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### Kazakh tea ceremony: traditions and innovations

Today it is impossible to imagine the Kazakh meal without tea. However, it entered the everyday life of the Kazakhs relatively recently. For centuries, the basis of the life of the Kazakhs was nomadic transhumance cattle breeding, in which sheep and herd horse breeding prevailed. This type of economy for a long time determined the specificity of the somewhat monotonous Kazakh cuisine, which was based mainly on the use of meat and milk, as well as a small number of grain products, in particular millet. However, from the end of the XVIII century. Fundamental changes in the political and, as a result, economic life of the Kazakhs began. They entailed a process of settling on the land, more frequent contacts with neighboring nations; In the Kazakh diet began numerous borrowings and distribution of new products. Purpose of the study at the end of XIX century in the diet of the Kazakhs, along with the name (the Kazakhs call it shai) tea is firmly entered.

**Key words:** tea, cattle breeding, diet of the Kazakhs, meat and milk, economic life of the Kazakhs.

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### Қазақтардың шәй ішу әдебі: дәстүр мен жаңышылдық

Бұл мақалада авторлар қазақтардың шай ішу мәдениетінің өзгеріске ұшырауын жан-жақты талдаған. Сонымен қатар заманауи кезеңдегі өзгешеліктерін көрсетуге тырысқан. Негізінен авторлар этнографиялық далалық материалдарды пайдалана отырып өзіндік зерттеулер жүргізген. Авторлар мақала барысында бірнеше сұрақтарға жауап беруге тырысқан: «Қазақ халқы неліктен әдепті барынша сақтаған?», «Қонақжайлылық кезінде әдептілік нормаларын қалай сақтаған?», «Дәстүрлі әдеп ортада қаншалықты сақталған?» т.б. Осы мақаланы оқу барысында оқырмандар әдепке байланысты жаңа ақпараттар біле алады. Қазақ даласына шайдың келу тарихы, оның тұрмыста қолданысқа ие болуы, мәдениетте алған орны, шай ішу рәсімі, оның түрлері қарастырылған. Мақаланы жазудағы авторлардың мақсаты бұған дейінгі жазылған зерттеулерге және өздері жинаған этнографиялық деректерге сүйенеді. Қытайдан бастау алған шайдың Қазақстан жеріне таралуының жолдары, оның XIX ғ. тамақ рационына кіруі, бұл туралы ғалымдардың жазған пікірі жазылған. Мақалада қазақтағы «ақ шай», «қара шай», «бордама шай», «сарғасқа шай», «ет қосқан шай» түрлеріне сипаттама беріліп, Қазақстанның әр өңіріндегі аталған шай түрлерінің таралуы жан-жақты талдаған. Қазақ шай ішу мәдениетін шыңдау арқылы заманауи үрдістерді жаңғырту керек.

**Түйін сөздер:** шай, этикет, салт-дәстүр, өзін-өзі тәрбиелеу, ережелер, қонақжайлылық.

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## Казахская чайная церемония: традиции и инновации

В данной статье авторы рассматривают казахскую трапезу чайепития от истока до современности. Детально описана основа жизнедеятельность казахов, рассказывается о кочевом отгонном скотоводстве овцеводстве и табунное коневодство. Также авторы тщательно проанализировали вариацию казахской чайной культуры. Он также пытался показать различия в современную эпоху. В основном авторы провели собственные исследования с использованием материалов этнографического поля. Авторы попытались ответить на ряд вопросов в статье: «Почему казахский народ следовал этике?», «Как они поддерживали хорошую мораль при гостеприимстве?», «Насколько строг в этической среде?» Читая эту статью, читатели могут узнать новую информацию об этике. История чая в казахской степи, история чая, его место в культуре, место чая, чай и его виды. В статье авторы опираются на предыдущие исследования и собираемые ими этнографические данные. Целью статьи является показать пути распространения чая из Китая в Казахстан в XIX веке. запись в рацион питания, как написано учеными. В статье описываются казахские «белый чай», «черный чай», «чайный чай», «чайный чай» и «чай с мясом», а также анализируется распространение этих видов чая в различных регионах Казахстана. вместе с названием (казахи называют его шай) прочно вошел чай.

