

Gender Norms and Pattern Creation in Kazakh Society

Chieko Hirota

**JSPS Research Fellow/
Hokkaido University SRC**

Life in Kyrgyz

2024/10/10

Orion Hotel, Kyrgyzstan



Purpose



Q. How do Kazakhs create new patterns from typical Kazakh patterns?

— From a Case of Kazakhstan

Gender norms in Kazakh society

- a patrilineal social structure,
- still observe the rules of exogamy.
- are recognized as social beings through marriage.
- Gender views have also been closely related to handicrafts.
- handicrafts were considered to be work that women should do for families.
- The relationship between handicrafts and gender is changing nowadays in Kazakhstan
- because handicrafts have shifted from being domestic materials to visual art objects.

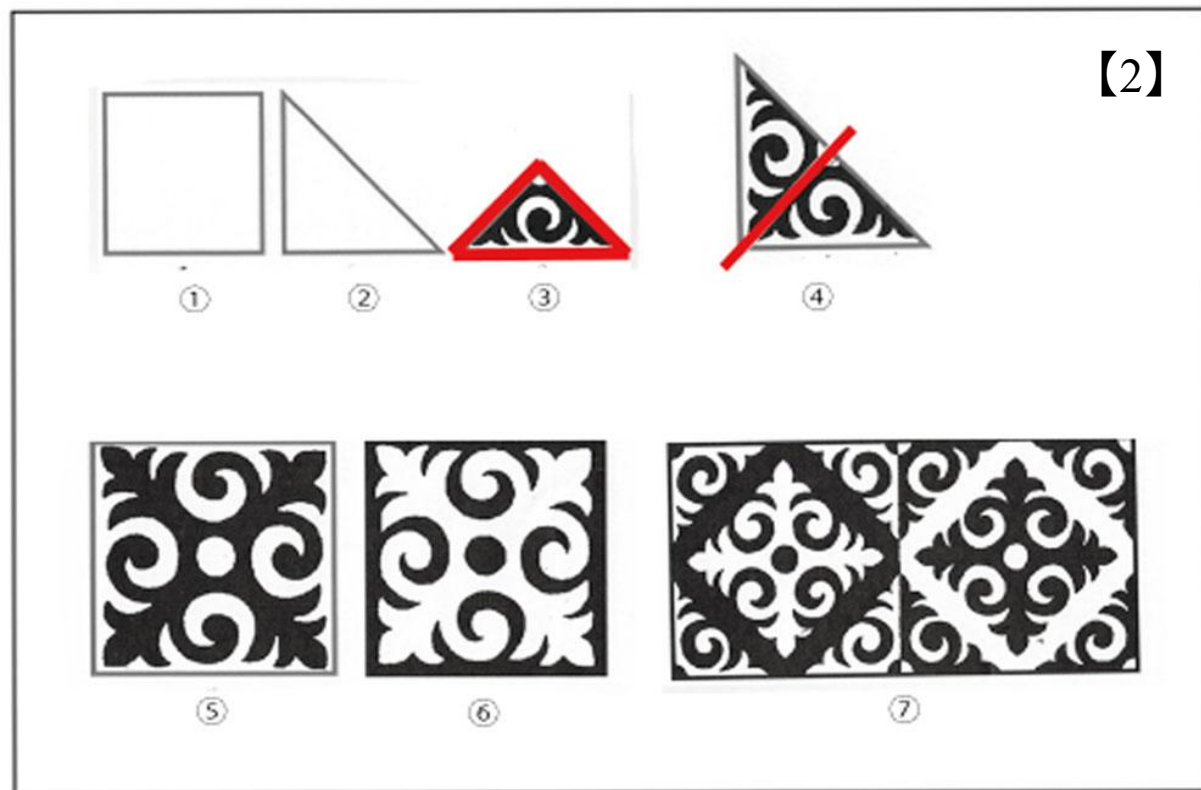


Basic Information on Kazakh Patterns

- Symmetrical, with curves reminiscent of sheep horns[Shobai1980].
- Repetition, inversion, or rotation of a simple shape.
- Two patterns, **positive** and **negative**, appear simultaneously.
- People have continued to improvise, extract, reconfigure, and reinterpret the pattern culture[Bunn2011] .



