGO:

1. Zhetyata—great great greatgreatgreat grandfather;
2. Tupata — great,great,great great grandfather;
3. Tekata — great greatgreat grandfather;
4. Baba — great great grandfather;
5. Argyata — great grandfather;
6. Ata — grandfather;
7. Ake — father.

Why exactly “Seven generations”? Genetics has given the answer to this question. Blood and genes are distributed over 7 generations below EGO as follows:

1. son-ul-has 50% blood from his father,
2. grandson-nemere -25%,
3. greatgrandson-12.5%
4. great-great –grandson-shopshek-6.25%,
5. grandson of the great-grandson-nemene-3.125%,
6. grandson of the great-great grandson-tuazhat-1,56%,
7. great-grandson of the great-grandson – zhurezhat-0,78%.

So, in the veins of the 8<sup>th</sup> generation there is no “first father” blood. This was one of the ways the Kazakh forefathers strove to create healthy genetic pool (Bozhekanov N.)

### 3.2. Changes in the meanings of kinship terms

Terms of kinship in themselves area beneficial research material. Being one of

the most ancient and stable vocabulary layer in all languages kin terms can give ample information on the history of family, kinship relations and society. Even “in some societies as for example the Japanese and Chinese, patterns of kin terms have remained virtually the same for a thousand years or more years ... also those of peoples of Anglo-Saxon background have remained essentially the same over the past millennium. Undoubtedly many such examples could be found” (Dole:135). They are highly stable over long periods because they are inherited from the proto-language without replacement. This is true for instance of Indo-European, where a sample of 36 terms (six kintypes in six branches) reconstructed to proto-Indo-European some 6.000-7.000 years ago, 27 (75 per cent) are retained in the daughter subgroups and only (25 per cent) are replaced (Clackson 2007:207). These rates of retention are considerably higher than those predicted by the loss of 14 per cent of basic vocabulary items per millennium proposed in glottochronology (Patrick McConvel:289). Through the research of kinship terminology it is possible to reconstruct the history of family and society. Morgan wrote that in the system of relationship of the great families of mankind, some of the oldest memorials of human thought and experience are deposited and preserved (Morgan:4).

Through the research of Kazakh kinship terms we could discover some historical social changes in the Kazakh kinship structure which are recorded in the meanings of the following lexical units. About the changes in the family structure in Kazakh society which took place after the revolution of 1917 we can learn by identifying the changes in the meanings of such kinship terms as “baybishe” and “tokal”. In the prerevolutionary times when men could

officially marry four wives the term “baybishe” meant “the first, older wife” and the term “tokal” – denoted “the youngest wife”. And in a synchronous plan the term “baybishe” has lost its meaning “the first wife” and now means “a spouse” of an elderly age. This term is also used as a respectful address to an elderly woman, mistress of the house and the third meaning is “a reputed and respected woman (among relatives)”. The term “tokal” denoted “the younger wife”, performing all house chores. This was a humiliating name of a woman – “the younger wife” who had no rights in the family, literally “tokal” means “a hornless goat”. Once out of use, this term lately has acquired a new meaning “mistress” of a rich man, since according to the current system of law man officially cannot have more than one wife and “tokalka” is an unofficial wife. The change in family structure has also affected the meaning of the term “kishisheshe” (younger mother) which denoted “younger wife of the father” and was used as a term of address and a term of reference by the children from other wives of a man.



### 3.3. Why terminologically distinguished?

According to the Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind the genealogical grid is universal and shared by all cultures (Dwight W Read: 84). This implies that the space of genealogic reckoning is common for the whole mankind on the planet. But every culture is selective about labeling the sets of kin types by distinguishing them terminologically. Theoretically, any language is capable of creating an unlimited number of words, so that all kinship types could be terminologically identified but no language does this. Firstly, we observe here the operation of the law of economy in language.

Language is a social phenomenon: "The origin and change of language never belongs to one person, but only to the community of people, the language ability rests in the depths of the soul of each individual person, but is activated only during communication" (Humboldt: 381). The functioning and development of the language is influenced by social factors. "Language serves society in all its spheres, is a reflection of social consciousness, reacts to changes in all spheres of social life and, finally, is itself created and shaped by society. Moreover, people, using language in their social practice, have different attitudes to language, to the same linguistic phenomena and, preferring some, reject others" (A.D.Shveitzer, L.B. Nikolsky : 11).

Only those kin types were distinguished terminologically which society preferred as significant. Kin terms, in their turn, carry the cultural load about categorization of kin types, they are culturally specific and convey cultural concepts (Dwight W. Read: 95).

