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PEOPLE OF CAUCASUS AND BLACK SEA REGION: ORATORY SKILL

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Various forms of toasts are considered: from the time of the Nart epic to modern time. In our study we rely on materials of Sakieva A., Kardangush Zaramuk, Naloyeva Zaura, Inal-Ipa Sh., Bigua S. "Khuekhu" (khokh – it is goodwill in a verbal form) – part of the traditional life and culture of peoples. Khokhs, as good wishes, are not always and not everywhere revealed, but only in this place and at a given time, i.e. at the moment of "pial'e" (time, the point of intersection of time and place). The place and time of the khokh utterance define its direction, its "depth", etc. On the other hand, khokh is an art of folk eloquence, and as such it was not given to everyone. A person who undertook to speak a special khokh (toast), apparently, had to learn from others for a long time. It was believed that the speaker spoke beautifully in the name of God that God "tkh'e, anchva", put in his mouth the highest, noble words of the people. In the epic "Narts" he was given to Sosruko, for his deeds in the name of people's Nart goods. The great old man, the hero of the epic Nasren-Zhache, taking the word from the toastmaster, with a khokh, kind word, blesses Ashamez, Nartsky. To receive good wishes from the hero is no less important event than to obtain the khokh of the Gods, as he (the hero) has seen a lot, done a lot, i.e. he is almost godlike. In the system of education of the Adygea-Abkhazian knight consciousness, a significant role was played by words – infusions (suggestions), received through instructions in khokhs. A man somehow completed his education in the khokhs, he discovered new truths and expanses of being. Thus, one can see that khokhs can be different. They are pronounced on various occasions: the beginning of the peasant's work, housewarming, coming out to the spring field, etc. The mountaineers also have the sacred khokhs about food on the table, table generosity. Toasts were pronounced in the name of son-in-law or son, or daughter-in-law. Abkhazians-Christians have a lot of khokhs. The art of eloquence, goodwill, here, on the ancient land of Apsna, achieves high perfection, aristocratic spirit. At the table, Abkhazians strictly follow themselves and their neighbors: is "Apsuara" ("Abkhazianity") respected? But through the Apsuara and Adyghenity, the peoples defend their national identity, their individual uniqueness, not willing to dissolve and disappear among other ethnic groups. The ability to pronounce khokh is an indicator of a person's culture for the peoples of the North and West Caucasus. Khokhs are not just words to the place and time, but words-feelings, word-concepts, words-sacral, organizing and subordinating people. The concepts of people' beauty, its morality, behavior etiquette, truth are as if concretized and specificated in the toasts. The importance of this topic is shown for a deeper understanding and study of the Caucasus people culture.

Key words: apsuara and abkhazianity, toast, khokh, epos, beauty, the word of the senior.

[Шенкао М.А. Народы Кавказа и Причерноморья: искусство красноречия]

Рассматриваются различные формы здравниц: со времен нартского эпоса по наше время. В данном исследовании мы опираемся на работы Сакиева А., Кардангуш Зарамук, Налоева Заура, Инал-Ипа Ш.Д., Бигуа С. «Хъуэжъу» (хох – благопожелания в вербальной форме) – часть традиционной жизни и культуры народов. Хохи раскрываются только в данном месте и в данное время, т.е. в момент «пiальэ» (= срок, точка пересечения времени и места). Место и время произнесения хох определяют его направленность, глубину. С другой стороны, хох – это искусство народного красноречия, что давалось далеко не всем. Человек, который брался говорить особенный хох (тост) должен был долго учиться у других. Исторически считалось, что красиво говоривший говорил от имени Бога, что Бог – «тхэ, анчва», вложил в его уста наивысшие, наиболее благородные слова народа. В эпосе «Нарты» его получил, например, Сосруко за свои деяния во имя народных нартских благ. Великий старец, герой эпоса Насрен-Жаче, беря слово у тамады, хохом, добрым словом благословляет Ашамеза, нартского Орфея. Получить благопожелания от героя – это не менее важное событие, чем получить хох от богов, ибо он (герой) много повидал, многое сделал, т.е. он почти богоподобен. В системе воспитания адыго-абхазского рыцарского сознания заметную роль играли и слова-внушения (суггестии), полученные через наставления в хохах. Человек как-бы довершал в хохах свое образование, ему открывались здесь новые истины и просторы бытия. Таким образом, нами показано, что хохи бывают разные. Их произносят по разным поводам: начало трудов крестьянских, новоселье, выхода на весеннее поле и

