

# BRANDING OF NATIONAL CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE ILLUSTRATION ART OF CONTEMPORARY KAZAKHSTAN THROUGH THE WORK OF ARTIST DAUREN TASBULATOV

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MAN IN THE ARTISTIC PICTURE OF THE MODERN WORLD

**Abstract.** This article is devoted to an art-historical analysis of the artistic and commercial processes involved in branding the images and symbolism of national cultural identity within the contemporary illustration art of Kazakhstani artist Dauren Tasbulatov. The article opens with an examination of the concept of national Kazakhstani identity and its role in shaping the country's economic well-being and international image. A strong, positive, and life-affirming national image is one of the most valuable and significant intellectual and artistic resources for any country, especially in the era of global globalization. The international ranking of national brands, Anholt Ipsos Nation Brands Index (NBI), highlights countries with successful national brand strategies, allowing the Kazakhstani national identity to be similarly considered as a national brand on a global scale. However, the tendency to "construct the edifice" of national identity becomes ineffective without the implementation of a state strategy aimed at disseminating these ideas and values to the broader public, since the key factor is societal acceptance and shared understanding of these ideas and values by citizens. Artworks, in turn, possess essential educational, formative, and aesthetic-enlightening value; they play a decisive role in cultivating taste, shaping spiritual values, and visualizing the style of an era. Based on this, the article *aims* to identify the cultural and social values embedded in Kazakhstan's national brands and examine their representation in the works of contemporary illustrators. In contemporary visual art in Kazakhstan, an entire cohort of illustrators is actively working, producing artworks with a distinct narrative and artistic character, as well as a unique authorial brand. This article employs art-historical analysis to study the mythologically inspired compositions of Dauren Tasbulatov. Although the artist relies on digital graphic tools in accordance with current technological realities, his stylistic signature and the cultural values of the Kazakh nation, expressed through rich imagery and symbolism, constitute the fundamental basis of his creative practice. As a *result*, through illustration, the artist

transmits spiritual national values to a broad audience, influencing society and contributing to the shaping of a model for constructing national identity within contemporary visual culture.

**Keywords:** national identity, national brand, Kazakhstani identity, contemporary illustration art of Kazakhstan, Dauren Tasbulatov.

**Cite:** Lada Kan, Malik Mukanov. «Branding of national cultural identity in the illustration art of contemporary Kazakhstan through the work of artist Dauren Tasbulatov». *Central Asian Journal of Art Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 2025, pp. 155–177, DOI: 10.47940/cajas.v10i4.1134

*The authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript and declare that there is no conflict of interest.*

## Introduction

From a socio-cultural perspective, identity is defined as a specific stability of individual, social, cultural, national, or civilizational characteristics that allow one to answer the questions «Who am I?» or «Who are we?». The word «identity» derives from the Latin root «idem» – «the same». Intellectuals of Antiquity and the Middle Ages used this term to denote the property of things to preserve their essence, specificity, and features that make a thing precisely what it is, distinct from all others, and capable of «remaining itself» despite changes and transformations. Over time, the concept of identity came to describe not the being of inanimate objects but the existence of the human person, acquiring the meanings of self-sameness and personal continuity. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the notion of the «Self» was actively explored in scientific discourse. However, the term «identity» began to be used in sociology only from the 1960s, mainly due to the work of American scholars Erving Goffman and Peter Ludwig Berger. In Goffman's book «Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity», the term «identity» was used instead of «self» (57). In parallel with sociology, the terms «identity» and «identification» appeared in psychology. In his book «Identity: Youth and Crisis»,

American psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, the first to introduce the term «identity» into academic circulation, defined it as «a firmly internalized and personally accepted image of oneself in all the richness of one's relations with the surrounding world» (86). Psychoanalyst understood identity as both: a subjective, spontaneous sense of one's own sameness and personal integrity, and the result of recognizing that one belongs to a particular social group (Erikson, 235). In 1914, Austrian psychiatrist and founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud introduced the concept of identification in his work «Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego» (60). For Freud, identification is an unconscious process in which a subject assimilates themselves to another individual based on emotional attachment. Through this mechanism, the individual forms their own «I» modeled after the figure they take as an example. Such behavior leads to socialization and the formation of moral ideals.

Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, founder of analytical psychology, viewed the human psyche as consisting of three components: the Ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. According to Jung, «the collective unconscious» is a genetically transmitted social memory formed in deep antiquity and existing autonomously from consciousness. It is «the accumulated

experience of ancestors over millions of years», an «imprint of the world's phenomena» expressed in «the structures of the brain and nervous system» and transmitted through «mnemonic images», inherited memory (240). The collective unconscious manifests itself in religion, philosophy, and creativity. For this reason, each image is interpreted subjectively through individual associations. Since the 1980s, the term identity has been widely used by political scientists studying racial, national, and ethnic differences, as well as questions of national and cultural identity. This form of identity assumes a nation's self-sameness, enabling it to define its place in the world. National identity emerges as an awareness of shared worldview, values, traditions, and ways of life within a given community, marked by clear distinctions between «one's own» and «the other».

One component of personal identity – national self-awareness or national identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group or nation, grounded in shared culture, language, values, history, and worldview. The origins of modern national identity can be traced back to 1648: the end of the Thirty Years' War and the signing of the Treaties of Münster and Osnabrück, which established the Peace of Westphalia and a new system of international relations. Due to geopolitical and economic factors, the Holy Roman Empire fragmented, and on its remnants emerged the first European nation-states – a new political form characterized by full sovereignty within clearly defined territories. Based on the principle of equality among states, the foundations of the modern interstate system were formed, grounded in mutual recognition of legal equality and independence. The existence of this type of statehood is closely tied to the development and formation of a social community – the nation.

## Methods

The study of the artistic and commercial processes involved in branding the imagery and symbolism of national cultural identity in the contemporary illustration art of Kazakhstani artist Dauren Tasbulatov is grounded in an art-historical analytical framework. The artist's compositions are rich in detail and feature imagery drawn from mythological narratives, embedding codes of Turkic culture. Tasbulatov's authorial interpretations, his visual language, and his culturally shaped personal sensibilities necessitate a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach. This includes semiotic and semantic analysis, which enabled the identification of visual symbols and archetypes based on historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical sources, as well as hermeneutic and stylistic methods used to interpret the artist's intent and the distinctive characteristics of his work. The factual basis of the research consists of Tasbulatov's original illustrations, art-historical publications, encyclopedias, scholarly literature on Turkic and Kazakh mythology and folklore, electronic resources, official public websites, video materials, and a personal interview with the artist.

## Discussion

In the social sciences, the term «national identity» is understood as part of an individual's social identity and as a collective phenomenon that unites people into national groups. National identity can thus be viewed as a form of collective self-determination, a process of identifying with a group through the recognition and acceptance of its values, worldview, strengths and weaknesses, conditions of existence, historical experience, future aspirations, emotional foundations, institutions, and traditions. National identity can also be interpreted as the

outcome of a community's ethnic history and identity, its religious and value systems, worldview foundations, historical memory, symbolism, and prevailing ideology, including manipulations of collective consciousness.

