

Military armor of Kazakhs: ethno-linguistic description

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Abstract: Language embodies the uniqueness of the people, the national vision of the world and national culture [1, 2, 3, 4]. Uniqueness, originality of the language is determined by culture, mentality, “the spirit of the people”. In the study of the relationship between language, culture and ethnic consciousness the most important are the units of the language, expressing, in addition to linguistic content, and cultural knowledge. In this article – there are the names of military armor of Kazakhs. This paper is devoted to the comprehensive study of the system of traditional Kazakh weapons. Integrated approach allows us to describe military equipment in the interdisciplinary plane: at the intersection of such disciplines as history, military science, ethno-linguistics and art criticism. The article contains the terms of armaments, their traditional names in the Kazakh language and values, are described the kinds and types of weapons, their structural parts, manufacturing technology, how to use them. In addition, the system of Kazakh weapons is given in the mythological representation: structural parts of the weapon represent a model of the world. Also there described the customs and traditions associated with weapons of Kazakhs. Thus, the names of the traditional Kazakh weapons are means of national-specific development of the world. Rich information about the armed batyrs is found in the heroic epics. Therefore they stand as the material for analysis.

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Introduction

Since independence in the Republic of Kazakhstan has increased the need for expanding the horizons of the national history of the Kazakh people, the formation of a new historical outlook of the nation, preserving its cultural code, namely, language, spirituality, traditions, and culture. Proofs of this are the state program “Cultural Heritage” (2004) [5] and “The people in the flow of history” (2013) [6].

In the speech at the XX Session of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev outlined his views on the history of the state: “To raise the national spirit at the proper level, it is necessary to understand clearly what is our real history, culture and religion. National history of the Kazakhs, their ethno genesis should be treated as a single, indissoluble process for millennia. In this context, modern Kazakhstan appears naturally as one of the key ancestral heirs of the great steppe civilizations” [6].

Under these programs, there was published a series of books “Babalar sozi”, which presents tales, heroic epics and dastans (poetry), are found new archaeological excavations, carried out significant work to rebuild and maintain a military armor of

Kazakh people as a historical and cultural monuments. In this regard, we believe that our article is a small contribution to the implementation of the above mentioned governmental programs.

Military equipment of batyr – is one of the seven treasures of the Kazakh people. Victory of warrior-batyr was determined by his horse and armor. The horse of batyr endowed by magical power: went out off the ground and flew (mane = wings) like a bird (e.g., horse Bayshubar at Alpamys Batyr, Tayburyl at Kobylandy batyr etc.). And his armor handed down from father to son, from generation to generation, there were legends about them. Personal weapon was decorated with ornaments of silver and gold, it had the tamgha of the genus, which the batyr belonged to. This is evidenced by the existing language in proverbs “Er kanaty – at, er kuaty – karuy” (“Wings of a horseman – is his horse, power of a horseman – is his armor”), “Ak bilektin kushimen, ak najzanyyn ushymen»” (“by a spearhead, by a hand power”), “At – er kanaty” (“Horse is wings of a hero”).

Currently in the humanities, there are different approaches to the question of armed warrior-batyr. This is an indication of insufficient knowledge of the problem.

First ethnographic information about the traditional armed of the Kazakhs is given in the works of scientists of XVIII-XIX centuries, such as T. Atkinson, P. Pallas [7], J. Kestl [8], I. Levshin [9], V. Radloff [10], etc. They are characterized types of arm such as short-range weapons and distance fighting.

Technique of art decoration of some types of weapons as objects of applied art is described in the materials of German researchers collected while traveling in Kazakhstan (see the works of O. Finsch, A. Brehm, R. Karuttsa). So, R. Karutts admires by the work of Kazakh master jewelers: “Engraved and decorated with stones rings, bracelets, thimbles, belts, jewelry for bridles are beautiful, are very valuable items, they fully justify the pride with which they are worn at formal occasions or are shown to guests” [11, p. 60]. Of considerable interest for the author is bony plates inlaid saddles and maces.

Later the theme of Kazakh military art finds its continuation in the works of A.Margulan, K. Akishev, T. Allaniyazov, A. Kushkumbaev; A.Kaydar, S.Kaskabasov, K. Ahmetzhanov and other scientists.

