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## IMAGE OF A HORSE AS A SYMBOL OF ETHNIC IDENTITY (on the example of Kazakh and Tuva theatres)

The article is devoted to the problem of cultural and ethnic identity in the national theatres of Kazakhstan and Tuva. In the national theatre the issue of socio-cultural ties is provided in theatrical performances through the manifestation on stage of cultural and national values, meanings and values as a reflection of ethnic identity, aesthetic and moral ideals of the people. Modern world theatre is a potential place of cultural forms reproduced by stage artists, offering to look through the eyes of the contemporary here and now, what we are today, what processes are taking place in the ethno-cultural society. The works of the authors of national theatres, as subjects of indigeneous culture, represent the presentation of cultural symbolic images, in which the ethnic identity of the people is reproduced. And in this connection, the question is raised how in modern conditions the ethnic is expressed in the national theatres of Kazakhstan and Tuva.

*The aim of the work* is a comparative analysis of the symbolic image of the "horse" in the construction of the picture of the world in the national performances of the theatres of Kazakhstan and Tuva.

*The novelty of the study* lies in the fact that the consideration of the concept of a "horse" as a symbolic image of cultural and ethnic identity in Kazakh and Tuvan culture in the context of a theatrical performance has not been the subject of cultural analysis. *The theoretical and methodological basis of the article* are the works of foreign, Kazakh (A.Sh. Mirzabekova, 2006), Russian (V.N. Badmaev, 2005,) and Tuvan scholars (Ch.K. Lamazhaa, 2018) who studied the problems of national identity, as well as the works of Kazakh and Tuvan theatre scholars, philologists, and cultural scientists.

*The source base* is theatre productions: the Kazakh play "Kulager" (directed by Farhad Moldagaliev, Kazakhstan) and the Tuvan play "Egil, ezhim, egil!" (directed by Alexey Oorzhak, Tuva). (directed by Alexei Oorzhak, Tuva).

On the basis of the cultural analysis of the image of the horse, the authors of the article substantiated the concept of "horse" as a symbol of freedom and independence in the theatrical art of Kazakhstan and Tuva", revealed the symbolic image of "horse" in the Kazakh performance, reflecting the ethnic identity and traditional culture of this people, conducted an analysis of the image of "horse" in the national drama of Tuvinians as a cultural element that ensures the preservation and transmission of traditional values of this people.

**Key words:** horse image, traditional culture, ethnic identity, performance, Tuva, Kazakhstan.

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### Жылқы бейнесі этникалық бірегейліктің символы ретінде (Қазақ және тува театрларының мысалында)

Мақала Қазақстан мен Тува ұлттық театрындағы мәдени және этникалық бірегейлік мәселесіне арналған. Ұлттық театрда әлеуметтік-мәдени байланыстар мәселесі сахнадағы мәдени және ұлттық құндылықтары этникалық бірегейліктің, халықтың эстетикалық және адамгершілік

мұраттарының көрінісі арқылы театр қойылымдарында сахналады. Қазіргі әлем театр-бұл сахна өнерінің суретшілері қайталайтын мәдени формалардың әлеуетті орны, мұнда қазір замандастың көзімен, біз бүгін қандай екенімізді, этномәдени қоғамда қандай процестер болып жатқанын көруді ұсынады. Ұлттық театрлар авторларының еңбектері индигендік мәдениеттің субъектілері ретінде халықтың этникалық сәйкестігін жаңғыртатын мәдени символдық бейнелердің төлтыынды көрінісі болып табылады. Осыған байланысты, қазіргі жағдайда Қазақстан мен Туваның ұлттық театрларында этникалық қалай көрінеді деген сұрақ туындайды.

Жұмыстың мақсаты- Қазақстан мен Тува театрларының ұлттық спектакльдеріндегі әлем бейнесін құрудағы «жылқының» символдық бейнесін салыстырмалы талдау болып табылады.

Зерттеудің жаңалығы – «жылқы» тұжырымдамасын қазақ және Тува мәдениетіндегі мәдени және этникалық бірегейліктің символдық бейнесі ретінде театрландырылған қойылым контекстінде қарастыру мәдени талдаудың мәні болған жоқ. Мақаланың теориялық-әдіснамалық негізі ұлттық бірегейлік мәселелерін зерттеген шетелдік, қазақстандық (А.Ш.Мирзабеков, 2006), ресейлік (В. Н. Бадмаев, 2005,) және тувалық ғалымдардың ( Ч.К.Ламажаа, 2018) жұмыстары, сондай-ақ қазақ және тувалық театр ғалымдары, филологтар, мәдениеттанушылардың жұмыстары болып табылады.

*Ақпараттық база болып келесі спектакльдер назарға алынды: қазақ спектаклі «Құлагер» (режиссер Фархад Молдағалиев, Қазақстан) және тувалық спектакль «Эгил, эжим, эгил!» (режиссер Алексей Ооржак, Тува).*

Жылқы бейнесін жүргізілген мәдени талдау негізінде мақала авторлары Қазақстан мен Туваның театр өнеріндегі еркіндік пен тәуелсіздіктің символы ретінде «жылқы» тұжырымдамасын негіздеді, осы халықтардың этникалық бірегейлігі мен дәстүрлі мәдениетін бейнелейтін қазақ спектаклінде «жылқы» бейнесінің символдық бейнесін ашты, тувалықтардың ұлттық драматургиясындағы «жылқы» бейнесін мәдени элемент ретінде талдады осы халықтың дәстүрлі құндылықтарының сақталуы мен таратылуын қамтамасыз етеді.