The British historical sociologist Anthony D. Smith identifies several fundamental features of national identity: a historic territory or homeland; shared myths and historical memory; a collective mass public culture; common legal rights and obligations for all members of the community; and a shared economy that provides territorial mobility. Smith argues that national identity is the product of a long historical process associated with the formation of nations and nation-states. It emerges from ethnic, linguistic, and religious ties, as well as from shared historical and cultural traditions that connect people living within a particular territory. From this perspective, national identity can be understood as an individual's self-identification with a complex of representations associated with the national-state community and with the obligations and rights that apply to its members and the state (Semenenko).

Kazakhstan, as a modern independent state, is developing within the global trajectory of nation-state formation. In his monograph «Kazakh Identity in the Context of Societal Modernization», Mukhtarbai Seid-Aliyevich Shaikemelev analyzes the concept of national identity through philosophical and methodological approaches, examines the phenomenon of Kazakh identity within the processes of social modernization, and studies it in cultural-historical, political, ethno-national, and socio-psychological contexts. Shaikemelev identifies several civilizational and cultural foundations of Kazakh national self-consciousness: the nomadic way of life as the basis of traditional identity forms; religious identity; the legacy of Kazakh enlighteners; socio-political and ethno-cultural factors; the role of the ethnic

language; tolerance and multiculturalism in contemporary Kazakhstan; the relationship between ethnic and civic identities in conditions of globalization; and the potential of Eurasian regional identification. Drawing on extensive sociological material, he outlines the ideal-typical features of Kazakh identity (Shaikemelev, M. S.-A. Kazakh Identity 230). It is important to note that on the territory of Kazakhstan, national identity before independence (gained on 16 December 1991) emerged from a mosaic of cultural and ethnic elements, since the population of the USSR constituted a multiethnic community that the state sought to transform into a unified «Soviet people» characterized by communist patriotism and socio-ideological homogeneity.

Historically, the idea of national identity was actively articulated and developed by Kazakh intellectuals and enlighteners from the mid-19th century to the 1930s. The formation of Kazakh intelligentsia, the development of the worldview foundations of traditional Kazakh society, and the emergence of Kazakh national identity trace their origins to the intellectual and creative legacy of thinkers and bearers of oral tradition during the period of the Kazakh Khanate. In the mid-15th century, the founders of the Kazakh Khanate, Kerei Khan and Janibek Khan, united the nomadic tribes. By the early 17th century, the Kazakh ethnos had formed as an independent community inhabiting the territory of modern Kazakhstan. A special place in Kazakh history belongs to the «Golden Age», the reign of Tauke Khan (1680–1715), son of Zhangir Khan, known for his wisdom and courage and honored with the title Az-Tauke (the wise). This was a period marked by the cessation of intertribal conflicts and rivalries among clans, elders, zhuzes, khans, and sultans. In the 18th century, the military threat posed by the Dzungars, and later by the Kokand and Khiva khanates, compelled the nomadic civilization to seek protection by

joining the Russian Empire to preserve its national identity and people. This began the gradual colonization of the steppe and the introduction of sedentary ethnic groups. The nomadic and semi-nomadic mode of life made the creation of permanent educational institutions challenging; consequently, the most educated segment of society emerged among zhyrau, biys, and the Islamic clergy. Until the 19th century, education could be obtained only in Muslim religious schools—madrasas—and, in some cases, students continued their studies in cultural centers such as Istanbul or Bukhara. With the incorporation into the Russian Empire, the first secular schools began to appear in regions inhabited by Kazakhs. Prominent figures of Kazakh culture were graduates of these secular institutions: the poet, philosopher, musician, and educator Abai Kunanbayev; the scholar, orientalist, ethnographer, and traveler Chokan Valikhanov; and the educator, folklorist, writer, and public figure Ibrai Altynsarin, among many others. Through their intellectual contributions and civic engagement, they advocated enlightenment and renewal of Kazakh society, criticized obsolete social norms, and articulated the need for political change in the Turkestan region. From the mid-19th century onward, affluent families sent their children to schools and lyceums in major cultural centers such as Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kazan, Omsk, Kyiv, Istanbul, and others. Education became a means of defending civil and political rights, and social prestige was associated with being educated. Many Kazakh youths pursued legal studies. The spread of higher education among Kazakhs later strengthened the national liberation movement and aspirations for autonomy. Shaikemelev notes: «For the first time, Kazakhs were elected to the State Duma of the Russian Empire. Future Alash Orda members published liberal Kazakh newspapers under the slogan «*Oyan, Qazaq*» (Wake up, Kazakh), calling on the

people to awaken, to recognize their own disenfranchised condition» (Shaikemelev, M. S.-A., *Ethnocultural Identities* 23). The historical and political phenomenon of the Alash movement occupies a significant place. The word Alash holds several meanings in Kazakh: the battle cry of Kazakh warriors; the ancient tribal union named after Alys, its mythic founder and first ruler; and a synonym for «Kazakh». The exonym «Kazakh» was given by neighboring peoples, whereas Alash is the endonym used by the people themselves (Informburo.kz). The Alash movement (or Alash Party), founded in 1917 by A. Bokeikhanov (chairman), A. Baitursynov, and poet and writer Mirzhakyp Dulatov, and dissolved by the Bolsheviks in 1920, was a national liberation movement uniting Kazakh and Kyrgyz intelligentsia and opposing the colonial policies of the Russian Empire. Its official newspaper, *Kazakh* (1913–1918), became a key platform for discussing land rights, education, culture, and the unity and future of the Kazakh people. Thus, the concept of Alash became a powerful symbol of Kazakh identity, revived from ancient oral traditions. This process of identity formation, rooted in history, culture, language, and collective aspirations, was violently interrupted during the Bolshevik repressions of the 1930s. It was only after independence that the possibility emerged for a conscious and objective revival of ethnocultural identity, and the concepts of national and cultural identity began to be shaped with new depth and self-awareness.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new geopolitical and socio-economic landscape began to take shape, the emergence of international alliances and transnational corporations, the development of transportation infrastructures, trade, technologies, and, most notably, information and communication technologies such as the internet, processes of political, economic, religious, and cultural integration, as

well as unification (i.e., standardization and consolidation into a single whole), accelerated. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as globalization. The contemporary era of transformation brings both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, globalization enables scientific and technological progress, economic and business development, closer relations among countries, improved cross-cultural understanding, and unrestricted access to information and its exchange. On the other hand, globalization also results in uneven economic development, the monopolization of markets by transnational corporations, violations of labor rights, environmental and social problems, and, most notably, the risk of losing cultural uniqueness. The accelerated expansion of global technologies, communication platforms, media, and social networks poses the risk of cultural homogenization, in which traditional values, cultural diversity, and national identity are obscured by mass culture.

As an independent, sovereign state with a unique cultural heritage, Kazakhstan strives to strengthen its global presence while preserving and developing its national identity. The fundamental values and principles, as well as the country's political, economic, social, legal, and cultural foundations, are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in state strategic planning documents, including programs, concepts, and strategies. V. A. Malinovsky's article «Public Harmony and National Unity as the Foundation for Shaping Kazakhstani Identity» provides a detailed analysis of the state's role in ensuring social cohesion and in strengthening Kazakhstani identity and national unity (Malinovsky, V. A.).

