

# Language and Identity in Kazakh Horse Culture\*

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## Abstract

This paper will focus on horse culture as a feature of Kazakh national identity. After the collapse of communism, the reconstruction of Kazakh national identity became relevant for all citizens independent of their ethnic background. I will argue here that one of the most important features of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage is the horse. In addition, language is one of the main features in the concept of national identity because language has a cohesive force binding together a nation in its homeland. I will also focus on the essence of horse culture from an ethnolinguistic viewpoint to reveal aspects of the Kazakh language that elucidate the culture.

## Keywords

horse culture, national identity, language, ethnolinguistics, Kazakhstan.

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## INTRODUCTION

Kazakh national identity relies on some ethnic features that played an important role in the history of the Kazakh such as common historical memories, common culture, rituals, traditions and language. As an originally nomadic people, the horse has emerged as the most significant feature of Kazakh national identity. The horse has played a central role throughout Kazakh history as provider of transportation, food, labour and companionship. That's why, generally most of the Kazakh traditions and linguistic expressions are connected with the horse. Today the horse is a symbol of Kazakh culture and prestige. Horse became Kazakh's national heritage. Alan Outram once noted that horses shift from being a quarry, to become a herded economic mainstay, a source of military power and, up to present, a symbol of Kazakh culture. It is therefore unsurprising to find that horses feature heavily in the rituals, art and cuisine of the region (Outram et al. 2011: 116).

Language is one of the main concepts of national identity, because it has a cohesive force binding together a nation in its homeland and it can reveal a nation's outlook, and world view. Whorf in one of his hypothesis had been said that the native language is strongly influences or determines the world-view he will acquire as he learns the language (Brown 1976: 128). The famous specialist in Turkic philology Mahmud Qashqari in his *Divani Lugat it-Turk* (Dictionary of Turkic Languages) researched the importance of extralinguistic factors like life style of the nation, everyday life, occupation, geographic differences etc., and also spent a lot of time for the research of national onomastics (Qashqari a.1997, b.1998). Kononov and Nigmanov (1981: 130) also wrote about this. The great work of the great poet Alisher Novaii *Suzhdeniye o dvuh yazikah* (The Judgement of Two Languages) written in 1499, is also important from the ethnolinguistic view point. He proved in his work the richness of Turkic literary languages giving examples from the life of Turkic nation (Nasimov 1981: 152).

Language is the mirror of the ethnos, as Abduali T. Kaydar noted, in order to reveal the nation's outlook and culture, we have to investigate ethnos in *language vicinity* which means ethnos and language should be taken and investigated as a whole. The Kazakh scholar Kaydar suggested investigate ethnos always with its language (1985: 18-22), because ethnos and its lan-

guage is connected with the spiritual and cultural life. Foreign scholars like Johann Gottfried von Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt<sup>1</sup>, Edward Sapir and Benjamin L. Whorf<sup>2</sup>, Roger Brown (1976: 125-153), Paul Kay and Willet Kempton (1984: 65-79) among others have also studied ethnoses together with its language.

Today, the theme of language expressions specially connected with the horse culture interested many Kazakh scholars like Toktabai (2010), Sarbassova (2010), Baitelieva (2007), Toktaqul (2005), Beisenova (1995) among others.

Kazakh scholar Toktabai (2010), who is the expert in this field, collected from national sources more than 600 terms and names, including 358 definitions of horse color with its peculiarities, and superstitions on these colors of the nation.

Guldana Sarbassova (2010) collected most of the old measuring names used by the Kazakh before the metric system were standardized. She noted that the most of the measuring names were related to horse culture and nomadic cattle breeding lifestyle of the Kazakh. This affected the way of time, distance, and weight were measured in Kazakh language.

