

# The Genesis of the Art of the Kazakh Sals, Seris and Paluans in Characteristic Comparison to European Histriones and Russian Skomorkhs

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**Abstract**—This article is a piece of the doctoral thesis "Syncretism of traditional Kazakh culture in the light of the innovation direction of circus and choreographic art of Kazakhstan and its integration into the world civilization", and reveals the features of the creative personalities of the traditional culture of shamans, sals, seris, paluans in the comparative characteristic of the European histriones and Russian skomorokhs.

**Keywords**—circus, histriones, shamans, skomorkhs

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE great traditional nomadic culture is the property of the Kazakh people. It is distinguished for its democracy, syncretism and solidity. Alongside with its openness to the exterior influences and assimilation of some of their features, the traditional culture has preserved its authenticity and greatness up to day. It contained the determining constants – sacredness, unity, universality, pre-conditioned by the spiritual world outlook of Tengriism. In the permanently mobile nomadic world the only stable sign by which one could trace his ways was the Divine Eternal Blue Sky. He, the Tengri, was the nomads' superior god, epitomizing a man's element, governing the world created by him, governing the celestial bodies and Divine animals. The same sacred characteristics as of Tengri were applied to Mother-Earth (Zher-Su). "When above there appeared the blue sky, and below the earth, and between them sons of a human." [1] And the goddess Umai was nomads' custodian of home hearth, children, art and warriors.

The Central Asian nomads had a cyclic calendar, mushel, in which each of the twelve years was called after the name of an animal. "This calendar that penetrated into every pore of the nomadic society and culture, is not just a time-measuring tool. More than any other calendars existing in the world today, it defined the lifestyle, philosophy, ethics and aesthetics of the tengrians scattered around the globe." [2].

The nomad's tengriism, rooting back to the ancient times, being a universal phenomenon of primary culture, has preserved its solidity up to day, thus allowing scientists to interpret it as philosophy, myth and religion at the same time. For the essence of tengriism lies in the harmony of times and worlds, it has never had as its aim getting into struggle with other religions, though it was cohabitating with them, assimilating some of their features, but not changing its own foundation.

This tolerance has lived up to day, constituting one of the cardinal constants of existence of various confessions in the life of the modern Kazakhstan.

## II. THE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF SHAMANS, SALS, SERIS AND PALUANS, BEARERS OF THE TRADITIONAL CULTURE OF THE GREAT STEPPE

The idea of the unity of the earthly and the celestial lies in the basics of Tengriism. The mediators between the superior powers and the humans were shamans-baksy (sorcerers). Their mysterious acts – rites – comprised in themselves synthesis of music, drama, dance and acrobats' arts, and were aimed at exiling "the evil spirit" out of the sick, thus balancing the harmony of the corporal and the spiritual in a human. In other words, their acts present themselves in a much varying role, in both the mental and spectacle-acting respects. On one hand, shamans are the guides of the superior powers, teachers, healers, keepers of traditions and everyday life. On the other hand, they are bearers of the nomads' syncretic culture made up of many arts, embodying traditional features, national specifics and religious authenticity of the steppe men.

Rites of shamans-baksy, containing religious-magical semantics, were accompanied by a kobyzy, the musical instrument sacred to nomads, the common folk could not dare even touch it. Shamans' dance-acrobatics lexics contained swift twirls, leap-ups, imitating a horse's gallop, big jumps, jumps from one place to another, conveying dodges of an obstinate horse. Movements of other animals and birds were imitated, of an eagle, heron, bear, fox, hare. Subsequently, in concrete-sensuous images of Kazakh folk dances, the genesis of their dances ascending to shamans' dances, was in the animal world, surrounding a steppe nomad.

These are: «Қаражорға», «Тепенкөк», «Жорғалау», «Жорғаны еліктеу» - dances of a galloping horse; «Ор-теке» – dance of a jumping goat, «Аю-би» – a bear's dance. They are in the national dance troops' repertoire, and are performed on the Kazakh Circus arena.