【1】



Improvised formation of patterns



Research Site



**Photos from an interview
with us in 2017**



- first met her in 2017
- She is a creator and more than 20,000 followers on Instagram
- stayed at her home /for about a week in 2017 and 2023
- had many conversations

The case of a Kazakh woman in Kazakhstan

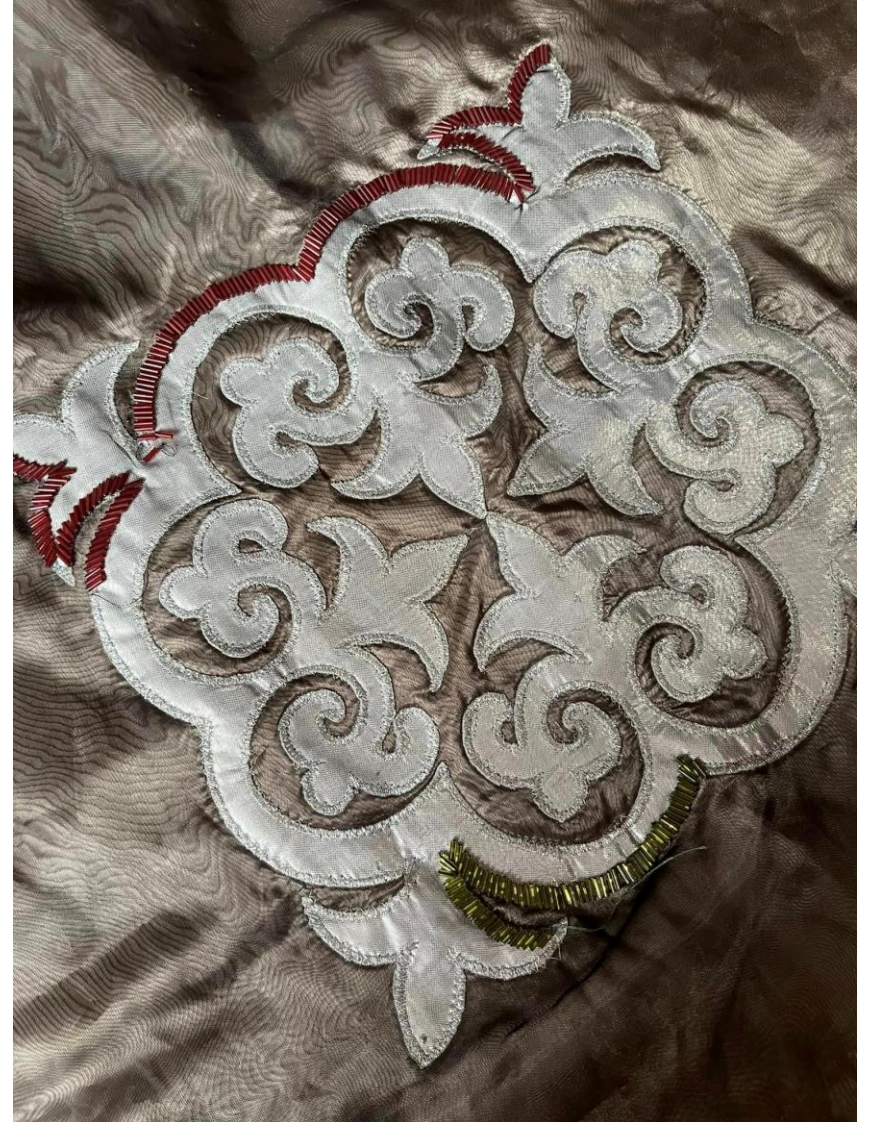


- Born in 1962.
- She cuts fabric with scissors and makes rugs using the applique technique.
- She is very keen on creating patterns.



The social position of Kazakh women

- she was living alone in Almaty.
- She ran a private school at her home, where she taught socially disadvantaged people and their children.
- She raised her daughter on her own.
- Her mother repeatedly encouraged her to remarry, but she did not.



Rugs made by cutting out modern felt



- A festive rug made for a grandchild (in 2015).
- Beginning to receive orders from Kazakhs.
- From handicraft to art in Kazakhstan.
- As she continued to cut patterns, she was inspired by an idea.



The idea of creating a new pattern by cutting.



One of the typical patterns



New pattern:
having two heads inside
one body

The idea of creating a new pattern by cutting.

**New pattern:
having two heads
inside one body**



mother

child

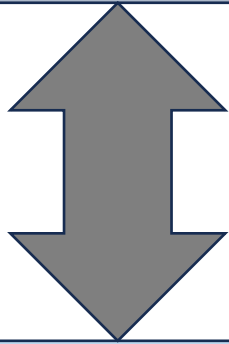
**symbolizes
a mother and a child.**

**it looks like the image of the
mother holding the child
in her arms.**

Different attitudes toward the meaning of patterns.