Zhanar Baitelieva (2007) also concluded that most linguistic expressions concerned with the horse characterize the national life and culture of the Kazakh. She noted that many expressions referring to horse age and sex, breeding and natural features, body parts, coloring, illnesses, appearance, characters, movements, shelter and equipment.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

According to British ethnographer Anthony D. Smith, national identity is mainly based on historical memories, shared language, religion, culture, and a common descent. In his book *National Identity*, Smith distinguishes between Western and non-Western model for understanding national identity. Historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology; these are the components of the standard, Western model of the nation. To the non-Western model belongs the countries of the Eastern-Europe and Asia. Smith terms

this non-Western model an *ethnic* conception of the nation. Its distinguishing feature is its emphasis on a community of birth and native culture. The nation can trace its roots to an imputed common ancestry. This emphasis on presumed family ties helps to explain the strong popular or demotic element in the ethnic conception of the nation. That is why lexicographers, philologists and folklorists have played a central role in the early nationalisms of Eastern Europe and Asia. Their linguistic and ethnographic research into the past and present culture of the *folk* provided the materials for a blueprint of the *nation-to-be*, even where specific linguistic revivals failed. By creating a widespread awareness of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community, they succeeded in substantiating and crystallizing the idea of an ethnic nation in the minds of most members (Smith 1991:11-14).

The word *nation* etymologically comes from Latin. It was derived from the past participle of the verb *nasci*, meaning to be born. The term was used for signifying blood ties and also to describe the inhabitants of a country regardless of the population's ethno-national composition (Connor 1994: 38). Anthony D. Smith defines the term *nation* as a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members (Smith 1991: 14). The Greek word for nation is *ethnos* derived from ethnicity (Connor 1994: 43). Ethnicity refers to the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set them apart from others (Cohen 2011: 47). Anthony Giddens stated that the members of ethnic groups see themselves as culturally distinct from other groups in a society and are seen by those other groups to be so in return. The most common characteristics of ethnic groups are language, history, ancestry, religion and style of dress (Giddens 2001: 246).

Ethnos together with its language may consider ethno-linguistics that part of anthropological linguistics concerned with the study of the interrelation between a language and the cultural behavior of those who speak it. In other words, ethno-linguistics is an ethno-semantic, anthropolinguistic branch of linguistics which appeared on the border between ethnography and lexicology and which is engaged into a comprehensive investigation of the mutual relation of the ethnos and its language (Sarbassova 2010: 120). Wilhelm von Humboldt adumbrated his *Weltansicht* hypothesis in the following manner:

Language appears to present to us subjectively our entire mental activity (in a manner of our procedure), but it generates at the same time to object in as much as they are objects in our thinking... Language is, therefore, if not altogether, at least in terms of perception, the means by which [each] human being constructs at the same time himself and the world or by which he, rather, becomes conscious of himself by discriminating between himself and the world. (cited and translated after Konrad Koerner 1992: 179)

This idea was further developed by the followers of Wilhelm von Humboldt. The Humboldt-Sapir connection was explored in 1967 by Mattoso-Camara (1970) and more recently and more fully by Drechsel (1988) especially with regard to the *inner form* concept (Sapir 1921: 115) and the so called Sapir Whorf Hypothesis.

The ethnolinguistic investigations of the Kazakh language were first introduced in Kazakhstan by academician Abduali T. Kaydar, who contributed a lot to the development of Kazakh ethnolinguistics. Kaydar was the first who raised the issue of ethnolinguistics in Kazakhstan and the author of the present paper will conduct the research based on the theoretical principles proposed by Kaydar in 1985. Kaydar's theory investigates ethnos in *Language Vicinity*. This means that ethnolinguistics is the research of language questions which are connected with the spiritual and cultural life of a certain territory (ethnos) speaking that language; with the everyday life of the ethnos; with its outlook, its traditions, its consciousness (Kaydar 1985). The definition of ethno-linguistics is the history of ethnogeny and ethnos; the language processes in internal and interethnic mutual relations; the role of language in ethnos formation, in its existence; the peculiarities of thinking of a certain ethnos and language; the language itself and the traditional culture (consciousness, customs, religion etc.). Thus, having defined the essence of a nation it shows its difference from other nations. Moreover, it considers the classification of world languages and many other questions (Sarbassova 2010:120-122). Therefore, Kazakh horse culture and their linguistic expressions referring to horses are closely connected and, undoubtedly, can give information about the everyday life, ideas, and outlook of people.

