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## **ПУТЬ К ВЕРШИНЕ: ИДЕАЛ ЧЕЛОВЕКА В ТРАДИЦИОННОЙ ТЮРКСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ УСТНО-ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЙ И ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННО-РЕМЕСЛЕННОЙ СФЕРЫ)\***

Сегіз қырлы, бір сырлы  
Казахская пословица

Тюркская идиома «Сегіз қырлы, бір сырлы», в переводе означающая «Восемь граней — одна целостная суть», использованная в качестве эпиграфа этой статьи, бытует в народе с древнейших времен и сейчас известна практически каждому казаху. Народная память хранит имена многих, кто удостоился этих слов. Сейчас они звучат, может, и реже, но более рельефнее, острее.

Авторы статьи стремятся раскрыть эти «восемь граней, и одной целостной сути» человека — народного идеала личности, который формировался тысячелетиями, на примере устно-профессиональной и художественно-ремесленной сферы. Теоретико-методологической основой статьи выступают художественно-философский и культурно-исторический методы, герме-

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невтическая основа которых позволяет более объемно взглянуть на проблему образных и смысловых интерпретаций, а также аксиологический метод, способный выявить ценностные ориентиры традиционной культуры в ракурсе воспитания настоящих мастеров «слова» и «дела».

Результатом статьи видится анализ социокультурного потенциала способов и методов народного воспитания и их актуализация в аспекте сохранения собственной культуры, национальной идентичности и национального кода.

*Ключевые слова:* народный идеал личности, тенгрианство, Казахстан, Центральная Азия, искусство, ремесло.

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## **A PATH TO THE TOP: THE PICTURE OF A MAN IN TRADITIONAL TURKIC CULTURE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE ORAL-PROFESSIONAL AND ART-CRAFT)**

*Segiz kyrly, bir syrly  
Kazakh proverb*

The meaning of the Turkic idiom “Segiz kyrly, bir syrly” — “Eight shapes, but one meaning” as an epigraph for this article has been among the nation from the ancient times and now almost every Kazakh knows it. The traditional memory keeps all names, which were honored. Nowadays it sounds less often, but stronger, sharper.

The authors of the article are trying to show these “eight shapes, but one meaning” of a man — the national personality picture, which has been formed for centuries on the oral-professional and artistic-craft sphere.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the article is artistic-philosophical and cultural-historical methods. The hermeneutic basis allows more volu-

minously look at the problem of figurative and semantic interpretations, as well as an axiological method that can reveal the value orientations of traditional culture from the perspective of educating true masters of the “word” and “deal”.

The result of the article is an analysis of the socio-cultural potential of the methods and methods of public education and their actualization in the preserving their own culture, national identity and national code.

*Keywords:* national personality ideal, Tengrianism, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, art, craft.

**I**ntroduction. We often blindly follow national traditions, celebrate national holidays, but they are not becoming a part of us and we do not always understand the true meaning and purpose of it. We treat ourselves and our family and friends with national cuisine, but we do not feel reverence for food and we do not see any sacred rite here. We look with interest in museums at traditional clothes, utensils and objects of art, but we do not have sufficient knowledge about their true meaning and value for us today. We communicate in our native language, but we cannot sing in it, write poems and talk about our feelings and thoughts, about pain and joy.

Everything that we have mentioned above could be as Heritage. The Heritage is all material and spiritual values, knowledge and life principles accumulated by the nation throughout its history. And if its material exists and is successfully reproduced now, then its meaning and purpose, as well as our understanding of what to do with it, is melting every day. We are talking here about intangible cultural heritage, or about Knowledge and its Meaning.

It is not secret that our historical and cultural memory is deformed and highly fragmented under the influence of many factors. This global problem has been the subject of many studies and scientific papers. Despite the fact that all these articles, monographs, conferences and symposia materials study different things and cases, they all come to the same conclusion: the form can be returned, but if the content is gone, then it is for ever and completely.

The Kazakh's sacred Knowledge has always been important and valuable. These knowledges were accumulated the power and viability. The knowledge that has come from Studies was to be transferred into Action and only this algorithm guaranteed the preservation and transfer of heritage to the generations. The Knowledges are not enough, but more important is the Consciousness, because it was a material, which literally has breathed life to lifelessness.

The Master, out of all his students, to whom he once has given Knowledge, chooses only few of them as his successors. Sages sometimes preferred to remain without followers altogether, if there was not one among them,

whose eyes would had had at least a flash of Consciousness. Knowledge, Consciousness and Action are three steps or levels from the elementary to Mastery or Art. We are deeply convinced that “art” is the key word here. Among Kazakh nomads, creative people marked by talent were immeasurably higher than representatives of “socially significant” people. When an akyn or a sere entered a yurt, even if he was young and lower origin, the society unanimously accompanied him to the tor, paying tribute to his art, his octahedral talent.