**Түйінді сөздер:** жылқы бейнесі, дәстүрлі мәдениет, этникалық бірегейлік, спектакль, Тува, Қазақстан.

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### **Образ коня как символ этнической идентичности (на примере казахского и тувинского театров)**

Статья посвящена проблеме культурной и этнической идентичности в национальном театре Казахстана и Тувы. В национальном театре вопрос социокультурных связей обеспечивается в театральные постановках через проявления на сцене культурных и национальных ценностей, смыслов и значений как отражение этнической идентичности, эстетических и нравственных идеалов народа. Современный мир театр – это потенциальное место культурных форм, воспроизводимых художниками сценического искусства, предлагающих посмотреть глазами современника здесь и сейчас, какие мы сегодня, какие процессы происходят в этнокультурном обществе. Работы авторов национальных театров, как субъектов индигенной культуры, представляют собой презентацию культурных символических образов, в которых воспроизводится этническая идентичность народа. И в этой связи, ставится вопрос как в современных условиях выражаются этническое в национальных театрах Казахстана и Тувы.

*Целью работы является сравнительный анализ символического образа «коня» в конструировании картины мира в национальных спектаклях театров Казахстана и Тувы.*

*Новизна исследования заключается в том, что рассмотрение концепта «коня» как символического образа культурной и этнической идентичности в казахской и тувинской культуре в контексте театральной постановки не был предметом культурного анализа. Теоретико-методологическая основой статьи являются работы зарубежных, казахстанских (А.Ш. Мирзабекова, 2006), российских (В.Н. Бадмаев, 2005,) и тувинских учёных (Ч.К. Ламажаа, 2018), изучавших проблемы национальной идентичности, а также работы казахских и тувинских ученых-театроведов, филологов, культурологов.*

*Источниковой базой являются театральные постановки: казахский спектакль «Құлагер» (режиссер Фархад Молдағалиев, Казахстан) и тувинский спектакль «Эгил, эжим, эгил!» (режиссер Алексей Ооржак, Тува).*

На основе проведенного культурного анализа образа коня, авторы статьи обосновали концепт «коня» как символ свободы и независимости в театральном искусстве Казахстана и Тувы», раскрыли символический образ «коня» в казахском спектакле, отражающем этническую идентичность и традиционную культуру этого народа, провели анализ образа «конь» в национальной драматургии тувинцев как культурного элемента, обеспечивающей сохранность и трансляцию традиционных ценностей этого народа.

**Ключевые слова:** образ конь, традиционная культура, этническая идентичность, спектакль, Тува, Казахстан

## Introduction

In the conditions of globalization, one of the urgent tasks of cultural studies is the problem of cultural, national and ethnic identity. For our peoples after the collapse of the Soviet Union, after gaining a new social and political status, this problem becomes especially relevant. It is especially important for Kazakhstan as an independent and autonomous state in the format of revival and preservation of its national cultures. This problem is also especially important for the Tuvan people, because having received the status of a Subject of the Russian Federation, the Tuvan people have to solve a number of complex problems, among which the preservation of their language, original and unique culture is both a practical and scientific-theoretical task.

In modern conditions, one of the important tasks is to refer to the experience of socio-cultural institutions that play a significant role in the education, development, socialization of a person, in particular in the formation of a new view on the rethinking of traditional attitudes, stereotypes, values and their adaptation to the emerging new social and cultural reality. An important role in this is played by modern theatre as a socio-cultural institution capable not only of transmitting artistic values, models of behavior, symbols, meanings and values of the corresponding ethnic culture, but also influencing people's worldview, focusing on important patterns of culture. And in this sense, theatre acts as a center for the transmission of culturally significant meanings, being a space of cultural community, where "sensual-emotional, mental connections of an individual with other representatives of the community" are experienced (Gorenkin, Shvetsova, 2022).

It should also be noted that in national theatre the issue of socio-cultural ties is ensured in theatrical productions through the manifestation on stage of cultural and national values, meanings and values as a reflection of cultural and ethnic identity, aesthetic and moral ideals of the people. In the modern world, the theatre is a potential place of cultural forms reproduced by stage artists, offering to look through the eyes of the contemporary here and now, what

we are today, what processes are taking place in the ethno-cultural society. The works of the authors of national theatres, as subjects of indigenous culture, are a presentation of cultural symbolic images, in which the cultural and ethnic identity of the people is reproduced. If the problem of the place and role of theatre in the cultural life of peoples is sufficiently studied, there are actually no scientific works both in the field of art history and culturological plan to study the problem of constructing cultural and ethnic identity in the national theatres of Kazakhstan and Tuva. Moreover, there are no special scientific works devoted to the analysis of the image of the horse as a symbol of cultural and ethnic identity in the context of the study of their representation in theatrical performances.

It follows from scientific studies that in Kazakh and Tuvan culture the horse has been a pivotal part of cultural and economic activities for many centuries. Kazakh scientists, such as S.Kaskabasov, S.Kondybay, E.Tursybai and E.Tursi, pay attention to this. Kaskabasov, S. Kondybay, E. Tursynov, A. Toktabaev, M. Khasanov and others. The authors note that in the worldview of Kazakhs and even the ancestors of Kazakhs, there is an opinion that the horse is a creature of universal character. The studies of Tuvan scholars such as Darjaa V., Zhizhigitov D., Kuzhuget A. and others show that it was impossible to imagine the everyday cultural life of Tuvinians without the horse, as many traditional, ritual and ritual-cult aspects of their everyday life are connected with the horse. For a Turkic nomad, the horse was a breadwinner, a faithful friend, a fighting comrade and a wise counsellor. The image of the horse has always been an indicator of beauty, loyalty, solidarity and wisdom.