From syncretism of shamanic seances threads of continuity are drawn through the ages to the traditional art of sal and seri, steppe universal performers, uniting in one person arts of kuishi-composers, improvising singers, excellent horse riders, dancers, jugglers, mimes, acrobats.

Artistic versatility, theatrical manner, masquerade and bohemian life-style of sals and seris sharply distinguished them from the others surrounding them, "Non-compliance with regulatory rules at times mingled with exquisite aristocratic behavior. This put them at a higher level of social hierarchy and provided rights referred from shamanic practices to mediate between the two worlds.

That is, they were both religious and magical figures approximate to Tengri and aruakhs (spirits)." [3].

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For a long time the Kazakh traditional culture remained terra incognita, in the best case - the object of exotic to caravan of merchants, going along the Great Silk Road. But from the middle of the XVIIIth and during the XIXth centuries, European and Russian scientists, explorers, artists worked intensely in Kazakhstan. This interest in the Great Steppe was stimulated by the development of economic and cultural relations contributing to the growth of number of professional travellers and explorers. They left us written records, works of fine art devoted to the home daily life of the Kazakh people, ethnographic sketches of the different social and age groups in many regions of Kazakhstan. Attention is drawn to the fact that the researches of the XVIII-XIXth centuries, relating to the material culture of the nomads, are descriptive in nature. Suffice it to give characteristic sals in the Turgay region, given by A. Dobromyslova, "Sals are the type of young people among the Kirghiz. These are dandy boys, rich and original in dress and manners" [4]. Of course not to notice sals and seri, these unique bearers of the traditional Kazakh culture was impossible. Their work is a sample of syncretism. In one person, many sals and seris combined the arts of a composer, singer, virtuoso performer on different musical instruments, actor, mime, dancer, juggler, acrobat. Sals and seri featured a bohemian lifestyle, fancy, bizarre behavior, failures in regulatory practices of steppe ethics. Of course, into the researchers' eyes first fell the external features of the sals and seris phenomenon, their exoticism, as is evidenced by the above statement.

A more in-depth insight at these bearers of the traditional culture was outlined in the work by A. Zataevitch, an outstanding ethnographer-musician in the 20-30s of the XXth century. A. V. Zataevitch wrote, "Sal is an eccentric figure, "force" of a futuristic trend, a person who is wishing, in whatever happens, to differ from the common crowd and to impress them either with a frilly in the suit, or original manners, daring escapades, rich saddles and harnesses, and the like." [5].

A. V. Zataevitch tries to understand the reason why sals were allowed to do what was normally forbidden by the steppe etiquette, "Sals gave the impression of some fortunate favourites of fate, of people of the highest rank, who could do anything, and this only nurtured their longings for honor and worship. In the common Kazakh society, about them there was preserved the memory of them as of people of higher rank, particularly that among them were many persons having abilities of singers, verse-makers, agile athletes, brave hunters, etc." [6].

In characterizing sals A. V. Zataevitch mentions sals' competition in originality, "when one of them stuck owl's feather into his head skin, the feathers that Kazakhs usually decorate their hats with, and another ... walked naked through the aul (village), as no-one else would dare." [5]

But the universality of sals' and seris' creativity noted by A. V. Zataevitch was only the external reason of their special status in the traditional society.

To get to the deeper meaning of the sals and seris phenomenon was left to the forthcoming generations of scientists in Kazakhstan.