**Ключевые слова:** чай, скотоводство, рацион казахов, мясо и молоко, хозяйственная жизнь казахов.

**Introduction.** In different parts of Kazakhstan, tea began to spread, apparently, in various ways and at different times. This was determined by the vast territory of the settlement of the Kazakhs, in which several centers of gravity were formed – Russian cities in the west of Bukhara, Khiva and other Central Asian cities in the south, Kuldja, Chuguchak and, in general, China in the east (Monograph-catalog 2012: 122). The purpose of this article is to show the Kazakh tea ceremony for two centuries.

The main directions and ideas of scientific research in ethnology is Levi-Strauss often mentioned Montaigne's essays on cannibalism as an early example of "ethnology"; he pursued a goal through a structural method to discover universal invariants in human society, as which he accepted the prohibition of incest. However, the demands of such a cultural universality were criticized by various social thinkers of the XIX and XX centuries, among whom were Marx, Nietzsche and others.

The Kalmyks (the Dzhungars) played a key role in the distribution of tea on the lands west of China (Pokhlebin 2000: 7). Kalmyks regularly fought with the cities of Central Asia, sometimes settled in them, were part of the military elite under the rulers (Abashin 2001: 63). And there the Kalmyks influenced the urban population, addicted to tea, which confirms the initial spread of a special type of tea – shir-choi (tea with milk).

In part, the Kalmyks played a similar role in the distribution of tea among the Kazakhs in the eastern steppes. Dzhungarian khanate was a powerful and restless eastern neighbor of the Kazakh tribes. But it not only made devastating raids to the west. Kalmyks actively traded with China, buying or bartering tea for cattle for their own use, since the sale of tea to the West was almost monopolized by the Bukharians (Potanin 1868: 39), and by the middle of the XIX century. – Russian merchants (Nebolsin 1856: 55). During periods of complicated relations between the Kalmyks and the Chinese, their trade was interrupted, and then tea was delivered to the Kalmyks "from Siberia, through Kyakhta, Tomsk", and "at the same time, Dzhungaria from China passed through Semipalatinsk and Kyakhta to China Dzhungar cattle and camels for the Chinese troops, who was compared in the fields of Dzungaria", notes G.N. Potanin with irony (Kivokurtseva, 1996: 5). Naturally, the widely distributed "Kalmyk tea" was familiar to the Kazakhs.

With the fall of Dzhungaria (1757-1758), the role of the Kazakhs in the region has greatly changed. The Kazakhs quickly occupied these lands, and with them the vacant trading niche: "The Chinese, who had previously supplied their troops with horses from the Kyrgyz and Dzhungar steppes, attracted Kyghyz (Dobrosmyslov, 1900: 30) to exchange horses for goods, and thus, the former trade on East arose again.

“ (Dal 2001: 157) Since then, the Kazakh trade in Ust-Kamenogorsk and Semipalatinsk, the fortresses of St. Peter on Ishim and Yamyshevskaya became active. Trade along the route that already passes through the western regions of the Kazakh steppe, for example, from Urga through the Ulus of Ablai at Konchinskoe Lake and Baklan fortress to Orenburg, begins to actively develop (Nebolsin 1850: 178).

A common commodity for the Kazakhs was cattle (horses for the military needs of Russians and Chinese), various furs (foxes, woodchucks, etc.), saiga skin, salt, and Armenian, which were exchanged for iron products (knives, axes, cauldrons), flour and cloth. This set of goods remained unchanged in all points of trade and exchange for a very long time.