**Methods.** The methodological fundament of the article comprises artistic-philosophical and cultural-historical methods, their hermeneutic potential allows to more objectively see the features of figurative and semantic interpretations. The axiological method helps to identify the value orientations of modern Kazakhstan culture. Also, the authors used analytical, retrospective and comparative historical approaches.

**Results.** Segiz kyrly in the traditional oral and professional culture. Eight shapes, one meaning (or according to B.D.Kokumbayeva [1]: “octahedral, possessing the secret of Being”) is the ideal of the spiritual elite of the Kazakh — Tengrian, and broader than the Eurasian nomad. Being determines consciousness, the being of a nomad determined his consciousness, his ideals, including the ideal of personality. In the article “Culture and education in a dehumanizing world” Zira Naurzbayeva writes: the goal of education is to form a conscious, responsible, spiritually advanced, mature person. We are not talking about a “comprehensively harmoniously developed person of communism”, but about the ideal formed by the traditional culture and realized by it “segiz kyrly, bir syrly”. The human personality should be multifaceted, but these facets are determined by a whole, single essence, the core of his spiritual “I”. A Tengrian person is a spiritually advanced person with a pure heart, who is capable of realizing his spiritual potential in any area [2].

To the spiritual elite “segiz kyrly, bir syrly” B.D.Kokumbayeva classifies various specialized types: baksy, zhyrau, kuyshe, akyns, sal, seri and anshi [1], marking that this phenomenon has not received conceptual philosophical and scientific understanding in the scientific literature. In her opinion, “kyushi and 8 kyrly are equivalent constants, an authentic definition of the spiritual teachers of Tengrianism. Those few staff of the spiritual experience of atakty aulie: baksy, kuyshe, akyns, zhyrau, sal, seri, which are preserved in the mental memory of the Tengrians, show that in their sacred meditation activity 8 kyrly sacredly observed the key idea of Kok Mangi Taniri about the balance of Heaven and Earth” [1]. The essence of an 8-sided person who has mastered “bir syr = one secret” can be described as a person with 8 talents,

possessing “the secret of Being as a non-contradictory unity, mutual transition of life and death. Life and death as immortality” [1]. This is probably why the numerical combination  $8+1=9$  is a mathematical expression “tolyk kisi” (a whole, complete person among the Siberian Turks).

The interest in sacred numerology in the modern world is simply enormous and there is no going down tendencies. The magical features of numbers are known to almost all mythologies of the world. “Number played a primary role in ritual and cult functions, in folklore and ancient literary texts. The reason is common to all archaic mythopoetic traditions and researchers say that “number and counting were sacralized means” and if necessary, “the structure of the cosmos and the rules of man’s orientation in it were reproduced” [3]. Since ancient times, number is the highest of all symbols available to the intellect. This is a “universal code for describing the world” [4]. With the help of the number, the most perfect thing that a person could know about Cosmos, the Universe and, finally, about himself, was expressed. What symbolism does the number eight have among the Turks/Kazakhs? In this case, what does the analyzed idiom say?

Unfortunately, there are very few studies on the Turkic number system; the priority in this direction belongs to the Kyrgyz scientists. The counting system of the ancient Kyrgyz is considered in the works of Elery Bitikchi and Nazikbek Kydyrmyshev [5, 6]. Both authors associate the Turkic number system with the yurt, or rather, the starting point for the analysis of the numerical structure of the Turkic world is the yurt kerege (it may have been used for simple multiplication and division, subtraction and addition). “Kerege presents the lattice walls of the yurt (usually from 2 to 6 separate parts), located in a circle and are the basis of the nomad’s dwelling. We believe that such construction of the dwelling led the Turks to solve the problem of the circles space by dividing the circle into as many squares as possible. Indeed, the kerege is a circle divided into many squares. Each square was marked with a separate number — equal to the same closest square” [6].

The Turks had their own specific system of counting, which was definitely sacralized. In this article, we did not mean to go into details of the sacred aspects of the numerical system of the ancient Turks, but only concentrated our attention on the number 8.