т.д. Есть также у горцев священные хохи о пище на столе, о щедрости стола. Здравницы произносили во имя зятя или сына, или невестки. Особенно многочисленны хохи у абхазов-христиан. Искусство красноречия, благопожелания, здесь, на древней земле Апсны, достигает высокой отточенности, аристократизма духа. За столом абхазы строго следят за собой и соседями: соблюдается ли «Апсуара» («абхазство»). Но через апсуара и адыгство народы защищают и свое национальное лицо, свою индивидуальную неповторимость, не желая раствориться и исчезнуть среди других этносов. Умение произносить хох для народов Северного и Западного Кавказа – показатель культуры человека. Хох не просто слова к месту и времени, а слова-чувства, слова-понятия, слова-сакральности, организующие и подчиняющие себе людей. В здравицах – хохах как бы конкретизированы и детализированы понятия красоты народа, его моральности, этикета поведения, правды. Показано значение данной темы для более глубокого понимания и изучения культуры народов Кавказа.

Ключевые слова: апсуара и адыгство, здравица, хох, эпос, красота, слово старшего.

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There are no deep, detailed studies on this issue. Although to understand the psychology of people, their ideals, their sacramental states of the soul, their understanding of beauty, morality, the understanding of the depth and scope of the people's world outlook, all this requires research of toasts. In general, to talk (give a voice) to common people on such metaphysical, i.e. unreachable, insubstantial concepts, like beauty, hospitality, honor, divine, namys, eternal and transcendent, purity, girlhood, consent in the home, in the world, etc., is very difficult in the ordinary, "Profane" time. Only during the Khokhs (uttering toasts, lofty words addressed to the celebrants of the celebration), the people, relaxing from the righteous labors, begin to speak with high style, poetic speech, bringing out the purest and highest in thought, i.e. secretly-mental, that would not be said everyone, and would not be shown to everyone, i.e. ability to speak and think.

In our study we rely on materials (empirical and research) Sakieva A., Kardangush Zaramuk, Naloyeva Zaura, Inal-Ipa Sh.D., Bigua S. and others, who work fruitfully in this field, or rather in the Folk culture field. "Khuekhu" (khokh – it is goodwill in a verbal form) - part of the traditional life and culture of peoples. Khokhs, as good wishes, are not always and not everywhere revealed, but only in this place and at a given time, i.e. at the moment of "pial'e" (= time, the point of intersection of time and place). The place and time of the khokh utterance define its direction, its "depth", etc. On the other hand, khokh is an art of folk eloquence, and as such it was not given to everyone. A person who undertook to speak a special khokh (toast), apparently, had to learn from others for a long time.

The khokh artist in his self-study had to remember and retain in his memory some clichés of thoughts, special, unique expressions, remember and speak his own, taking into account what was said before him so as not to repeat himself, and speak what is permitted, speak decently at this place, at this stage of the feast, in this house, and at the same time not be ahead of the events and the elders, i.e. not to violate the etiquette of the festive table. The researchers and observers of Caucasian toasts (a toast – external form of khokh) by general consent mark that the words there are "ardent" for hearts, i.e. in the course of khokh pronouncing one verbally touches such "strings" of a soul, which leave no one indifferent neither by age, nor by sex, nor by race and culture.