For the first time, the law of the principle of economy in language was formulated by French linguist A. Martine. Studying the laws of language changes, he concludes: "Linguistic behavior is thus regulated by the so-called principle of the least effort", but we prefer to replace this expression with the simple word "economy" (Martine, A: 126).

The law of economy provides for strict adherence to the principle of expediency, the need for a particular word, phrase, grammatical form, syntactic construction in the language. So the law of economy demands strict observance of the principle of purposefulness, the need for the existence of a particular word, phrase, grammatical form, etc. Each lexical unit that exists in the language must perform a definite function, its presence must be necessary. When it concerns the sphere of kinship relations, theoretically every kin type can be terminologically distinguished. But terminologically distinguished are the kinsmen who are recognized by the society's **kinship system as playing significant roles in the life of the kinship community**. The existence of a special term for denoting a kinsman suggests that he/she is an important member of a kin community. The verification of this idea is the presence of the terms for each member of a nuclear family in languages since family is the main foundation of human society.

The Kazakh nuclear family terms besides the terms "*ana,sheshe*"(mother), *ake* (father),*ul*( son), *kyz* ( daughter) include terms for *aga*(elder brother), *apa* (elder sister), *singli*(little sister), and a special term *karyndas* (little sister) in relation to brother.

**Kazakh consanguine terms:** *Ulken Ata* (Paternal Great Grandmother); *Ulken Ana/Azhe* (Paternal Great Grandfather);*Ata* (Paternal Grandfather); *Azhe*(

Partenal Granmother); Ake (Father); Ana, Sheshe (Mother); Aga (Elder Brother); Ini (Younger Brother) Apa, apke (Elder Sister); Singli (Younger Sister); Karyndas (Younger Sister-male speaking); Ul (Son); Kyz (Daughter); Nemere (Grandson/granddaughter-son's son/daughter); Zhien (Daughter's son/daughter); Shobere (Great grandson/granddaughter – son's son's son/daughter); Zhienshar (Daughter's daughter's son/daughter); Nemene (Great grandson's son/daughter).

The presence of every term is appropriate and socially significant. For example: introduction of the element of hierarchy among siblings *aga* (elder brother); *ini* (younger brother); *apa* (elder sister); *singli* (younger sister) was important from the point of view of the Kazakh concept of family. Historically survival in the harsh conditions of steppe was not an easy one, so the Kazakhs had to maintain close kinship relations which guaranteed mutual support, help, unity and solidarity in the family, in the tribal community and in the nation. According to Kazakh family concept each family member should follow the code of conduct including the rights and obligations and elder brother/sister is expected to take care of his/her little brothers and sisters, help parents to raise children and be supportive of the members of the whole family. Accordingly, we argue that the specific feature of the Kazakh kinship terminology is that it is in perfect harmony with the kinship rules and customs. Basically it can be stated that it is kinship rules and customs which determine the kinship terminology.

The peculiar feature of Kazakh consanguineal terms is that all cousins through mother's line (*nagashyapa*, *aga*, *ini*, *singli*, *karyndas*), father's brother's line (*nemereapa*, *aga*, *ini*, *singli*, *karyndas*), sister's line (*zhienapa*, *aga*, *ini*, *singli*, *karyndas*) are all brothers and sisters. The lines through which they were relatives are particularized by adding the terms "nagashy"- mother's brother's / sister's

children; "nemere"- father's brother's children, ego's own brothers and sisters; and "zhien"- sister's children.

This is a very common feature of many Asian cultures that all cousins are lumped together under the terms brother and sister. Although language could particularize each kin type by a special term it did not go to the invention of terms to distinguish any of them. For the Kazakhs, naming all cousins through father's mother's and ego's lines by the sibling terms - brothers and sisters -, was a social necessity. In Kazakh mentality it is expected that brotherly relations should involve friendship, cooperation and mutual support, especially, in the times of test and hardships. The extension of the sibling relations within the family to the relations between cousins provided peaceful coexistence of the kinship community. These relationships are lifelong and rooted in equality. They have greater extensivity and heterogeneity than paternal ties, "the more extensive the network, the better social resources to be accessed and mobilized". (Qiang Forest Zhang, 2012: 75-91).

Naming all cousins through maternal and paternal lines brothers and sisters, in this way instilling brotherly and sisterly relationships among them, is the case of terminological prohibition of incest which was also one of the ways of preventing incest and inbreeding since marrying anyone whom one calls "sister" or "brother" is unacceptable.