In an increasingly globalized and rapidly changing world, the concept of cultural identity remains both relevant and essential, as it can unite and consolidate a nation and its ethnic groups, thereby forming a strong and

life-affirming «national image» that positively influences the country's well-being. Research on «national image» is interdisciplinary, and the term is subject to various interpretations. The concept of national image refers to the general impression and comprehensive assessment of a country's history and contemporary condition formed by the international community. It represents an integrated reflection of a country's political, economic, socio-cultural, diplomatic, and other characteristics, as well as a concentrated expression of its multifaceted national power and sovereign spirit (Chen Fu, Gao Yimin, and Sun Dan). A strong, positive national image functions as a strategic resource at the state level. It enables a country to position itself as distinctive and unique within the global community, strengthening its international influence and raising its status. It also provides a competitive advantage and enables a country to effectively communicate its ideas, values, and concepts to internal and external audiences, including citizens, partner states, tourists, and investors. This is especially relevant today, as international cooperation has intensified significantly. According to I. V. Sidorskaya's article «The 'Image' of a Country: How Mass Media Represent It», a country's image «is formed through the evaluation of elements such as: political life (political leaders, government reputation, diplomacy and military actions, etc.), economy (financial power, GDP characteristics, income levels, etc.), social sphere (social cohesion, security and stability, national consciousness, national character, etc.), culture (technological achievements, education, cultural heritage, customs, values, etc.), and geography (environment, natural resources, population size, etc.)» (Sidorskaya, I. V.). The mass communication system plays a crucial role in shaping a country's image. All processes related to public communication contribute to disseminating intellectual and artistic

resources and instilling shared values within society. Since national identity lies at the core of a country's image, it is essential to analyze its features and manifestations.

The national Kazakh identity of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as the self-awareness of an open, diverse, and tolerant culture, is rooted in the legacy of the ancient Turkic nomadic civilization. Key components of this national identity include history and geography, mythology and legends, oral traditions and creativity, contemporary mass culture, and shared legal rights and responsibilities. The nomadic worldview and value system are grounded in Tengrianism, a belief system that developed naturally through the people's traditional worldview. Tengrianism rests upon the notion of kinship between humans and the natural world. Humans do not possess dominance over nature, animals, or plants; instead, they are inseparable from it. Tengri, the sky deity, is the progenitor of the world, the creator of nature and the universe. Consequently, nomads placed great emphasis on observing the sky, natural phenomena, stars, and solstices. Nature was treated with profound respect: forests, mountains, rivers, and other landscapes were viewed as sacred places inhabited by spirits, often perceived as messengers of Tengri. Historically, Tengrianism served as the spiritual tradition of warrior-nomads, grounded in devotion to a supreme Creator. Honesty and loyalty were not external obligations but expressions of inner virtue, the essence of a noble person. This worldview shaped the spiritual core of the nomadic civilization, defining its morality and tolerance. For nomads, reality was perceived not only through sight but through hearing, transmitted through myths, oral narratives, and epic tales.

Visually, national identity manifests in recognizable elements: state symbols, territorial landscapes, archaeological and historical monuments, cultural and artistic

objects such as language and dialects, ornamentation, clothing, music, traditions, and folklore. Kazakhstan is renowned for its striking natural landscapes, and tourism statistics grow each year (Atameken).

Ancient nomads treated nature with reverence; their way of life and philosophy emphasized harmonious coexistence and deep respect for the environment. Historical knowledge is an essential foundation of national identity, informing respect for one's homeland, culture, and values. In an interview, Doctor of Law Yerkin Kubeyev notes that «the most important spiritual value of a society always has a concrete historical character. Patriotism is based not on abstract ideas but on deep knowledge of and positive attitudes toward the actual events, processes, and figures of a people's historical existence» (Ryzhkova, N.).

A well-developed state brand is key to building a respected and authoritative national image, and the identification of a nation constitutes a crucial resource in state branding. The idea of a national brand requires thoughtful and competent implementation so that the values it promotes are accepted and shared by citizens, thereby fostering intellectual and spiritual cohesion. A strong, accessible, professionally designed, and effectively implemented state brand can attract attention and facilitate cooperation both within the country and on the international stage. Furthermore, such a brand highlights the uniqueness and exclusivity of a national identity in a healthy competitive environment, ensuring long-term conditions for demand and exchange.

State branding emerged from brand management in the business sector. A brand is typically understood as a registered trademark that distinguishes a specific company and evokes positive emotions and associations among consumers, thereby building trust and stimulating demand. Maintaining continuity with tradition is important: trends are transient, but stable associations, core values, and

fundamental ideas ensure longevity, reliability, and lasting recognition (Le Quoc Vinh.). Thus, a brand is a constellation of values and ideas encoded in visual and auditory messages that generate enduring associations.

Within the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), experts define a national brand as the process of creating a unique and positive image of a country to attract tourists, investors, and other stakeholders. This process involves developing a clear brand identity, promoting and supporting key attractions, and disseminating and popularizing national cultural values. Brand identity refers to the overall perception of a country held in the memory of international audiences. It includes elements such as people, public figures, culture, language, cuisine, history, geography, fashion, and more. The process of building a national brand involves selecting and amplifying the country's most distinctive and exceptional values, ensuring their recognition, acceptance, and appreciation by international partners and audiences. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) explains that «nation branding is the way in which a country or a place positions and promotes itself as a destination where people can visit, invest, and build a reputation for the quality of goods, services, and talent it offers» (Le Quoc Vinh.). Simon Anholt, a leading expert on national brand image and a political advisor who shaped the foundations of nation branding, introduced the term national brand into academic discourse. According to Anholt, a national brand represents «the sum of people's perceptions of a country across six dimensions of state activity: exports, governance, tourism, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, and people» (Anholt 118). He is also the founder and publisher of global indices in place branding: the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index and the Anholt-GfK Roper City Brands Index.

It is clear that constructing a coherent national image, or «branding» an entire country that comprises diverse regions and cities, is a complex undertaking composed of many interdependent components. Significantly, the image of a country is shaped by far more than national branding campaigns, visual concept development, branding elements, communication strategies, or the provision of goods and services. Equally influential are the unconscious and intuitive impressions a country communicates, those deeper layers of perception that cannot be shaped entirely by aggressive or overly commercial strategies. Thus, state branding can be understood as a reflection of citizens' worldview, philosophy, and mentality, expressed through diverse socio-cultural forms. The branding process involves not only strengthening and developing positive values but also overcoming negative stereotypes. This can be achieved through the thoughtful popularization of one's own culture, the promotion of positive traditional values that remain relevant today, and the emphasis on universal human values and meaningful expressions of spiritual heritage, making them appealing both to diverse ethnic groups within the state and to international audiences. The former contributes to social cohesion, resilience, stability, and ecological interactions, while the latter supports stable, prosperous development and strengthens the country's global image. As stated in one formulation, “Awareness of the unity of humankind is one of the most effective paths to cultivating a culture of peace. A person who understands their belonging to humanity will not and cannot seek the destruction of another—even in the name of supposedly «high» or «noble» goals» (Nurzhanov 131).