Already in XV century European Interiano says that drink and khokhs are realized there in the North Caucasus with all seriousness, as any other deal. Thus Interiano wrote: "They drink all the time, and to the glory of God, and to the glory of saints, and for the health of relatives, and in memory of the deceased friends, and in memory of some great

and important achievements, and drink with big solemnity and respect, as if doing a religious rite, always bare-headed in sign of the highest humility" [7, p.49]. Khokhs can (as exception in XIX century, and now often) be pronounced by the women. But Khokh is nevertheless "the word of the man", i.e. solid, solemn word, "speech of the man". And if the Khokh – the word of the man then it is presupposed that the youngest in age and especially the youngest in the rank at the table, (and often this person fills the rouses) "bzh'ek'ues", must listen to Khokh, the word of the oldest person, standing for the sake of respect. Also for a woman, the mother of many children, people listened to khokh and drank standing, for the sake of respect to her, and to the maternal labor. It was believed that the speaker spoke beautifully in the name of God that God "tkh'e, anchva", put in his mouth the highest, noble words of the people. After the Khokh, people thanked the speaker for expressing what was in their minds, in their hearts ("di gum il'yr zhyptai") that he did not fail their honor also in eloquence ("dybg'eurkiytal'mi, dyk'epschekhyzhai").

Nowadays everybody understands that the Khokhs are nothing more than table decorations, they are a beautiful fantasy of the speaker, but everyone, at least sitting at the table, wants all the Khokhs to come true. At least, everyone wants any kindness to be fixed, oath-assured, i.e. in the Adyghe "тпалыэну". It was believed that through toast, a phenomenon, a thing or a person is sanctified, and therefore they are not subject to the evil eye, the worse, the accident, or the disintegration. "Kh'uekh'u" - literally: compliment, boast. The highest Khokh, naturally, is from God or the gods. In the epic "Narts" he was given to Sosruko, for his deeds in the name of people's Nart goods.

The great old man, the hero of the epic Nasren-Zhache, taking the word from the toastmaster, with a khokh, kind word, blesses Ashamez, Nartsky [6, p. 246-247]. To receive good wishes from the hero is no less important event than to obtain the khokh of the Gods, as he (the hero) has seen a lot, done a lot, i.e. he is almost godlike. So the Adyghe has the expression: "Tkh'em i psal'em utyreg'euve; apkhuedesh tkh'epel'yti, nart khakhuem i psal'er guegu nekhu utreg'euve", that in translation is: "The Word of God puts on feet, and exactly the words of a godlike hero - narta puts on a bright road". Khokh of a toast-master (tkh'em i ade), the God messenger was heard on feet and in silence. Moreover, the line of conduct at the table, the theme of the khokhs was determined by the first khokh toastmaster. The word of the toastmaster is law of all sitting and serving the table. The speech of the toastmaster should be built logically, cleverly, with sparkling jokes, with observance of all decencies and traditions.

Adyghe say: "gupschysi- psal'e", - "firstly think then say". And that is why the Adyghe respected those, who "zhabze zyiyl'y, sheryueu psal'er" (= who had eloquence and distinctly, to the place and time) spoke, even if he was from the common simple tablemates or even younger, standing at the table over the elder people, or temporarily invited to the table. A beautiful, affectionate word amazed, amused, allowed to forget, liberated the soul and body of man from the burden of earthly cares "si gum bampei debg'ekiai" (= "removed longing from my soul").

In the system of education of the Adyghe-Abkhazian knight consciousness, a significant role was played by words - infusions (suggestions), received through instructions in khokhs. A man somehow completed his education in the khokhs, he discovered here new truths and expanses of being. Universities at the table completed the pyramid of his education and civilization. Here, for him, the truth of life, the transcendental meanings of human existence and concepts, were revealed; Simple everyday words received sharpened forms and meanings; during the khokhs, a person received cognitive-conceptual knowledge with moments of abstraction and sensory reflection in the form of word-images.

