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## Livestock Motifs in Tatar Tales

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**Abstract:**

*Cattle breeding had a huge impact on the traditional worldview system and the views of Tatars. It is an ancient branch of Turkic-speaking people economy. The attitude towards a horse is distinguished particularly. Like many Turkic peoples in the Tatars' economy, it occupies the main place and performs the functions of labor and transport, guaranteeing the reliability of life communications, serves as the most important factor of family well-being, provides nutritious high-calorie food, provides leather, hair and tendons in Tatar economy like among numerous Turkic peoples.*

*At the same time, a horse was worshiped, proud of, it was considered as the property of the Tatar family. Tatars still have the echoes of ancient beliefs of nomadic culture concerning the horse cult. It is particularly pronounced in folklore. Mythical white horse "акбүз ам" is one of the most active artistic images of folk lyrical songs, magical and adventurous tales, dastans. In the conspiratorial - spellcasting tradition and in occasional ceremonies, the mane and the tails of horses are still used, which, according to the Tatars, protect from evil spirits, demons and dangers.*

*An old horseshoe, which, according to the Tatars, does not let the impure force into a house, hammered to the threshold of an entrance door of a residential building, continues to perform its protective function. There is a lot of such examples related with the traditions of domestic cattle breeding. But, unfortunately, these phenomena are practically not studied in the Tatar folklore studies. Taking into account this fact, the authors will try to reveal the mechanisms of viability of the pastoral traditions among the Tatars, expressed in folkloric phenomena, in our case in the Tatar folk tales for the first time within the framework of this article. Due to the limited amount of this article, we will focus only on the image of a horse.*

**Keywords:** *Cattle breeding tradition, fairy tale, motif, folkloric phenomena, a horse image, a hero, a wonderful helper.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The processes of globalization lead to the leveling of the cultural code and the national characteristics of Russian Federation peoples. Scientists talk more and more about the complete disappearance of traditional people crafts and occupations. Cattle-breeding traditions are not an exception. The people's practices focused on skillful occupation of agriculture, the cultivation of livestock, grain, vegetable crops in natural climatic conditions and landscape for ethnoses leave irrevocably. The rules and the mechanisms of pastoral traditions, consisting of a system of people's prescriptions, regulations, prohibitions aimed primarily at ecosystem preservation of their territories and relation development with neighboring peoples are forgotten. At the same time, other components of the cultural code of peoples are disappear, which are expressed in a language, in its system of terms, zoonyms, and folkloric phenomena. A scientific study on the identification of these mechanisms, in our case within the framework of the cattle breeding traditions of the Tatar people, can become a kind of scientific tool to carry out such types of research.

## **2. Methodological framework**

The cultural picture of the Tatar people world is surprisingly rich. It was formed over the centuries in a multi-ethnic space, where the figurative system of Tatars, Polovtsians, Khazars, Teptyar, and Finno-Ugric, Slavic tribes merged. Cattle-breeding along with agriculture has always been the main economic activity of Tatars, which for several millennia of nomadic culture was synthesized with the worldview system of neighboring peoples. In the future, nomadic cultural codes were assimilated with the codes of sedentary culture. But, despite the global changes, the pagan ideas that took place in the way of life of the Tatars, having common Turkic roots, are still preserved as the main markers of the Tatar people cultural code.

In this regard, the study of the problem for viability mechanism identification concerning the worldview, language, ritual systems of the cattle breeding tradition of Tatars provides for the use of an integrated approach involving various scientific disciplines, which is reflected in the following aspects of the problem: the ethnographic aspect of the problem is expressed in the need to study the system of ritual practices, calendar and occasional rituals related to the subject matter of the project; the folkloric aspect of the problem lies in the system of images, motifs, plots, beliefs and ideas in folk art associated with pastoral traditions. In the linguistic terms, the nominations of domestic animals, phenomena, the system of concepts and terms related to cattle breeding traditions, their etymology, as well as their semantic nests, revealing the conceptual world of the cultural code of the Tatar people. Due to the limited scope of one article, we are forced to consider this problem only in one folkloristic aspect, choosing Tatar folk tales as an object of study, in particular, published in the multi-volume anthology by Yusupov (2016) and the subject of the study is a horse image.