With the 2nd half of the XXth century, their creative work has been covered in the works by classics of the Kazakh culture and science, M. A. Auezov, A. K. Marghulan, A. K. Zhubanov; in the writings of scholars of the middle and younger generation Y. Ismailov, Y. Tursunov, A. Mukhambetov, M. Gamarnik et al, who filled lots of gaps in solving a mystery of the universal talent phenomenon. To begin with, it was not outside of the question of sals and seris differentiation for it was a clue in deciphering the many "inconsistencies" in their lifestyle and creativity. If A. V. Zataevitch supposed that seris belonged to the feudal elite, and sals were formed exclusively by vocation, or inherited their talent from ancestors, Y. Ismailov, in his "Akyns" (steppe singers) study is not inclined to divide the sals and seris by social criterion, saying that they both were, as a rule, wealthy men, as they "had dozens of horses for rides." [7; 65]. E. Ismailov, proposes to differentiate sals and seris by behavioral analysis: sals are characterized by peculiar antics, extravagance, while seris are distinguished for their chivalry and nobility. In itself, this proved to be true, but it was only the "top of the iceberg." There appeared the need in the researches in the fields of ethnography, religion, sociology, philosophy, aesthetics, musicology, philology, and theater studies, so that thanks to the works by many researchers, whose method chosen was the complex study of the traditional culture problematics, sals' and seris' creativity presented itself as the one fueled with a deeper meaning alongside with all its seeming frivolity on the surface. Many functions of seris' and sals' activity in its military, ceremonial and ritual, artistic and educational roles were highlighted. All of them are integrated into a single united organization system of the traditional Kazakh nomadic society. There was a strict age stratification, expressed in senior-junior-middle categories, which projected onto the socio-political structure (senior, middle, junior zhuzs), the public power system, lifestyle of every member in the society.

Protagonists of nomadic culture were also subject to age stratification, reflecting on the content of their work and lifestyle. Chanting the young life stage was the sala' and seria' scope; to middle age was directed akyns (steppe singers) and paluans' (steppe wrestlers) creativity; the senior age was associated with the zhyraus' (song-writers and performers) activities. Interesting is the fact that the instrumental music steppe, the highest manifestation of the genre being kyui (long steppe music composition), absorbed in itself all spheres of life and spiritual experience of the nomadic society, was also subject to the age stratification principle. Thus, sals' and seris' activities were connected with the love-lyric, entertainment, dance kyuis; the sphere of akyns' are toibastars (wedding reception songs), tartys-kuis (ceremonial songs); with zhyraus' activities were connected tolgau-kuis, zhyr-kuis (narrative songs).

Shamans-bakysy were not subject to age stratification as their art was of timeless nature, being focused on the world of spirits and Tengri, contacting the human world, the world of the current time in their own specific way. Shamans-bakysy were guides between the worlds, which explains their privileged position in the traditional society.

The peculiar syncretism of the religious-magical and of the artistic was typical of their creativity and lifestyle. All the bearers of the Kazakh traditional culture, shamans-baksy, sals, seris, akyns, paluans, zhyraus were united with the high social status in their own environment, where the nomadic culture, with its spiritual and artistic values was the domain of all the population. It was not, as in Europe, the division into the palace and plebeian culture. It was truly democratic.

So, sals and seris determined the "youth" culture in the traditional society. Their creativity and style of living genetically for centuries were being formed in accordance with this age group.

Sals' and seris' lifestyle was filled with the carefree spirit of communication with the young.

Driving around aouls in a merry gang, accompanied by young admirers of their talent, they were the favorites of all the steppe festivities. Their work is an area emotional-sensory experience of life in the glamor of its young stage: admiration for the beauty of nature, the joy of hunting with a falcon and a faithful horse, happiness in a woman's love and regret about the transience of youth.

Characteristically, the youth life-style was kept by sals and seris until the ageing years. So, Paluan Sholak, the famous wrestler of the Kazakh steppes, singer-sal, dombra player, improviser, praised his life in such lines:

I am forty-nine now  
I can conquer mountains and fortresses  
Once I have been fighting,  
Broke Baron Karon's rib  
Chorus: Time goes by,  
I had a good time  
Oh, youth!  
I am so pleased! [8].