According to the warriors - mountaineers, instructing a person through khokhs, corrections were made in the line of his fate, in the bone, in the body, i.e. social, as it were, interfered with the biological. Thus, the narts forecasted the beautiful and knight fate for

Ashamez when he was a child: that unnumbered amount of years he has Psath'e as a patron (the God of soul), could destroy the enemies, would cost the whole troops as a knight, his one blow would equal 100 strokes of simple people, so that no one would escape his arrow to sweep half the troops with a sword, so that all those who heard him would be surprised, so that he would be the guardian of the village, so that the harvest of millet would break his barns, and his sword all the time would be sharp; and God Psatk'h'e would not leave his room, and Thagalezhe would always say on the field and in the lowlands that his life (Ashamez), would have no end, would be eternal, let him be a strong root to our Nart people, praise him [6, p. 246-247]. Severe nart warriors, laconic, closed to strangers, are able in their own way, as one saw above, to open up, relax before the miracle of nature - before the birth of a child. There is no naming for a child in the khokh – this is given in advance, from above, from God, as an obvious thing, i.e. the name as if defined before the birth, a baby was delivered with name, this is the peculiarity of the epos.

To open their mentally concealed sledges - soldiers can only in moments of the highest excitement: during the blessing with khokh the pure, holy hero - the child of Asamez. The nart's world beauty is framed, defined with severe military life. Military valor, the ability to survive, defeat the enemy by force, dexterity, ingenuity - all this was both beautiful and true in their and other people's eyes. If during the heroic time, within the framework of war, a nart man was embellished with valour in relations with foreigners, then at the same time knowledge and behavior beyond the bounds of decency was considered to be "beautiful" (aesthetically-aesthetic). Adyghes say in this connection: "K'ekiuk'emykiu zekhezyschiiyir tsykhusch", i.e. "who differs decent- indecent things, that considers to be a man". This idea is held in the khokhs of our days under the expression "zekheschiyki iiey sal'e".

The beautiful girl, who prepares to get married, the bride is beautiful in all folk texts, in all national verbal creations, and especially in the khokhs [1]. The ideal of the Caucasian girl beauty, young daughter-in-law that for the first time steps over the new house, is described in the khokhs. The bride, according to popular goodwill, must: quietly whisper words like a sheep, like a murmur of a stream, like sounds during fermentation of wine or "makhsyme" (millet beer), be like a lamb - soft-lipped, like a hen - caring for children, like a good horse – famous for (breed, origin or for loftiness? - M.Sh.), as a bird would chirp. There one can see how a peasant observation picks out some feature, close to a person, from every animal, i.e. something soft, tender and hominized. The hair of young girl is compared with a mane of a lion (lioness), she sits on the table – a dove, she stretches her body - a lioness, her eyes are like the stars, her body is like Crimean cotton, her cheeks are like red apples, "sakhusaplere", her breasts are like apples, her eyebrows are like pearls or half moons, her back is straight, a face and a neck are white [4]. The objects from the visible world are taken in all these comparisons. Symbolical, landmark thinking ascribes some concealed qualities, known only for people of this region to all of them.

Thus, "aslan" (a lioness) – symbol of inaccessibility, power and seriousness, a dove - gracefulness, stars – the symbol of precision, purity, cotton – the symbol of softness etc. But Adyghes and Abasins saw the beautiful things not only in appearance, but also in deeds. So, the young daughter-in-law, according to the toast, should have been clean, "not to part with a broom", to sew well that what she sews would not break at the seams, that she would not like to sleep, that she would cook delicious food. Specifically stipulated that she must be slender, not fat and not skinny: "K'erekatatau, Barentinagoue" – and especially beautiful was a girl who had white face, black hair and blue eyes. Generally, the girl was emphasized according to her eyes: "Dakhanagyeu", i.e. "beautiful, blue-eyed" (there is even such name). Besides, "nekuelen" was considered to be beautiful, i.e. with different eyes, green-eyed. Calling the daughter-in-law like "pho" (honey) that who pronounces khokh right there adds, emphasizes the components of the woman beauty: eye-

brows are like swallows, hair is down to her ankles... The daughter-in-law (nyse) is appreciated for obedience to mistress (guasche) – mother-in-law. And here with, one asks in the khokhs that “the tongue should be softer with mistress”, (uibzegum fok telu epsale), i.e. that means that honey should be on the tongue, when one says, Adyghes ask. A daughter-in-law should avoid meeting with a father-in-law (a father of a groom). According to the mountain customs it was impossible to talk to the father-in-law, before his permission. The bride also should adhere to “habze”, i.e. the natural right of the mountaineers, and also live according to “namys” (morality), according to “nart khabze”, i.e. adhere to the highest heroic morality, where the duty, hospitality, honor code are the highest of everything. The bride was also appreciated for whether she was independent, whether she accomplished the matter to the end? Thus one asks in khokh: “Zydek lwahum Liy klel’ymykiuezh”, i.e. that men would not accomplish her deeds [4. p. 96].