The phenomena related with cattle breeding traditions in the Tatar folklore studies are not studied almost. They have not been studied also in ethnography, although one can find information on Tatar cattle breeding in the work of the well-known ethnographer Mukhamedov (2008). The author's judgments are aimed at universal ethnographic facts revealing inherent in the Tatars of the studied territories, and the ritual component of cattle breeding remained unaffected. From the point of view of the theoretical basis, the following works are interesting: Tokarev (1983), Valeev (1993), Zhukovskaya (2002), Artynbaev (1975), the thesis by Yarzutkina (2004), the scientific articles by Selezneva (1999), Akhmetova and Seleznev (1995), Smirnova (1979) etc. It is necessary to emphasize here some interesting publications by the author of this article Battalova (2016). In the context of the given topic, the work of the well-known Tatar dialectologist. Sadykova (1994) is interesting, where a large body of the semantic group of zoonyms is given. From the point of view of the motive structure of the fairytale tradition of the Tatars, the articles by Zavgarova (2016) (who is the author of this article) are noteworthy. Despite a considerable layer of scientific research, the problem of folklore in the system of the cattle-breeding tradition of the Tatar people remains poorly studied.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### *Livestock motifs in Tatar tales (using the example of a horse image)*

A horse had and still is of paramount importance for Tatars. The presence of horses made it possible to manage the economy actively, to guarantee the reliability of life communications, served as the most important factor of former military power, then family well-being, gave nutritious high-calorie food to people, provided leather, hair and tendons that were actively used in everyday life. Therefore, a horse occupies a special place in the fairy-tale tradition of Tatars.

In the Tatar tales, the story line unfolds within the framework of the medieval daily life that is traditional for Tatars. In contrast to the dastans, there are practically no stories related to nomadic culture in Tatar tales. In all stories the heroes, family members are the representatives of a particular small state (phratry). As a rule, the heroes of all fairy tales move from the territory of one padishah to the territory of another one. In the plots of the works published in the above-mentioned collection, the heroes move from one city to another, both on foot and on horseback. There are a few plots, where a hero has his horse and is rides it. In the main plots, a hero finds a horse by himself or, he gets it for the good deeds. In such cases, a horse becomes a faithful companion and a wonderful helper of the hero. Basically, a hero, having reached his maturity leaves his father's house without a horse. This, in our opinion, is conditioned by the fact that an adult guy, leaving his father's house must get a horse, his faithful companion, by himself. A horse obtained in hard trials (including the tests in agility and strength, spirit, generosity, intelligence and skill) becomes really the most faithful companion, a wonderful helper in the hardships of an adventurous plot. Analyzing stories of fairy tales from the point of view of a given topic, we can say the following: there are a few works with clear cattle-breeding motives. But nevertheless,

there are great prerequisites for the reasoning about the relationship of the Tatars to a horse - the main animal of its economic activity. In several fairy tales, a padishah trusts a hero to take care of his horse, the process of caring is typical for the Tatar cattle breeding tradition. The hero feeds the trusted animal with oats, clean it and takes away his manure. All this is done with great love, for which the horse begins to feel gratitude, and they begin to understand each other. The horse gifted by superpowers (it run huge distances in a short time, flies, dives into the sea, can walk on the bottom of the sea, has the gift of prophecy, etc.) begins to help in difficult trials over time, turning from a typical animal into a faithful helper. In many tales, the images of a horse and a man are inextricably interconnected and, complementing each other, form a single whole. Like in many fairy tales of Turkic peoples, horses are wise and possess the gift of providence. Their task is not only to lead the hero from danger, to be his assistant, but also to be his mentor. The horse is valiant and brave. A good horse inspires the owner - the hero. In Tatar fairy tales, horses are skillful and fearless, cannot tolerate coercion and violence, they are hungry for victory. In fairy-tale subjects, one can also observe how the image of a horse has gone from mythology to reliable heroics, from the image of an animal patron and a wonderful assistant to the image of an accomplice and a companion. The horse in the fairy tale understanding of people becomes the embodiment of the socially valuable, beautiful and moral, the beauty of soul and flesh, which has a great influence on the poetics of many people folklore (Smirnova, 1979). In such epic works, events unfold not only around a fairy-tale hero, but also around his magic horse, which largely determines the hero's successful overcoming of certain tests, the achievement of the intended goals of the entire described plot. An important motif in such tales is also the battle of the heroic horses with the horses of the opponents, preceding the duel of their masters, like in Tatar heroic eposes. The abilities of a magic horse in such tales are similar to the abilities attributed to a protagonist. The winner in such fights is always a magic horse of a protagonist, which has the same positive features.