Efforts to «construct the edifice» of national identity are unlikely to succeed without an effective state strategy to communicate its ideas and values to the broader population, as public acceptance

and shared understanding are essential. One of the goals of this process is to encourage local consumers to consciously choose domestic products, based on a comprehensive assessment of quality, national identity, pride, patriotism, and personal affinity. This can be achieved through various media promotion strategies. In today's global context, communication plays an increasingly central role. As a result, mass media exert significant social influence. Artistic production, in turn, fulfills educational, formative, and aesthetic-enlightening functions. It contributes to the cultivation of taste, the development of spiritual values, and the visualization of an era's cultural style.

## Results

One of the most prominent young contemporary Kazakhstani artists whose works display vivid, narrative-rich mythological imagery is Dauren Tasbulatov, a graphic designer by training and an illustrator born in 1985 in Almaty, and a graduate of the T. Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of Arts. Tasbulatov works across three thematic directions: commercial illustrations with ethnographic themes, monumental panels that explore social and philosophical narratives, and compositions inspired by Turkic mythology. His works are instantly recognizable due to his distinct authorial style and expressive, «Easter-egg-filled» narratives, in which he embeds history, mythology, philosophy, and personal reflections—sometimes with a satirical undercurrent. The art panel *Mythological Consciousness of Nomads* by Dauren Tasbulatov is publicly displayed at Aport Mall East, as well as at the SmArt.Point coworking center, where the triptych *Zaman* is installed on the first floor. In addition, the artist has developed a range of authorial art objects integrated into everyday life. Tasbulatov actively participates in exhibitions and art

meetings and delivers lectures on Turkic culture; this activity is documented on his official social media platforms, which are regularly updated. His illustrations can be found in the books «Military Culture of the Kazakhs» by Zira Naurzbayeva, «The Kazakh Steppe and the Germanic Goods» by Serikbol Qondybai, «The Book of the Warrior Spirit» by Serikbol Qondybai, «Female Images in the Mythology of the Pre-Kazakh Period» by Zira Naurzbayeva, as well as «A collection of Kazakh wise tales» produced in collaboration with the «ARUNA» publishing house in 2021. The presence of publicly accessible artworks alongside the artist's active exhibition and educational practice constitutes an evidential basis confirming that his artistic work itself functions as a mechanism for branding national cultural identity. As he writes on his official social media page: «I paint «talking pictures» that change consciousness, awaken essential feelings, and sometimes wipe the eyes clean».

Tasbulatov's illustrations are marked by a strong personal style grounded in cultural symbolism, Kazakh traditions, socio-philosophical reflection, and Tengrist motifs. His interest in Turkic mythology dates back to his student years. While working on his thesis project, «Mythological Images of Turkic-Speaking Peoples in Contemporary Interpretation» he created a board game featuring folkloric characters, Kazakh «superheroes». Having a naturally curious and passionate disposition and a deep love for his culture, he devoted extensive time to studying world and local history in search of cultural, symbolic, and mytho-historical connections. Over time, his fascination with Kazakh tales, myths, and legends deepened, and he began to explore and reinterpret their sacred meanings in his works. Positioning himself as a kind of «collector of puzzle pieces», Tasbulatov looks for answers to existential questions about the structure of the world and his place within it—and finds them in

mythology. While history can be rewritten, distorted, and fragmented, the narratives and archetypes of mythology offer him freedom of thought and imagination, enabling philosophical speculation and aesthetic expression. As he explains in a YouTube interview: «That is where I rest» (Galiyeva).

From this, the artist arrived at what he calls «mythological consciousness», a worldview that resonates deeply with him. Mythological consciousness implies a particular way of perceiving reality—through Myth as a mode of being. The Greek word mythos means «story» or «legend». From a literary perspective, the Myth is a folkloric genre reflecting human ideas about the structure of the surrounding world. Myth acts as a specific form of thinking—an emotional, symbolic, and imaginative interpretation of reality. It is well known that ancient people possessed a mythological worldview and cosmocentrism, understanding the universe, nature, and humanity as a harmonious whole. The world around them was endowed with human traits, manifesting in animism and anthropomorphism, belief in the «ensoulment» of animals, plants, stones, and natural phenomena. A. F. Losev, Soviet philosopher and philologist, wrote: «Myth is the most essential, one may say transcendentally essential, category of thought and life. There is absolutely nothing accidental, unnecessary, arbitrary, fabricated, or fantastical in it. It is a genuine, maximally concrete reality» (Losev 4). For Tasbulatov, mythological consciousness enables a holistic perception of the world. Myths, legends, and oral traditions are created collectively and transmitted from generation to generation. Their details may change, but their core meanings remain intact. Questions about the meaning, sacredness, and causality behind mythic narratives, rituals, and symbols drive the artist. A deep understanding of his own culture holds

exceptional value for him. Through myths and ancestral spiritual heritage, he seeks the «original truth» of cultural concepts, worldviews, and meanings. Tasbulatov believes that rituals, ornaments, and even words preserve cultural codes; however, many people have lost the ability to read them, reproducing customs mechanically without understanding their essence, thus weakening cultural identity. For him, genuine identity begins with education and culture. Tasbulatov values justice, purity, sincerity, and responsibility. Based on his own life experience, he believes in the duality of the universe, the laws of cosmic reciprocity, the power of words, and the power of imagination. Culture, he argues, begins with small things—awareness, humanity, respectful relationships, the feeling of home, and care for everyday details. His mission as an artist is «to awaken and gradually instill love for our native language, culture, and traditions». «It is very important that art evokes emotion», he says in a podcast interview with Liliya Galiyeva (Kosmos Vntri). Tasbulatov creates with the intent to enlighten, to transmit energy through his works, to provoke deep reflection. According to him, the meaning and logic of his paintings may be predetermined by higher forces— «My hands are only the instrument; my eyes are the projector».

Thus, one of Tasbulatov's artistic aims is to communicate national culture both locally and internationally, enriching society's spiritual fabric. His works are often exhibited at public and cultural events, and appear in business collaborations across the city; his authorial merchandise is also available. His artistic language represents a unique synthesis of academic training, design sensibilities, mythological concepts, and distinctive national motifs. Tasbulatov's active creative practice attracts diverse audiences, engaging them visually and intellectually through riddles of symbols, metaphors, and coded imagery. Children, he notes, often

recognize and decode hidden elements faster than adults. This early engagement subtly shapes the worldview of future generations, forming an associative visual repertoire that becomes foundational for cultivating a healthy cultural identity and strengthening the national code, individually and collectively.