## THE POSITION OF THE HORSE AS A FEATURE OF KAZAKH NATIONAL IDENTITY

Kazakhstan became independent with the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, but there had been no independent nation or even territory commonly designated for Kazakh (Sarsembayev, 1999) before the Soviet takeover in the early twentieth century. President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted after independence that one of his first tasks was to “consolidate the political community and build Kazakh patriotism” (Kubicek 1998: 35). A policy of *Kazakhisation* encourages immigration by ethnic Kazakh, increases political appointments for ethnic Kazakh, and mandates the use of Kazakh language (Zardykhan 2004). At the beginning of independence, the Kazakhstani government encoded a dual definition of *nation* into the legal infrastructure of the new state. An all-inclusive territorial citizenship was combined with a *remedial ethno-nationalism* of the indigenous ethnic group. The expectation was to craft a new identity of *Kazakhstani*, officially recognizing the poly-ethnic nature of the republic, while at the same time tilting towards Kazakh culture, history and language as the principle ingredients of the new territorial identity (Sürücü 2002: 385).

Kazakh as nomadic people horse became one of the main features in Kazakh national identity, because horse plays enormous role in Kazakh life, and it is fundamental feature, intangible, fixed element and it is holy for Kazakh. Today the importance of the horse is evident in Kazakhstan’s popular culture. As a symbol, it has served to build a Kazakh national identity. For example, traditional themes focusing on horses and the nomadic life of the steppe are present in the media, particularly Kazakh films and music videos. Kazakh yearning for a romanticized past are drawn to image of nomadic life. Clearly, the producers of emotionally powerful Kazakh music videos include visual references to nomadic heritage, and affirms their allegiance to their new nation (Johnson 2006: 12-13). The visual images of traditionally dressed Kazakh on horseback, travelling with families across great expanses of the steppes revitalize ancestral memories that the Soviets once tried to squelch with policies that restricted the Kazakh language and attempted to agriculturalize the steppe. This view of nomadic life builds on a common historical past and shared culture portrayed in all aspects of the popular culture (Sarsembayev 1999). Thus, the development of Kazakh national identity is facilitated.

The image of the horse is also seen in many Kazakh paintings (See Fig. 1). The painting below of important Kazakh political leaders appearing on horseback represents power and how the Kazakh people and their leaders want to see themselves.



Fig. 1 *Eltutqa* the idea of M.Zholdasbekov, painter is N.Qarymsaqov.

Other famous Kazakh people that played a crucial role in their history are depicted in the (Fig.1) painting. Kazakh girls are wearing the national dress; other people are playing *dombyra* and *kobyz*, Kazakh national instruments. The enormously important *Khodja Ahmet Yasawi* mausoleum built by *Aksak Temir* in *Turkistan* city and a Kazakh yurt, a traditional wooden framed nomadic shelter covered with heavy cloths, are represented. The historical theme in this picture is noteworthy because many Kazakh see history and nomadic traditions as a solution to contemporary social problems. One author offered an *alternative history of Kazakhstan* in which he boldly attempted to assimilate *Chinggis Khan* and his Eurasian empire as Kazakh, although the term *Kazakh* makes no appearance as an ethnonym in the historical record until centuries later. Thus, he asserted, “We must prove to Kazakhstani scholarship that the Kazakhs are a more ancient and historically well-known people [nation] than the Mongols. False theories are not only falsification of history but also encroachments on history, on the territorial integrity and culture of the Kazakh people” (Daniyarov 1998: 175).