Poet and literary critic Beket Karashin notes that the number 8 is an ancient symbol of the Turks and Turkic-speaking tribes; 8 — octahedron, octagon (signs of the Turks — amulet, seal, symbol of ethnicity); 8 — the sign of the Amazons — love, interlacing of rings, marriage between a man and a woman, sex (O. Suleimenov); 8 — 2 twin yurts; 8 — the number of spokes on the Turkic wheel; 8 — an eight-winged yurt creating the illusion of a cir-

cle [7]. An octahedron is “the main geometric element of Turkic architecture. It gives the maximum area with a minimum perimeter. The shortest wall and the most spacious house” [8]. Kurens were octahedral — the first structures made of logs in Altai, ancient temples of the Turks (the Bozok settlement). The eight-rope yurts of the ancient Turks were considered the most resilient against the wind.

The number 8 is interesting in the aspect of the duality of the masculine and feminine principles; 8 — a symbol of the infinity of the universe, a mathematical symbol of eight winds and cardinal points: four main and four intermediate (southeast, southwest, northeast, northwest); “Number 8 — the possibility of two spaces (4+4) or parallel worlds. The number 8 gives us the opportunity to understand that the world should not be considered as the only one” [4]. The octagon in the hypostasis of the “wind rose” is a figurative expression of universality in all cultures of the world. So, “8 is the favorite number in China, a symbol of perfection, completeness in nature and the state. The following associations: 8 annual holidays, 8 gods: the god of the sky, the god of the earth, the god of war, the god of darkness, the god of light, the god of the moon, the god of the sun, the god of the four seasons; 8 aura, 8 jewels: carnelian, coral, tortoiseshell, mother of pearl, ruby, moonstone, rock crystal; 8 classes close to the emperor [9, p. 202].

The octahedron or octahedral jewel in the Vajrayana iconography depicts “Chintamani” — a wonderful stone, the embodiment of the highest wisdom, “precious stone of thought”, a symbol of “spiritual treasures for enlightened mind”. This stone holds a special place in the work of Nicholas Roerich, one of the brightest minds of his time, a brilliant artist, set designer, mystic philosopher, writer, traveller, archaeologist and public figure. Isn't it true that 8 facets of Nicholas Roerich's talent are listed here?

“The number 8 has the symbolism of the initiation path in various traditions. The meaning of the word “kyr” as an edge, a facet of a geometric figure, the proverb can be decoded as an image of a tetrahedral or octahedral pyramid with a single peak — the image of the World Mountain, as well as an initiatory, spiritual hierarchy” [10].

Baksylyk is a traditional area for folk image of “segiz qyrly, bir syrly”. A shaman-baksy are a “sacred type of tenrikan endowed with many talents. In its initial genetic basis, the 8 kyrly represented a spiritual and practical integrity, embodied in the ritual practice of baksy, shamans, kams, who stood out due to their extraordinary mind, spirituality, creative, unconditional artistic abilities. The shaman is a spiritual type of universal, whose functions that are shared in civilized societies between the religion, medicine, education and various spheres of art are present in an integral form” [11].

It is true, that the baksy has the parallel Worlds secret, with the help of which he heals the body and the soul of a patient, using various types of art (dance, music, folklore). At the same time, as a rule, the baksy made their “shamanic” instruments (or they were inherited, made by the teacher-father, teacher-grandfather), so the baksy had hand-made skills. Overall, he transfers to his student the educational function. So, “the first 8-sided Korkyt Ata Aulie contains all 8 hypostases in an indivisible syncretism:

Ata (kaz. “Ата”) — a person who has name (kaz. “ат” — at). According to the ancient’s view, only aksakals had this privilege, since they are close to the world of their ancestors — aruakhs.

Aulie (kaz. “Әулие”) — a holy (aura), prophet, close to Almighty God.

Usta (kaz. “Ұста”) — a master, demierge (close to the Kazakh word dem alu — to take a breathe), that invented the first musical instrument — sacred kyl— kobyz.

Ustaz (kaz. “Ұстаз”) — a teacher, whose octahedral activity has found a worthy continuation in modern 8 kyrly.

Baksy (kaz. “Бақсы”) — (shaman) — close concepts; seer, sage.

Kuyshi (kaz. “Күйші”) — preacher and bearer of the Tengrian spiritual teachings “Kök” (kok), the unity of the sky and earth.

Zhirau (kaz. “Жырау”) — epic storyteller.

Akyn (kaz. “Ақын”) (from kaz. ақ үн — the sound of soul). The initial base “ақ” (ak) — white, the spiritual purity is the basis of many constants of Tengrian culture (aksakal; Aksak kulan; Ak ku; Ak Kaz; Ak Suyek, ak bata, ak sut...) [10, p. 104].

