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GUBI AS A PART OF THE MATERIAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE KARAKALPAK PEOPLE: TRADITIONAL DAIRY PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY AND ITS ROLE IN MODERN MUSEUM EXPOSITIONS

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Abstract. This article discusses the national household items of the Karakalpak people and their role as an integral part of everyday life. It presents information recorded from informants about the methods of preparing traditional Karakalpak national dishes using these household items. The article also provides information about the fact that these items are gradually falling out of use today and are becoming museum exhibits.

Keywords: tradition, history, museum, exposition, collection, exhibit, gubi, gubi-chelak, atlov, kelli-kelsop, wood, kursau, gellek.

The Karakalpak people have long been distinguished in Central Asia by their rich history, national customs and traditions, and cultural values. They are widely known for their way of life, family relationships, traditional clothing, and distinctive national cuisine. The culture of the Karakalpak people has developed over centuries and has been passed down from generation to generation. Today, household items that are gradually disappearing from everyday use among our people, such as the *gubi*, *kelli-kelsop*, and mill, are increasingly becoming museum exhibits.

The *gubi* is known by similar names among many peoples, although its pronunciation varies across different languages and local communities. For example, among the Karakalpaks it is called *gubi*, among the Kazakhs *kubi*, , among the Kyrgyz *kubu,* among the Uzbeks (in Khorezm) *gupi*, (in Tashkent *quvi)*, and (in Samarkand *kuppi)*.

The *gubi* is a long (90–100 cm), narrow, cylindrical-shaped vessel. Among the Karakalpaks, *gubis* were made of wood, while among other peoples of Central Asia, in addition to wood, some were also made of ceramics and fired clay. Wooden *gubis* were made by Karakalpak woodworkers (*og'och ustalari*), who used white willow wood for this purpose. There were two types of wooden *gubis* made in the territory of Karakalpakstan. One type was made from a single piece of wood (the body), described as "*putin gellek aq tal agash*," and was hollowed out; the other consisted of wooden boards or planks (*kurak-gubi*). The walls of these vessels were reinforced with rings called *kursau* ("a *kursau* is also placed around the mouth and bottom of the gubi"). The first type was called *kuraksiz gubi* (that is, a whole gubi not made from separate pieces), while the second was called *kurakli gubi* (that is, a gubi made from several wooden pieces). The *kursau* hoops served to prevent the wooden pieces from separating. Before being used, the *gubis* were washed with boiled salted water. The *gubi* was made of wood (white willow) and hollowed out from the trunk of a willow tree (on the right). A wooden disk forming the bottom was fitted into the lower opening and secured with a metal ring. [1]



In 2022, the Museum of Remembrance of the Victims of Repression, which is part of Karakalpak State University, received the *gubi* and its *pichoq* (stirring tool), a *gubi-chelak*, and a *sakrash* item as exhibits representing traditional Karakalpak household objects. The height of the *gubi* is 77 cm, the circumference of its bottom is 21 cm, while its mouth is slightly smaller, measuring 16.5 cm. It was carved from a single piece of wood. The head of the *pichoq* was made of interwoven pieces of wood. Its dimensions are 11 × 11 cm. A 95-cm-long wooden handle was fixed precisely in its center.

These items were donated to the museum in 2022 by Khakimniyoz Kunnazarov, a resident of the *Qushjap* citizens' assembly of the Sari Oltin area, Qanliko'l District, Republic of Karakalpakstan.

The *gubi-chelak*, meanwhile, is a vessel used in the household. **Material:** wood. **Dimensions:** height – 41 cm; diameter of the bottom – 13 cm; diameter of the mouth – 11 cm.

Gubi-Chelak (Gubi Bucket) and Gybi (Gubi) and Gubi (Gubi)

These items were donated in 2022 by Salavatov Abatbay Asqarbay ogli, a resident of House 45, Janbas Jap village, "Baxtli" citizens' assembly, Chimbay District.



These objects were accepted into the main collection of the Museum of Remembrance of the Victims of Repression and are considered highly valuable museum exhibits.

- **Object:** *Atlov* — used for making butter from ayran.

- **Material:** Made of wood and cattle horn.
- **Dimensions:** Height – 42 cm; 9 × 6 cm.
- **Inventory No.:** Kr. 1159.
- **Owner/Donor:** The object was donated in October 2022 by Salavatov Abatbay Asqarbay ogli, a resident of House No. 45, Janbas Jap village, "Baxtli" citizens' assembly, Chimbay District.

Gupi is gradually falling out of use in recent times. Ayran and butter are produced using the *gupi*. Ayran is then used to make *suzma* (strained yogurt), from which *qurt* (dried fermented dairy product) and *toraq*, which is stuffed into a *tulup*, are prepared. A traditional food product of this kind was prepared by Amanbay Usnatdinov, a resident of Nukus District of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and his wife, Marziya Qurbaniyazova. As soon as the first *Mezon* month of autumn arrived (September is called the *Mezon* month in the Karakalpak language), they would prepare *toraq* for stuffing into the *tulup*. September was considered the most suitable month for preparing *toraq*: if it was made during intense heat, it could dry out too quickly, while if the weather became too cool, the *toraq* might not dry properly.

Amanbay Usnatdinov learned how to prepare this type of *toraq* from his mother. Not everyone is capable of making such *toraq*, because there are specific procedures and rules that must be followed. First, *katyk* (fermented milk) is placed in a *gupi* vessel, and water is added to dilute it into a liquid state, thereby producing ayran. The ayran is poured into a bucket, and natural butter is extracted from it using a *sakrash*. The remaining ayran is poured into bags made of *bo'z* (coarse cotton cloth) and hung in a high place, where it gradually turns into *suzma*.

The prepared *suzma* is placed in large cauldrons and boiled while being continuously stirred; otherwise, it may spoil. Once the *suzma* has reached the boiling stage, it is cooled and formed into round pieces approximately the size of a clenched human fist. These pieces are spread out and left for two or three days. After the excess moisture has evaporated, they are collected and placed in a large container, where a considerable amount of salt and *katyk* is added and the mixture is thoroughly kneaded.

The mixture is then firmly packed, without leaving any air inside, into bags made of thick *bo'z* fabric. The bags are approximately 30–40 cm in height and 25–30 cm in diameter. The mouth of each bag is tightly closed, after which it is turned over onto a hard wooden board and placed outdoors in a sunny and well-ventilated location. The *toraq* stuffed into the *tulup* is turned over every seven to ten days and dried for one month. [3]

The *toraq* prepared in this manner and stuffed into the *tulup* was also used for medicinal purposes. When people suffered from colds or experienced pain, pieces of *toraq* were placed in boiling water and consumed as a remedy. It was also added to *go'ja* and various types of grain-based dishes and consumed.

The wooden *gupi*, which occupied an important place in the traditional way of life of the Karakalpak people, was one of the household items widely used in the processing of dairy products. This object embodies the everyday needs of the population, their experience of household management, and traditional craftsmanship. The *gupi* is valued as an integral part of the material culture and national heritage of the Karakalpak people. Therefore, studying its history,

manufacturing technology, and specific uses, as well as preserving and transmitting this knowledge to future generations, is of significant importance.

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