Kazakhs and Tuvinians during their nomadic life under extreme conditions learnt to recognize the qualities of this animal. According to the researchers, given the horse's instinct, natural caution and ability to recognize danger, Turkic nomads gave the horse sometimes ambivalent characteristics: a cautious animal and a cruel killer, because the animal could react very quickly to any reaction from the outside,

very quickly “read” the information coming from an unfamiliar person, unfamiliar environment. Kazakhs and Tuvinians spent their life on a horse throughout the day: they rode a horse during the day, slept on a horse during warfare or nomadic movements, so they paid attention to the peculiarities of the horse’s behavior, learned from it: to trust their intuition, subtle instinct, to be cautious in an unfamiliar environment.

According to K. Jaspers, “the ability to use the horse, along with the creation of irrigation systems, the discovery of writing, and the emergence of ethnic groups in the transition from the throne to civilization, was very important for mankind” (Jaspers, 1994:71-72). In fact, the application of the horse to life is a step towards mastering the whole world by breaking the limited space. As the analysis of literature shows, the cult of the horse stood at a high level for representatives of Kazakh and Tuvan ethnoses, which are cultural heirs of nomadic civilization. As the analysis of literary, folklore and cultural studies shows, for Kazakh and Tuvan nomads the image of “horse” occupies an important place in their worldview, philosophy, folklore and mythology. This image in a generalized form represents the Kazakh and Tuvan ethnic pictures of the world, the model of the Universe, and the deep archetypes of cultural identity. As follows from the literature analysis, the problem of the horse symbol and its role in the construction of the ethnic picture of the world of two Turkic peoples (Kazakhs and Tuvinians) is very important for the formation of national identity. This problem is very relevant for the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural and historical memory.

In our opinion, the question of what role the theatre as a cultural institution plays in preserving the ethnic picture of the world for the Kazakh and Tuvan peoples is particularly significant. This image in the context of a theatre production gets a new meaning from the point of view of what the descendants of these peoples are today, how they as carriers of indigenous culture present symbolic images of their identity. Modern theatre is an symbolic images of their ethnic identity are reproduced. National theatre and its language are one of the key factors in the formation of cultural identity and act as a translator of archetypal images and deep meanings of their culture (Sadykhova, 2014).

Adhering to these views in society, we will consider the image of the “horse” on the basis of a theatre performance. The authors of the article stop their choice on three performances: the performance

“Kulager” staged in the Kazakh Academic Theatre for Children and Youth named after G. Musrepov, the performance of the Tuvan theatre “Come back, my friend, come back”. These two performances are a source, material for the consideration of ethnic identity. to conduct a comparative analysis of the image of the horse as a symbol of ethnic identity of the Kazakh and Tuvan peoples on the example of the theatrical production of the two performances.

**The purpose of this article** is to analyze the symbolic image of the “horse” in the construction of the world picture on the example of three performances of the theatres of Kazakhstan and Tuva: the Kazakh “Kulager” and the Tuvan “Egil, ezhim, egil!” (“Come back, my friend, come back”). The study of the image of Zhylyk (Horse) seems relevant, as it is significant for understanding Kazakh and Tuvan culture. Given the numerous works on the formation and development of the history of Kazakh and Tuvan theatres, it is important to note that so far scholars have not conducted special studies on the analysis of the stage image of the horse.

**The novelty of the study** lies in the fact that the consideration of the symbolic image of the “horse” as a reflection of the cultural and ethnic identity of Kazakh and Tuvan culture in the theatrical production has not been the subject of cultural analysis.

In this article, the authors aim to consider the ways of representing the image of ethnic identity through the concept of “Horse” in the context of the national theatre of three Turkic peoples. It is known that theatre acts as a center for the transmission of culturally significant meanings, being a space of cultural community, where “sensual-emotional mental connections of an individual with other representatives of the community” are experienced (Gorenkin, Shvetsova, 2022). National theatre and its language is one of the key factors in the formation of cultural identity and acts as a translator of archetypal images and deep meanings of culture (Sadikhova, 2014).

#### **Extent of study of the problem:**

The image of the horse has been sufficiently researched in mythology, oral literature and art. These are the works of T.A. Bakchiev “The image of the horse as a symbol (on the example of the epic “Manas””, G.R. Balmakhaeva “Sacral image of the horse in traditional Eurasian culture”, A.P. Vasilieva “Representation of the image of the horse/horse in traditional Yakut culture”, B.P. Vasilieva “Representation of the image of the horse in traditional Yakut culture”. Vasilieva “Representation of the image of the horse/horse in the traditional culture of Yakuts”, B.B. Nogerbek “The image of

the horse in the film “Absinthe, the son of Arab and Bakkara”, Oraz Abishev, O.V. Baturina “Landscape painting of Kazakhstan” and others. These studies determine the role and specificity of the horse in the spiritual and material life of man in each type of art: fine arts, cinema, oral literature, crafts, etc.

The place and role of the horse in ritual ceremonies and traditional culture is investigated in the scientific works of Kazakh and Tuvan culturologists, ethnographers, philologists and philosophers, such as S. Kondybay, K. Nurlanova, E. Tursynova, V. Suzykei, etc. The researchers also substantiate the idea of the importance of the horse image in literature, folklore, tales and myths. The researchers also substantiate the idea of the importance of the image of the horse in literature, folklore, in tales and myths. The authors note that in the worldview of Turkic peoples and even their ancestors, there is an opinion that the horse is a creature of universal character.