It was considered that the bride i.e. nyse, atatsa (in Abasinsk) should know fear and shame in front of mistress. This is something house-building, patriarchal. But, evidently in this way the young nyse was educated to adopt to the interests of family, agitation of the oldest one according to the age, who always was nervous about constantly burning fire in the house (inextinguishable fire) fireplace (the symbol of life) that housekeeping became the first habit, the thing number one for the young “atatsa” that will be constantly nervous about: presence of hot food in the house, health of children, coziness and peace for the husband. One asks in the khokhs: that those whom she gives birth, in a month after delivery will be sat on a horses, for children to grow fast, “That the house of bride will always be full of guests”, that many people come to the married couple – thus one thought about the happiness and beautiful life.

There also was a wish (it is usually pronounced by the guests before the leaving), that the table which the bride will lay, will nourish the whole Kabarda, and that the food from all the table will turn all girls into beauties (“tkh’eiukhud”), i.e. the estimation of the bride was given according to her cooking skills. The food as something holy, sacred should be cooked by a young, healthy, beautiful (inside and outside) girl.

According to the toast the beauty was considered, when the words of a bride were soft, as honey that the fire of her heart would burn in the house, for the children that she always was cheerful and light with a face; that “her throat was long for people”, i.e. that she would have patience and would not raise voice; that the bride would not have anything negative “kh’eram” (kosher) in her mind and in soul, that she would keep a face (i.e. morality) of a new family, where she came following by her husband (to live in a bride’s house was a shame for a man); that bride would move silent, quiet, and her walk would be like moves of a fallow deer, deer (= blane), i.e. graceful [1. p.79].

Also a young couple was considered as successful if they have enough wealth, gold, silver (“uyuzi”, “uestal’e”), money and, especially, “gold children”. It is more said about the “golden children” than about the real metal. Under the “golden children” one could understand well-bred descendants, who, according to the abasin people expression “can easy let his heart to be eaten” (= upsy idurphi). High moral qualities were invested to “golden children” from birth through a certain mountain system of education. So, and now Adyghes old people will tell you: “I have 2 sons. One stands certainly on my soul (i.e. he contradicts everything). And the other son always comes to meet my heart, my wishes, and I would give him my heart”, i.e. “sigum k’ypyl’ydey, si psyr zezg’eshkhyn”, understands me with a half-word. The name of the first name is “k’in”, i.e. “stubborn beggar”, the second “spsy”, i.e. “my soul”. And, evidently, “spsy”, will be a “gold child”, who has “khial-shan, adab” (=character, moderateness, politeness, discipline).

One wishes the bride from the place she came away (parental house), she would leave the day golden trace of her heel, and she would bring the day with her feet to the house she would come. Thus it is said here:

“Kygazashi –
l’edak’e makhue k’akhuschine,
K’yzdashami –
L’ape makue k’akhyikh’akhe.
Tkhiem k’yschig’eki!” [4, p. 103-104]

Apparently, the traces which were left by the wife were sacred, as her thoughts, as of nobody, were considered to be pure, as the best feeling of all – love, moved her to the new house, to creation of new hearth.

Thus, one can see, how severe souls of the mountaineers were developed from wonderful sides in toasts. Their beauty ideal is a pure, gentle, almost aerial, fragile creation of nature - the bride, who at the new stage, on the threshold of the expectation of a new one, who, as one says, love everything by all the fibers of her soul, wishes everyone good, this is a pure open soul. And, apparently, the sensitive, wise souls of the mountain people absorbed the trembling tenderness of the young soul. And one comforted her through the khokh, helped her to overcome excitement, and the words about her were said in unison of her heart, i.e. one spoke for her, the things she thought about.