### 3.3. Affinal terms

The affinal relationships are based on marriage which is a way of expanding social relationships beyond one's own kin.

Kazakh affinal terms are a very interesting lexical group for research from the standpoint of denoting in-law kinsmen terminologically. The Kazakhs practice a strict exogamous marriage. As it has been mentioned above bride and groom should belong to the tribes that have no any kinship ties. There are marriageable and nonmarriageable tribes.

For Kazakhs appearance of a new family means creation of social relationships

between the two big communities, which consist of two nuclear families and all their relatives.

Kazakh affinal terms are numerous. For comparison in the English system of kinship there is an "in-law" component, which in combination with the basic consanguineal terms denotes a relative through marriage. In Kazakh kinship there are many special terms for designation of wife's and husband's parents, elder and younger brother's and sister's husbands and wives, special terms for wives of brothers in relation to each other and sister's husbands in relation to each other, parents of a husband and wife in relation to each other. Since, according to the law of economy terminologically distinguished are the relatives who are important, then it means that the above mentioned kinsmen really play significant roles in the kinship community and it should be emphasized that each Kazakh affinal kinship term is accompanied with the specific expected normative behavior and code of conduct. Here we again deal with the two aspects of the same reality: the relationship between the set of kin terms and the system of kin roles.

Unlike English affinal terms (brother-in-law, sister-in-law, mother-in-law...) Kazakhs use very few consanguineal terms to denote relatives by marriage. The consanguineal terms are present only in the names of relatives acquired by the wife in her husband's family and husband's new in-laws in his wife's family. This indicates that these relatives are tabooed. The relatives denominated by consanguine terms are strictly prohibited to have any "undesired" relations except respectful, kind and warm. All females or males who are distinguished by the terms *aga/apa* (elder sister and brother), *ini/singli* (little sister/brother) should maintain brotherly and sisterly interrelationships with each other.

Wife's and husband's in-law terms that comprise consanguine terms (*kain*-denotes in-law)

#### **Wife's- in-laws:**

*kainata*-father-in-law;  
*kainene*- mother-in-law;  
*kain bike*-elder sister-in-law  
*kainaga*- elder- brother-in-law;  
*kainsingli*- little sister-in-law;  
*kainini*- little brother –in-law;

#### **Husband's –in-laws:**

*kainata*-father-in-law;  
*kainene*- mother-in-law;  
*kainaga*- elder- brother-in-law;

#### **Terminologically distinguished Kazakh in-law terms:**

*Kuda/kudagai*- husband's and wife's parents in relation to each other.

*Kudabala /Kudasha*-the younger son and daughter of the husband's and wife's parents in relation the in-laws from both sides.

*kelyn*- daughter in –law; *baldyz*-wife's little sister; wife's little brother; *kain bike*-wife's elder sister-in-law; *zhenge*-elder brother's wife; *zhezde*- elder sister's husband ; *bazha*-husbands of sisters; *abysyn*- wives of brothers in relation to each other, *kieubala*-daughter's husband in relation to his wife's relatives.

As a rule, in-law kinship community consists of the representatives of different Kazakh tribes and peaceful relationship and unity among them can be maintained, exclusively, through following socially accepted norms of behavior. So, each of the terminologically distinguished in-law relative is supposed not to violate these norms. For example: *Bazha*- sisters' husbands (brother-in-law) - their friendship is supposed to be strong *Abysyn* -brothers' wives (sister-in-law). It is considered that the well-being of the household depends on the cooperative relationships among them. There is a proverb that confirms this idea: "Againtatubolsa at kup,



abysyntatubolsa as kop" (If the brothers are friendly, there are many horses, if the sisters-in-law are friendly, there is plenty of food).

"Zhezde"(elder sister's husband) should be very kind to "Baldyz"(wife's little brother and sister), as they are wife's closest relatives.

**Kuda/kudagai(husband's and wife's** parents in relation to each other) should maintain a kind and respectful relationship with each other. It is interesting that the term "**Kuda**" has the same root with the word "Kuday" (God). This indicates the importance of these in-law relatives on whom the happiness and wellbeing of the married couple largely depends. When guests arrive for the first time to ask for the daughter's hand, they are considered to be guests sent by God. During mutual visits, "**Kudalar**" should be shown special honor and respect: for the Kazakhs these are the most honorable relatives and everything is done to ensure that the relationship between them was warm and friendly.