Based on the main ideas, principles of these scientific works, we determined that through the image of the horse in culture, each nation seeks to convey its unique image, its essence, its worldview. However, analyzing the works devoted to the image of the horse, it turned out that there are not many materials about the image of the horse on the theatrical stage, among them it is worth noting a few reviews written about performances. Given the numerous works on the formation and development of the history of Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Tuvan theatres, it is important to note that so far scholars have not conducted special studies on the analysis of the stage image of the horse. Therefore, the authors of this article, based on the idea that theatre is cultural capital (Burdë), do not aim to describe or analyze theatrical performance as a whole, but focus their attention on the differentiation of the formation and preservation of cultural and ethnic identity in the minds of ordinary spectators through the image of the “Horse” in a stage work.

### **Research methodology and method**

The problem of cultural, national and ethnic identity, despite the rather large volume of scientific works devoted to certain aspects of this complex problem, is still insufficiently researched both in foreign and Russian philosophical and cultural science (including Kazakh and Tuvan).

Among the scientific works on cultural and ethnic identity we should note the works of French scientist (Benois J.-M., 1977), American scientists

(Identity, 1993; Identities, 1994), the works of Boronaev A.O., Delokarov K.Kh., Mezhuiev V.M., Malakhov V.S. and others. The authors of the article were also based on the works of Russian (V.N. Badmaev, 2005,) and Tuvan (Ch.K. Lamazhaa, 2018), as well as on the work of Kazakh scientist (A.Sh. Mirzabekova, 2006), who studied the problems of cultural and national identity.

There are not many fundamental works on Tuvan theatre, but there are works written at different times by such researchers as Sagdy K., Tavkay A., Alyansky Yu, In addition, in the 5-6 volumes of the collective monograph “History of Soviet Dramatic Theatre” published in 1969-1971 and in the book “People of the Tuvan Theatre” published in 1971, as well as in the collection “Multilingual Theatre of Russia” published in 1980, one can find valuable information about the creative path and scenic quest of the Tuvan theatre.

Enough fundamental scientific works have been published on the history of Kazakh theatre. They can be divided conditionally into two stages. In the Soviet time there were written researches: N.Lvov, N.Berkovsky, O.Kaidalova, L.Bogatenkova, K.Kuandykov, B.Kundakbayuly, A.Kadyrov, I.Shostak and others, and after independence there were published monographs: A.Sygay, S.Kabdieva, B.Nurpeis, A.Mukan, A.Yerkebay, Z.Islambayeva and others, which allow to trace the ways of development of Kazakh theatre.

It is known that the notion of the complexity of theatre and the possibilities of studying it from different perspectives is important in the development of modern interdisciplinary research. Unfortunately, a one-sided historical approach prevails in Kazakhstani theatre science. Therefore, based on the consideration of theatre as cultural capital (Burydë), the authors do not aim to describe or analyze theatrical performance as a whole, but focus on differentiating the problem of formation and preservation of ethnic identity in the minds of ordinary spectators through the image of “Horse” in the stage work.

In the course of the study of the mentioned problem, the authors were based on the indigenous approach, which allows them to substantiate the common and special in the presentation of the image of ethnic identity of the three Turkic peoples, and also applied comparative and cultural relativistic methods in the course of the study.

*The source base for* this article is theatre productions: “Kulager” (directed by Farhad Moldagaliev, Kazakhstan) and the Tuvan play “Egил, ezhim, egil!” (directed by Alexei Oorzhak, Tuva).

Rationale for the selection of specific performances.

Kazakh professional theatre emerged in the 1920s. In those years Kazakhstan was a part of the Soviet Union. The process of formation of the national stage art developed along a typical path for the Central Asian region. The totalitarian policy of the Soviet Union was engaged in the creation of a completely new in the history of the “united Soviet people” and a model of international socialist Soviet culture was developed.

In the cultural life of Kazakhstan during the era of the Soviet Union, the foundations of national theatres of opera, ballet, drama, etc. were laid. Under Soviet rule, the trend known as “socialist realism” reigned on the Kazakh stage, as well as in the theatres of Central Asia. Kazakh theatre did not remain isolated from this process, as the stage practices of K.S. Stanislavsky, considered a reformer of the Russian theatre school, were spread throughout the artistic groups of the USSR under the name “Stanislavsky’s system”, while folk art in the totalitarian system remained under the pressure of prohibition (censorship) if it did not conform to the ideas of socialism. Works of national content were also persecuted. The so-called Soviet culture that emerged under Soviet rule had two sides. On the one hand, it opened the way to European education and art for

*Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Tuvinians.* On the other hand, it led to the destruction of the national educational traditions of all peoples living in the Soviet Union, including Kazakhs and Tuvinians. Practically the whole way of life in the USSR was built on the principle of unification, and the theatre process was not left aside.

As noted by the Kazakh researcher S. Kabdiyeva, since the period of national independence in all post-Soviet republics, the process of revival of national cultural self-identity has begun. In theatres, this was expressed, first of all, in an active appeal to the comprehension and understanding of the historical past, the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and folklore. Traditional culture, rites and rituals organically fit into the structure of new directorial decisions” (Kabdiyeva, p.31). Modern young actors of the stage, turning to the past, demonstrate their vision, their interpretation, working in the aesthetics of post-dramatic theatre. They continue the theme of the search for national identity on the theatre stage and seek new ways to harmoniously combine the traditions of cultural heritage with the ideas and forms of current world theatre. This model of interaction between stage traditions and innovations

seems to be the most productive for national theatres at the present stage.