In the khokhs of our days one speaks about that the bride should also study after the marriage that she in profession, as in home, should find her refuge, and whether she would conceive, all these things were reasonable, and that welfare would hail from her hands, and that she would glorify her new father – the host (old man) “ipschizh”, and that she would be helpful for the mother-in-law (=anem i psem iurytu).

In the khokhs of the latest years, one certainly comes changes, which took place for the last years, into account: europeanization, free will of the young people, but at that there is always a wish for the young people to keep to “habze” in such a manner that “habzer ubze yaphiemyschiu”, i.e. that customs would not called as flattery that natural right would not abased to maidservant for the guests, would not serve for dulcifying. Apparently, this khokh is addressed to a girl from a different culture [4. p.103-104], so she understands that all wishes are serious and for ever, and that they should become part of her nature, character, they must enter into blood and flesh as an order and the basic law of family life.

And almost always in all toasts the speaker calls himself to help and witness the most powerful personality of the universal scale - God. And that is why there are always such expressions in the end of the khokhs: “Tkhem k’edit”, i.e. let God give us the bride we think about, or “kuedre tkh’em utkhuig’epseu”, i.e. let God give her longevity; or “Apkhuede nyseu k’ydets”, i.e. God give us such bride, - thus people appeal to impersonal Divinity. People do not strictly observe who is who in witnesses in the khokhs: Tkh’e (God) or Allah. They are identical and interchangeable for the people in days of merriment. It is also interesting that during the years of totalitarianism in toast about Stalin, they asked Allah (!) To give the great leader (who himself did not believe in God, neither in the devil, nor in people) health, an inexhaustible long life [4. p.157-158].

In 1947, when this toast was written about the leader, there was famine in the Circassian Autonomous Region, and Stalin was asked as a god: to send them rain and grain to the peasants. Truly, it was difficult to understand where the forces of the extraterrestrial god (Tkhay or Allah) ended, and where the functions and powers of the earthly god (Stalin) began, and who was considered to be dependent? Totalitarian consciousness produces aberration, overturning of values, substitution of tradition by a surrogate, as we see, well-being did not escape this. Guests and compatriots from Muslim countries, coming to us, and looking at our khokhs, are surprised at how we combine often incompatible things: we say khokh, we ask Allah for something, with a glass of vodka or wine in hands. This is similar to what the great Omar Khaiyam wrote about:

In one hand a glass,

*The other is on the Koran,
And so we live under the blue sky,
Semi-atheist and half-Muslims.*

Adyghe-Abazino-Abkhazian mentality cannot accept Hoch without alcohol “arque”. Apparently, this is the influence of totalitarianism. Mountaineers before the revolution raised rouses with “bakhsyme, hu fade”, i.e. buzy, millet drink, which alcohol strength approaches beer, but no more than. The culture of drinking, feasting, libations (if we can speak about culture in this case) has surpassed all measures, and now, we, figuratively speaking, drink and destroy our genes. The genetic future of the children, people through alcohol we put at great risk, if not a fatal one. Returning to the khokhs, one can see that they are different. They are pronounced as a ritual according to various occasions: the beginning of new peasant labors, new moon, housewarming, the first plough in spring, the first furrow, the first row of mown hay, the first emergence on the spring field, completion of seeding time [4, p.17-56]. There were khokhs as if coming from the Gods: from Amysch (the God of cattle), where the words were natural: “that the lake was like milk, wheels like heads of cheese, the number of sheep was uncountable, like stars in the sky”. Such notions as soul beauty, generosity – people wanted to turn to them from the name of God and with the help of these notions fertilize their being.

Mountaineers also have holy khokhs about food on the table, generosity of the table. They are usually pronounced according to etiquette at the end of the feast, when they bring to the table the famous “nysh” – a half of a sheep head. This is the signal of the hosts about the end of the feast and it is addressed to the guests. In such cases one says at the end of the toast: “to be like this for 1000 yers!” And this wish is given not with drunken seriousness, but quite sincerely: this is dictated by the mytho-epic, heroic nart nature of the mountaineers. These are the remnants of chivalry, the generosity of the soul. It comes from the traditional culture of the mountaineers, from the past structures of mentality. In the past beauty manifested itself in a gift, a broad gesture. And the person, who pronounced the khokh at the table, as if expressing opinion of the group, with a divine way gifted this house, hearth, mistress and table – 1000 of years.