Kazakh divide themselves into three *zhuz* (tribal confederation); *Ulu zhuz* (Great Horde), *Orta zhuz* (Middle Horde) and *Kishi zhuz* (Small Horde) and further sub-divided into *ru*. Each *zhuz* has its own *bii*'s (leaders). The leader of Great horde was *Kazibek bii Keldibekulu* (1659-1765); the leader

of Middle horde was Tole bii Alibekulu (1657-1756); and the leaders of Small horde was Ayteke bii Baibekulu (1644-1700). They are in the middle of the painting and praying for the prosperity of the Kazakh nation. On the right side near them are Kazakh associates of the Prophet Muhammed (Sahabalar). They helped Kazakh learn to read and write and spread Islam throughout the territory of Kazakhstan. At the top of the painting is the Golden Man on the leopard (barys). The Golden Man is a unique archeological discovery from Kazakhstan. It was found in 1969, 50 km East of Almaty, by Kazakh archeologists under the supervision of K.A.Akischev. The archeologists named the burial site *Issyk* since it was never mentioned in any folk legends. Leopard running fast, it was mentioned in the painting (Fig.1) as an aspiration to the future and development of the state under the sun which has a deep meaning, shining as the sun for the holy state. The image of the sun is a sign of wealth and abundance. Its graphical picture is a symbol of vitality. The sun is also a great guide for the nomad. He arranges his life according to it. He subordinates his life to the sun. *Be always on the move!* That is what nomad is learning from the sun. The great image of the sun which is always moving over the blue sky is a real symbol of life for nomads. Therefore, in the language of art, the sun is given as an eternal life. This is how Kazakh perceive the Kazakh national identity. Historical events play important role in Kazakh national identity. The horse has always played an enormous role in Kazakh history and culture because it is so valuable in so many different ways. Kazakh appeared on the historical stage together with their horses. The horse was always their true friend and protector, and helped them to overcome all economic and military challenges of everyday life. While for other peoples horses are just for riding, transport or sport, for Kazakh horses are an integral of their cultural heritage.

### **Kazakh Horse Culture From The Mythological View Point**

Many years ago before the Islam spread Kazakh steppe, Kazakh was shamanic people. So, it is still living in their blood, and Kazakh has so many mythological beliefs. In old times Kazakh belief that horses among other home animals has a spiritual guide. Kazakh is also belief that horse born from wind. There is Kazakh saying, *jilki – jelden, siyir – sudan, tuye – shölden, eshki – tastan, koy – peyishten jaralghan* that means *the horse born from wind, cow from water, camel from desert, goat from stone and the sheep from paradise*

(Toktabai 2010: 11). When man first milked a mare and intended to make some qurt (dried cheese in a round shape) and cheese just as it is made from cow's milk, he proved unable to do it: so there is a legend among Kazakh that Kambar-Ata, the spiritual guide of the horse, taught people how to make kumyz, the horse milk. That is why Kazakh call Kambar-Ata the spiritual guide and protector of the horse, but he is also seen as a real man who taught Kazakh how to make kumyz. In addition, Kambar-Ata is also a master of the earth, miracle-worker and a holy man who grants the birth of sons etc. So, worship of Kambar-Ata among Kazakh is of great importance and is linked to the worship of the horse in the life of nomads. Even nowadays, compared to shepherds, herders in charge of horses are regarded as more important. In olden times horse herders took part in all social affairs and would dine in the households of the rich. Horse herders would be given a place of honor in a yurt or in a room. Kazakh call this place *tör* that is a recess opposite the entrance to a room. Rich people, the so-called *bailar* would even give horse herders their daughters and accepted them as bridegrooms when they protected and saved their horses from danger and violent attack (Toktabai 2010: 171).

In general, nomads strongly followed their customs and traditions. Herodotus wrote that Kazakh till the end of XIX century saved the tradition to bury the man with his horses even they traditionally bury good horses as a man. In XX century, Kazakh after the death had a tradition to kill between 10-100 horses, depending on their richness, and gave dinner from its meat for friends, relatives, neighbors and any people who came to present one's condolences. In XXI century, this tradition still follows and Kazakh after the death kill 1-2 horses. The archeological excavations proved the words of Herodotus (Toktabai 2010: 40).

