

KAZAK MİTOLOJİSİNDE ATIN BETİMLENMESİ

THE DEPICTION OF THE HORSE IN KAZAKH MYTHOLOGY

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ÖZET

Bu makalede at ile ilgili bazı mitolojik meseleler ele alınmıştır. Araştırmada sadece Kazak halkı ile ilgili değil, aynı zamanda Türk dünyasından da çeşitli örnekler verilmiş ve onların üzerinde durulmuştur. Kazak halkı için atın önemi, insanın hayatı ve günlük yaşamındaki yeri, özellikleri, mitoloji ve at gibi konulardaki çeşitli sorulara cevap bulunmaya çalışılmıştır.

Kazaklar "At yiğidin kanadıdır" derler ki, bu sözün temelinde derin bir mitolojik anlam vardır. Yani at uçan bir hayvan olarak görülmektedir ve bu sadece mitik dünyada karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İşte, bunun gibi sözler, efsaneler ve hikâyeler sadece psikolojik, felsefi ve edebî açıdan ele alınmakla kalmamış, bunu ressamlar ve sanatçılar kâğıt üzerinde, tuvalde, heykel ve benzeri alanlarda da işlemişlerdir. Makalede bunların nasıl yapıldığı, hangi stilin kullanıldığı ve ortaya çıkan sanat eserinin sanatı ve insanları nasıl etkilediği, ne gibi bir değişim getirdiği ile ilgili araştırmalar yapılmıştır. Kazak ressamların eserleri dikkate alınarak diğer halkların ressamları tarafından yapılmış çalışmalar tahlil edilmiş, yorumlanmıştır. Araştırmaya konu olan at ecdatlarımızla birlikte tarih boyunca var olmuş ve at tipi atalarımızın tarihinin önemli bir bölümünde çok yönlü ve karmaşık bir yapıya sahip olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: sanat, at, mit, resim, Kazak mitolojisi

ABSTRACT

In this article, some mythological issues about the horse are discussed. In the study, not only the Kazakh people but also various examples from the Turkish world were given and they were emphasized. It has been tried to find answers to various questions about the importance of horses for Kazakh people, their place in human life and daily life, their characteristics, mythology, and horse.

Kazakh peoples say "A horse is the wing of the brave", there is a deep mythological meaning behind this saying. In other words, the horse is seen as a flying animal, and it only appears in the mythical world.

Here, such sayings, legends, and stories have not only been handled from a psychological, philosophical, and literary point of view but also painters and artists have worked on paper, canvas, sculpture, and similar fields. In the article, research has been done on how these are done, what style is used, how the resulting artwork affects art and people, what kind of change it brings. Considering the works of Kazakh painters, the works made by the painters of other peoples were analyzed and interpreted. The horse, which is the subject of the research, has existed throughout history with our ancestors and has had a versatile and complex structure is an important part of the history of our ancestors.

Keywords: art, horse, myth, painting, Kazakh mythology

1. INTRODUCTION

The horse is an animal that has an important place in the life of the proto Kazakhs, their spiritual perception and worldview. Many words have been said about horses, thousands of poems have been written, and scientific works have been produced. However, there are not many studies and studies on the branches of art. Therefore, there is no need to say the place of the horse in the life, history, culture, and traditions of the Kazakhs and new expressions, new similes, new metaphors about it. What we need is to examine the art and folklore materials of Kazakhs and their relatives, the Turkish peoples, the history and archeology of the Eurasian steppe, and to benefit from the known works of branches such as painting, sculpture, and ornamental arts that we consider important, and the information about the horse in today's mythology and to create a system of view and understanding about the "horse in mythology" or "horse cult" today.

One of the issues of scientific issues related to horse mythology, and most importantly, is the dogma that the horse cult was created by Indo-European tribes. According to this view, it is Indo-European tribes who tame the horse and create the mythical system related to the horse, and an understanding emerges that nomadic peoples such as Turks and Mongols only follow and imitate them.

Kazakh scientists have also expressed such a view. For example, Alisher Akishev repeats the memorized views about the horse in mythology in his work titled "The Art of the Saka and Mythology", that is, the author says: "The horse had an important place in agricultural pursuits in the value system of Indo-European tribes. Here, the horse was first tamed and the peoples who started to use it have largely accepted many names, equine terms, and myths about this animal" (Akishev, 1984, p. 31).