Toasts were pronounced in the name of son-in-law or son, when they were respectively invited to the home of the bride’s parents (schaue tekhe), or when the son was called to the house of his parents. It is remarkable here that in khokhs there is no description of the appearance and body of a man (this would be shameful for his honor); but the wishes of great deeds are given, as well as exemplary behavior in the khokhs, like: “Fi g’asxhier kiykh’u”, i.e. the life is long, “Fi namysyr l’ageu”, i.e. we wish you great happiness; “Fi ak’ylyr khurik’uu”, i.e. we wish to be clever enough; “Gykhekhuer fi kuedu”, i.e. we wish more happiness; “Fadzbzh’er zephieephu”, i.e. so that people raise their rouses, drink, but not to be drunk, i.e. live according to Adygeya proverb “Efe-efe umyudafe”, i.e. drink, but not drink yourself to death; “Psherykh’yr vg’evetu”, i.e. we wish you that you could boil fatty meat [4, p.113]; “Tkh’em fig’epseu”, i.e. we wish that God let you live more. As one can see, there are given other landmarks, other values and other concepts for the man in khokhs that determine his dignity. And immediately the man is told that he should not see female tears, for him not to slobber. And he should never show his tears [4, p.115], he will never be forgiven for this momentary weakness, and the tears of a man are more expensive than his blood. This weakness does not suit him as a man. Here, the beauty of a man is revealed in his endurance, in firmness of spirit, in restraint and in behavior manners close to aristocratic. Truly, as in the Arabic proverb: “The mind of a woman is in her beauty, the beauty of a man is in his mind”. The man of the family, the head of the family, the one who speaks the toast, now, after the marriage of the son, tells him that he (the son and his family) is now a separate unit of the genus, hence, now he must have his own pride, his own line of behavior, his own beauty in behavior: “Ue si schiale, Utsiyki-

ukhunkie - uzigupasch, In ukhyari - uzulepagish, Fyz k'apsheri– uziunek'uesh" [4, p.113]. To become a congener of the father (unecuesh) obliged to many things, and most importantly, social recognition came for a man, responsible not only for themselves, but also for children, wife, relatives. Abazins say about such period of maturity: "Izaman akh'atsara akh'atsara zaman italti", i.e. entered into prestige and complex male age, where a lot of (if not everything) was easy for him.

Khokhs are especially numerous among Abkhazians - Christians. The art of eloquence, goodwill, here, on the ancient land of Apsna, achieves high perfection, aristocratic spirit. Abkhazians pronounce the khokhs as for merry, so for sad events (on the occasion of death, commemoration). At the same time, during the funeral, the khokhs (toasts) have themes:

1. Drink for the surrounding.
2. Drink for the neighbors.
3. Drink for the missing people.
4. Drink for the perished on the war.
5. Drink for the peace of the soul.
6. Drink for the family of the perished person – finishing toast.

There are 18 themes for toasts during the commemoration [6, p.44-51].

A toast – an external expression of the khokh. Khokh can be without toast and rouse, especially if the faithful Muslim old man pronounce it. Khokh - tradition, but toast – only form, dictated by civilization. A toast for Abkhazian man – significant moment in his life, in this time he, as if, passes the exam on intellectual maturity before the whole world. Abkhazian national poet Bagrat Shinkuba wrote in his poem "Toast":

*We raise the toast to the initiative,
Loudly clink with thin glasses,
- For the men! The real man
Does not leave the sense at the table.
That should not touch the wine,
Whose soul is crafty and dim,
And the tongue begins to mumble
Not to honor of a man,
Only alcoholic cannot drink,
And he does not know the sense of wine,
He does not get clever from wine at the table
Who searches for truth at the bottom [6, p.47]*