In fairness it should be noted that a comprehensive approach to the study of the question of arming the Kazakhs differ the works of Ch. Valikhanov. In the research of the scientist “Armament of Kirghiz in ancient times and their military armor” and “Historical legends about batyrs of XVIII century” are described the types of weapons and firearms, the technology of their manufacture; customs and traditions associated with arm of the Kazakhs [12, p. 463-468, 9, p. 220-222].

Thus, a brief review of the scientific literature shows that the works devoted to a comprehensive study of the traditional Kazakh weapons, are in a very little quantity[13].

Military armor of Kazakhs is an ethno-cultural phenomenon. Study them in the context of national culture, in terms of **language – culture – ethnicity** just determine the relevance of the theme of this paper.

The main part. Military equipment is the part of the national culture.

People say: “Er karuy – bes karu” (“Weapons of a horseman – are five types of weapons”). These are: shooting bow (sadak), saber (kylysh), spear (najza), ax (ajbalta) and mace (gurzi). The presence of these weapons is due to the fact that each of them has a specific function; hence, you cannot change one species by another. So, the bow has throwing function, saber – cutting, spear – stabbing, ax – chopping and mace – striking function.

It should be noted that such a succinct expression reflects the holistic system of military weapons of Kazakh warrior (er karuy). In the Kazakh language, the word ‘er’ has three meanings: 1) male, 2) husband, spouse, and 3) batyr, hero, brave warrior. In runic monuments written in the ancient language the words ‘er’, ‘jer’, ‘eren’ meant Batyr, warrior. In the names of Kazakh epic heroes Er Targyn, Er Kosai, Er Kokshe the word ‘er’ is a synonym of the word ‘batyr’, compare: Kobylandy batyr, Alpamys batyr. In Russian language bogatyr – is the hero of Russian fairy tales, wherein by physical strength, intelligence, beauty and daring, the word was borrowed from Turkic languages: bavatur (anc. Turk.), Batur ‘brave commander’ (chagat.), bagatur (Mong.), batr (kalm.) [14, p. 84]. The example demonstrates the harmonious joining of Turkisms into Russian language and culture and a high degree of their development, and thus the acquisition of cultural significance in the minds of the Russian people.

Researcher I. Levshin notes that in the epic “Manas” is described: “In the structure of the seventyth army of Kyrgyz, Kazakhs and other Turkic peoples were regiments of 20,000 archers, 30,000 shooters, 5,000 maceholders, 15,000 spearmen and 15,000 saberholders” [9, p. 89].

Fighting duels of batyrs were brave with the above five types of weapons, as evidenced by the Kazakh heroic epics. For example, before the battle with Aksha Khan “*he put on a coat of mail with lumens than a sparrow's eye, with double mirror of the sun shining on, head on himself hoisted the white helmet of Damascus steel, round as the full moon, and feathered eagle owl. All five weapons took Targyn*” (Er Targyn); willing to seek his beloved Gulbarshyn, “*put it on a steel chainmail, inhaled gold belt, armed with all five types of weapons and headed out into the steppe, where numerous herds of horses grazing...*” (Alpamys batyr).

On a material of epics we try to reveal the uniqueness of certain types of military equipment.

Throwing weapons of ranged combat was a bow (saadak).

In the dictionary of Turkisms edited by A. Kononov are given word *saadak, sagadak, Sagaidak, saydak* – (tat.) cover on a bow, bow with a cover and arrows (V.Dahl), complete unit of arm with a bow and arrows, bow with case for a bow and arrows and quiver; case for bow and arrows (I. Sreznevskii); in the XV century, borrowed from the Tatar language – *Sagaidak (sagajdak)* (I. Ogienko); *sagBdak (sagbdak)* (tat.) – quiver, *Sadak (sadak)* (chul.) – a bow for shooting, *Sadak (sadak)* (Kazakh) – a bow with all the accessories, *saadak (saadak)* (Kirgh.) – a quiver,

Saal (saal') (Mongolian) – a bow (V. Radloff) [14, p. 267].