According to the researches by E. D. Tursunov, sals' and seris' high status was explained by their membership in secret military alliances, distinguished for gallantry and intrepidity in action, commitment to the cult of the ancestors, the worship of ancestral spirits, aruakhs (evils). Therefore, during the battles sals and seris came at the front of the troops, in bright clothes, not covered with armor, despising possible death.

Thus, they demonstrated to the enemy how strong their aruakhs under whose protection they went into battle were. Apart from the military duties, another important sphere of their activity was the continuity of functions of shamans'-baksy mediation between the living world and the spirit world.

Syncretism of religious and artistic practices of shamans goes down to many functions of sals and seris, which have their source in the priestly magic, secret knowledge of life and death, power over spirits. They were not only entertainers, jokers, acrobats, musicians, singers, dancers, jugglers, and above all, the keepers of knowledge of cosmic laws, projected onto earthly existence.

That's why kyuis by sal Tattimbet embodied the magical power of healing the sick, control over the behavior of people and animals.

The continuity of the link between sals, seris and shamans-baksy was revealed in the story told by M. Magauin "Kok Balak, horse with blue feet."

In the image of Aita sal there was presented the syncretism of his talent as a musician-performer (a dombra, kobyz, sybyz player, a singer), an actor, a dancer, a shaman-baksy, "master of spirits and demons". [9.]

Attention is drawn to the fact of similarity of behavioral stereotypes of baksy, sals and seris in the traditional society. Initially it was agreed that the ritual activities of shamans-baksy were not so much the "profession" as "the way of life." "The role assumed by the shaman is inseparable from himself: it is his entire life" [10; 136].

So wide was the range of their creative employs, the manner of expression and the type of activity that, giving into such a behavioral pattern, did not draw the line between work and life, following their calling anywhere, anytime.

The reason for the similarity of their behavioral stereotypes is in that that the religious-magic functions of the sals and seris closely related to the actions of the shamans, whose "communication with the spirits," and "travel to other worlds" often presented "one-man show." A work of sal and seri syncretism also featured musical performance, composition, poetry, circus, pantomimic arts. They proceeded in an atmosphere of celebration, games, carnival, ritual or non-compliance with the established rules of etiquette. As for the baksy sals and seris game was a way of life, and life was a game. And as the baksy, they were in the borderline position not only between life and art, but also between the earthly and the heavenly worlds, being magical intermediaries between people and aruakhs. Such religious-magical function of sals and seris makes them close to Tengri and the spirits of ancestors. This explains the special ritual of sals' and seris' arrival in aoul (village): they fell from their horses or hang on the tree – i.e. "make-believe" died. The girls ran up to them, and young wives invited them into guest yurt, drew their boots down, out of which it rained with gifts. Such a behavior of sals and seris was understood in the traditional society as the death-resurrection ritual.

As part of the ritual of honoring sals and seris as mediators between the worlds, they were allowed to sit at a festive dastarkhan (festivity dinner table) in posture, normally taken on mourning of the deceased, or to come to the funeral, showing off on horseback when according to the etiquette one should get off the horse. Or another example: in the nomads' traditions, yurts thresholds were not allowed to attack, because it was a sacred place-the border between chaos of the world and harmony of home. But shamans, sals and seris, as mediators between the two worlds, were allowed to violate the ban. Because of that the great Kazakh steppe sal Tattimbet, wanting to comfort a father's grieving sorrow for a deceased son, played him his kyui, sitting on the doorstep of the yurt, as magic intermediary between the living father and the spirit of the deceased son. In religious-magical functions of sals and seris an essential place was allotted to the magic of fertility: it was designed to maintain the natural biological level of the physical world, encouraging young members of the traditional society – successors of life – in education, family and childbirth [11.183]. This explains the courtesy, the gaming style of romance behaviour in creativity of sals and seris, addressing young people. Because their free jokes within the rite were venerated, conducive to enterprise procreation.