The next specialized type is “segiz kyrly, bir syrly”/representative of the spiritual elite — zhyrau: a person that keeps the verbal heritage; poet — in a poetic form preached the ideas of goodness and truth; singer-improviser, kobyz performer; fortuneteller, adviser to the khans, orator, iconic political figure, and finally, the bearer of sacred knowledge. The sacred knowledge of ancestors, zhyrau was passed from mouth to mouth, and only to a special person. Beket Karashin writes about the facets of the personality of Makhambet-zhyrau: 1) Er (husband); 2) Batyr (hero); 3) Azamat (citizen); 4) Akyn (poet); 5) Sazger (composer); 6) Oryndaushy (performer of musical compositions); 7) Seruyenshi (wanderer); 8) Oyshy (thinker). All these facets close, focus in the concept of “seri” — a multi-talented knight [12].

Not everyone in the Great Steppe was honored with the epithet “seri”; this multifaceted, meaningful concept includes “the designation of the spiritual and physical perfection of a person. Seri is a poet, a warrior, a musician, a commander, a strong man, an orator, a hero-lover, an expert on horses and birds of prey, etc. [13].

The sal-seri institute begins from the antiquity, the sal-seri emphasized their “special” point, not only demonstrating their multifaceted talent and challenging behavior in public, but also visually. Sals were famous for their pretentious outfits of an original and unusual cut and colorful clothes. Seri, in turn, were steppe dandies, dressed richly and tastefully. Both have a high concentration of several talents “akyn, zhyrshi, composer, artist, decorator, magician, skillful juggler, clown-comedian, sportsman-wrestler, entertainer, hunter” [14, p. 65].

If the multifaceted talent of sal-seri is expressed in the above, then their personal “secret” (sir) consists in “combining the primitive magic of fertility in courtly-erotic rituals with the social mission of maintaining the fire of love and sacred-ontological ideas about the structure of the world” [15].

Finally, the “segiz kyrly” meaning in the perspective of the traditional oral-professional sphere, as B.D.Kokumbayeva says: “the spiritual point of “segiz kyrly, bir syrly” — initiates who possessed spiritual intuition, inner vision, re-actualizing the mystery of being, was aimed at ensuring atanasia — the immortality of the Kazakh. In other words, the art of “segiz kyrly, bir syrly” is the Melody of Life as a spiritual being” [10, p. 107].

At the same time, the choice to be as a bakсы, akyn, zhyrau, a master, a craftsman, etc. in traditional society, it is not a personal choice, your mission is predetermined from above, by the aruakh spirits or representatives of the older generation of the spiritual elite. However, it is a mistake to believe that segiz kyrly comes with blood, representatives of the spiritual elite were not born, but became, passing at each stage various initiation rites (among zhyrau, akyns, sals-seri — some associated with secret military alliances; in another category “dedicated” — others).

If “segiz kyrly have Sacred Knowledge — the secret (bir syr) of the World, Space, the Universe” [10, p. 105], then in the sphere of handmade activities of the ancient Turks/Kazakhs, the principles of the formation of segiz kyrly should function absolutely identically. People say: “sheberdin koly ortak, sheshennin sozi ortak” (“the hands of a craftsman and the tongue of an orator are the property of the people”).

Segiz kyrly in traditional handicrafts. The main point of this part of the article, the proverbs will describe better. For example, a Kyrgyz proverb says: “Bir sirduu, myn kyrduu” (a modest, hardworking man, a master of everything, can talk and do), Kazakhs say about skilled craftsmen: “temirden tuyin tuygen sheber”, “koly bilgen kum ustinen keme zhyrgizer”(golden hands will lead the boat on the sand)”, onerpazdyk on koly bar” (a skilled one has ten hands) and many others. All of them reflect the main essence of the artisan artist — multifaceted talent.



About these masters — *segiz kyrly*, the adepts of Mastery, Spirit and Myth, corresponding to the “idea of artefix — “Master” acting on the other side of “art” and “craft”, at the same time containing both” will be shown further. “In the ranks of artefix, Plato includes not only poets, painters, sculptors and musicians, but also weavers, embroiderers, potters, cabinetmakers and blacksmiths” [16]. A master who has ceased to be an artefix, a keeper of sacred knowledge and sacred handicrafts, becomes a doer [17]. “Artefix for the ancients is an art person or craftsman; but, in truth, he is neither an artist nor a craftsman in the sense that these words have today (moreover, the word “craftsman” is increasingly tending to disappear in modern language); it was something superior to both, because initially, at least, his activities were associated with principles of a much deeper nature [18, p. 50].