A bow was made of birch, maple and pine. Therefore, in the folklore materials we find expressions kajyn sadak (“birch bow”), karagaj sadak (“pine bow”) and ujenki sadak (“maple bow”). It consisted of several main parts: the middle of the bow – handle (Kazakh – kirisi), bent (reflectors) portion between the handle and ends – shoulders of a bow (Kazakh – iin) and two ends. The ends of the bow were wrapped with specially tanned, strong untanned skin (kajys – used for rides on horses). This is evidenced by the phrase “bylgary sadak” (“leather bow”) occurring in the heroic epic “Kobylandy batyr (Kobylandy batyr)”: Bylgary sadak, bukar zhaj, / Tartylyar majdan kun bugin.

Dimensions of a bow varied between seven hundred and twenty centimeters. As for the bow string (Kazakh – adyrna (Adyrna)) were used finely woven horsehair. Bowstring consisted of five parts: the middle of the string – lit. loin (Kazakh – beli), bent parts – shoulders (Kazakh – iin) and two end – lit. head (Kazakh – basy). In the rest position the bow string left loose, slack. With the purpose of protection from various weather conditions bows were kept in special leather cover which had a common name – Sadak (sadak).

In the heroic epics we find different types of bows – zhaj, zhak, keris, sarzha (buharzha): Atuga mergen zhakty aldy, / Kashuga zhauylar bet aldy (Kobylandy batyr); Alty atka algan adyrna, / On atka algan buharzha / Ata almasam, magan sert! / Shym zhibekten esken kerisi / Uzilip ketsen, sagan sert! (Er Kosai). Thus, for example, twill, according to the descriptions of V. Radlov – is a kind of bow, fortified bone lining, repainted in yellow [10, p. 339]. In this case, the yellow color expresses a feature of this type of making technology of a bow.

Arrow (er) consisted of four main parts: the tip (zhebe), shaft (saby), feathers (kanaty) and heel (tabany), with the help of which the boom was attached to a string.

According to the production material tips were divided into iron (temir) and horny (mujizdi). Among them were also dihedral – for hunting, tetrahedral (sauyt buzar) – to break through the shell and kozy zhauyryn (in the form of the blade of a lamb) – to shoot down from the saddle, for example, “*In the quiver of Kartkozhak there were a lot of arrows, and among them: Res-arrow – combat, tiz-arrow – hunting, Kiyak-arrow – whistling arrow, arrow “lamb blade” – is an arrow with an arrow tipped as a crescent moon, horned copper arrow, bloody – red arrow, armor-piercing arrow. But of all the arrows took the old warrior only dane – arrow with a blunt thickening at the end, and put it in a bow*” (Er

Targyn). Tetrahedral tip had a diamond shape, belonged to a class of armor-piercing arrows. “*Kozy zhauyryn*» – is a kind of diamond-shaped tip, it resembled the shape of lamb’s shoulder blade. In linguistic material we find: «*Oh, my ancestors!*”. – *Targyn addressed to the spirits of his ancestors and put his hand in the quiver, decorated with a tiger, finished with bony plates. Of the many arrows he chose an arrow with a tip as a lamb’s blade, feathered with black bristles. Targyn bow pulled up to the arrowhead* (Er Targyn).

Whistling arrows, Kiyak-arrows were made as follows: on the blades of large arrowheads were made small holes or dressed on the stalk at the base of the boom bone or iron ball with holes – a whistle. When flying these arrows made an awesome moaning sound, sinister singing arrows caused fear of the enemy cavalry and frightened him. Whistling arrows called “singing arrows”.

Thus, throwing the enemy with “singing arrows» was intended to have a psychological effect on the enemy, undermine its morale and sow turmoil in its ranks. In support of this I want to quote the words of Nikolai Gogol's» Asian attack is the most terrible force of the first breakthrough to confront him and prolong the battle... you had to have superhuman courage and strength of spirit... Their attacks were made with such a terrible cry of a large mass of them flew so thick and so hard on horses mad, as if it were dropped from a steep cliff”.

Arrow shafts were manufactured from birch wood and branches of poplar, willow. For the best flight at the bottom of it was decorated with a feather of birds (eagle, vulture, etc.). In epics describe: “... *draw the twelve tail arrow with crow feathers tipped with similar ram's shoulder...*” (Er Edige); “*The day has come to release all my arrows, feathered eagle feathers that edge punch enemies*” (Er Targyn). Arrows tipped with metal had a pole down on patterns in the form of colored bands that applied spiral. In the analyzed materials are found “sur zhebe”, “kok zhebe”, “sary zhebe” etc. The colors arrows pointed, on the one hand, the practical necessity. Colored stripes, applied to the arrow shaft, were symbols of the warrior - archer: as required, he took out the right arrow from the quiver. On the other hand, these bands, the so-called “color tags” were distinctive signs: pointed arrows on a combat assignment, and determined race, Juz, which the batyr belonged to, the owner of the arrow and the social status of the warrior. Confirmation of this – is folk material: noble warriors labeled their arrows with silver and gold. We explain what the label applied to arrows of batyrs and what they meant.