There is also material on horse-related beliefs, traditions, and their mystical aspects. It is possible to classify the mystical behaviors on this subject as follows, based on Ahmet Toktabay'in book "The Traditions and Beliefs of the Kazakhs, the King of the Animals, the Horse":

1. The horse meets in rituals to facilitate the birth of the woman.
2. He meets in the rituals of treating horses.
3. The child meets at the swaddle ceremony (do not put the child in the swaddle under the stirrup; they also put dogs of breeds such as noble hounds and purebred dog under the stirrups).
4. The footprint of a breed horse's hoof is perceived as an "angel's footprint", and the soil with the footprint of the hoof is used as a treatment element in folk medicine. The hoof mark on the stone is also "worshipped" (Toktabay, 2010).

The Kazakhs defined the horse quite richly according to its type and color. The colors of the horses ridden by the heroes and their rivals in archaic tales and epics are varied, and the colors of the horses they ride often turn into their names. It is possible to see that the colors of horses in some texts are not a coincidence, but that the color of the horse has a mythical meaning. Researcher Ahmet Toktabay's work titled "The History of the Kazakh Horse" states:

For example, when the materials collected during the ethnographic trips are examined, it is revealed that the Kazakhs like the "black sky" (dark blue) colored horse more. In general, the Kazakhs were able to distinguish and understand what kind of animal it was by looking at the color of the horse.

It is known that the color of the horse is associated with four directions in the ancient Hun tradition. So, according to this understanding, the semantic list is as follows:

Sky (or gray) horse – east – spring – dawn (morning)

Redhorse - south - summer - noon

White (grey) horse – west – autumn – evening

Black horse - north - winter - midnight

Horse mythology is one of the important spiritual layers of our national identity, just like animal mythologies. The most important aim of this study is to determine the place and importance of the horse in the spiritual life and mythology of the Kazakhs and to show it through art.

2. THE IMAGE OF HORSES IN ROCK PAINTINGS AND PETROGLYPHS

In order not to immediately start with the mythologies of the origin of the horse, first we will go through the history of the image of the horse. The image of a horse was used by ancient people many thousands of years ago, even before the time when the horse was domesticated and tamed by man.

The mystery and pearl of the Khakass petroglyphs is the White Horse rock painting, located on the Black Mountain, next to the Chests ridge. The ancestors saw the renewed Time in the image of this Horse. The "White Horse" is a symbolic animal of the most ancient sanctuary in Asia (Skarlukhina, 2015).



Visual 1. Rock painting "White Horse", Black Mountain, Khakassia, from 17 to 30 thousand years (Ice Age).

Resource: <https://bit.ly/3q9nHrv>

Many images of horses can be found in the Lascaux (or Lascaux) cave, located in France, in the Perigord region. It is considered a great cultural monument of the late 15th century. The rock paintings of the Lascaux cave belong to the Solutrean archaeological culture, their age is 18-15 thousand years BC. This is the very first drawing of horses. It is located in the very center of the rock, here it is drawn as if a herd of horses is running from something and strive to achieve one goal. There is one large yellow horse in the center. Our ancestors depicted horses with unusual shapes as if these animals were from another world.



Visual 2. Reproduction of Lascaux artwork in Lascaux II

Resource: <https://bit.ly/3zOTfxE>

Now let's move on to our origins. In the vastness of our country, in the Tamgaly tract, Zheltau, the Karatau gorges, and in other environs, there is a huge museum. We are talking about a unique collection of ancient images on rocks - petroglyphs, or writings. These are monuments of ancient art. Some date back to the Upper Paleolithic era, while others date back to the Bronze or Early Iron Age.

Typically, these are stone surfaces covered with dozens, if not hundreds, of carved or painted images. Even an untrained eye can easily distinguish figures of people, animals, birds, dwellings, hunting scenes, or battles. But some of the images no longer have analogs in our time: figures of fantastic creatures, giants, fly agaric people, incomprehensible signs and symbols (Golovanov, 2021). However, it was not by chance that they appeared on the pages of a giant stone book. Art is always a message: for contemporaries, it is an encrypted picture of the world, for posterity, it is a whole encyclopedia of mythical legends about which we no longer have a clear idea. What do the ancient images say? What myths are trying to tell us?