The process of organizing theatre in Tuva, as in other republics of Soviet power in the first quarter of the twentieth century, was in full swing. The drama circle that opened at the Russian club in the city of Kyzyl also had a great influence on the quest of Tuvan theatre artists. Many amateur theatrical productions promoting the values of Soviet power were staged.

Tuvan theatre as a professional art gradually began to form since the 30s of the twentieth century. In 1935, a national studio was established in the city of Kyzyl at the training center and on the basis of the Oyun Shagdyr-Syuryun Club. On March 25, 1936, the studio students performed their first concert and this day became the birthday of the Tuvan theatre. In 1940, the studio theatre was reorganized into a state musical-drama theatre. Historians of Tuvan culture associate this period with the process of “policy of cadres’ Korenisation”. The national intelligentsia faced the task of “adapting and conveying the ideas of socialism to their peoples”. In 1945, the first graduation of actors who graduated from the music and drama school took place”. Their work became the basis for the development of professional theatre. (History of Soviet Drama Theatre, 627.). Since 1986 the theatre has borne the name of V. Kok-oolaa, the founder of Tuvan theatre and national dramaturgy.

In the new century, the stage art of Tuva, developing as a regional theatre of Russia, leads new artistic quests, demonstrating the ethnic identity of the people. The actors and directors of the new generation of theatre face the task of reviving their cultural and anthropological traditions.

Time has proved, on the example of the scientific and cultural space of the former Soviet peoples, the untenability and incorrectness of those strictly restrictive methods of establishing norms and boundaries of science and culture, which were characteristic of the Soviet time. At different stages of the socio-cultural development of these peoples, the ratio of folklore and new theatre forms was changing on the stage. Differently interpreted, differently embodied in stage practice, folklore and mythological motifs were invariably present in the works of leading national playwrights, directors and actors.

In the XXI century Kazakh and Tuvan theatres are modernizing in a new way, becoming the center of many stage searches and public thought. Modern modernization of spiritual and cultural values accumulated over centuries has become the most urgent task for Kazakhstani and Tuvan theatre

actors. Kazakh and Tuvan stage art is not only a platform for cultural dialogue, but at the same time theatre is not a closed space, but on the contrary, it is a cultural institution ready for various experiments.

It is known that there is much in common in the history of formation, stages of development and aesthetic orientations of the stage culture of Turkic-speaking peoples. Kazakhs and Tuvinians as bright representatives of Turkic-speaking peoples have common folklore and mythological origin. Therefore, not only in their culture, but also in theatre art there are many common themes, motifs, characters, etc. The determining factor in the development of stage culture of the Turkic world is the attitude to traditions that contribute to the enrichment of ideas and create a modern theatre discourse, artistic image, means of expression.

The play “Kulager” based on the poem by the outstanding Kazakh poet Ilyas Zhansugurov was staged in 2020. The author of the staging and director of the play is a young theatre director Farhat Moldagaliyev. He works fruitfully in different theatres of Kazakhstan and has managed to form his own special director’s handwriting. The plays staged by him on national classics and modern dramaturgy were received by the audience with great delight and were highly appreciated by the theatre specialists.

The artistic value of the play “Kulager” was appreciated at the Republican Festival of Drama Theatres held in the city of Karaganda in 2021, where the play was awarded the Grand Prix (the main prize of the festival). The play was shown at the Forum-Festival of Young Theatre Workers of the CIS, Baltic States and Georgia, which was held in Tashkent (Republic of Uzbekistan), became a diploma winner and received a ticket to the International Chekhov Theatre Festival in Moscow. Many leading theatre critics from different countries, including theatre critics from Kazakhstan, highly appreciated the national colour and ethnic identity of the production.

The play «Egil, egil, egil!» (directed by Alexei Oorzhak) is one of those plays that presents a symbolic image of national identity. Alexei Oorzhak is the director of the Victor Kok-Ool National Musical Drama Theatre of the Republic of Tuva. People’s Artist of the Republic of Tuva A. Oorzhak is a talented artist who has created more than 40 productions on stage, made a great contribution to the development of professional Tuvan theatre and presented it to audiences far and near abroad. Many of his productions won prizes at international theatre festivals. A special place in A. Oorzhak’s creative work is occupied by the play «Egil, Ezhim,

Egil!» staged back in 1998. In 2005, according to the reviews of theatre critics, this stage work was named «The best performance at the X International Festival «Belaya Vezha», held in Brest (Republic of Belarus), where theatre groups from all over the world participated.

The Tuvan production “Egil, ezhim, egil!” is based on the poem “Igil yyzy” (“Igil’s Lament”) by A.A. Darzhai (Section “Igil dugaiyinda toolchurгу chugaa” (“Legend of Igil”). The dramatisation was written in co-authorship of A. Oorzhak and actor Kh. Shirin-ool. The images of folklore in the philosophical and poetic dramatisation, which arouse universal interest, convey the eternal themes of the price of loyalty and betrayal, the struggle between life and death.

The poem concentrates a lot of folklore images. Folklore motifs and elements in the plot of the work give it a folk flavor. Researchers of Tuvan folklore note that, as a rule, the narrators name the hero and the whole work (Tuvan Folk Tales, 1994: 19). In the fairy-tale epic folklore of Tuvinians the name of the protagonist is inseparable from the name of his horse. For example, Khoven-Bora a’ttyg Khoven-Tazhy – Khoven-Tazhy with his horse Khoven-Bora. The title of the play “Egil egil, egil!” encapsulates the main character’s appeal to his friend – “Come back my friend, come back!”. As for the word “egil” itself, there are two variants of its translation. The first, if literally, means “two strings”. The second meaning of the word is “come back”. In the production, the director and scriptwriter presented a synthesis of the two legends of the origin of this word (CA website #5).