Tags were placed on the tombstones, armored warriors and on the rocks. Tauke Khan in “Zheti

zhargy” (Laws of Kazakh society) noted that every race should have their own distinctive mark. According to this law, every kind created their signs, sign supplies symbol possessing something. So, Uly Juz (Senior Juz) Canley – poker, bridle, Shanyshkyly – painting, Zhalayyr – comb, Shaksham – arrow, Shapyrashty – moon tumar (amulet), Dulat – circle Ysty – poker, bridle; Orta Juz (Average Juz) Argyn – eye Kypshak – the first letter of the Arabic alphabet (coss alip) Nyman – pole, Konyrat – threshold, Wak – pole, Kerey – humped label; Kishi Juz (Junior Juz) Sherkesh, Alasha – pole, Tana – poker, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet (coss alip), whip, Aday – bow and arrow, Toleu – hammer, Kereyit – saber.

N. Witsen in his work “Northern and Eastern Tartary” states with surprise: “It is strange that at the end of hunt every man can learn their arrows” [15, p. 150]. The ends of the patterns ended with a wide black stripe. In the described form of weapons the red color expresses the status of warrior batyr and black – his strength and power.

Arrows were put in leather quivers (koramsak, kylshan), attached to a metal hook by waistband. For example, *Koramsakty suyrdy / Kuala Tartyp sadakty-ay / Neshe warrior Bolsa da / Tutin Costa tutinge, / Yntykty-ay batyr*, yntykty-ay (Er Targyn). Inside the quiver, for different color of arrows, had special partitions. Arrows laid down by sharp tip. Bow is usually found in a quiver with arrows and worn on the left side.

Thus, the bow and arrows was special, sacred weapon. About caring for them shows the interior of the yurt: a bow and quiver of arrows hung to the top of kerege

(Wooden lattice, forming the circular walls of the yurt). They were also used in magic ceremonies. We will discuss it later.

Cutting weapon of Kazakh warrior were saber (Kylysh) and sword (Semser, Aldaspan). These weapons were intended for close combat.

Depending on the shape of the working part of the blade distinguished Semser (Direct dvuhlezviynym sword blade) and Kylysh (sword with a curved single-edged Kolinko).

Semser – is a word of Arabic origin 'Shamshir'. In oral folklore we found examples of using the word 'Semser' as names of saber: *Kanzharmenen karmasty, / Semsermenen sermesti, / Soytip Oiyyn oynasty, / Shybyn Jandia Kienast. / Kanzhar Caldey kayysyp, / Semser Caldey mayysyp, / Erleri Jeanne tunildi* (Kobylandy batyr).

In the Kazakh heroic epic are presented different names of swords: ‘ak semser’, ‘cock semser’, ‘buktemeli semser’, ‘aldaspan’, etc. It is emphasized their great weight: *Reaching the gate, Targyn drew heavy sword aldaspan length in eight*

karys. And he slashed his aldaspan enemies arrayed on the right and left, and soon cleared the area in front of them latticed iron gate (Er Targyn). Buktemeli Semser (‘folding sword’) had a very long flexible blade. This type of sword was designed for concealed carry.

Sabers feature is the curvature of the blade. In accordance with the nature of curvature, swords are divided into five groups. The first group consists of saber blade with a weak curvature, uniform throughout the band bending of the blade. The second group consists of saber blade mean curvature starting from the middle part of the blade. Sabers with strongly curved blade form the third group. These swords are called ‘narkesken’ (lit. ‘cutting camel’). Fifth group is formed by heavy sabers having a small extension at the end of the blade, which is called ‘zhalman’ (‘ridge’, ‘elman’). Heavy sword is called Aldaspan. They could wear only batyrs.