At the table they do not drink for the sake of sports interest – who will win in deinking, but for the sake of mood rising, for the soul's amusement. At the table Abkhazian people strictly search for themselves and for the neighbors: do they fulfill "Apsuara" ("Abkhazianess"). This is how "Adygagie" ("Adygheness") – the way of life, the pattern of thoughts and behavior, i.e. traditional mentality, making Abkhazians to be Abkhazians, Adyghes to be Adyghes. The best aristocratic features of behavior and mentality of people entered into Apsuara and Adygagie. Through them people show the measure of their civilization, openness to the whole world. But through apsuara and adygagie people also defend their national face, their individual singularity, without desire to be dissolved and vanished among the millions of ethnoses, i.e. apsuara and adygagie - spiritual ways for people self-preservation in front of European and electronic civilization press.

The ability to pronounce khokh for the people of the North and West Caucasus is an indicator of a person's culture. The slightest violations of drinking etiquette cause Abkhazians either embarrassment or a violent reaction. There is a lot of Eastern traditionalism here. The author of these lines was a witness, when according to the Abkhazian, the prior-

ity of given the word to the older people (by toast-master) was violated (permission for khokh).

If the mountaineers of the Karachaevo-Circassian Republic traditionally transmit the word, the permission to pronounce the toast and the order of sitting at the table are determined by the seniority in advance, then it is not the same in Abkhazian tradition. This order of saying goodwill among the Abkhazians is well described in the book of Inal-Ipa [6, p.112]: the khokhs are provided according to the degree of honor:

- 1-st – to the senior host;
- 2-nd – to the senior guest;
- 3-rd - to the senior of community;
- 4-th – to the main guest;

5-th – to the uncle from the mothers side.. etc. and in all – 23 ranks; and from 24th toast come the others. But everyone is listened attentively. In this case, the violation of the rank, inability or “weak table management” at its best can end with polite abandonment of the celebration. In this case for the traditionally thinking Abkhazian to stay for one “disso-lutely behaving” table means to abuse yourself that the Abkhazian will never allow himself. The plebeian table and plebeian speeches are not for the proud “apsua acaca”, i.e. Abkhazian.

Thus, as one can see, khokh is not just words to the place and time, but the words-feelings, word-concepts, words-sacredness, organizing and subordinating people. In the toasts – khokhs the concepts of people’s beauty, their morality, decency, behavior etiquette, truth are concretized and specificated. Of course, no one can live by the standards of khokhs - these are ideals. But all people at national gatherings, at these peculiar universities of the spirit, absorb the best samples of speech, behavior and thinking, and in everyday life they “cleanse” themselves under the ideals, values and norms of the khokhs. Everyone is striving to live better, and in this they are helped by equality in some ways to etalons of toast.

The well-known Adygea researcher of culture Zaur Naloyev is right when he says that the khokhs were eventually pronounced to wish happiness first of all. And under the happiness one understood the absolutely different: this is heavy crop, and big runs of cattle, beautiful clothes, health, and the day of bride, and children, and good house, and the articles of daily use, and peace among people, and violation of enemies’ (“zheg’ueg’u”) and enviers’ planes (“zheg’ueg’u”) [1, p.5-14].

A similar phenomenon is also observed in the Ossetian people, this is a prayer that is pronounced before the bride enters the house. He is often spoken by a man, sometimes an elderly woman, with a bowl of beer in his hand. “Prayer doctrines have a definite canon, they can be divided into three types: an appeal to God, a wish for two kindred surnames, wishes to the bride. The pronouncing of prayers stays obligatory at the modern weddings. Prayer turned into parting words, in which one of the bride relatives, with all the gathered guests, instructs her how to behave in the new house, tries to remind her that she must love her new family the way she loves her own, and even more” [1, p. 54-55]. One can see, therefore that toasts are multidimensional, comprehensive, i.e. Stereoscopic in their coverage of reality, and they are waiting for new research for their adequate disclosure. Khokhs – the hearts hymns, and those who utter them only in special, solemn minutes reveal their rich inner world, their mentality.

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