**Literature review.** Another interesting fact is that the Kazakhs have so much tea for tea, that the tradition of tea is served to the visitor. Due to the seasonal specification, the preparation of tea, its subtlety treatments are of interest. The tea parties in Kazakhstan are compared with the Japanese. There is also a peculiarity of tea parties in other nations. In the Kazakh community, the so-called “tea tea”, “tea for tea”, “mood tea” and “thankful tea” have been preserved. The procedure for granulating tea according to etiquette was a kind of dosage. In the course of the article A. Levshin, GN Potanin, AN Dobromyslov, MY Quotes from data. At the moment, about the tea ceremony Professor R.A. Beknazarov is an author of an article published in the *Ethnographic Review Magazine*. However, few Kazakhs by the middle of the XIX century began to trade and tea. Tea in the trade of the Kazakhs took, one might say, a symbolic place. There are minor references to the sale of tea in St. Peter’s fortress by G.N.Potanin; “In 1758, brick and baikhov tea 5 brick poods were taken out of the fortress, but these figures do not give clarity – who bought this tea, because in the trade exchange with China, the Kazakhs “changed them for yashny grain, wheat flour and groats ” [Notes on the way from St. Petersburg to Barnaul, 1850]. Statistics on the sale of tea by Kazakhs increased, and only slightly, by the middle of the 19th century. Here are eloquent figures: in seven years (1840-1846), the Kazakhs sold tea for 12 thousand rubles by silver. At the same time, in one 1840, the Kazakhs sold livestock in Orenburg and Troitsk for 790 thousand rubles, in 1843 for 1 million 200 thousand rubles. For comparison, we point out that China annually 1841, 1842, 1845 and 1846. tea was brought in the amount of about 7 million rubles in silver (Argynbaev 1962: 65).

Since the mid-60s of the XIX century, tea was already sold in many cities of Russia, in particular

in Odessa, Poltava, Kharkov, Rostov, Orenburg, Samara, Uralsk, Astrakhan (Zalessky 1991: 31). It is natural to assume that the Kazakhs bought tea in Orenburg or Uralsk. At the same time, it is firmly in the daily use of the entire Russian population.

**Material and methods.** The theme of the article is dedicated to the Kazakh tea ceremony. The topic is actual because of the less studied in ethnography. The history of the tea in the Kazakh steppe, the history of tea, its place in the culture, the place of tea, tea, and its types. In the article, the authors rely on previous research and ethnographic data they collect. The ways of spreading tea from China to Kazakhstan, in the XIX century. the entry into the diet of food, as written by scientists. The article describes the Kazakh “white tea”, “black tea”, “tea tea”, “tea tea” and “tea with meat”, and analyzed the distribution of these types of tea in different regions of Kazakhstan.

**Results and discussion.** Speaking about contacts with the Russian population, it is important not to forget that the Russian settlers were not the same (Krasnov 1887: 421). Old believers, who moved to the eastern regions of Kazakhstan and Altai, did not drink tea for religious reasons either. But the Cossacks of Irtysh, Orenburg and the Urals loved this drink. The use of tea by the Russians and Ukrainians of the largest migration center at the end of the 19th and 20th centuries was massive. Tea did not take its place in the Kazakh food culture overnight. This process can be resurrected by reading the diaries and essays of travelers, researchers who have fallen into the Kazakh steppes at different times. All of them point to the constant use of kumys by Kazakhs, which they drank almost all year round: “For those who see for the first time how much kumys Kyrgyz drink, it will seem incredible” (Levshin 1996: 303), “from morning till evening the Kyrgyz kumys blows and satisfying them both hunger and thirst, he then consumes little other food”. But instructions on the use of tea until the middle of the XIX century are very rare, and almost all belong to the higher strata of Kazakh society.

Apparently, the first that the Kazakhs drink tea was written by A.I. Levshin in 1832: “Khans, sultans and some rich people begin to drink tea with sugar or honey, and the branches that wander near the Chinese borders use Chinese tea, like the Mongols “(Nebolsin, 1856: 182). The direction of G.P.Nebolsin relates to this time: “Brick tea is sold in large quantities to Kalmyks and is beginning to come into use among Kyrgyz people” (Kittary 1849: 32). Interesting observations of V. I. Dahl. In the story “Main” twice described the situation associated with

tea drinking. At first, tea is mentioned in connection with the kargalinskytatar, “who left me with nothing, in a lightly empty cart in which lay: a samovar, a pillow, arshin and bezmen – and only, but returned, having gotten hold of god knows where, in a horse riding, in a fox-clad toe coat, stretched out on a feather bed, and drank the road tea exactly five times a day” (Slyuz, 1862).