The shape of the blade indicates Dictionary of Turkisms edited by A.N. Kononov: *saber*, hand edged weapons; *saber*, adj. Old Russian. *saber* (14th c.) hand edged weapons // (from 968) edged weapon with a curved edge on the outside of the bend; *saber*, adj. from the word *saber* (I.I. Sreznevskii, 3, 238); F. Polikarpov, 1704 *saber*; V.I. Dal, 4, 126 (Official Acad., 1962, 28). These words are considered part of eastern origin. Source for taking Hung. *szaablya* ‘saber’ from *szabni* ‘cut’. To the east, it happens. *Sabel* ‘saber’ [14, p. 269].

Saber consists of the following structural parts: working part of the blade “bolat” cheren Blade – “zhete” folded – “sap”, sword knot – “buldirgi”, crossing swords designed to protect the hands of a warrior from enemy weapons – “baldak”. A straight portion of the blade saber in the Kazakh language is called “alkym”, “moin” (neck), the curved part – “bass” (head), the blade – “zhuz”, back – “syrt” (reverse side), the point – “ush”.

The reverse side of the sword was sharpened by a quarter of length from the tip, it made it possible to apply the stitching rips and blows. Saber hilt allowed in cutting hand bend not only at the elbow, but also at the brush. This technique made it possible to make more and better to put the blade sweeping blows at full gallop. Edge of sabers was done bayonet-shaped to pierce through the rings of chain mail. Sword knot Temlyak (loop of the belt with a brush on the handle of the sword) was worn on the wrist to a battle could, driving horse, dropped his sword. Crosshairs on the handle catch and stop counter strike which side he does not come, and protects the hand of a warrior. Sabers were carried in a wooden sheath (“Kiyn”) and leather straps fastened to his belt.

In heroic epics we found examples using a combination of “ak beren”, “cock beren”, “altny

baldak” (name of intersection instead of swords). Before us are not words for types of swords and metonymic parts on the whole.

Saber is more geared to cutting off his horse than the sword. Advantage of it before the sword was that the curved shape of the blade was capable of applying a sliding cutting blow long wound. Blades of sabers were made of damask which was a native East. Damask blades distinguished by exceptional sharpness, hardness and elasticity at the same time.

Owners of expensive and high-quality swords, as a rule, were khans, sultans, biis and batyrs. Saber was considered a valuable gift. It was also used for medicinal purposes: shaman (Bucks) stuck in the ground with the edge of his sword up at the head of the patient, suggesting that the evil spirits saw naked sword, frightened and sick leave. Naked sword that is snatching of the blade from its sheath meant open hostilities. Breakaway was accompanied by inserting swords sheathed. Saber symbolized independence.

As described above, the names of the arms components indicate the human body organs, such as the middle stringer – *literally* loin (beli), bent parts – shoulders (iin) and two ends – *literally* head (bassy).

Accordingly, military armor of warrior batyr has a great mythological significance.

According to the mythological representations of the Turkic people the world consists of: vertical – top (heaven, the world of the gods), medium (land, people, animals) and lower (the underworld realm of the dead, evil spirits) levels, across – the four parts of the world. Space model of the world is fixed with axis, which is called “world tree”, “tree of life”.

Correlate structural parts of the weapon with a model of the world. Designation of working parts of the weapon by the word ‘bass’ (head) indicates that it is a major part of arms and points to its relationship with the upper world. The average part of the weapons (‘bell’ – the back) – is with an average world. As for the part that defines the connection to the lower world, it is absent. This communication takes place through the body of a man, holding a weapon.

If parts of the weapons to present as “anatomical codes”, the name ‘zhuzi’ (face) indicates the direction of this part of the arms forward, and the symbols ‘shuydesi’, ‘zhelkes’, ‘syrti’ (neck, back) – back, ‘kyry’ (side) – on the direction of the left and right arms. According to the mythological beliefs, front, back, left and right sides of the human body relate to the four parts of the world: the front side corresponds to the east, back – with the west, the right – to the south and the left side – with the north. Proper understanding of this correlation is important in religious ceremonies and magical rituals associated with the use of weapons. The structure of weapons

kinds we have described represents an anthropomorphic model of the origin of the world.

Next, stop on the customs and traditions associated with weapons of Kazakhs.

Until the middle of the XIX century kalym and dowry included some weapons, in particular, bow (sadak), mail (sauyt) and shield (kalkan) [16, p. 304].

