

HISTORICAL DYNAMICS AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE OF THE SOCIETY: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS

HALLOWEEN AND THE FEAST OF IVAN KUPALA: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

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To study foreign languages is a vital necessity. Knowledge of a foreign language is very important in modern society. But knowing only a language is not enough. In order to better understand other people, it is very important to get acquainted with the culture of these people, their traditions, values, understand their worldview and world perception, be able to see the world through their eyes. Knowledge of English is important as a way of learning different cultures. Studying the culture and customs of other countries helps to develop the cultural level. Holidays and traditions form an important part of the life of many people. After all, this is the history and heritage of the country. It is always interesting to learn more and more about the peculiarities of celebrating the events of the country whose language we are studying. That's why I wanted to learn more about the culture of England and compare it with the culture of Belarus.

The purpose of research work is to improve the level of knowledge on the culture of other countries, compare the foreign holidays with "ours" and identify the relevance of these holidays at the present time.

Material and methods. The material of the study was the history and traditions of the holidays of Ivan Kupala and Halloween. In the course of the survey 30 people were interviewed. In general, they are familiar with Halloween and with the holiday of Ivan Kupala.

Findings and their discussion. Despite the fact that most of the respondents do not celebrate these holidays (52%), Halloween (38%) is still more popular than Ivan Kupala (10%). Differences and similarities between the two holidays were found in the course of my study.

Having studied many sources of information, I realized that these holidays are very similar. Both in history and in traditions there are many similarities but apart from the similarities I also found some differences.

For example, do you know that Halloween symbolizes the arrival of winter, and the holiday of Ivan Kupala symbolizes the day of meeting fire and water? And something else, fortune telling - is an integral part of both holidays especially often guess at love.

A lot of customs and traditions of Ivan Kupala holiday are associated with love. Girls gather flowers and weave coronets which they wear at the holiday and then, at dawn, they throw their coronets into the river and let them float downstream. The boy who fishes the coronet out of the water will be that girl's

intended. At night, young and old light bonfires not far from their village or town and perform traditional dances, sing folk songs and jump over the fire. Jumping over the fire when it is burning low, as well as bathing in a river or lake are supposed to be the acts of purification. One of the culminating moments of the event is the search for a magic fern-flower in the forest. As the old legend says this flower blossoms only once a year, on «Kupalle», and the one who is lucky to find it will master the language of glass, trees, birds and animals and be happy for the rest of his life. No wonder that a lot of young boys and girls spend hours in the search for the fern-flower in blossom, which is also a symbol of love.

Traditionally, Halloween is celebrated around the fire, with songs and dances, as well as with terrible stories and legends about spirits, sorcerers, witches and all other evil spirits. People visit neighboring houses on Halloween night, which symbolizes the dead in search of food. The masks of demons and goblins represent evil spirits who seek to do something evil. Those who distribute sweets represent houses that have visited the dead, or may also represent frightened people who try to propitiate the evil spirits. Girls on this night are engaged in fortune-telling: they throw pebbles and nuts into the fire and watch what pattern will leave the fire on their surface and determine the future.

The girl should take an apple in a dark room to light a candle, and with this candle to sit in front of a mirror, then it is necessary to peer intently into the reflection. You need to eat an apple or comb your hair. After some time, the girl should see the reflection of her future husband. If a candle suddenly falls, it means presence of evil spirits, divination should be stopped.

Conclusion. In conclusion I should say that in the course of the survey 30 people were interviewed. In general, they are familiar with Halloween and with the holiday of Ivan Kupala.

Despite the fact that most of the respondents do not celebrate these holidays (52%), Halloween (38%) is still more popular than Ivan Kupala (10%).

These holidays are mysterious, mystical and inexhaustible on inventions. They mix modernity and mythical antiquity. Two concepts - good and evil, black and white, everything bad and all good - are interwoven into them. They are the same as life: multifaceted. But we need to learn to distinguish the subtle path of Life leading to the Light.

The need to attract the attention of foreigners to the national culture has forced many countries to revive the forgotten traditions.

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HOROSCOPES: REALITY OR JUST WISHFUL THINKING

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Zodiac Sign is associated with the star under which any person was born. There are billiards of stars, therefore different names of constellation were created in order to distinguish them from each other. In modern world we know 12 types of constellation. Each person with any Zodiac Sign has own peculiar features and can differently behave in society. Sometimes the influence of any Zodiac Sign doesn't have only positive effect, but negative too. Our research is devoted to Zodiac Signs and their impact on people's nature.

The actuality of the work lies in the fact that there are many controversies between people who believe in horoscopes and Zodiac Signs' influence and those who think that it's wishful thinking.

The aim of the research is to find out whether the characters of people in life coincide with the description of characters in horoscope and Zodiac Signs' influence on our life.

Material and methods. As a material we used horoscopes. The methods of the research are theoretical, historical, and empirical.

Findings and their discussion. Zodiac Signs have been a part of humanity, guiding them through the space as well as providing them insight into their own characteristics since thousands of years. Certain changes have obviously been made through the years but it still remains to possess major significance in today's world. There have been certain rumours about this in past and that has diminished its credibility and importance.

Each sign of the Zodiac has its own element, which has a strong influence on the fate of a man and his life. For example, signs which are in the power of the forces of fire (Aries, Leo and Sagittarius) are subject to the strong influence of energy, which, on the one hand, bestows perseverance and leadership qualities, and on the other warmth and even passion. Each of the present Signs is charged with perseverance and zeal. Their representatives are accustomed to decisive action and never deviate from their goals. They are guided by the desire to subjugate others, but they like to lead a fairly carefree lifestyle. Representatives, under the signs of this element, like fire bright, catchy. They have well-developed muscles. A bit massive. They are characterized by good health, vitality, excellent energy.