Rock carvings, or petroglyphs, are unique "letters" from our ancestors about how they lived and hunted, whom they worshiped. A rich variety of these drawings has been preserved in Kazakhstan. Petroglyphs are ancient rock carvings on stone. Their age is different - from the Paleolithic to the Middle Ages. Often, the drawings depict primitive forms of animals, people, tools. They symbolize the everyday life of ancient people - hunting, religious rituals and ceremonies, and even the mythical thinking of that time.

The horse, domesticated in the Eneolithic, already in the Bronze Age, as its potential grows in the system of the economic life of the peoples of steppe Eurasia, becomes one of the key objects of cult veneration and, as a result, its image is intensively developed in a multifaceted visual activity - in small plastic, in the rock art, toreutics, in mobile statuary monuments, etc. Therefore, it is natural to allow the formation of artistic traditions, styles, etc., in different regions of a delineated territory, enriched with some local specific elements that do not obscure the formed image of a particular cultural phenomenon and without violating the general outline, at the same time give it a special flavor. This is, to a certain extent, a natural process in the emergence and development of various pictorial styles, traditions, or even mythological stories from the side of stories, philosophies, art.

For example, as "Minusinsk or Angarsk", "Saimalytas-Tamgaly tradition", etc., and is fully applicable to characterize and determine the specifics of the formation of the iconographic, mythical appearance of the horse in the pictorial monuments of various periods of the Bronze Age.

A whole layer of unique images of horses (and other images and plots) in petroglyphs, small sculptures, etc., made in the "Seima-Turbino traditions" and having a stable iconographic appearance that is easily recognizable in many regions, was distinguished at one time based on stylistic identification with figures on the tops of knives and daggers, as well as sculptural tops of stone wands from East Kazakhstan and neighboring regions (Samashev, 2009).



Visual 3. Tamgaly tract. A man on a horse (unicorn).

Resource: <https://bit.ly/3xymfRJ>



Visual 4. Chariots of the Karatau petroglyphs 2nd millennium BC e.

Resource: <https://bit.ly/3wUuM1m>

Of particular value are about 50 images of military chariots and cargo carts found in the last decade of the twentieth century. Among the Karatau rock carvings, they are considered especially valuable. Similar images are found in Zhetysu - in the areas of Tanbaly, Eshkolmes, and others. They are executed in the same manner, moreover, draft animals - horses or camels - are rarely depicted (Ayagan, 2005).

These Petroglyph compositions form a coherent artistic narrative that reveals all the details of the ancient mythology of the tribes that lived here in the Bronze Age. Many of these drawings are unique and are found only in this place in Central Asia. The second feature of petroglyphs is their strict, definite sequence. Artists of antiquity embodied their art according to a strict system and only in a certain exhibition.

Many petroglyphs have been restored. Some of them were assembled piece by piece and re-glued, some of them removed traces of vandalism. Some of the most famous drawings are images of "sun-headed" people. Hunting scenes are also common among petroglyphs. The need for art has been developed in people since ancient times, which is reminiscent of numerous dance scenes.

In addition to the images of animals that lived here, such as a spotted bull and a deer, you can also find drawings of mythical animals, for example, unicorns. A famous drawing is called "Philosopher" or "Sage". Petroglyphs of later centuries are supplemented with inscriptions made in ancient Türkic runes.

On some rocks, you can see, on one side, rock carvings of the Bronze Age, on the other - inscriptions made by the participants of the first Buddhist missions in Kazakhstan (Volkov, 2019).

3. THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE HORSE IN THE PAINTING.

The horse occupies a special place in the life of the Kazakh peoples. They say about a horse: "There is no equal to it on earth." She has an amazing memory, amazing intellect, unusually sensitive hearing, a developed sense of touch, and in terms of the subtlety of smell, a horse can compete with a dog. The combination of these amazing properties, as well as the perfection of the forms, made the horse mysterious and at the same time attractive.

The horse symbolism is extremely complex and not completely clear. The horse symbolizes intelligence, wisdom, nobility, light, dynamic strength, agility, quickness of thought, the running of time. It is a typical symbol of fertility, courage, and powerful power. Also, this image is an ancient symbol of the cyclical development of the world of phenomena (horses, carrying Neptune with a trident from the depths of the sea, embody the cosmic forces of primitive chaos). For example, in the works of Jandarbek Malibekov and Shota Aman Valikhanov, in the compositional work "Coat of arms of Kazakhstan", the main emphasis is on mythical horses. Research on this work is large and varied.