The process of cognition of the sacred art and craft itself requires the passage of initiatory rituals for initiation into the sacrament of strict pictorial regulations, which allows “to master perfectly the cosmic prototype of creativity” common for this culture [19, p. 34]. During the initiation, mentors pass on to the new generation of Masters the deep meaning of creativity and existence, and also help them to accept their intended occupation with full responsibility and apply their skills to actively participate in the cultural life of the community [16].

And it is no coincidence that in the written sources that we have now is emphasized that “the *risolya* (regulations) of the craft guilds of Central Asia considered the craft itself, the knowledge, tools and skills associated with it as sacred gifts transmitted by the Prophets and holy Sufi sheikhs. *Risol* instructed the master to commemorate specific suras of the Koran, hadiths, the names of Allah at certain moments of production. The initiation into the mouth was preceded by spiritual preparation, after which there was an initiation with girdles and the commemoration of holy feasts” [20].

So, the teacher — *usta* (kaz. ұста) must pass on to his student-*shakirt* all his knowledge, the whole complex of technical and spiritual-sacred knowledge, previously received “from his teacher in the closest to the original form. Each new generation in the chain of immediate succession receives knowledge in all its purity, from the very original source, and the act of the first creation of the world becomes the prototype of sacred artistic activity of its cosmogonic entirety meaning” [16].

Indeed, if you look closer at only one example of the Kazakh *dombra's* art making (in general, an archetypal construction that has not changed since its inception), you can understand that it comes from the “original source”, and in each new instance it implements the “fundamental principle”; and the act of its creation by the Master-Creator is a correlation with the World Tree, the center of the world.

The whole complex of technical knowledge transferred from Usta to shakirt. Of course, every craft had own specifics, but, the constant of spiritual and sacred knowledge unchanged in any kind of craft, consisting in “comprehending and reproducing sacred archetypes” both in the field of the subtleties of the image/reproduction, and in the figurative language, its symbolism and semantics.

So, in the aspect that interests us, the 8-sided talent of the artisan is in the possession of various natural materials (metal, wood, clay, wool, leather, etc.), not only in terms of technology. Probably more in terms of understanding/knowledge of any traditional artistic material “as a participation in a certain element” of the Universe/Cosmos, which allows the artist/artisan to fully reflect in their work the holistic sacred idea of the ancient Turks about the harmony of the world.

This includes the possession of various artistic instruments — the divine attributes of the “act of Creation”/act of cosmogonic action. Therefore, the transfer by the Master of the instrument to the Student is the first importance during the initiation ritual. “We can say that an artistic tool identified with a divine attribute is something more than the artist himself, since it determines the specifics of his further craft activities and the corresponding cosmogonic meaning [16].

Time flies, and due to various circumstances, the process of desacralization of many artistic traditions of the Kazakh people is taking place. “Gradually, people not only forget the meaning of individual ritual actions, material objects participating in the rite, but also lose the idea of the sacredness of Nature and Human Life. The sacred action disappears, first a custom, habit, superstitious ignorance, and then a frivolity and profanation” [21, p. 408]. Although the specific content of the sacred craft is already beginning to be forgotten, the Masters are still convinced that with their art they create a system of good and protective signs.

Conclusion. In our opinion, the ideal of personality “segiz kyrly, bir syrly” functions equally in at least two spheres of Turkic/Kazakh culture: oral and professional and artistic and craft. At the same time, the concentration of the meaning of the idiom on the number 8 is deeply sacred, showing a special understanding of the spiritual constant of the “initiates” in the Turkic culture. That is, “8” is a symbol of a person’s cognition/achievement of the essence of the Tengrian spiritual teaching in different spheres, in this case through the oral-professional and artistic-craft, which is expressed in the possession of 8 talents, 8 elements, 8 matters, etc. The number “1” is an expression of the Secrets Being knowledge. We can say that there is an 8-step, a thorny path to the only peak of the World Mountain in the Universe — the highest point of the spiritual development of the Tengrian person.

At the same time, we are convinced that a person who had not undergone spiritual training, had not mastered the philosophy of the craft, had not reached a certain level of Understanding was not allowed to either sphere, similar to the ancient sacred ritual of creating a sand mandala by Tibetan monks.

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## **САКРАЛЬНОЕ ПРОСТРАНСТВО КӨКШЕ В ИСКУССТВЕ ХУДОЖНИКОВ БОЛЬШОГО АЛТАЯ\***

Практика современного искусства Большого Алтая широко демонстрирует возможность органического синтеза фольклорного начала — народных сказаний, мифов, легенд с потенциалом изобразительного искус-

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