How to Pray in Kazakhstan: The Fortress of the Muslim and Its Readers

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Abstract

In this article, I describe the ways that Islamic presses associated with the piety movement attempt to help Kazakhs develop virtues such as patience and faith by publishing a book of supplications called The Fortress of the Muslim. Members of the piety movement attempt to follow these presses' instructions and often report that they have become more patient or mindful of God. Members of Ata Zholy, another Islamic movement in Kazakhstan, learn a different ideology of supplication on pilgrimages where they seek God’s help in conjunction with the blessings of saints. Members of Ata Zholy use The Fortress of the Muslim in heterogeneous ways, many of which contradict the ideology of the piety movement. The various tactics that members of Ata Zholy use while reading The Fortress illustrate the ways that readers unassociated with the piety movement in Kazakhstan use the products of a dominant Islamic movement for their own purposes.
Only then, Muslims could pray in public after being forced to pray in secret, fearing persecution by Quraysh in Mecca. When were Muslims commanded to pray? There are numerous narratives about the history, emergence, and evolution of prayer in Islam, one of the basic pillars of the faith. According to As-Seerah Al Halabiyah, the Prophet and his people had not been commanded to pray before his night journey and ascension to heaven. In his book “Tuhfatul Muhtaj li Sharh Al-Minhaj”, Ibn Hajar Al-Haythami further proves this when he says that “people were only commanded to believe in the onen In terms of customs and how to behave in Kazakhstan, most rules are based on the country's Islamic roots and nomadic traditions. According to Islamic dietary restrictions, for example, pork should not be consumed and alcohol is forbidden. In Kazakhstan the restriction on pork is closely adhered to, but with many Christians, pork is at times available. Alcohol is, however, a part of the daily life. Vodka is imbibed, sometimes in large amounts, by Muslim Kazakhs as it is by Russians and other Soviet peoples. Only the strictest Muslims refrain from drinking alcohol. [Source: safaritheglobe.com]. Kazakhs have always revered and highly valued their national customs and traditions. Islam is the largest religion practiced in Kazakhstan, with estimates of about 70.2% of the country’s population being Muslim. Ethnic Kazakhs are predominantly Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi school. There are also small number of Shia and few Ahmadi. Geographically speaking, Kazakhstan is the northernmost Muslim-majority country in the world. Kazakhs make up over half of the total population, and other ethnic groups of Muslim background include Uzbeks, Uyghurs and Tatars. Islam first arrived on the