In 2008, Danish historian, anthropologist Ildikó BELLÉR-HANN presented the book "The past as a resource in the Turkic speaking world" to the readers as a result of his editorial work. In this book, the works of many academics who research the Turkish world are published as a part of the book. Art critic, researcher Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Aydingün records some information about Kazakh mythology in her work titled "State Symbols and National Identity Construction in Kazakhstan" explains that the Kazakh people attach importance to their symbolic values (Baigutov, 2020, p. 51).



Visual 5. Jandarbek Malibekov and Shota Aman Valikhanov.
«Kazakhstan coat of arms». June 4, 1992.

Resource: <https://bit.ly/2SUa2ou>

The coat of arms depicts Tulpar - a mythical horse with wings. The same horses adorn the helmet of the Issyk Golden Man. The wings symbolize the dream of building a strong, prosperous state. They also testify to pure thoughts and striving for improvement and achieving harmony in society, with nature and world civilization. The state emblem of the republic depicts two mythical horses, and they seem to protect the shanyrak from both sides. They also vividly express the idea of serving the common home - the Motherland. Protecting the Motherland as the apple of an eye and faithfully serving it is one of the important leitmotifs embedded in the images of mythical horses (2014).

On the State Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in addition to the main elements associated with the history and traditions of the people, pegasus is marked. What relation do the winged horses of statehood have, what is their message? From the description of the State Symbol, it is said that winged mythical horses - tulpars, are a key heraldic element. From time immemorial, the image of a horse has embodied such concepts as courage, loyalty, and strength. The wings symbolize the centuries-old dream of the multinational people of Kazakhstan to build a strong and prosperous state. They testify to pure thoughts and a desire for consistent improvement and creative development. Golden wings of horses also resemble golden ears and personify the industriousness of Kazakhstanis and the material well-being of the country (Kemelbekova, 2017).

In ancient Greek mythology, there is a vivid character - pegasus. Since the horse was born at the headwaters of the Ocean, it was named Pegasus (Greek "stormy current"). He flew with the speed of the wind. According to legend, he had a stall in Corinth; lived in the mountains, spending more time on Parnassus in Phocis and Helikon in Boeotia. Pegasus is actively involved in the plots of ancient Greek mythology. About flying horses (Pegasus), the artist Aibek Begalin wrote his personal work of art. And everything is connected with the origins of the Kazakh people (Visual 6).

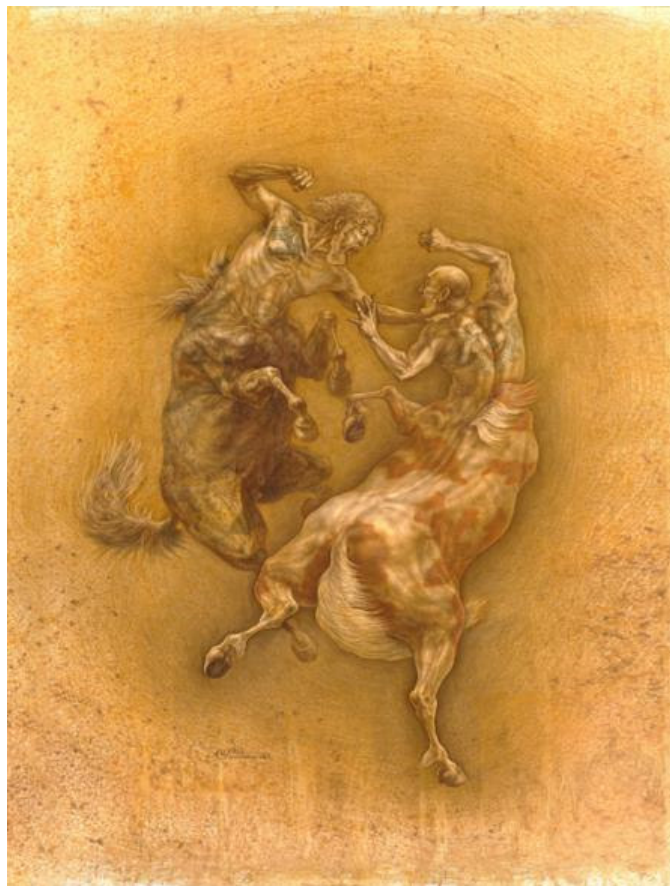


Visual 6. Aibek Begalin. "NOMADS". 180 x 120 cm, oil on canvas, 1998-2003.