Until the middle of the XIX century, mostly prosperous Kazakhs drank tea. The second half of the XIX century. – This is the time when they begin to drink it in all layers of the Kazakh society, and it gradually becomes a favorite drink; “With regard to tea, the Kyrgyz are very indulgent with our bailiffs and even the merchants of the old cut: they also revere tea as an equally pleasant drink in the bitter cold and suffocating heat,” wrote an observer in the middle of the century, who visited the Kazakh by the prosperous Kazakh Bukey Horde (Chormanov, 1889). In 1862, the Northern Bee correspondent N.Slyuz reported from the Irtysh border line that at the commemoration the Kazakhs put, in addition to a yurt for koumiss, and a “tea yurt” (Jacmon, 1892: 32). In the regions bordering China, tea in the 1870s was used by all Kazakhs: “Brick tea in general use; the rich samovars, the poor copper and cast iron kettles, or simply brewed in cauldrons. The rich drink and long leaf tea” (Bagimbaev 1904: 69). An ethnographer A.N.Kharuzin, who traveled around the Bukey steppe in the late 1880s, was offered tea in every yurt that was encountered on the way – it was impossible to let the guest go without tea (Nekrasova 1915: 18). In 1894, the Kyrgyz Steppe Gazette talked about commemorations in the Karkaraly district, where “meat, koumiss, tea, and boursaks were abundant in abundance,” for which, among other things, 100 pounds of tea, a few heads of sugar and several dozen boursaks – pieces of unleavened dough fried in boiling fat or butter. At the end of XIX century. In many publications, tea is often mentioned as something which has long been a part of Kazakh life.

The history of the spread of tea in the Kazakh environment suggests that many factors contributed to this. Obviously, the first who introduced the Kazakhs to tea were their eastern neighbors, the Kalmyks. But its wide distribution among the Kazakhs is more closely linked with the influence of the Siberian and Volga Tatars, as well as the Russians. We assume that at first tea became a habit among merchants, caravan-bashi – those Kazakhs who traveled around for business more often and talked more closely with people who already consumed tea. Through them, as well as under the influence of

interethnic contacts, tea, being an expensive product, spread primarily among the Kazakh nobility. Mass use of tea by the Kazakhs became possible during the transition to a sedentary lifestyle and changes in the economic structure. For nomads, simplicity and speed of cooking were important, which was typical in the preparation of lactic acid products. Tea drinking implies a lot of time. Since the formation of sedentary Kazakh settlements took place mainly along the river banks, more water and fuel became necessary for tea. At the same time, this entailed a change in the composition of the herd – herd horse breeding was reduced as well, and the production of kumys decreased, which was partly replaced by tea. Closer contacts with the Russian and Tatar people, for whom this drink has become in a certain sense national, also contributed to the formation of a tea culture among the Kazakhs. Kazakhs consume tea “without analyzing the time and place, before everything and after everything,” wrote M.Ya.Kittary in the middle of the 19th century. And indeed, if you look when the Kazakhs drink tea, then there are no strictly established rules for this: they drink it both before and after the main meal, by itself, for various reasons. Perhaps no treat is complete without tea.

Tea-drinking in everyday life is often arranged, for example, during regular visits of neighbors or close acquaintances, in order to mentally talk with friends, just sit with your family, etc. Tea drinking can act as a separate meal, such as breakfast (Borisovskiy 1898: 102).

Tea drinking as an integral part of the meal is necessarily included in the traditional treats accompanying the numerous Kazakh rites. It certainly rejects any traditional feast. After tea, after the washing of hands, the flow of meat follows. At the end of the meal, kumys used to be served (Kivokurtseva 1996: 8), and today instead of kumys they are having tea drinking again. N.Zh. Shakhanova describes the meal on the occasion of the first pregnancy of the young daughter-in-law, to which all the wives of relatives and neighbors were invited (Shakhanova 1990: 83.). It began with tea, then meat followed, and after the meat tea was served again (Yudahin 1965: 833). Such an order is preserved today during ceremonial meals for old people (Sadaka, tleu).