One important dimension of Tasbulatov's artistic expression is his series of illustrations inspired by Turkic mythology, particularly female mythological characters. In Turkic tradition, female archetypes are deeply archaic and universal, associated with protective and salvific functions, embodying ancient deities such as *Ot-ana*, guardian of the hearth, or *Umai-ana*, celestial protector of women and children. One of his most admired and, in his view, successful works is *Süt Ana*, «Goddess of Milk». Another title for the piece is *Kökten/Köklen Kempir* – «Heavenly Old Woman» (Figure №1). Turkic nomadic culture has consistently demonstrated a powerful mythopoetic imagination, something that resonates profoundly with the artist, whose visual language can likewise be described as poetic—shaped by his personal interest in literature, music, and cinema. His fascination began after encountering this figure in a book by Kazakh filmmaker and writer Bakhyt Kairbekov. Tasbulatov was captivated by the melodious sound of the word «*Köklen*» and the character's mythological depth. *Süt Ana* is composed as a vertical graphic piece—an intentional choice. The larger the artist's message, the larger the canvas must be. Here, the verticality expresses a desire to connect heaven and earth, embodying a cosmogenic motif. A similar device — representing the unity of heaven and earth—appears in the Greenfield Papyrus (The Book of the Dead of Nesitanebtashru), where the sky goddess *Nut* arches over the earth god *Geb*, illustrating cosmic balance. In Turkic cosmology, however, the creation story differs: *Tengri*, born from a cosmic egg,

created the sky from the upper shell and the earth from the lower one, placing between them the *Temir Qazyq* – the Iron Stake, the North Star – to keep the heavens from collapsing.

At the center of the composition stands the Goddess of Milk. Her serene figure evokes a sense of cosmic stillness and the flow of time — the entire piece functions as a complex symbolic puzzle filled with encoded imagery. The composition references the tripartite structure of the universe in Turkic mythology — sky, earth, and underworld (Jurakuziyev 24). Clouds swirl around the goddess, forming the flowing shape of her headdress adorned with zoomorphic motifs and ancient runes. This device echoes the works of Belarusian artist Vsevolod Shvaiba, whose characters' heads are wrapped in fabrics symbolizing streams of thought. For Tasbulatov, the cloud-headdress expands into cosmic infinity, reflecting the goddess's boundless nature. Clouds also serve as mythological vehicles—a motif found in Kazakh heroic epics, particularly the Epic of *Koblandy Batyr*, where the character *Köklen* appears as the mother of *Koblandy*'s wife *Kortky* and grants him magical clouds capable of transforming into whatever he needs throughout his journey.

The painting's upper right corner includes a subtle reference to clouds as transportation, carrying futuristic structures — an allusion to Tasbulatov's work «Mythological Consciousness of the Nomad». There, oversized objects of Kazakh material culture create a fantastical world of folkloric orchestration, retro motifs, and futurist imagination — a symbolic message about preserving identity while moving toward a progressive future.

The vastness of the Turkic steppe, comparable to the boundless sky, appears behind the Goddess as the Milky Way (Qus Joly). Birds fly against the stars and an inverted mountain, symbolizing the mirrored world. For the nomad, sky and earth are equal halves of the universe.

Turkic cosmism, the belief in human unity with the cosmos, shapes an open worldview grounded in freedom of movement and spatial thinking. According to legend, when Tengri separated Sky and Earth, he too split into male and female forms. The female became Tengri Umai – the protector of women and children. The Milky Way represents her flowing milk entering the celestial lake Sütköl.

Cloud imagery signifies celestial abundance and fertility. In Indo-Iranian myths, clouds are cows, and rain is their milk. In Tasbulatov's painting, planets emerge from the goddess's left sleeve, clouds from her right, symbolizing her cosmic scale and creative powers. Her waterfalls flow into milk rivers, symbolizing spring, renewal, and rebirth – echoing the celebration of Nauryz, the spring equinox. Köklen is also described as an aristocratic, prophetic, shape-shifting figure who can turn into a fox. Archival notes by Alikhan Bukeikhanov, published in «Turkestanskie Vedomosti» in 1899, describe Köklen as a «mythical being» (Kairbekov 178). Mythologist Serikbol Kondybai reconstructed her as an ancient Turkic goddess of fertility who lives in the sky, milks her celestial mares and sheep, and whose rains are milk and thunder the neighing of a young stallion. The rainbow – the kempirqosak, literally «the old woman's tether» – is the strap for her heavenly sheep.

In the painting, the Goddess holds a traditional Kazakh ozhau, a ladle filled with milk. Above the mountain, where waterfalls cascade into milk rivers, a rainbow appears, again referencing Köklen. In Kazakh, rainbow is «kempirqosak», a very interesting word that literally translates as «old woman's sheep tether». Chokan Valikhanov mentioned an older woman with a herd of multicolored sheep, reinforcing this symbolism. Dauren T. depicts the rainbow as a symbol of the manifestation of Kökten/Kökten - heavenly («kök» as in sky), descended from the heavens, bringing



Pic. 1. Dauren Tasbulatov, "Goddess of milk" in Turkic mythology (Koklen Kempir, Sut ene) graphic. 2021

spring, when blind rain and rainbows are her divine blessing games.

Around the milk rivers are grazing herds, yurts, and blossoming grass symbols of peace and harmony. Smoke rises evenly from the yurts, undisturbed by wind, suggesting cosmic balance. Dauren seeks to show the dualism of the world and the cyclical nature of life through his painting. In the lower left corner, three stone statues stand beside a serpent, symbolizing the unity of order and chaos, life and death. In Tengrist cosmology, everything is interconnected; energy is never destroyed, only transformed.

Tasbulatov invites the viewer into contemplation through a tiny nomadic rider whose back is turned to us, head lifted toward the sky. This figure forms a symbolic guide through the mythic landscape, embodying the mythological worldview—holistic thinking, sensitivity to signs, and imaginative depth. Through this rider, Tasbulatov welcomes the viewer into a fantastical journey inseparable from everyday life. The creation of Süt Ana reflects active intellectual labor and the influence of leading scholars and mythologists, including Serikbol Kondybai, Zira Nauryzbai, Edige Tursunov, and Bakhyt Kairbekov.

Another graphic work by Dauren Tasbulatov featuring a central goddess figure is Ot-Ana, the Mother-Fire (Kaz. ot – fire, ana – mother), also known in English as the Goddess of Fire (Figure №2). In Tasbulatov's interpretation, Ot-Ana appears as a composite image that merges several mythological characters whose etymologies and narratives are closely intertwined; the composition is further «seasoned» with the artist's personal interpretations, associations, and ironic details. At the center of the piece stands the figure of an old woman surrounded by tongues of flame and visual elements that evoke a fantastical eschatological scenario of «final rebirth», a moment of duality, a spatio-temporal point at which the end and destruction of all things give way to renewal. The mythological female figure of Ot-Ana is not as widely known as Umai or Zher-Su and survives in contemporary ethnocultural practice primarily through rituals and sayings. In Tasbulatov's work, this figure appears as an ancient chthonic being, an archaic image of the primordial mother. The term chthonic (from Greek  $\chi\theta\omega\mu$  – earth, soil) is commonly applied to beings that embody the wild elemental force of the earth; they often appear as bestial or monstrous and are associated with the underworld and the supernatural, as

well as with earth and fertility cults. The Mother-Goddess, one of the most ancient female deities in many traditions – is often described as a chthonic figure, as suggested, for instance, by the Paleolithic «Venus», interpreted as symbols of fertility and abundance.