According to the Tuvan scholar Valentina Suzukey, this performance is considered “one of the masterpieces in the repertoire of the Tuvan theatre” (Valentina Suzukey, Tuva Asia website). It should be noted the unique atmosphere in the performance, reflecting the national spirit and identity of Tuvinians.

In these two performances of Turkic peoples, national identity is clearly conveyed through the stage image of the “horse”, so it was very interesting for the authors of the article to consider and analyze the problem of cultural identity from this very angle.

## Discussion

In Kazakh and Tuvan culture, the horse has for many centuries occupied a pivotal role in cultural and economic activities. It was impossible to imagine the daily cultural life of Turkic nomads without the horse, as many traditional, ritual and ritual-cult

aspects of their daily life are connected with the horse. For a Turkic nomad the horse was a provider, a faithful friend, a fighting comrade and a wise counsellor. The image of a horse has always been an indicator of beauty, loyalty, solidarity and wisdom. Kazakhs and Tuvinians during their nomadic life in extreme conditions learnt to recognize the qualities of this animal. Taking into account the horse's instinct, natural caution, ability to recognize danger, Turkic nomads gave the horse sometimes ambivalent characteristics: a cautious animal and a cruel killer, because the animal could react very quickly to any reaction from the outside, very quickly "read" the information coming from an unfamiliar person, unfamiliar environment. Kazakhs and Tuvinians spent their life on a horse throughout the day: they rode a horse during the day, slept on a horse during warfare or nomadic movements, so they paid attention to the peculiarities of the horse's behavior, learned from it: to trust their intuition, subtle instinct, to be cautious in an unfamiliar environment.

Thus, in Kazakh and Tuvan culture, "At" (Horse) is considered to be the totem of ancestors – a sacred animal and therefore it is a symbol of the higher world, the world of wisdom, the world of ancestors. This image is well reflected in the folklore of these peoples. In fairy tales-legends and poems one can read most of the descriptions connected with horses. Therefore, the image of the "talking" At (horse), which always gives sound and wise advice to its master was deeply honored in the folk worldview.

The image of the horse is presented in all rites of Kazakh and Tuvan peoples: maternity, wedding, funeral and other important customs of Turkic peoples, and also simultaneously characterizes their way of life, in which "At" (horse) occupies a significant place. The image of the horse is represented in the rich heritage of these peoples, in particular in epic-romantic poems of outstanding folk poets.

## Results

***"The horse as a symbol of freedom and independence in the Tuvan performance "Egil, egim, egil!"***

The play "Egil, Egil, Egil!" reflects the features of national culture. The plot of the play "Egil egil, egil" is the motif of friendship between a foal and a shepherd. In the philosophical and poetic play, the images of folklore, which are of universal interest, convey the eternal themes of the price of loyalty and betrayal. The legend tells of a boy named Bala who saved a foal from death, which the cruel Khan

was trying to kill. The foal (Syldys-Shokar) and the boy become faithful friends. The foal becomes a sturdy "saiguluk" horse. He wins all the races and overtakes all the khan's horses. The envious Khan orders Saiguluk to be killed. The Khan's servants get Bala drunk and he betrays his friend Syldys-Shokar. The horse dies. The spirit of the horse appears to the boy in a dream, and tells him to find his skull and hang it on a tree, and make a musical instrument from it, and from horsehair – strings. This is how the Tyva musical instrument, the "igil", came into being.

For the authors of the dramatization, the main center and the cause-and-effect basis of everything that happens is the foal, and then the matured and strengthened horse Syldys-Shokar. He is the Absolute to which Bala's soul aspires and the shepherd-boy himself needs him. Having lost his friend, he loses the harmony of the world and loses the meaning of existence. The authors of the dramatization put the main value-orienting meanings of Tuvan culture into the actions of each of the characters towards Syldys-Shokar.

The character of the stallion Syldys-Shokar is a kind of a tuning fork of moral and ethical values of Tuvan traditional culture. The horse is a certain symbol, a symbol of strength and endurance. It is a native animal for Tuvinians. When a Tuvinian sits on a horse, rides, flies on it, they become one (Tuva Asia). Thus, the horse in the Tuvan performance is interpreted as a symbol of strength and endurance. Also, "Egil, ezhime..." tells about the birth of the folk instrument "igil", here the divinity of the horse and its sacredness are brought to the fore. The mare Shilgi Bae, the mother of the foal, appears at the very beginning of the performance, and this is not accidental.

This character refers us to the cosmogonic image of Cher Iya, the Mother of the Earth. The Earth gives birth, the Earth is the beginning of all beginnings. And it is with this image that the play about the protagonist begins. The mare dies and she dies sacrificing herself to save the life of her child, she has fulfilled her important destiny. According to the traditional Tuvinian worldview, the world has three parts, according to which the Middle World Ortaa Oran is Mother Earth; the Upper World is Ustuu Oran Father Sky and the Underworld is the Lower World Erlik Oran. If Mother Earth gives birth, then Father Sky patronizes and grants, bestows a special status, makes one chosen. And only the strong in spirit and courageous can become the chosen one of Heaven. The idea that Cher Iye Mother Earth and Father Sky will patronize and protect the hero

as their sons at the necessary, critical moment, the authors show in the course of the storyline clearly and distinctly.