Depending on the situation, tea can be long or fast. For example, the visiting matchmakers (the most honored guests of the Kazakhs. There is a saying: “Son in law for a year, and a matchmaker for a hundred years”) immediately treat with tea and sit with them for a long time, talking. However, it is not customary to talk about the purpose of arrival at this

time, the main conversations are postponed until the end of the meal (meat). Only then you can ask “Do you have any requests or requests for me?” etc.

Quick tea drinking (in one Kazakh family they were called “tea on duty”) tripled when many people had to come to the house, but not at the same time, to congratulate or express condolences. A quick tea is made by the townspeople of the Kazakhs after the funeral – on the table in the house where they are commemorated, everything is cooked; for those who come with condolences, they quickly make tea, and after drinking it, they leave.

Varieties of tea and tea utensils. Kazakhs traditionally prefer to drink black tea. Previously, it was mostly tiled tea, which was bought from Russian and Tatar merchants. (For its preparation, leftover tea leaves were collected and old leaves were mixed, ground, moistened with rice water and, after steaming, pressed in the form of bricks or tiles (Kuftin 1926: 35). Tiled or brick tea (bricks, tactashai, tasshai) Kazakhs drank until the 50-60-ies of the twentieth century. From the second half of the twentieth century, long leaf tea was used – crumbly. The word “baikhovi”, known since the 60s of the XIXth century, comes from the Chinese “baihe” – lily (bai he cha – originally from the Chinese meant “tea from the stem and petals of some eaten lilies”). But this word was widely adopted already in the post-war USSR. Nowadays, Kazakhs call black tea “reds” (Kyzylshai). The word “red” does not indicate the color of tea leaves, but the color of tea after adding it to milk: it should not be whitish, but red, i.e. brewing should be strong. Therefore, Kyzyl shay can be translated as strong tea. (Such a translation is provided by the Kyrgyz Kyzyl tea by K.K Yudahin (Kharuzin, 1889).

In the Soviet period, of all the Moroccan Kazakhs, the most valued so-called tea was Three Elephants (Indian tea in packs in three elephants) and Tea No. 36 – 50-100 g packs. Anyone who went to Moscow, necessarily brought a large amount of this tea. Houses created large stocks – 100-200 packs. They were necessary not only because a lot of tea was spent on tea. It was also used in the gift exchange: it was considered the best gift, and donated not one by one, but 10-20 packs each; on a pack of tea, they wrapped them in small pieces of cloth (zhyrtys) for traditional gifts at commemorations or weddings. Today, with a large variety of types of tea, as a rule, not so much the brand as the volume of the package is important – usually 500-gram packs are bought, because the consumption of tea remains very significant.

The spread of tea introduced certain utensils into the life of the Kazakhs. B.A. Kuftin points

out that “porcelain dishes – cups with saucers and “kese”(wide Turkestan-type cups) came into use along with the spread of tea consumption” (Konovalov, 1986: 88). Traditionally, the Kazakhs kept wooden dishes in special felt bags – ayak cap, elongated in length and rounded down.

They also began to store and transport porcelain kese. Nowadays, almost every home has wooden spoons – they pour milk in a kese.

Kazakhs had small chests for storage of tea – shay sandyk – wooden, often on legs with a loop and a lock. All that was needed for tea drinking was kept there: besides the tea itself, sweets, sugar, cookies, and sweets.

Brewing methods. Today, Kazakhs drink black tea with milk, but this was not always the case: A.N.Kharuzin noted that Kazakhs drink tea without sugar, while drinking, “sometimes they pour milk into tea”(Kharuzin, 1889: 253). Tea brewing methods were influenced by the traditions of tea drinking of those peoples from whom the Kazakhs borrowed tea. The northern Kazakhs, including the Bukeys, to whom tea came from the Tatars and Russians, apparently first drank black tea without milk. The Kazakhs, who are neighbors of the Kalmyks, drank the so-called Kalmyk tea – with milk, butter and salt. The Kazakhs of the Altai, until recently, added tea, in addition to milk, cream, sour cream, talkan, lard, salt or sugar (Shakhanova, 1998: 75).