Kazakh also has a tradition when woman trying to born the baby, woman must be outside of the house, and they run the horses around the pregnant woman in order the horses run away the devils so the woman could then born quickly without any pain (A.Toktabay 2010: 254). Here, Kazakh belief that horses protect the people from the devils as well.

Scientists who are researching the ancient history say that in Greek's ancient culture that has a shape of mythological horses centaur occurred to their mind thanks to the Turkic people, as Turkic people were born together with

their horses as they always were on horses days and nights who eat and sleep on horses (Toqtagul 2005: 44).

The national emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan is also composed of a pair of golden-winged mythical horses with horns in the shape of crescents (Fig.2).



Fig. 2 *The national emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the authors are the architects Shota Ualikhanov and Zhandarbek Malibekov.

The image of horse embodies such features as courage, sagacity and will power. Their wings symbolize the aspirations of the multinational peoples of Kazakhstan to build a strong and a prosperous state. They indicate pure thoughts and intention to perfection, achieving harmony in society with nature and global civilization, achieving high aims. Winged animals with the body of a horse and the head of a man like centaur created from the dreams of a man and carved on the stones are often met on the pictures of the early period. A pair of mythical fast horses is depicted on the national emblem. It seems like they protect a holy place (shanyrak) on both sides against misfortune (trouble), libal and danger.

### **Significance of Horse Color**

The color of horses has played an important role in Kazakh life. Throughout history, the color of horses has been of enormous significance in all aspects of their life. Usually, Kazakh divide horse colors (horse coat) into three types: bay, black and piebald. Kazakh scholars group horse colors in three types. Arginbaev's classification of horse colors, for instance, involved:

bay (including white, grey, roan, blue roan, flecked (spotted), dull, yellow, sorrel, sorrel-bay, liver-chestnut, blue, grey, chestnut, bright-red, red, yellow-red), black (including dark-bay, black, black-blue, black-grey, brown, bay, and other shades of brown) and skewbald (including white with yellow, grey or blue markings etc.) (Toktabai et al. 2005: 52-53).

In the painting (Fig.1) the colors of horses is also represents and has a deep meaning. A large number of Kazakh beliefs and superstitions are still present in modern life of Kazakh. The founder of the Kazakh state in the 15th century, Wali-ullah Abul-Mansur Khan better known as Ablai Khan (1711 - May 23, 1781), is on the left side, and the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, is on the right side. Other Kazakh political leaders, famous writers, akyns and batyrs (heroes) are mounted on white horses. White was the color expressing holiness and purity. In the old Kazakh tradition, if a bride was not a virgin she would be placed on a horse back to front and sent home or if people liked the girl they would bathe her in white mare's milk. In this way, she could wash away her sins and then marry her bridegroom. There is a Kazakh saying, *aieldin kunasi tek boz binin sutine tusse gana ketedi*, which means that "the sins of a girl not a virgin can only be washed away and forgiven after she bathes in white mare's milk" (Toktabai 2010: 29).

When people sinned they could wash away their sins if they bathed in the milk of a white mare, but not in the milk of a black mare (or mare of any other color). In this way they could wash away the sins they had committed: not only girls who were not virgins but any man, who had committed a sin, could also bathe in a white mare's milk and wash away his sins. Toktabai noted that, due to the fact that a white horse is holy and valuable for Kazakhs, they used not to ask for money for a white horse when it was stolen. One of the advantages of a white horse is that it can be seen very well in the dark at night. That is why in olden times young men used white horses when they went to see their brides in the night (Toktabai et al. 2005: 53). White mare's milk was also used as a medicine. When someone was suffering from an illness or grief he would bathe in white mare's milk and in the belief that he would recover and get well soon. In the famous Turkic epic, dedicated to a hero named Alpamys, it is written that when Alpamys Batyr won a battle and returned home he made sure that his parents took a bath

in white mare's milk as they had suffered while he was on the battlefield. So there is a Kazakh saying *sheshendi boz biyenin sutine shomyldyratyn zhaiyin bar* meaning you should bathe your parents in white mare's milk, to show that you respect and love them (Toktabai 2010: 228).