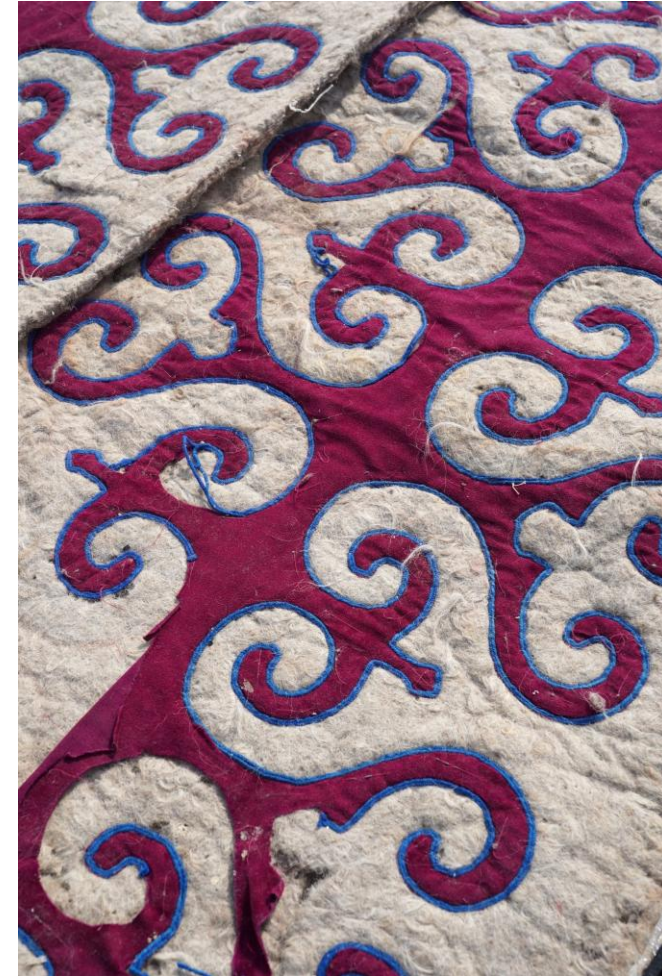
My fieldwork experience
in Mongolia Kazakh

not very interested in the symbolic
meaning of the patterns. Saying
“the horns of sheep represent wealth”.



My fieldwork experience in Kazakhstan

She(people) is aware of the symbolic
meaning and narrative quality of
patterns in her daily life.



The influence of social context on pattern creation.

<1>Kazakh patterns are not static, but have changed dynamically over time, reflecting people's personal experiences and social conditions.

<2>What drives her to create?

- learned to create patterns through **the repetitive learning** process of production techniques.
(The environment formed the basis for improvised patterns).
- emphasizes **uniqueness** and **narrative**.
- values **recording** of each production.
(Social trends supported her motivation for her work).
- being positioned **as a socially disadvantaged**.
(Social context gave her specific ideas for her work).



Reference

(Japanese)

丹波朋子2011「かたち・言葉・物質性の間 陝北の剪紙が現れるとき」床呂郁哉・河合香吏『ものの人類学』京都大学学術出版会, pp25-46。

津田命子2004「アイヌ衣服と文様の変遷」繊維製品消費科学45（12）, 25-30。

廣田千恵子（Chieko Hirota）2023a「モンゴル国カザフ人の装飾文化動態－移民・少数民族の文化継承と変容に関する考察－」令和4年度千葉大学大学院学位請求論文（博士）（未公刊）。

廣田千恵子（Chieko Hirota）2023b「カザフ文様をフィールドワークする」Arctic Circle128, pp14-17。

廣田千恵子（Chieko Hirota）、カブディル・アイナグル（Khabdil, Ainagul）2019『中央アジア遊牧民の手仕事 カザフ刺繍』誠文堂新光社。

(English)

Hallam. E and Ingold. T (ed.) 2007 *Creativity and Cultural improvisation*. Routledge.

Portisch, O.A, 2010 The craft of skilful learning: Kazakh women's everyday craft practices in western Mongolia, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 16: 62-79.

Salimjan. G 2017 Debating gender and Kazakhness: memory and voice in poetic duel ayty between China and Kazakhstan. *Central Asian Survey*36(2): 263-280.

Stephanie Bunn 2011 Moving people and the fabric of society: the power of felt through time and place. *Central Asian Survey* 30(3):503-520.

(Kazakh)

Баталова, Э.Н 2009 *Қазақтың кесте өнері* Алматыкітап баспасы.

Қасиманов, С. 1995 *Қазақ халқының қолөнері*, Алматы.

Сералев, Б.Ы. 2010 *Қазақ қол өнері каталог*. АБДИ компани, Алматы.

Шобай, Қ.1980 *Қазақ урианхай халықтарының ұлттық қолөнері*. Өлгий.