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**CUSTOMS RELATED TO KNIFE CUTTING**

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**ABOUT ARTICLE**

**Key words:** "knife with toothed handle" and "knife with carcase", patrons, exorcism, belt, leading cordsmith, korhat, dukan, knife shop.

**Abstract:** In this article, the master-apprentice traditions, traditions and ceremonies related to knife-making, the symbols of the knife, as well as the fact that the knife is a symbol of bravery in the Uzbek people, are covered from a historical and ethnological point of view.

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**INTRODUCTION**

One of the important ethnographic features of each nation that distinguishes it from other nations is its rituals [1]. Because the economic life and spiritual development of each nation is related to the origin and development of its own rituals. Also, studying the master-apprentice traditions and traditions related to crafts in Uzbek folk crafts, which have been formed for many years and have experienced stages of development, and comparing them with the manifestations of modern crafts today, and in forming the spirit of loyalty to national values in the minds of the young generation, restoring those traditions, professional qualification is also of great importance in improving skills.

Most of the traditions and rituals related to crafts were related to the cult of ancestors. The producers of goods consisted mainly of craftsmen, hired craftsmen and apprentices. Grandfather was the union, that is, the head of the trade, elected from among the prestigious craftsmen, and in most cases he remained in this position until the end of his life. The position of grandfather was mainly preserved until the beginning of the 19th and 20th centuries. A number of other crafts, including blacksmithing, coppersmithing, carving, tanning, and other trades, were held as elders or winners [2].

One of the unique features of the craft was the existence of a separate patron of each branch - the piri. For example, blacksmiths recognized Prophet David, weavers Sif a.s, silk workers Prophet Ayyub, builders Abraham or Prophet Muhammad, carpenters Noah Prophet, Mahsidos Hazrat Saleh as patrons. Knife makers also consider David as their patron saint. Belief in pirs is of great importance in the development of handicrafts and in the life of craftsmen. The reason was that the patrons believed that they would help the development of each craft industry. In addition, knife makers also hold ceremonies in honor of Hazrat Khizr (grandmother Khizr). Hazrat Khizr is seen as a saint who showers blessings in handicrafts and agriculture [3]. That is why they attribute their profession to the rights of Hazrat Khizr in order to be blessed and develop.

As the artisans earned income from patronage, they spent part of it on sacrificial ceremonies for the benefit of the pir. According to the imagination of settled Uzbeks and Tajiks, the human heart consists of soul and spirit. The soul continues to live after the person. Accordingly, the spirit of patrons is always side by side with craftsmen. In order to help them, they lit a rechargeable lamp and lit special incense. Usually knife-makers, like other craftspeople, performed the ceremony of "exorcism" dedicated to the memory of the soul on Friday night and on the days of Eid al-Fitr in Ramadan. Ceremonial dishes such as chalpak and halvaitar were cooked in vegetable oil. After the oil is well heated in the pot during the heating process, dough is added to it (chzoma, ghursok). It is said that the spirits of the deceased wished good luck to their loved ones when this oil was heated [4]. "Lights" were made by soaking cotton in the oil left in the cauldron and wrapping cotton around cane stalks. This light is on inside the shop. It is believed that the spirit of the old man found his way to the store through a lighted lamp. In the content of this ritual, it can be seen that there are animistic ideas that the spirit of the pir always patronizes his descendants, protects them from various evils, and punishes sinners.

Before starting the work, the master of the knives used to remember his elder and ask him for help, saying the words "it's not my hand, it's the hands of the teachers" and asked that their work would be fruitful. In addition to the pirs, the artisans engaged in knife making also honored the members of the family of knife makers, who became famous in this profession and had a long lineage. Among our ancient scholars and sheikhs who gained fame in knifemaking and blacksmithing, we can give examples of Sheikh Muhammad Sakkon in knifemaking and Sheikh Abu Hafz Haddadlar in blacksmithing. These sheikhs were highly respected in their profession [5].

The human factor is important in the development of handicrafts, and master-apprentice relations have a special place. In particular, one of the unique features of Uzbek traditional crafts is that craftsmen of a certain field have a certain social organization. Uzbek craftsmen-masters have their own associations,

and these associations are called "kasaba" among the local population. Trade unions played an important role in the organization of crafts as a kind of internal management body.