Bala is a key character whose actions will measure the full extent of his guilt, thus warning that such misconceptions can haunt and cloud the thinking of every member of the community. From the position of cultural meanings, it is shown how the one who has acted “as he should not have done” will be eternally punished as an admonishment to the others. In this regard, the Tuvan proverb *søglæn søs, kertken yyash*, which translates as ‘the spoken word is a tree with a nick’ refers to the irretrievability of the deed committed, the impossibility of replaying, correcting and surviving. By putting Bala to the test, the authors have tried to show how he gradually loses the appearance of a human being, becoming more and more like a jackal and a raven – the servants of Shydaar Bai. This is the main function of Bala’s character – to show what awaits a man who has lost his appearance.

Thus, for the authors of the play, the main center and causal basis of everything that happens is the foal, and then the matured and strengthened horse Syldys-Shokar. He is the Absolute to whom Bala’s soul aspires and in whom the whole essence of the shepherd needs. Having lost his friend, he is deprived of the harmony of the world and loses the meaning of existence. The authors of the play put the main value-orienting meanings of Tuvan culture into the actions of each of the characters towards Syldys-Shokar. And in this case, the character of Syldys-Shokar as a central and key character performs the function of an “orienting construct” (Val.A. Lukov, V.A. Lukov, 2008: 166). The character of the foal Syldys-Shokar is a peculiar chamberlain of moral and ethical values of Tuvan traditional culture.

In A.Oorzhak’s production the stage space is actively working. It is an area free of material details. Thanks to this, the spectator can easily move from the khan’s chambers to the vast Tuvan valley. And the director activates and directs the viewer’s imagination by saturating the production with a system of recognizable images and rituals. All functional and plastic possibilities of the scenography are involved in the action, including metaphorical ones.

The play “Egil, ezhim, egil!” (“Come back, my friend, come back!”) by a Tuvan director. (“Come back, my friend, come back!”), staged at the end of the 20th century in the Tuva National Musical Drama Theatre named after V. Kok-ool, became a continuation of the traditional line of affirming the immutable values of Tuvan culture. V. Kok-

ool’s play was a continuation of the traditional line of affirming the immutable values of Tuvan culture. Thus, the image of the horse Syldys Shokar, demonstrated the eternal story of friendship and betrayal, which was brilliantly staged by the director of the performance Alexei Oorzhak. Thus, with the central image of the horse Syldys Shokar worked as an “orientating construction” in the socio-cultural society.

The play “Egil, egil, egil!” by the Tuvan theatre is an example of an unusually careful attitude of small ethnic groups to their cultural heritage and to the problem of its further development in modern professional art. The image of the “horse” symbolises the revival of the national spirit of the Tuvan people and their hopes for the future.

#### ***“Horse” as a symbolic image of Kazakh cultural identity***

The production “Kulager” also presents the image of a horse, and the script of the performance itself is based on the poem of the same name by the Kazakh poet Ilyas Zhansugurov, who became a victim of Stalin’s repression in the 1930s. The poem “Kulager” tells the story of the legendary Kazakh poet, sulfur, composer- singer Akan Koramsaula, who lived in the second half of the XIX century. For his noble heart, courage and mad love for horses Akan Koramsaula received the nickname “seri”, which means “knight”. Akan-seri’s songs “Kulager” and “Horse Manmanger” dedicated to Kulager became so loved by the Kazakh people that they began to be perceived as folk songs. The fame of the singer Akan-seri rivalled the fame of his horse Kulager. This horse belonged to the Argymak breed, which harmoniously merged the speed of Arabian pacers with the endurance of Kazakh horses. There were no races where Kulager would not come first. This horse was recognised by its graceful head on a long neck, about which Akan-Seri himself said that it looked like an oil head of a wind-bent reed (Kotlyarova, 2012).

In the play “Kulager” we are shown about 10 different horses. However, the main idea of the director was to show two horse-heroes: the image of Kulager and his antipode Koktuigyn. The images of Kulager and Koktuigyn do not resemble each other. If the image of Koktuigyn is characterised by nobility, grace, aristocratic, then in contrast, the image of the horse Kulager is endowed with such qualities as perseverance, courage, inner beauty. Despite the fact that he is not of such a noble breed as Koktuigyn, Kulager is a real argymak, absorbing the fertile soil of the Kazakh land.

For Akan, the horse Kulager is not only the closest, most dear friend and companion, Kulager is his home, he is the only reliable being on whom Akan can rely in the most difficult moments of his life. Akan trusts Kulager with himself, with the lives of his nearest and dearest in the difficult nomadic life. The horse helps Akan to preserve not only his life, he personifies his ethnic and cultural identity, the originality of Kazakh life.

Argymak (horse) is a horse of noble blood. Kazakhs highly valued Argymaks (horse), considering them intelligent, endowed with a bright and unique personality. Such horses are loyal to their master, they always share the most difficult moments in life with him, always accompanying him both in heat and in cold, warming his soul. Independent and burrowing, endowed with an indomitable will to win and giving his best, he will never lose his way and will give his best to the end, such an Argymak (horse) always symbolises the most genuine and noble. All his best qualities influence the crowd around him, this is his attractive power. He personifies the spirit of the people, his endurance, his invincibility and that is why Batyrash, having seen him for the first time accompanied by Akan, planned to kill this noble animal, not only to give a fatal blow to Akan, to show his power over him, over those who are dependent on him...