Resource: <https://bit.ly/2S9wUmU>

For the Kazakh people, winged horses have a sacred meaning. It is believed that the horse is a true friend of a person in this world, and the horse also accompanies him after death, in heaven. The Kazakh people led a nomadic lifestyle. For a strong-willed, nomad, warrior, a horse is an obligatory attribute. Therefore, many tales, epics, proverbs, and sayings are associated with the horse. Creative work under the name "nomads" is associated with the golden man. Associated with the ancestors of the Kazakh people.

In Saka mythology, fast horses have a connection with the sun and fire. According to the "Avesta-Vesta", the sky god Mitra, who created the world, ran four horses to the chariot. Horses have something to do with gods such as Surya, Yama, Agni, and Indira. Winged tulpar depictions on the prince's helmet found in the Esik kurgan – a chariot made of the sun. The depiction of winged tulpar in the form of the sun is also present in the folklore of other nations. In the Greeks, the winged horses pull the chariot of the god Apollon towards the sun.



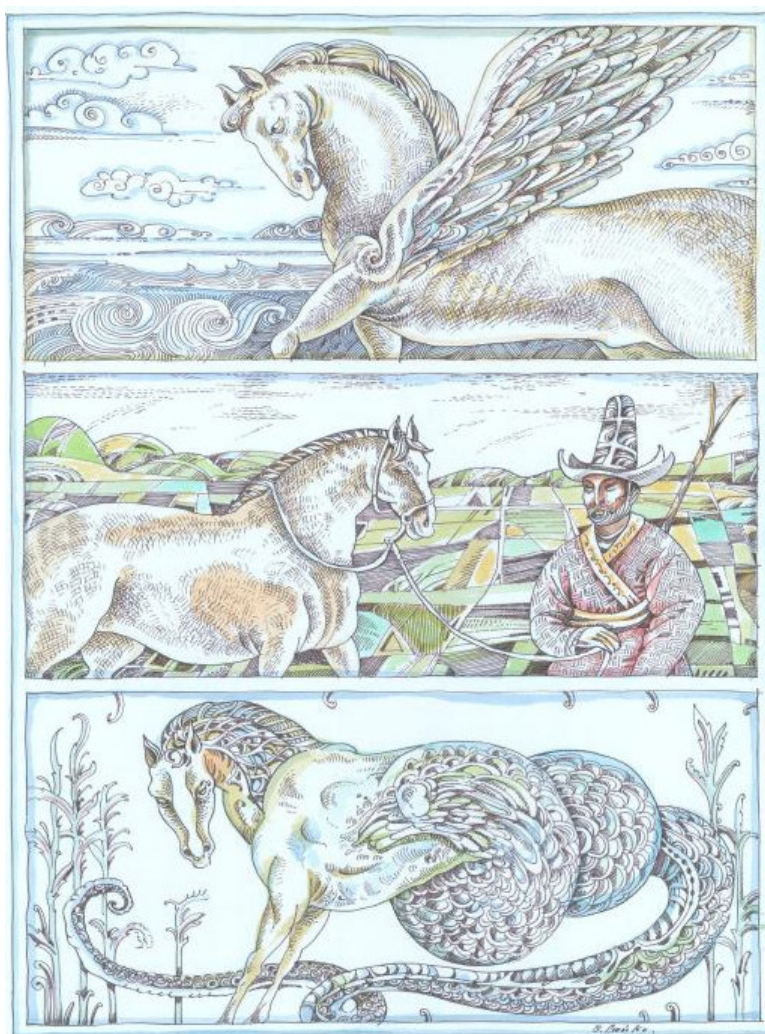
Visual 7. Nurlan Bazhirov. "The War of the Horsemen". Mixed technique. 2012.