In the history of the Kazakh people is known custom of gun ownership (*karudy iemdenu salty*). From early childhood (basically six or seven years old) child was taught martial arts. In written sources we can meet the following characterization of the Turks: “The Turk shoots wild animals, birds, targets, people... He shoots, driving at full speed back and front, left and right, up and down. Turk has four eyes - two are on the face, two are on the back of the head” [9, p. 230].

In order to achieve marksmanship, long range of arrow flight, it was necessary to know the technique of shooting. When shooting, a bow mainly was held upright in his left hand. The particular importance was attached to the slope of the bow. When shooting at long distance bow was held in high altitude position.

One of the main factors to ensure the successful use of the bow, were the weather conditions. During throwing of arrows was taken a stand to fly boom accompanied the movement of the wind. This was one of the defining moments of accurate and correct shooting. A successful hit and bowshot depended on other conditions: flexibility, elasticity of bow, string method of putting on kubit of bow bowstring quality, hand position on kubit (grip) and the string (capture), and finally, experience and skills of the student. Great maneuverability required shooting from the horse. It had great importance saddle stirrups. For Kazakh manners landing in the saddle were typical short stirrups. Most often rider shortened one stirrup (left or right – it depended on the individual features), which gave him the ability to maneuver when driving and thus facilitated archery.

The secrets of archery handed down from generation to generation. This idea can be confirmed according to the researchers of S.A. Pletneva “From nomadic to the cities”: “Many tales of nomadic peoples begin with the responsible moment in the life of the hero, when he asks his father to give him a name, weapons and horse. In the epic and tales, the hero at this time can be even three years, but the ethnographic data suggest that the boy sat on a horse for the first time in about six or seven years. The Oguz gave the name to the boy and his horse in fifteen years. This custom is undoubtedly an echo of the ancient custom of initiation that existed at a certain stage of social development for all peoples of the world” [17, p. 78].

Detailed description of the rite “step over by the sword” (“kylyshstan attatu”) we find in the Kyrgyz epic “Manas”: Manas before his death bequeaths to his wife that she prepared her son Semetei the role of the avenger of the death of his best Choro. To avoid the machinations of kin – six stepbrothers of Manas, the wife should lead the child to his father in Bukhara, perform in time the rite of initiation into warriors – “jumping over damask”, in twelve years put on it chainmail by “holy” day and open it the mystery of its origin.

In heroic epics weapons anyway portends death. Harbingers of death may be: 1) *literally* unpicked mail of warrior batyr (“sogilgen sauyt”), 2) a weapon that is kept at home, and 3) sleep of relatives. According to mythological views, between man and his clothes exist a magical connection. So everything that happened with clothes is reflected on the person. In the epic “Kobylandy batyr” sister Karlygash is dreaming her brother and realizes that he was in trouble: *Yesterday, the last night. / Axe that brother left / Touched a stone, left a scar.* Ground off ax portends the death of batyr.

With military equipment of batyr is also associated rite called “karu-zharakty syndyru” (*literally* to break weapon). It occurs after the death of the warrior. After the death of batyr all his armor were hung around the house. Left of the house was reinforced a long spear. Spearhead was tied with shawl of a red color – if a young warrior was killed, black – middle-aged and white – old. By color of the shawl people guessed the age of the deceased. In the funeral procession were arranged the races. After the races were collected all warrior gear and a spear with a shawl (depending on age) on the tip was broken.

In some ethnographic materials is given the information that the batyr was buried with his armor. On their graves could be found a spear with a ponytail at the tip, bow, sword, and other equipment. This motive goes back to the animistic conceptions of man; his soul may be not only in body but also in clothing, weapons and other things.

Conclusions

Thus, in this paper we have tried to consider the question of arming of the Kazakhs in aspects of “language – culture – ethnicity”. Military equipment is a part of the national culture. They are quite reliable information about the history of national customs and traditions, religious, mythological ideas of people. Structurally, the parts of the weapon, in our view, are represented with “anatomic codes”, denoting the organs of the human body. Accordingly, the structure of weapon represents an anthropomorphic model of the origin of the world. In the center of the universe – is a man.

Comprehensive study of the question of Kazakh arming was possible to determine the ethnic and cultural potential of military armor of batyr.

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