In earlier times when soldiers prepared for battle before going to war there was a tradition of sacrificing a white horse and wishing soldiers good luck so that they might win the battle. When the founder and Great Chinggis Khan (originally known as Temujin), went to fight the Chinese on his way to the battlefield he stopped on a hill and, together with his heroic soldiers and leaders of the hordes, sacrificed a white horse and prayed to Gök Tengri<sup>3</sup> (Seifullin 1964: 189-200). In the battle of Anyrakai field in 1726, the rulers of three zhuzes or hordes (Kazakhs are divided into three hordes: the Great Horde, Middle Horde and Small Horde) came together to consult each other and elected Abilhaiyr Khan as their chief warlord and ruler. To celebrate this, a white horse was sacrificed as a symbol of future victories (Seifullin 1964: 201-202). Whenever there was a war, battle, or litigation between zhuzes (hordes), tribes or Khans and when it was decided to end a war, battle or litigation between *brothers*, a white horse would then be sacrificed. Those involved would then swear, by putting their forefingers into the blood of a white horse that they would never again become enemies. The Kazakh scholar, A. Toktabay, cites examples of such customs from written sources referring to a study made by L. Badabamov. Toktabay wrote that after the battle between Ablai-Khan and the ruler of the Dzungars, this custom was followed. This custom continued until the end of the 20th century (Toktabai 2010: 229-230).

From history, we know that the color of horses also played an important role in the naming of directions when soldiers mounted on their horses. According to Çinar, who referred to Sertkaya's notes, has said that the East was blue, the South was red, the West was white, and the North was black. Kul Tigin the General of the Second Turkic Khaganate did also change the color of his horse according to the directions in which he was setting off to battle. When he rode to the East his horse was light-colored or grey, when he went to the South the color of his horse was light-colored or brown, when he went to the West his horse was white, and when he went to the North he took a dark horse. Çinar also noted that the King of the Hunnic

Empire, Mete Khan, did also arrange the mounted formations in his army on the basis of horse color. Mete Khan, while encircling the Chinese army, used light-grey horses in the East, light-colored horses in the South, white horses in the West and dark-colored horses in the North. This was a part of his battle tactics (Çınar 2001: 17).

We also can find evidence for this in inscriptions that give us information about the ancient Turkic culture. In old monuments written in the Uighur language the following colors correspond to animals: *east* – blue, green (the symbol of the dragon), *west* – white (the symbol of the tiger), *south* – red (the symbol of the magpie) and *north* – black (the symbol of the snake) are specified for instance. Nomads also designated parts of the earth by color: *red* – the color of the South, *black* – the color of the North, *blue* – the color of the East, *white* – the color of the West and *yellow* – the color of the zenith (the highest point of the sky) (Sarbassova 2010: 9). Academician Kononov noted that the color geo-symbolism of the Turkic peoples apparently only died out recently, replaced by a linear-spatial orientation, as has often happened elsewhere. Even when such customs were only used long ago, they can still remain clearly evident in particular practical activities of individuals (Kononov 1978: 160). Thus, the color of horses can be seen to have played a major role in the life of the Kazakh, great nomad of the steppes, in both their daily life and their beliefs.

## THE ROLE OF HORSE IN KAZAKH LANGUAGE IDENTITY

In the paragraph of *Theoretical Background* I have discussed what does ethnolinguistic research means. Now, we know when research the ethnos with its language, it can be revealed the ethnos world views, culture, traditions and beliefs. The environment influences ethnos consciousness and it builds in their language. Kazakh as the nomadic people, most of their language expressions connected with cattle breeding, I will discuss language expressions related with horse culture and how it is affect the national identity. Thus, it shows us that the language is indeed one of the most important features in the concept of national identity. There are Kazak sayings: *til zhok zherde ultta zhok* (there could not be a nation where there is no language); *özge tildin barin bil, öz tilindi qurmette* (you can learn all foreign languages, but you have to respect your Mother Tongue).