In knifemaking, an elder is called "peshkadam". The knife craftsmen trained by making the best knives were called "peshkadam kordsoz" and they acted as the foremen of the knife craftsmen. After learning the secrets of knife-making, masters who entered the apprenticeship to learn this profession must go with their master to the master knife-maker and receive white blessings.

Dedication to mastery was of special importance in crafts, especially in knife making. The white blessing was also given by the master himself. This ceremony is called "blessing". In this case, the master was giving a white blessing to his student and said that his soul would use it after his death. The next ceremony is "kamarbandon", i.e. tying the waist. The student who performed these two ceremonies could separate from his teacher, open a separate workshop and work independently [6]. When the disciple acquired the status of a master, a part of the money he earned was given to God to please the souls of the masters who passed away from this world [7]. In addition, the student organized a party for his teacher at his home. Leading knife masters, mullahs and close relatives were invited along with the teacher. At the end of this ceremony, after the Mullah prayed, the master gave his disciple a white blessing and showed the knives made by him to the guests. The apprentice was dressed in a robe and belted by the master. In order to positively start his career, he donated the best knife he made [8]. Thus, the transition of the apprentice to the master has a special place among the craftsmen's ceremonies, and it is important for the apprentice to independently engage in a certain type of craft.

As in all types of crafts, this profession had to be passed down from father to son in knife making. Among the artisans, it was believed that if the child does not learn the father's profession and does not continue it, the patrons will not hear from this household. If the master did not have a son, he married his daughter to his closest student. Through this, he continued his lineage [9].

Among the peoples of Central Asia, the knife has acquired a special symbolic meaning. Since knife-making is one of the sacred crafts, various traditions have been formed. In the Uzbek people, a knife is considered an expression of bravery, courage, pride and pride. Not long ago, our ancestors used to tie a belt around their waist and carry knives with a decorative scabbard on one side. A person who is alone in the house has a knife under his pillow. It was considered an expression of companionship in solitude, not an attack against a surprise invasion. A person praying placed a knife in front of the place of prayer. Only then it was possible to pass in front of him. These traditions have not lost their importance from generation to generation [10].

Knife masters held regular "exhalation" ceremonies in their shops. Through this ceremony, prayers were recited for the ancestors and pirs who were engaged in this profession and had a great reputation. In the future, they visited the house of masters who died in the profession of knives, wishing them to be blessed with their profession. In addition, clean water was used in the process of watering the blade. It was believed that the knife would be sharpened by saying "Allahu Akbar" 3 times while watering. Among the inhabitants of the valley, there are customs such as not to stand with the edge of a knife, not to pray at a table with a knife. The reason is that they thought that the knife would cut the prayer. There are customs, such as not holding a knife in front of pets. It was believed that if an animal sees a knife, it will be afraid and will not collect meat or milk production will decrease. According to the information of the English ethnologist J. Frazer, the knife is one of the objects of the peoples of the world that have the power of magic. He noted that this process is especially widespread among the peoples of Central Asia [11].

Among the types of knives, "knife with tooth handle" and "knife with carcase handle" are divine. These knives were important in protecting a person from evil. It was believed that holding a knife handle protects women from snake bites and childlessness. These knives are still rare, even for masters. The water used to sharpen the blade during the making of the knife was used to treat sore throats and the heart. In addition, in embroidery, architectural decoration, ceramics, the knife is depicted in a symbolic position [12].

One of the traditions associated with knifemaking is that women are not allowed in knife workshops and knife shops. Since ancient times, blacksmithing was a difficult profession, so women were not involved in this work. There is also a saying among knife makers that iron does not like women. The masters try to keep the knife workshop clean and tidy. They are cleaned by the master or his apprentices. Among the craftsmen, the proverb that keeps the knife workshop and shop tidy from your bed has been passed down from generation to generation. Among the Uzbek people, sharp objects are interpreted as having the same power as amulets. Similarly, the knife is a feature of many traditional folk rituals and rituals: many legends are written about its strength, beauty and practicality. A knife has always been considered the best gift for a friend, but they took a symbolic fee for the knife in order not to cut the bonds of friendship. If a child was sick in the family, a small knife was placed under the bed at night and it was believed that the child would recover quickly.

Images of knives and peppers on objects protect people and the house from evil forces, according to folk beliefs. Such views are widespread in the valley and can be found in the national values of the Uzbek, Tajik and peninsular Kyrgyz, Kipchak, and Karakalpak ethnic groups. Such researcher M. According to

Rahimov's information, potters from Rishton painted the image of a knife and a knife sheath in the middle of the vessel. It was believed that the intended purpose of a knife or a knife sheath would protect the owner of the house from various evil spirits[13].