These cultural norms of behavior codes are the oldest system which the contemporary Kazakh society has copied from their ancestors for many generations and they promote peace, unity and cooperation among a big kinship community. Coe points out that cooperation must be encouraged; traditions are the mechanism for such encouragement. The aim of the oldest system of behavior was to encourage enduring, cooperative, unselfish behavior ,...to promote nonviolent interactions among individuals"(Coe:4). In his interview to the correspondent of UA Regnum doctor of Philosophy I.Suleimenov said : " The Kazakhs are monolithic as a nation, tied by thousands of family ties, thousands of years of history and common traditions"

(Suleimenov 2012)

## Experiment

The objective of the survey was :

1. To examine the young people's awareness of the core principle of Kazakh kinship system;
2. To find out the young people's attitudes towards kinship traditions.

So, in the period September 20 - 22, 2020 a sociological on-line survey was conducted among the first-year students of KazNU al-Farabi. One hundred students took part in the survey. The respondents are 17-18 year old young people from different parts of Kazakhstan. We have chosen them on the ground that at the age of 17-18 young people already have their own opinions and developed their stable identity. This is an important time to prepare for more independence and responsibility. (<https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontopsychology/chapter/6-3-adolescence-developing-independence-and-identity/>).

Theoretically this period of life is very important for young people as the people who mostly surround them-their family, uncles and aunts, cousins, other relatives promote their self-esteem, their sense of belonging and security and assist to develop their problem-solving and social skills and learn values.

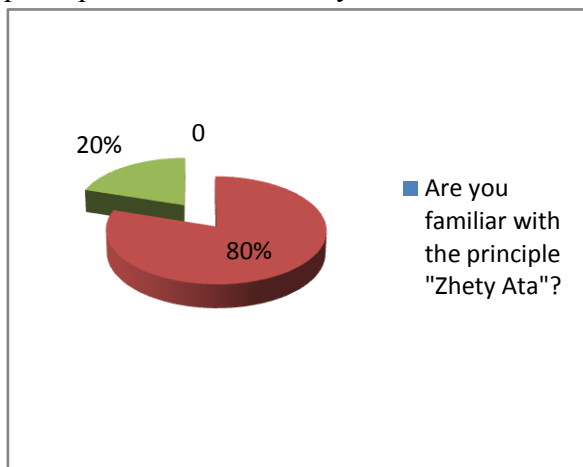
The survey included four questions on the topic of our research.

### The survey questions:

1. Are you familiar with the principle of "Zhety Ata";
2. If you answered is "Yes", please, write the content of this principle;
3. Do you and your family maintain close relationships with the relatives?
4. What role do kinship relations play in the life of Kazakhs?

### The survey results:

**Question №1.** Are you familiar with the principle of “ZhetyAta”? Table 1.



**Question 2.** If your answer to the question №1 is «Yes», please, write the content of this principle.

**Table 2.**

69% of respondents gave full and correct answers to the question;  
18%- the answer is mainly correct but there are some factual inaccuracies;  
9%- the answer doesn't correspond to the subject matter;  
4%- no answer.

#### Examples of answers:

Among Kazakhs “Zhety Ata” is a special principle. Many Kazakhs know their ancestors well up to seven generations. This principle is important in marriage. Kazakhs never marry their relatives. That is why, Kazakhs are considered the most purebred people, and their genes are very “pure”.

21/09 / 20.03: 25RM

Respondent: The “Zhetyata” principle implied the obligatory knowledge of the names of one's ancestors in the male line up to the seventh generation.

20/09 / 20.00: 25AM

Respondent: The “Zhetyata” principle implied the obligatory knowledge of the names of one's ancestors in the male line up to the seventh generation. Relatives up to the seventh generation were considered close relatives and collectively held responsibility for each other; marriages between them were prohibited in order to avoid inbreeding.

**Question №3.** Do you and your family maintain close relationships with your relatives?

90% of respondents answered: “Yes”;

10% of respondents answered: “No”.

**Question №4.** What role do kinship relations play in the life of Kazakhs?

**Table 3.**

Answer options:

Respondent: In any situation one can rely on his relatives and Kazakhs never leave their relatives in difficult situations. If someone does something bad, then the elders are responsible and will educate them.

21/09/2020 10:18 .AM.

Respondent: Very important!!!

Respondent: A family connection for a Kazakh is special part of his life. We all are “Tuys” (relative) to someone - son or daughter, brother or sister, husband or wife, father or mother

21/09/2020/20.00.AM

Respondent:

For a Kazakh “Otbas” (family) is a sacred concept. Born and raised in a family, a child absorbs everything that is inherent in his “zhanuia”(family). Having matured, a person creates his own family and transfers the education he has received in his family to his children. That is why the right upbringing of children in Kazakh families is of great importance.