Despite the monochrome black-and-white execution, the artwork seems to blaze; it is saturated with flames. The goddess's hair appears to be engulfed in a bright, turbulent, yet somehow soft and even gentle fire. Fire, as an element, has been a constant object of human attention throughout history. The earliest evidence of fire use dates back 1.7–2 million years, and early humans began to use fire deliberately roughly 400,000 years ago—for cooking, heating, lighting, and protection from predators. The study and philosophical interpretation of fire as a natural phenomenon arose in ancient civilizations and the medieval period. Its meaning, value, and role have attracted the attention of virtually every culture; as such, fire can be considered a universal cultural phenomenon rooted in social and cultural experience. The transformation of fire from a natural force into a cultural phenomenon endowed it with multiple layers of meaning, turning it into a sign, symbol, and metaphor. The first worldview structure to conceptualize fire is mythological. In mythology, fire is often of cosmic or divine origin. The ancient Greek myth of Prometheus, who steals divine fire and brings it to humankind, is widely known. In many world cultures, narratives about the cosmos and the origin of humanity are linked to «fiery beginnings», emphasizing creation and development. Tengrist esotericism holds that clay is a dense form of fire; in Turkic tradition, the human body is composed of clay, blood of water, lungs of the atmosphere, and warmth of fire (Shaygozova 227). In various cultures, clay is the noble substance from which humans are made. In the Abrahamic religions (Judaism,

Christianity, Islam), humans are created from clay, whereas divine messengers – angels – are created from fire. According to Sumerian-Akkadian mythology, the god of wisdom and water, Enki, and his consort, Ninhursag, fashioned the first human, Adapa, from clay. In ancient Egypt, the fertility god Khnum molded humans on a potter's wheel. In Kazakh culture, the cult of fire and purification rituals were already documented by Chokan Valikhanov. Kazakhs worshipped fire and used it as a purifying force, as reflected in numerous sayings and rites. A person who had committed a transgression could be made to ride through a large bonfire; if he survived, it was interpreted as a sign that Tengri had forgiven him and granted him rebirth. The Kazakh historian, ethnographer, and archaeologist Abdesh Toleubaev notes that, before the spring migration, an entire aul would pass between two fires for ritual purification – people, their belongings, livestock, and property, except for horses. Horses were believed to be creatures of the upper world, formed from heavenly, divine, spiritual fire. Among the Turks, fire is revered as auliye, meaning «sacred». Accordingly, fire had to be treated with great respect: one must not spit into it, step on embers, or extinguish the flame in the hearth; it should be allowed to die out on its own.

As O. Zhanaidarov writes in «Myths of Ancient Kazakhstan», the father of the goddess Ot-Ana is hard steel, and her mother is flint; she lives in the hearth of the human dwelling. In Turkic cosmology, fire is a gift from the goddess Umai and a divine embodiment that grants warmth, food, and protection to the home and family. In the lower left section of Tasbulatov's composition, on a mountain, we see the silhouette of a woman with her arms raised toward a tall, blazing fire. This scene illustrates human joy at receiving the gift of fire for the first time—bringing warmth, comfort, safety, and well-being into life. It is a minuscule detail, easy to

overlook at first glance, yet Tasbulatov's works are mosaics that demand time and attention to reveal their meanings and «Easter eggs». The figure is depicted as a faceless silhouette; only the gender is distinguishable by clothing. The human figure appears small and depersonalized in relation to the flame, which can be interpreted as an indication of humankind's vulnerability and fearfulness without fire, or as a moment of exultation at the acquisition of warmth and protection.

From this point on, fire acquires symbolic and mythological significance, and the guardian of the hearth becomes a woman. A well-known expression states: «Ot-ana, Mai-ana, zharylqa» («Mother-Fire, bless us»). A bride would pronounce these words as she crossed the threshold of her husband's home. She would be led to the sacred center of the dwelling the hearth where she performed the ritual of «feeding the fire» by pouring oil or clarified butter into it. Another practice associated with Ot-Ana involved difficult childbirth: the woman in labor would pour oil into the fire, reciting, «Ot-ana, Mai-ana, zharylqa, günäm bolsa keshe gör, tüinsegim sheshe gör» («Mother-Fire, Mother Fat, bless me; forgive my transgressions; untie the knots of my labor»). The most terrifying curse in this system is «Oshağynda otyn sönsin» – «May the fire in your hearth die out» (Saikeneva).

An additional layer of meaning lies in the word family built around *ot* («fire»): *otbasy* (family; literally «head of the fire» or «beginning of the fire»), *otağasy* (head of the family; literally «elder brother of the fire»). For ancient Turks, the homeland of sacred spirits was the sky of Tengri; for Kazakhs, *Otan* (homeland) is the land where the hearth fire (*ot*) unites loved ones. The creation of a family is called *otasu* («to establish a hearth»), and the newlyweds' yurt is called *otau*. Thus, Ot-Ana embodies the protective functions of the domestic hearth and family happiness, safeguarding children's lives, protecting the family from

misfortune, and symbolizing abundance, warmth, unity, and prosperity in the home.

Another striking component in the painting is the diadem on Ot-Ana's head, through which a white stream flows, connecting her to the globe at the base of the composition. In Kazakh, *oshaq* means «hearth» and denotes the central symbolic locus of the living space and household, a site of well-being and sacrifice to the Sacred Fire, the Master of the Hearth. Closely associated with the hearth is the cauldron, semantically linked to ideas of abundance, inexhaustible life, renewal, and transformation. In Tasbulatov's authorial interpretation, this object appears as a headdress. This is meaningful: if Ot-Ana is understood as an otherworldly, ethereal being, her primal cosmic energy can enter through the head and exit through the breath, transformed and reconfigured.

In the painting, incomplete human figures – broken in body and spirit – fall into the boiling cauldron, enveloped in streams of warm vapor. In the heat of the sacred fire, their physical shells disintegrate while their souls are purified and healed. The goddess then releases them anew as reborn, whole, and cleansed beings. Tasbulatov renders them as amorphous, androgynous white silhouettes floating in the deity's warm breath. The healed soul can then take on a new form in any element of nature – human, animal, plant, or stone, thus embodying Turkic notions of rebirth and cyclical. In each new incarnation, the soul travels, accumulates new experiences, and explores new paths.

As noted above, Ot-Ana in Tasbulatov's painting is presented as a chthonic entity and a dual figure. Furthermore, in the artist's concept, she is a composite mystical character composed of several figures: Ot-Ana, *Mystan Kempir*, and *Zhalmauyz Kempir* (an alternative title for the painting). In the history of religions, it is a typical pattern for positive deities and forces to be transformed into negative mythological figures – demons

or embodiments of evil – during religious shifts. In antiquity, the ancestors of the Kazakhs revered female principles and worshipped many goddesses; this heritage has contributed to a rich demonology primarily populated by female figures. Two of the most prominent evil characters in Kazakh folklore are *Mystan Kempir* and *Zhalmauyz Kempir*. *Mystan Kempir* is a cunning older woman who often pretends to be a weak grandmother but can run faster than a horse and has enough strength to defeat a strong man in battle. She eats people, kidnaps children, and can cast curses and misfortune. She also guards the entrance to the underworld. However, she can sometimes appear as a helper to the hero, aiding or giving advice in critical situations.