In ancient times, a knife was placed under the mother's pillow during childbirth to ensure that the child was born healthy, not to harm the mother, and to protect her from evil spirits. Also, the father gave him a knife when he was born. It was believed that it would be his companion throughout his life. If the child did not enter the road for a long time, he was cut by a knife with a string tied to his leg and head. This ceremony is popularly called "cutting the shackles". It was thought that the child would walk on his feet. Before building a new house, people buried an old knife under the floor. Through this, it was possible to protect the owners of the house from evil spirits and unpleasant events. It was customary to keep a knife on the waist, i.e. in a belt or on the top of a boot, as it was also needed to protect a person from danger. When entering the room, a knife is hung in front of the door. The purpose of this is that the spirits that harm the family could not enter the house. If a person was struck by heavy rain while walking, he went to the shelter of a tree, and a knife was stuck into the tree so that it would not be struck by lightning. In case of hail, they stuck knives in the ground to protect the crops. In this way, the clouds were driven away from the crop field. Also, if the shepherds lost their livestock, a knife was stuck in the barn wall. It was believed that the lost animal will not be attacked by predators. This condition is common among the population. For example, in order to find a sheep or a goat left in the field, the Karategin Tajiks perform the custom of "Korkhat"[14], while in the Fergana Valley Kipchaks, they stick a knife inside a makhsi or a boot, and then tie its mouth. There were imaginations that if this is done, the goat's mouth will be tied, and it will not be able to eat the sheep left in the field[15].

The workshop is considered sacred for craftsmen. Since the knifemaking profession is a delicate profession, not everyone is given a blade. Women and young children are strictly prohibited from entering the workshop [16]. It is also strictly forbidden to use obscene words directed at the tools used in making knives, to enter the workshop without ablution, and to put the tools in dirty water. All occupations related to blacksmithing, including blacksmiths' workshops, were considered so sacred that the sick and those suffering from mental illness could spend the night there and thereby be cured. Childless women went to the leading masters and prayed to them for a child. A master knife maker did not sell or give away a knife that was not finished. They thought that if this is done, the blessing will be removed from the profession [17]. This custom must have been passed on to knifemakers from blacksmiths. The reason is that blacksmith workshops in Karakalpaks are called "dukan". They also did not show the unfinished product to the customer [18].

In ancient times, every household had a knife hanging in its net. Also, when the bride was brought to the new house, a knife was presented to the brother who brought the bride "in front of the horse" or a knife was placed at the head of the crib where the baby was lying. Historian S. Ibrokhimov touched on this in his research. That is, knifemakers made a special "wedding knife". Such knives were taken by the bridegroom as a gift when he went to the girl's house [19]. These traditions are still preserved today. It is customary to put a knife, peas and a piece of bread under the bed to scare away the dark forces so that the baby does not cry. Also, forty days after the birth of a child, a "cradle wedding" ceremony was performed. Then they put pepper, bread and a knife under his pillow. In this case, there were views that a knife is as sharp as a knife, and bread will make him smart and have a great reputation, and pepper will ensure that the child's life will be bright.

There are also some views related to seeing a knife in a dream. If a person sees a knife in a dream, it means that a child will be born in the family, if a man sees a woman with a knife in a sheath in a dream, it means that he will get married after celibacy. If a man sees in a dream that he has a knife or someone gives him a knife, and if the knife is taken out of its scabbard, it means that he will have a child and a son will be born in the family. Also, seeing a broken knife in a scabbard in a dream means that a close family member will be sick. They even believed that one of their loved ones will die when they see a broken knife in a dream. Seeing a person injured by a knife in a dream indicates that he will harm himself. If you see a knife ring belonging to you in a dream, it means that your wealth will be damaged. If a person is working on something with a knife in a dream, it means that he will benefit from that thing throughout his life.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it should be noted that all these ceremonies differ not only in their originality and history, but also in relation to ethno-national and religious ceremonies. It is in these traditions and ceremonies that we can observe the interdependence of ancient religious beliefs - totemism, animism, fetishism, shamanism, witchcraft, Zoroastrianism, along with the traditions of Islam. On the one hand, this means that the customs and ceremonies typical of ancient nations have a long historical basis, and on the other hand, it indicates that qualities such as loyalty to traditions and values are preserved among the Uzbek people.

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