Resource: <https://bit.ly/2ZcrFUN>

In Nurlan Bajirov's artistic work "The Battle of the Horsemen", the struggle of two horsemen is depicted (Visual 7). The painter has very skillfully depicted a dynamic movement, the speed of the moment of movement of objects in his works of art. The characters in his works are taken from the heroic epics of the Kazakh. Most of his paintings are about heroes' struggles, wars, traditional games, and hunting. The painter combines the physical and spiritual strength in one spot and wonderfully depicts the appearance of the bodies of humans and animals during movement and war. All of Nurlan Bajirov's paintings consist of shades of yellow.

When we look at the source and historical origin of the two paintings we mentioned, first of all, it is necessary to focus on the horsemen. The centaur is a half-human, half-horse mythological character described in Ancient Greek legends. They are the friends of Dionysus, son of Zeus. According to one of the myths, the centaurs first lived in the highlands of Thessaly. Some researchers argue that the origin of the "horseman" type is not Ancient Greek mythology. They associate this with the Saka's Asia Minor expeditions. The ancient Greeks believed that the Saka soldiers, who did not get off the horse all day long, were created together with the horse and told various legends about them (Ashimbayev, Sayrov, 2007, p. 615).

The views that the horsemen who met in Kazakh mythology lived in this world are also present in the works of the Ancient Greek historian Herodotus, known as the "ancestor of history". There have been mystical narratives about the Sakas, or "horsemen," among the Greeks living at the same time as the Sakas. These narratives not only portray the life of the Ancient Turks but also explain the world-famous animal style of the Turks.



Visual 8. Vyacheslav Lyuy-Ko. "Myths of Ancient Kazakhstan". "Myth about Pegasus".
Paper, ink, charcoal, watercolor. 36x26 cm. 2005
Resource: <https://bit.ly/3cV3ekF>

There are also creatures living in the water in Kazakh fairy tales: sea, river, or lake horses. They also represent the Lower World. If the horses living in the Upper World have the properties of birds, then the horses of the Lower World must have the properties of underground inhabitants. They have serpentine bodies or tails. In three mysterious worlds, we meet different horses: in the Upper world it is a winged tulpar, in the Middle, it is a steppe horse that is familiar to us, in the Lower world it is a horse of the underworld, half of whose body is serpentine. And in each of these worlds, the horse is man's friend and helper. For example, in the work of Vyacheslav Lyuy-Ko, all three mythological worlds in which horses live are shown. At the very bottom, a horse with a fish or snake's tail is drawing. When you look at this work, you feel the unusual format of horses transferred from the artist's works. Hippocampus - in Greek mythology, a sea horse with a fish tail. Among the mythological concepts revealed in the above myths, there is a particularly significant fact that water horses lived in the Caspian Sea. The study of this particular topic touches upon many archival works associated with the myth. But first, it is necessary to study the connection at the genetic level of the mythology of the horse (horse) and the mythology of the dragon (snake). Without resorting to allegories, let's say directly: The mythology of the horse is a system of mythological-ritual and economic concepts that emerged from the cult and mythology of the snake (dragon).

If the mythology of the horse branched off from the mythology of the snake, then the creator of the mythology of the horse must be an ethnocultural environment that originally had the cult of the snake. If the Indo-European - Indo-Iranian - Iranian environment did not adhere to the cult of the snake, then it cannot be the environment that created the mythology of the horse. This is what I consider to be my most significant argument (Naurzbaeva, 2013).

4. CONCLUSION

Since time immemorial, the horse has been a source of inspiration for people of art: sculptors and painters, writers, and poets. They sang the graceful forms of the horse, its intelligence and devotion, calm disposition, and speed. Works of art that are associated with the image of a horse show us the prevailing trends in the cultures of different countries of the world in different historical periods and eras.

The Kazakh people valued the value of horses, saying, "My origin is the Turkic world, my product is a horse." The Kazakhs included the horse in the list of seven treasures. There are many myths, legends, and paintings artworks about horses. Any Kazakh tradition is passed on through these horses. He also believed that this horse affected the birth of man.

This is a research article starting work in the field of horse mythology in art. Of course, many examples were given on the creation and explanation of the origin of the horse in the mythology and culture of the Kazakh peoples. Artists not only from Kazakhstan but also from other peoples mainly write and study the nature of the phenomenon of a horse in their own cultures. An example is given that the ancestors of the Kazakhs from the very first days were closer to the horses and studied them. Compared to other peoples, the Kazakhs have a lot of mythology about horses. And this means that our researchers in the field of culture, art can discover newer in the field of horse mythology and develop innovation.

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