Linguistic expressions connected with horse culture arose from Kazakh beliefs, traditions, everyday life, and world views. Unfortunately, I can not list all the expressions, so let us look at some and analyze them:

*biye sauim vakit* the whole time spend for milking the horse, milking takes *approximately 30 minute*. This phrase is appeared before the metric system was standardized and was used to show the time;

*zhilki zhusar kez* time when people feed the horse *early in the morning*. This expression is appeared before the metric system was standardized and was used among Kazakh to show the time of the early morning;

*biye baylar kez* time to milking the horse in *spring approximately in May*, when Kazakh give special feed and care (by separating the horse from the herd) in spring in order to get a lot of kumyz (horse milk);

*bir biyeden ala da tuadi, qula da tuadi* (from one horse may born marked and bay horse) this became a proverb that means *the same female may born as good as bad person*. In medieval ages Kazakhs killed marked horses when they born. They believed that the marked color brings unhappiness. So the marked color for Kazakhs has a bad association;

*at shaptirim jer* the measure phrase is associated with the ability of the horse to run without becoming tired, this is *approximately 25 kilometers*; and *kulin shaptirim jer* the measure phrase is associated with the ability of the foal to run without becoming tired, this is *approximately 10 kilometers*. These phrases are also appeared before the metric system was standardized and were used to show the distance, among others etc.

All above mentioned linguistic expressions in Kazakh language appeared because the history of words and its meanings are closely connected with the history of the nation who speaks that language. The importance of household and everyday life is that the nation see and use them in every day of their life, that is why it plays important role. The horse was everywhere in Kazakh life. They used them as a food – drink horse milk and eat horse meat; as a clothes – from its leather made coats, fur coats, boots, and from its wool made socks, pullovers, and also carpets; as a cartage; in military/wars; in economics and commerce; and in social life. Horse helped Kazakh to conquer the lands and win the battles, since it plays crucial role in their traditions and customs. Naturally, it influenced Kazakh language. The ac-

tivity of the horse is extremely important as it save their land, traditions and language.

The horse is also the symbol of freedom, independence, life and wealth. That is why in Kazakh poetry, epos, and fairy-tales heroes, which Kazakh call them batyrs, adequate with horses. For example, in the poetry Kobylandi batyr has Taiturulu horse; in the poetry Alpamys batyr has Baishubary horse; in the poetry Isatai batyr has Aktabani horse; in the poetry Birzhan batyr has Talkonyr horse; Shalkuirik horse in Kazakh fairy tale; ancient poetry Qozy Korpesh and Bayan Sulu have many horses that saved their lives, and many others praise this with the songs. Radlov stated that “the horse is the wealth of Kazakh, they favour horses and you can notice this from the beautiful naming of their horses” (Radlov 1905: 285).

Generally, all expressions in Kazakh language have different meanings and formed by different directions. Such linguistic expressions are stable phrases, component words of the phrase lost its first lexical meaning, and its new meaning has more persistency so that phrases having nominative meaning then it is impossible to separate these words from each other, they live as a one whole. Most of them appeared by the help of the environmental action and how people perceive the world. All semantic and meaningful groups of the phrases wholly is include men and his action, physiological form and condition that has a various emotions concerning with the psychological processes based on the emotions such likes and dislikes. The reason is that because formation of such phrases formed by men’s conception of space environment and made it by various self images, representations, symbols, comparing with other actions, using epithet, depict, and association. By all means the role of such phrase formation is important in language directed to anthropological researches.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a result of this study, I propose that the historical past is one of the important sources forming Kazakh national identity. For that reason, today, ideas of preserving cultural heritage are becoming popular. For hundreds of years Kazakh was herders who raised fat-tailed sheep, Bactrian camels, and horses, relying on these animals for transportation, clothing, and food. I argued at the beginning of this article that nomadic way of cattle breeding