The role of the "heavy artillery" in fertility magic was taken by music, its life-giving force. The musical activities of sals and seris was parented by the shamans. But if the scope of musical creativity associated the shamans with magical and mythological musical, performed by them were kobyzy, sybyzgi, dombra-nyz-zhar-kyuis, the kyui, the musical performance practice of sals and seris, focuses on love-lyric, entertainment, dance dombra kyuis. They, so to speak, rooted forward from the extensive practice of shamans to private sphere, associated with magic. And the musical, the ritual side of sals and seris, had the idea of preserving a world order through the unity of masculine and feminine as its basis.

From shamanic practice, where the drum was considered a natural fertility source, sals and seris treated a musical instrument as an animate object. For example, the names of certain parts of the Eastern and Central Kazakhstan dombra are associated with the parts of the human body: mojyn-neck, keude – breast, alakan – palm [12]. But the lyrical creativity of sals and seris, their courteous style of behavior in communicating with young people had a crucial purpose: in human maturation, to instill him with fundamentals and skills of steppe etiquette. And while the military, magical, artistic features of sals and seris, in the traditional society, above all valued, was their educational role. Most likely, the foundation of etiquette was entrusted to seris rather than sals with their underlined theatricality, extravagance and unpredictable behavior. As seris were distinguished for elegance in clothes and tact, knightliness, restraint in behavior. It is important to stress that educational activities of sals and seris had two functions: "on the one hand, help in the origin and maintenance of the fire of love, and retention this natural flame within the strict social framework" [3].

That is, sals and seris raised the youth in strict compliance with the rules of the steppe etiquette based on the harmonious combination of the emotional-sensual and social organizing function of love. Moreover, in the first place there were the mental and spiritual in its essence.

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### III. THE ACTIVISTS OF THE KAZAKH TRADITIONAL CULTURE IN CHARACTERISTIC COMPARISON TO EUROPEAN HISTRIONES AND RUSSIAN SKOMOROKHS

The thought of sals' and seris' closeness to minnesingers' creativity was put forward in the mid-20th century by A. K. Marghulan.

But, drawing a parallel between the two, he indicated the closeness of sals and seris to Slavic skomorokhs of Eastern Europe rather than histriones in Western Europe: "If minnesingers, basically, were jousting singers, the Kazakh akyns and sals by nature were closer to wandering singers of the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe. They created a peculiar lifestyle of an itinerant singer-musician (sal, seri), reminiscent of a buffoon. Their repertoire was not only the epic sagas, but artistic performances, in which the large space was occupied by jokes, jests, sometimes costumed tricks» [13; 71].

But in the light of the latest researches on traditional culture of Kazakhstan we assume that Kazakh sals, series and paluans were closer to European histriones rather than to Russian skomorokhs. As art was not buffoons' sacral functions in the Christianity (The orthodox church persecuted them!), whereas the histriones' art, namely, the circus artists stood in the service of the mysterious theatre of the Catholic Church: it was its spectacular.

We'll try explain the reason why the Russian Orthodox Church, unlike the Catholic Church *did not need* the services of musicians. The Russian Orthodox Church – the heirress of the Byzantine Church, which from the 4th century was self-sufficient as *spiritual theatre*, without resorting to the *real* personification of deity.

In the Catholic Church, due to various historical factors, there was added the mystical personification of many saints as well as their sensual personification. The Byzantine Orthodox Church as a spiritual theatre did well without mimes' art, they functioning in a secular environment. The Western Catholic Church initially also announced them the embodiment of the devil, but eventually was forced to relent in a rigid position and in the Xth century it began to use their services. "Mimes and clowns of the Christian era" were either born "on the porch, or when needed were allowed from the streets." [14.6]. So, in the Xth century, in the middle ages in the Western and Central Europe there was a religious theatre, which evolved from simple Easter games, held under the arches of the temples by several actors to grandiose mysterious shows on the arenas with hundreds of participants.