*Zhalmauyz Kempir* is likewise an older woman, often portrayed with sharp claws or even hooves, and sometimes with seven heads. Like *Mystan*, she is cunning and strong, endowed with magical abilities and the ability to shape-shift. She can also serve as a protector of the hero, helping him to reach his goal. In five Kazakh tales, S. Kondybai identifies a recurring plot in which a mutilated and abandoned hero encounters new friends, hunts with them, and later they take a young woman into their home as a sister and housekeeper. One day, the fire goes out accidentally, and she is forced to seek a new flame, which leads her to an older woman (*Mystan* or *Zhalmauyz*). In exchange for fire, the older woman drains her blood and life force. When her «brothers» discover this, they defeat the witch, who, in exchange for her life, swallows them and then spits them out healed. In this way, *Mystan* and *Zhalmauyz* can be seen as fairy-tale transformations of the mythological goddess Ot-Ana.

Earlier, we noted that Ot-Ana is an ancient deity with protective and safeguarding functions. The viewer's first impression of the painting is that everything burns. All fragments and details of the composition appear in a kind of

cinematic movement in multidimensional space, where destruction and regeneration co-occur in a continuous flow. The goddess's body lacks a clearly defined form; her arms are composed of floating pieces of land veined with rivers. The sinuous, serpent echoes the chthonic nature of the character- or dragon-like figure in the background, covered in scales. This creature serves as an authorial hint at a monstrous being – a kind of Turkic «kraken», a mythic entity that symbolizes chaos and destruction, fear and terror, the image of an invisible enemy and an overwhelming elemental force. At the same time, this image can be read differently: as something that can be challenged and overcome, an allegory of trial and the possibility of victory, if one refuses to retreat and continues forward, confronting inner fears and doubts.

In the lower right corner, two armed batyrs (warriors) on horseback are visible. Their silhouettes are resolute and forward moving; their horses are tense, ready to leap and race faster than the wind at any moment. These heroes can confront the monster; six severe heads appear in the background. Importantly, the heads are not just cut off; they become part of the cosmic order, dissolving into the fabric of the universe among stars, galaxies, and planets, transforming them into black holes or portals into parallel worlds.

This duality is further emphasized by the triangular motif visible in the goddess' hand gestures and earrings. The triangle symbolizes the triad or threefold unity, divine triads, the triple nature of the universe, concepts such as sky-human-earth; body-mind-soul; birth-life-death; father—mother—child, and so on. In Tasbulatov's composition, Ot-Ana's hands at the level of the abdomen form an inverted triangle pointing downward, symbolizing the feminine principle, wisdom, the element of water, and the direction of energy toward the earth. It evokes associations with the maternal womb and the primordial mother



Pic. 2. Dauren Tasbulatov, «Goddess of Fire» in Turkic mythology (Mother of fire, Zhalmayz kempir), graphic. 2021

of humanity, underscoring themes of creation and rebirth.

Above Ot-Ana's head, gently diffusing the darkness of the cosmic sky, a bird appears as a luminous silhouette gliding through the currents of the universe. In global myths and legend, the bird is firmly associated with the celestial realm. As a creature capable of flight, it embodies the other world. In many narratives, the bird is a chosen intermediary of the gods, participating in the creation of the world and accompanying souls to the afterlife. Birds inhabit the crown of the world tree, which represents the structure of the universe. The bird in Tasbulatov's painting thus personifies the spiritual and divine, the free and immortal. In nature, birds are remarkable for their endurance, capable of traversing tens of thousands of kilometers during migrations. Likewise, in the artwork, a small dove traverses the limitless expanses of the cosmic ocean, maneuvering between stars, black holes, and parallel universes. Historically, the dove has

symbolized the human soul; in Christian iconography, the white dove represents the Holy Spirit. Here, the dove may poetically embody the soul of the Goddess of Fire herself, even if she is, by her nature, a primordial elemental deity.

## Basic Provisions

Cultural self-identification constitutes an essential foundation for personal self-determination in today's rapidly changing world and for maintaining psychological integrity. National identity reflects how an individual feels and understands themselves to belong to a particular people or nation, grounded in the recognition and acceptance of shared culture, language, values, mentality, and common history and worldviews. Anthony D. Smith outlines several core features that characterize national identity: a historical territory or homeland, collective myths and historical memory, a shared public culture, common legal rights and obligations, and an integrated economy. National identity develops through ethnic, linguistic, and religious ties, as well as through the shared historical and cultural traditions of those living within a familiar territory.

The national identity of citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan is rooted in the legacy of ancient Turkic nomadic civilizations and is characterized by openness, diversity, and cultural tolerance. Its defining features include history and geography, mythology, legends and folklore, oral traditions and artistic creativity, contemporary mass culture, and shared legal rights and responsibilities. Tengriism shaped the value systems and worldviews of the nomads and ancient Turkic peoples.

Visually, Kazakhstan's national identity manifests in state symbols, landscapes and natural scenery, archaeological monuments, cultural and artistic objects, language and folklore, ornamentation, music, traditions and rituals, and national

holidays. These elements are perceived through both conscious and subconscious channels. Consequently, state branding comprises the worldview, philosophy, and mentality of citizens, expressed through various sociocultural forms. The development of national identity cannot be effective without a state strategy that communicates its values and ideas to the broader public, since public acceptance and shared understanding of these values are essential.

One of the aims of this process is to encourage citizens to consciously choose domestic goods and services, based on a comprehensive assessment of quality, resonance with national identity, pride, and patriotism, and personal affinity. In contemporary life, media communication and the internet play a particularly influential role; mass media significantly shape public perceptions and cultural attitudes. Artistic production, in turn, fulfills educational, formative, and aesthetic-enlightening functions, helping cultivate taste, develop spiritual values, and visualize the style of an era. Among the contemporary young Kazakhstani artists who engage with mythological themes and imagery is the graphic designer and illustrator Dauren Tasbulatov, whose creative practice and artworks are examined in this article.

## Conclusion

In concluding this study and completing the art-historical analysis of cultural identity branding in contemporary illustration through the work of young Kazakhstani artists, several points may be emphasized. The branding of national identity through contemporary art requires state involvement and a comprehensive, multifaceted approach, one that synthesizes cultural heritage and tradition with the realities of the present. Tasbulatov's oeuvre demonstrates that visual culture grounded in mythological imagery, historical-

philosophical motifs, and folklore can serve as an effective instrument for transmitting cultural and spiritual values to the broader public, as these themes evoke genuine public interest and help cultivate a shared national spirit. Despite the use of digital tools that facilitate and accelerate the creative process, Tasbulatov preserves his expressive stylistic language and artistic vision, effectively integrating cultural symbolism, Turkic cosmological concepts, and mythological consciousness into his

compositions. His artworks are not only aesthetically compelling but also carry educational and formative significance: they draw viewers into an engaging dialogue, inviting them to think, decipher hidden meanings, and seek new knowledge. Thus, authorial illustration rich in cultural content have become not merely an artistic practice but a significant medium that shapes a coherent image of national identity and contributes to the formation of the country's cultural brand in the eyes of both local and international audiences.