The fairy tale "An orphan child" (Yusupov, 2016) describes one of such battles of magic horses: padishah sent a horseman for a pie stallion. Jigit stabbed thirty horses and skinned them. Thirty pairs of clothes were sewn from the skin of these thirty horses. After that, he continued his way. He drove and drove and reached the stallion. The piebald stallion was preparing to fight with a black stallion - a hero's stallion. The dzhigit tightened the shoulders of the black stallion with thirty skins. The black stallion went straight to the pie stallion. The piebald stallion sprang straight up. The black stallion run in the direction of his master. Again, first they fought, standing on two legs, kicking, biting, fighting, then, exhausted, struggled lying down. Djigit took the pie stallion. Then he untied thirty skins from his black horse, twenty-nine skins were bitten through, only one thirtieth remained. The dzhigit thrown the skins away and brought the pie stallion to the padishah. Propp (2001) in his famous study "The morphology of a fairy tale" defined the role of the fairy-tale horse as a universal helper, and assigned all others to "partial" and "specific" assistants. It should also be noted that in the tales of the heroic deeds of a batyr - a horseman horse is usually the only active helper; Other assistants (encountered on the way by batyr, noble animals and

various advisers endowed with unusual attributes), act mainly in the context of the story about the adventures of the hero on foot.

In Tatar fairy tales, a horse can become a friend only to those who tame it, subordinate to his will. Only the defender of people - an honest noble bogatyr can conquer a horse. This interpretation of capturing and taming the heroic horse is common to many Turkic epics and fairy tales: "The jigit stabbed the horse, cut his muscles, penetrated the bone. The horse dashed away, the jigit closed his eyes, froze as he rode, suffered from heat, the jigit realized how much strength he had left, unable to withstand the heat, went out into the field with the horse and fell" (Yusupov, 2016); *"And indeed, when he opened the door of the barn, the horse, inflating his nostrils, threw himself at him, but he managed to thrust a spear into the jaws of the horse, and the horse suddenly stopped dead and dropped its head; The soldier hit the right rib of the horse, the whip went through the left rib. He closed his eyes, and the horse flew. Some time passed, the soldier found himself near the water, near the city, from which he went to search the padishah's daughter"* (Yusupov, 2016). Thus, in Tatar tales, the image of a horse is an image of a special status that requires a special care, who must be tamed, and only a strong, courageous, brave, with a pure mind and a noble soul can tame a horse. Then a hero will have a true friend, a companion, an assistant, a mentor, with whom any trials are not terrible. Through these rules, not prescribed, but perceived through fairy-tale images and plots, Tatar people had a particularly respectful attitude to the noble animal - a horse for many centuries. All this contributes to the actualization of pastoral traditions also in modern times.

#### 4. Conclusions

Studying the large body of Tatar fairy-tale works published in the collection by Yusupov (2016) "Siberian Tatars. From the treasury of spiritual culture. Anthology of Siberian Tatars folklore" for the purpose of revealing the motives of cattle-breeding traditions we came to the following conclusions: there are a few works with clear cattle-breeding motives. But at the same time, with a detailed study, you can see the traditional rules of horse maintenance, which can be assessed as the motives of the cattle breeding traditions among Tatars. In Tatar tales, the image of a horse is the image with a special status, requiring a careful and a special care. A horse must be tamed, and it can be tamed only by a strong, brave man, with pure thoughts and a noble soul. Only then a hero will have a true friend, a companion, an assistant, a mentor, with whom any trials are not terrible. These rules of handling a horse are not prescribed, and perceived through the fairy-tale images and plots during centuries are an effective mechanism for the education of a special attitude among Tatars to a noble animal - a horse.

#### 5. Summary

The results of the article can serve as a scientific tool and a unique methodology to study a number of other images of the fairytale tradition of the Tatar people and other

genres of folklore. All this will stimulate scientific research in the areas related to people traditional occupations and crafts. Folklore phenomena were not studied from this point of view, so the results of this work can be used to prepare lecture courses and teaching aids on folklore and ethnography. Also, the results of this study will be useful for ethnographic route creation associated with the traditional rural way of life among Tatars.

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