Thus, “Kulager” and “Kulager” are staged works based on the legends or history of the distant past of an ethnic people. And this gives the directors an opportunity to revive archaic and deep moral and spiritual principles of culture through folklore motifs. The mythopoetic basis contributes to the enrichment of the figurative system of the theatre language.

Thus, analyzing the image of the “horse” in the play “Kulager”, we see that nowadays it has not lost its spiritual value, meaning and significance. Masterfully using stage metaphors the director has revealed the ethno-cultural meaning of the image of the “horse”. He shows the image of the horse as a symbol of spiritual freedom, liberation of the nation, and through the image of Kulager the director tells about the hard and bitter fate of the Alashordyn people who became victims of cultural expansion, who stood up for the integrity of Kazakh lands, for the sovereignty of the Kazakh state. This image symbolises the level of civil maturity of Kazakh society (Zhusupbekova, 2017). The play “Kulager” was able to convey the ethnic identity of the people, reflecting their everyday life, socio-psychological well-being, cultural-spiritual and emotional state. The image of the

“horse” is presented in the theatre production as a symbol of spiritual freedom and liberation of the nation. In this performance, the image of the horse is a patriotic spirit, humanistic faith in man, a realistic portrayal of the tragic fate of the nation, praising justice. The play “Kulager” is a work that proves the new searches of modern Kazakh theatre, reflecting the national outlook, deep history and spiritual world of the ethnic people.

The common origins of the music of the Turkic peoples are well reflected in these productions. Both directors managed to make music a powerful means of conveying national identity. Director A.Oorzhak in “Egil, ezhim...” uses folk songs and the powerful vibration of throat singing, the beat of drums, hoof stomping, etc. for the musical design of the performance. The entire sound score of the production becomes an important artistic means of creating the necessary emotional background in harmony with the content of the work. The music enhances the expressive-sensual and semantic side of the tragedy.

Director F.Moldagaliev decides the performance in the genre of “soundrama”. The word “soundrama”, as it is known, comes from the combination of the words “sound” and “drama”. Therefore, the musical score in the performance has a crucial role. The main leitmotif in “Kulager” is the song “Manmanger” by Akan Seri (vocalist – Yerden Zhaksybekov). The musical accompaniment of the performance is performed by the ethno-modern-jazz ensemble “STEPPE SONS” (“Son of the Steppe”). Live music mesmerizes the audience. The music performed by the ensemble conveys not only the atmosphere of the performance, but also the tragic and mournful subtext of the story. The production makes extensive use of ancient Kazakh instruments: dombyra, sybyzgy, kylkobyz, shankobyz, tuyaktas, dangira and others. The peculiar sounds of these instruments reveal the national basis and nature of the performance. In the episode, when the horse dies, the song-joktau (song- crying) “Kulager”, performed by Akan-Seri (actor Yedyl Ramazanov) to the music of dombyra strongly affects the emotions of the viewer, touching to the depths of the soul. The mournful song-joktau over the dead Kulager is the culmination of the work. The actor’s mastery of the art of singing reaches its peak here and evokes a gamut of emotions from sadness to tenderness and compassion. Akhan-Yedyl Ramazanov mourns the horse as a close person, a friend. A piercing and pinching song – joktau – shocks everyone. Thus, the music in these two productions carries a great artistic load and reveals a particularly national

character and national colour, as well as the cultural phenomenon of these ethnic groups.

In the productions we meet similar characters common in the folklore of Turkic peoples. For example, the image of Bai Batyrash in “Kulager” and the cruel khan in “Egil, ezhim...”. Batyrash, who has been replaced in the whole district by a bi (a revered man in the steppe, a people’s counsellor), is played by actor R. Omarov. Batyrash is full of arrogance, self-sufficiency and pride. The image of Batyrash is presented as a greedy, rude and evil man. This interpretation of the image reminds us of the folklore traditions of depicting power-holders.

The main villain and negative character in the play “Egil, ezhim...” – Shydaar-Bai, the all-powerful ruler of the steppe. The image of Shydaar-bai portrays the Khan as rude, proud and arrogant. Shydaar-bai maintains his dominance by scaring and threatening people. Shydaar-bai is neither clever nor distant, he believes only in the power of his hands and money....

These plays present the idea that man has the power to create and, unfortunately, to destroy. The destroyers are human envy, cruelty and ignorance. Criminals like Batyrash and Shydaar-Bai, who transgressed the moral law, are doomed to oblivion and eternal shame, they were stigmatized by Akhan-seri and Bala in their immortal works.

These national theatres broadcast a complex symbolic language, reproducing the deep

archetypes and meanings of traditional culture. One of the key constructs widely used by Kazakh and Tuvan theatre artists is the image of a “horse”, which translates a number of meanings: a horse as a symbol of spiritual wealth, a horse as a guide, as a symbol of the sun, as well as a faithful friend and companion. The image of the “horse” shows the temporal connection between the different generations of these peoples, allows to present cultural interrelations, interactions and communications rooted in the legends and myths of their distant ancestors.

### Conclusion

At present, society finds in the productions of national theatre artists answers to the events in the changing world. Through their work, national Tuvan and Kazakh theatres create and transmit culturally significant meanings, present the worldview and spiritual, moral and aesthetic values of the people, reproduce their traditional culture, their spiritual quests and expectations. National theatre artists, being carriers and representatives of ethnic culture, create various cultural and spiritual images, reproducing the historically passed path and destinies of the Tuvan and Kazakh peoples, in close connection with the nomadic way of life, with mythology, folklore, legends, tales, with their philosophy.

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