lifestyle of Kazakh, affected to their culture and world-views, certainly, also on language (expressions), because they used language in everyday life for communication and also to express their feelings and thought. The findings that I have presented suggest that from ethnolinguistic research is possible to reflect on a nation's outlook and the spiritual treasury of the people. This is because ethnolinguistic data is a widely open window to the history of people, the history where the genetic roots are shown, the mutual relations with other people are revealed, and the original spiritual and material culture is preserved. Studying horses promotes the national consciousness of Kazakh; it forms their cultural image and determines their course for the future. Research into the six-thousand-year history of Kazakh horse, complete with its historical-ethnographic and culturological implications, made it possible to throw light on the material and spiritual achievements of Kazakh which would not otherwise be clear. The material and spiritual world of Kazakh, their traditions, rituals, beliefs and world views were discussed in this paper, because all these aspects of traditional culture is important from the point of national identity, and it became clear when considered through the prism of *horse*. The horse provided a special key to understanding the culture of Kazakh, a culture of nomads.

For future research I suggest that the demand of present day is to give people ethnic-cultural knowledge through carrying out various ethnolinguistic research. This is because the ethnic cultural knowledge is knowledge directed on the preservation of ethnic-personal conformity of a person through mutual mastering of a native language and own culture, values of the world culture.

## NOTES

- 1 German scholars Johann Gottfried von Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt and their followers in the idealist-romanticist tradition, emerged again in the United States as a result of the discovery of the vastly different structure of American Indian languages, as delineated by the American anthropological linguists Edward Sapir and Sapir's student Benjamin L. Whorf.
- 2 Edward Sapir, one of the foremost American linguists and anthropologists of his time most widely known for his contributions to the study

of North American Indian languages, was a founder of ethnolinguistics which considers the relationship of culture to language. Sapir suggested that man perceives the world principally through language. He wrote many articles on the relationship of language to culture. In 1931 he wrote that thorough description of a linguistic structure and its function in speech, might provide insight into man's perceptive and cognitive faculties and help explain the diverse behavior among peoples of different cultural backgrounds. Sapir's theory considers the relationship of culture to language mostly known nowadays as a Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. See: <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/523671/Edward-Sapir>> (25.01.2013).

- 3 Gök Tengri is one of the names for the chief deity in the religion of the early Turkic (Xiongnu, Hunnic, Bulgar) and Mongol (Xianbei) peoples. Worship of Tengri is sometimes referred to as Tengrism: the all-important figures in Tengrism are the Sky-Father and Mother-Earth. It involved shamanism, animism, totemism and ancestor worship. See also: <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tengri>>, 25.05.2013.

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# Kazak At Kültüründe Dil ve Bilinç

Guldana Sarbasova\*

## Öz

Bu makalede, at kültürü Kazakların ulusal bilinci olarak ele alınmaktadır. Kazak ulusal bilinci Sovyetler Birliği döneminden sonra bütün vatandaşların etnik özgeçmişine uyarlı olarak yeniden kurulmaktadır. Bu makalede Kazakistan ulusal bilincinin en önemli etnik özelliklerinin biri de at kültürünü kapsadığı vurgulanmaktadır. Aynı zamanda dil ulusal bilincin en önemli parçalarındandır, çünkü dil bir halkı ülkeye bağlayan güce sahiptir. O yüzden burada yine at kültürü etnolingüistik açısından incelenmiştir.

## Anahtar kelimeler

at kültürü, ulusal bilinç, dil, etnolingüistik, Kazakistan.

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# Язык и идентичность в казахской конной культуре

Гулдана Сарбасова\*

## Аннотация

В данной статье казахская конная культура рассматривается в качестве национальной идентичности. В постсоветский период казахская национальная идентичность начала заново формироваться на основе этнических корней всех граждан страны. В данной статье подчеркивается, что одним из самых важных этнических характеристик национального самосознания в Казахстане является конная культура. В то же время одной из наиболее важных составляющих национальной идентичности является язык, так как язык обладает силой, связывающей народ со страной. В связи с этим, в данной работе конная культура рассмотрена с точки зрения этнолингвистики.

## Ключевые слова

конная культура, национальная идентичность, язык, этнолингвистика, Казахстан

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