**Contributions of authors:**

**L. A. Kan** – research, collecting data and search of literature, critical and theoretical analysis.

**M. F. Mukanov** – assembling the work, editing of the text, preparation and revision of the article for publication

**Вклад авторов:**

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**М. Ф. Муканов** – компоновка работы, редакция текста, подготовка и доработка исследовательской части текста.

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## БРЕНДИРОВАНИЕ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ КУЛЬТУРНОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ В ИСКУССТВЕ ИЛЛЮСТРАЦИИ НОВЕЙШЕГО КАЗАХСТАНА ЧЕРЕЗ ПРИЗМУ ТВОРЧЕСТВА ХУДОЖНИКА ДАУРЕНА ТАСБУЛАТОВА

**Аннотация:** статья посвящена искусствоведческому анализу художественно-коммерческих процессов брендингования образов и символики национальной культурной идентичности в искусстве современной иллюстрации казахстанского художника Даурена Тасбулатова. Статья начинается с исследования понятия - национальная казахстанская идентичность и ее роли в формировании экономического благополучия и имиджа страны. Сильный, позитивный и жизнеутверждающий национальный имидж является одним из самых ценных и значимых интеллектуально-художественных ресурсов для любой страны, что особенно актуально в эпоху всемирной глобализации. В международном рейтинге национальных брендов «Anholt Ipsos Nation Brands Index» (NBI) приведены страны с успешными стратегиями развития национального бренда, что позволяет аналогично рассматривать казахстанскую национальную идентичность как национальный бренд в мировом масштабе. Тенденция к «возведению здания» национальной идентичности будет совершенно неэффективна без реализации государственной стратегии трансляции ее идей и ценностей в массы, поскольку важен процесс общественного принятия и разделения этих идей и ценностей гражданами. В свою очередь, художественное произведение имеет важную воспитательную, образовательную и эстетико-просветительскую ценность, так же оно играет существенную роль в воспитании вкуса, формировании духовных ценностей и визуализации стиля эпохи. Исходя из этого, целью статьи является определение культурно-общественных ценностей национальных брендов Казахстана и их отображение в иллюстрациях современных авторов. В современном изобразительном искусстве Казахстана трудится целая плеяда художников-иллюстраторов, чьи произведения уже обладают самобытным сюжетно-художественным содержанием, которое можно охарактеризовать как сформировавшийся авторский бренд. В данной статье методом искусствоведческого анализа исследуются композиции мифологического содержания Даурена Тасбулатова. Несмотря на то, что художник в силу современных реалий создает свои произведения с помощью графических редакторов, его художественно-стилистические авторские особенности и культурные ценности казахской нации в их образно-символическом проявлении являются основным фундаментом его творчества. В результате, привлекая искусство иллюстрации, художник-иллюстратор транслирует массовому зрителю духовные национальные ценности, оказывая влияние на социум и формируя модель построения национальной идентичности в современной изобразительной культуре.

**Ключевые слова:** национальная идентичность, национальный бренд, казахстанская идентичность, искусство иллюстрация современного Казахстана, Даурен Тасбулатов.

**Для цитирования:** Кан, Лада, и Малик Муканов «Брендирование национальной культурной идентичности в искусстве иллюстрации новейшего Казахстана через призму творчества художника Даурена Тасбулатова». *Central Asian Journal of Art Studies*, т. 10, № 4, 2025, с. 155–177, DOI: 10.47940/cajas.v10i4.1134

*Авторы прочитали и одобрили окончательный вариант рукописи и заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.*

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## ДАУРЕН ТАСБУЛАТОВ ШЫҒАРМАШЫЛЫҒЫНЫҢ ПРИЗМАСЫ АРҚЫЛЫ ЖАҢА ҚАЗАҚСТАН ИЛЛЮСТРАЦИЯ ӨНЕРІНДЕГІ ҰЛТТЫҚ МӘДЕНИ БІРЕГЕЙЛІКТІ БРЕНДТЕУ

**Аннотация:** Бұл мақала қазақстандық суретші Даурен Тасбулатовтың заманауи иллюстрация өнеріндегі ұлттық мәдени бірегейліктің бейнелері мен символикасын брендеудің көркем-коммерциялық үдерістерін өнертанулық талдауға арналған. Зерттеу үлттық қазақстандық бірегейлік ұғымының және оның елдің экономикалық игілігі мен имиджін қалыптастырудағы рөлін қарастырудан басталады. Құшті, позитивті және өміршеш үлттық имидж кез келген мемлекет үшін аса бағалы әрі маңызға ие зияткерлік-көркем ресурс болып табылады, бұл жаһандану дәүірінде ерекше өзектілікке ие. «Anholt Ipsos Nation Brands Index» (NBI) үлттық брендтерінің халықаралық рейтингінде үлттық брендті дамыту стратегиясы табысты жүзеге асқан елдер көрсетілген, бұл Қазақстанның үлттық бірегейлігін әлемдік деңгейдегі үлттық бренд ретінде қарастыруға мүмкіндік береді. Үлттық бірегейлікті «қалыптастыру» үрдісі оның идеялары мен құндылықтарын көң бұқараға жеткізетін мемлекеттік стратегиясыз тиімсіз болмақ, өйткені бұл идеялар мен құндылықтарды азаматтардың қабылдауы мен бөлісүі аса маңызды. Өнер туындысы өз кезегінде тәрбиелік, білім беру және эстетикалық-ағартушылық мәнге ие, сондай-ақ ол талғамды тәрбиелеуде, рухани құндылықтарды қалыптастыруда және заман стилін визуализациялауда елеулі рөл атқарады. Осыған орай, мақаланың мақсаты – Қазақстанның үлттық брендтерінің мәдени-қоғамдық құндылықтарын айқындау және олардың заманауи авторлардың иллюстрацияларында көрініс табуын анықтау. Қазіргі Қазақстанның бейнелеу өнерінде сюжеті мен көркемдік мазмұны жағынан өзіндік авторлық бренд деңгейіне жеткен бірқатар иллюстратор-суретшілер енбек етуде. Бұл мақалада Даурен Тасбулатовтың мифологиялық мазмұндағы композициялары өнертанулық талдау әдісімен зерттеледі. Заманауи жағдайларға орай суретші өз туындыларын графикалық редакторлар авторлық жасайтын болса да, оның авторлық көркем-стилистикалық ерекшеліктері мен қазақ ұлттының мәдени құндылықтары образдық-символдық түрғыда оның шығармашылығының негізгі іргетасын құрайды. *Нәтижесінде иллюстрация өнерін қолдана отырып, иллюстратор-суретші үлттық рухани құндылықтарды көшпілік көрерменге жеткізіл, социумға ықпал етеді және қазіргі бейнелеу мәдениетінде үлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастыру модельін түзеді.*

**Түйінді сездер:** үлттық бірегейлік, үлттық бренд, қазақстандық бірегейлік, заманауи Қазақстан иллюстрация өнері, Даурен Тасбулатов.

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Авторлар қолжазбаның соғы һүсқасын оқып, макұлдаады және мүдделер қайшылығы жоқ екендігін мәлімдейді.

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