So, Kazakh mediators were closer to European histriones rather than to Russian skomorokhs. Although the social status of the European histriones and the traditional Kazakh culture was totally opposite. Sals and seris were deeply revered, deified, in the traditional society were given the honour of place above the elders, sultans, biys (judges)». [11].

Even higher was the status of paluans-batyr in the great steppe. They belonged to the heroic element of bard, which is peculiar to batyrs' life with the hardships of military campaigns, away from the hearth. Grand kuishi (kyui performer) Kurmangazy, upon his creativity to the bard, in life too was up to his status – whether held himself equal with the power officials, the King's officials, was a brave warrior, took part in wrestling, horse racing, shooting (Altyn qabak), hunting. His creative status was in harmony with the lifestyle. He was a legend in the Kazakh steppe. So, sals, seris, paluans were highly respected members of the traditional society in the Kazakh steppe.

The picture is quite different in the hierarchical ladder of West European histriones (minnesingers, minstrels, jugglers, troubadours, and the like). In their midst there was a differentiation as to type of occupation and social status. The "black bones" among the histriones were considered craftsmen circus men, although they kept all of the burghers and mysterious festival performances of the Catholic Church.

Let's pay attention to the fact that universalism was inherent in the circus artists, while other histriones groups had predominantly narrowly specialized professions – singers, poets, actors.

In the highest point of convergence is the universalism of European circus artists and sals' and seris' art, as in performing their sacred functions. The histriones misterious plays in the service of the Catholic Church, sals and seris' are the successors' function of the shamans-baksy in the field of magic fertility.

The Orthodox Church in Russia attracted art buffoons in the circle of rites, as did the Catholic Church. Although could not divert laity from art musicians. The ability to entertain the audience, was typical for very good musicians in the comedic part of fun "bear's fun", the ancient theatre and circus performances in Russia. Its origins date back to pagan times, when pre-Christianity "cult of the bear and the customs of his driving constituted a coherent whole." This ritual action eventually was revealed to hilarious spectacle. Former God Veles, turned into the trained bear, and the jester, a former shaman entertained the people with funny antics and witty rhymes of a joker "[15; 110]. We see that in the Russian culture there is a phenomenon peculiar to many world cultures: the origin of the Arts (including circus) from the syncretism of sacral pieces of archaic religious cults.

Andrei Gruntovsky, in charge of the study on the traditional folk performances, concluded that "the bear's fun" in Russia is "folk theatre in the full sense of the word, with a dramatic text and not just the actor-spectator, but also a clearly emerging director (puppeteer, bear coach) "[16; 26].

Theatre and circus arts were merged into "bear fun", so they closely coexisted in comedy and tragedy. More often than not "bear's fun" began with the comic, it was headed by guided bears, and are generally built to adjoin buffoons with their ability to entertain the audience. Bears' coaches; phenomenon was set in Russia, they wandered with trained pets over villages and villages, the most talented were invited to the Tsar as the "bear's fun" functioned exactly in the courtyards of Russian tsars.

Due to the accumulated experience of the centuries, bears are allowed to create a database of traditional Russian bear rides when in Russia in the era of Nicholas I, the first stationary circuses appeared. In the 20-ies of XXth century the works of Nikolai Gladilshnikov, Trophimus Isaenkov and other masters who worked in a circus with performing bears, accumulated rich experience, which gave a qualitative leap in the training of these animals in the family of Olkhovikovs. Their attraction, bear circus (premiered November 6, 1949, Moscow Circus) is now known all over the world. If the Russians were the favourite musicians with bears, the best numbers of the Kazakh seris, sals, paluans were the horse, because of horse-alter ego of each inhabitant.

Let's not forget that it was the horses that date back to ancient astronomical nomads in the beginning of life on Earth. According to the ancient myth, around the Pole Star (Temir žazyk), which is the center of the universe, there are white (AK) and gray (kôk) horses, symbolising the female connection. [17; 50-60].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Expression of the traditional culture is still quite perceptible in all the arts of modern Kazakhstan, including the circus art.