The Kazakhs of the south-western regions of Kazakhstan, like the Turkmen of the north-western Turkmenistan, brewed tea in the original way described by V.V. Pokhlebkina: “They brew tea not with water, but with milk, and the milk is very fat, usually camel. This method is acceptable in hot climates of the desert and saline steppes, where the lack of water and the presence of hot sand (60-80 ° C) creates the basic conditions for such brewing. A large 2.5-3 liter earthenware kettle is placed in hot sand for warming up. Then, low-grade Indian low-end black tea (Kyrgyz-Russian dictionary / Comp 1965: 833) is poured into it, at the rate of 25 g per 1 l of milk, “moistened” with a glass of boiling water so that the tea will “finish off” a little, and then immediately pour boiling camel’s milk and maintain 10-15 minutes, then pour the cream formed during the preparation of the chal. After that, the tea must be strongly shaken in the teapot several times from one dish to another so that it mixes (Kuftin 1926: 108).

Today, the most common method of brewing tea is the next. (We drank such tea in the Volga region, in the Altai Mountains and in different regions of Kazakhstan). In the teapot they make strong fresh, necessarily hot tea leaves, for which this teapot is

kept on a small hot plate. Near the hostess is also some kind of pot of boiled milk and a boiling samovar. First, a bowl (kese) is poured with milk (usually it is poured with a wooden spoon, and then it is one full spoon), then tea from the teapot is added through a sieve, then boiling water is added from the samovar. Moreover, the ratio of brewing and boiling water is set “by feeling”, so each time the tea has a slightly different taste.

Of course, today there are individual preferences in how to drink tea. Some, especially townspeople, drink tea without milk, with lemon, honey, etc. Naturally, the Kazakhs, who inhabit vast areas, have local ways of brewing tea.

Tea ceremony. It can be assumed that together with tea drinking to the Kazakhs they passed on to some knowledge about the existence of special rules for drinking tea “tea ceremony”. Otherwise, what can be explained by the fact that they quickly developed tea etiquette. By tradition, the Kazakhs, like all the peoples of Central Asia, are not allowed to pour the bowl to the brim: the less tea is poured into a cup, the more respect is given to the guest. However, in different regions of Kazakhstan, the amount of tea “with respect” is different. So, a young Kazakh woman, having arrived from the Alma-Ata region in Kyzyl-Orda, was very surprised when they poured tea almost on the bottom – they had to pour much more in the village. She was told that if you pour a lot, it will be accepted as if you want the guest to leave sooner (Glukhov 1927: 122).

Tea, as before, is drunk a lot; the hosts all the time watching that the guest drinking bowl was not empty. There are several ways to show that you are already drunk. One of them was described by M. Ya. Kittary (Fielstrup, 1927: 82) and A.N. Kharuzin: “The visitor is served first with tea, which he drinks

five, six or more cups, indicating the reluctance to drink more by tilting the cup on a saucer (like our peasants)” (Shakhanova, 1990: 84). Other ways are to put the bowl on its side; put the spoon in a bowl or on top of the rim of the cup. But even when the guest makes it clear that he no longer wants tea, the hosts usually persuade him to drink another drink.

### Conclusions

Today, the Kazakhs have this skill in women, they usually pour tea, and they have special requirements. It is necessary to brew tea well, to pour it properly, to serve the guests in the order that the tradition requires, and then not to confuse where their drinking bowl is when the guests start serving empty cups. It is also necessary to ensure that there is always boiling water, and the tea leaves do not end, and the dishes should not be booming. A woman pouring tea should sit properly, not turn her back to the guests. It can be said that in the entire tea ceremony, the figure of a woman pouring tea acquired a special aesthetic value from the Kazakhs. As Kazakhstan ethnographers testify, the same attitude persists today: “A woman pouring tea should be agile and attentive... Just because she is in the center of attention, she should look neat, her movements should be smooth. Guests like to watch her. The atmosphere of the feast, the level of reception of guests depends on her ability to pour and serve tea.

Tea drinking today is an important part of western everyday life. In this gentle tinkle of cups and saucers, a sweet manifestation of female hospitality, common concerns about cream and sugar, we find unconditional confirmation that the cult of tea is recognized everywhere. To some extent, this allows us to hope that the West and the East can meet on the soil tastes”.

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