20/09/2020 10.20.AM

Respondent:

Special relationships among kin members were developed during the centuries. These are century-old traditions of the people. These traditions allowed the Kazakh people to survive the centuries and develop as a single national state.

21/09/2020/05:05.PM

The survey data shows that the Kazakh kinship traditions are still strong in the

minds of people and they are being transmitted to the younger generation. The core principle of the Kazakh kinship system "Seven Ancestors" is familiar to 80% of the young people. This fact suggests that the overwhelming part of the modern young people have inherited this principle and, hopefully, will successfully pass on to their offspring. It places hope that implementation of this principle in the forthcoming centuries will have positive effects on successful continuation of traditions of unity and cooperation and ensure healthy reproductive prospects.

90% of respondents answered that their families maintain good relationships with their relatives.

Of special interest is the question №4 "What role do kinship relations play in the life of Kazakhs?" to which 95% of respondents replied that kinship constitutes very important part of the life of Kazakhs. The data imply that kinship traditions remain stable and vital in the Kazakh society. Now when "kinship is at the center of the epic crisis which has, with increasing turbulence, swept over the Western world for the past several generations" (Scot FitzGibbon:390) which is not very good news, the data we have obtained by the survey inspire optimism that the Kazakh kinship traditions will not lose its strength and relevance in the foreseeable future and will remain a reliable mechanism of ensuring social and emotional wellbeing and promote the existence and perpetuation of harmonious and enduring social relationships (Coe:2008).

## Conclusion

The concept of "Seven Ancestors" is a powerful defining core, the heart of ethnic integrity based on family and kinship traditions of the Kazakhs. The Kazakh nation as an ethnocultural community have survived precisely thanks to their ethno-collective memory, preserved in the history of tribes, their "Shezhre" – genealogical historiography. It is a unique heritage of the Steppe people, their history and ideological education of the younger generation of

Kazakhs and a unique genealogic map thanks to which healthy offspring was created. Adherence to the "Seven Ancestors" principle ensured unity and solidarity of the Kazakh nation, the reproduction of healthy generation, and preservation of national traditions and culture.

According to the Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind the genealogical grid is universal and shared by all cultures. Our research shows that the Kazakhs are special about in-law terms, because these kinsmen are recognized by the society as playing significant roles in the life of the kinship community.

Terminological distinction of kinsmen is also one of the ways of prevention of incest. Incest taboo has long been very strictly adhered to in Kazakh society. Any cases of inbreeding were severely punished. Although kinship is no longer the mechanism of survival the tradition of the kinship behavioral code of conduct has persisted up to the present day being transmitted from ancestors to descendants since they proved "crucial to the existence and perpetuation of harmonious and enduring social relationships" (Coe,2003). The Kazakhs, being ancestor worshipping culture, copy these traditions and successfully pass them on to the next generation.

The Kazakhs are a very relational society. The sense of self and belonging emerges from the kinship ties. In everyday life they rely on their relatives to ensure their livelihood and secure their interests. This aspect of not only Kazakhs, but of all Asian cultures, explains much of its respect for the resultant communicative system (Ellis, 248) rooted heavily on mutual assistance and support, politeness and respect. Kazakh kinship terminology represents the specific domain of national language picture which conveys cultural traditions and mentality of the community of people united with each other by consanguineal and affinal bonds.

They are deeply embedded in social life and this gives grounds to state that they are socially determined and relevant. Each kinship term denotes the place and the status of the relative in the kinship structure and conveys ample information about the code of conduct of this or that relative should follow in relation to other members of the same kin community and beyond. As the analysis of the data obtained from the experiment shows, so far in Kazakh culture family membership and kinship ties is a powerful force that holds people together and they consider their consanguine and affine relationships as important social capital. Social capital is the effective functioning of social groups through interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity ([https://link.springer.com/reference/workentry/10.1007%2F978-0-387-93996-4\\_130](https://link.springer.com/reference/workentry/10.1007%2F978-0-387-93996-4_130)). The response of young people to the survey question “What role do kinship relations play in the life of Kazakhs?” inspires optimism that the Kazakh kinship traditions will not lose its strength and relevance in the foreseeable future and will remain a reliable mechanism of ensuring social and emotional wellbeing and promote the existence and perpetuation of harmonious and enduring social relationships.

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