Right was Titus Burckhardt, saying that the role of the traditional culture is phenomenal: it retains sustainability of value orientations, attitudes, mentality, "which are actually unconscious level in people's minds." [18].

Following consideration of tengriism, religion is the ratio of the nomads to the world of animals. Petroglyphs of Tamgaly and the Chulak mountains in the Neolithic, bronze age, animal style Saka gave us knowledge about the steppe to the world of animals. Respectfully-admired were the animals, which is still kept in the life and art of the Kazakhs now: Snow Leopard pictured on the coat of arms of the city of Almaty; it is crowned by a majestic monument of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan; in the symbolism of modern Kazakhstan is also the wide-open Eagle's wings on the national flag. It is unknown how many centuries ago nomads accustomed Eagle to hunt the animals of the steppe. But one thing is: the arts were known to Kazakhs since time immemorial. Taming the Eagle requires special skill, labour, love and patience. Profession, in training freestyle birds, is called by Kazakhs as berkutchi, it was highly appreciated by the nomads and passed from generation to generation, becoming dinastial occupation. The image of berkutchi embodied in Kazakh "Kusbegi: dance-dabylpaz", dance training of bird hunting, "Koyan-Berkut»-dance of the Golden Eagle hunting Hare. And in the modern art of Ballet and circus there is the image of an Eagle. The proud Lord of the celestial spaces embodied in by the Kazakh Ballet choreographer Mintai Tleubaev in Serkebayev's performance «Kulan» in the image of Aksak. The dancing Eagle was settled by the choreographer in strong sharp movements, lightning-fast shifts angles, expressive jumps and spins. The brilliant performance of the dance of the Eagle entered the Kazakh culture, its first performer Zaurbek Rajbaev. Aerialists of the Kazakh circus in their tricks use such a plastic Eagle flight as "breakage" in a rapid drop down. This trick mimics the "fall" of the Eagle stone down, aimed toward its prey. However, among all the animals and birds in the surrounding steppe with nomads gave the first place to the horse. The nomads, whether in battle, could count only on themselves and their horse. So from babies to elders, all the steppe inhabitants were skilled horsemen, that was considered the norm. Each steppe warrior owned the most complex elements of a fancy, modern Kazakh circus horse riding programmes, the most complex kind of circus arts, for Kazakhs are genetically native and close to the heart. Most specific of the great steppe were dancing on a horse.

It is not fancy riding: how to jigit (ride a horse) was known to everyone, and dance while standing in the saddle was only for professional dancers when the horse was the rhythm and was one whole "[19; 26]. Then this existed in the Kazakh steppe genre theatrical sports presentation and organically entered the modern Kazakh circus. In the steppe celebrations were also glorified paluans-wrestlers-bogatyr, amazed the crowd by tricks. Among them, the legend became Kazhi-Mukan, who received classical training in St. Petersburg in 1905-1907, and populated the European force art specific features of their steppe motherland-strongman-paluans' skills, perceived them from traditional culture. Kazakh professional circus is more than forty years.

During this time, it developed its traditions, formed the family dynasty. While traveling to many countries of the world the Kazakh circus demonstrates its school, the prestige of which is affirmed by the high prizes at major international festivals and competitions. Winning artists of the Kazakh circus were in Rome, Warsaw, Monte Carlo, Moscow, Beijing, as there launched a modern sovereign Kazakhstan among the States with highly developed circus arts with a strong national specifics. The problem of self-identification of circus arts of Kazakhstan – the highest to date, it is stated in the objective: maintain and develop the traditional national forms of circus art in relation to the achievements of the best masters of the arena around the world. Priority is a thoughtful attitude to tradition: it cannot be reduced to external ethnographic forms, reproducing an exotic decor. Important language of circus art is to express profound ideas associated with the sense of being, to maintain continuity of spiritual, moral and cultural values, bequeathed of the ancestors.

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