

THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL FIGURES AND LEGEND MOTIFS IN THE MODERN PROSE STRUCTURE IN EXPRESSING THE IDEA OF STATEHOOD

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Abstract: *The article is relevant as the idea of statehood that dates back to ancient times has become an eternal theme in literature. The theme of protection of country, peacefulness and heroism, which occupies a central place in folk model, has become the basis of written fiction. The large literary works in the world literature have made the famous historical figures, who united nomadic tribes, created a large state, fought for strengthening, development and protection of the state, the protagonists or just ordinary heroes. In this article the authors considered the works on this subject, analyzed the struggles and conflicts during the defending the country, and life goals of some heroes, who lifted the spirit of people. The text structure of such works that explains the author's position by displaying a historical event in combination with mythic motifs requires comparative and hermeneutical analysis.*

Keywords: conflict, functional-stylistic layer, novel, plot, psychological details, writer.

The works of famous writers as Chingiz Aitmatov and Abish Kekilbay are based on historical-mythic figures and reflect various aspects of artistic approach of prose and picturesque mastery, depicted by psychological depth, romantic motif and mythopoetic meaning. The novel “Anyzdyn akryr” (End of the legend) and story “Khansha Dariya khikayasy” (The story of princess Dariya) written by well-known writer-depicter Abish Kekilbay are the major works that revived the nature of world-famous rulers psychologically and philosophically in the art space. Consideration of these works in a textual context and tapping into them in a structural direction affect on revealing the writer's gifts.

According to Y.M. Lotman, text and the work of art are not the same concept: “The idea that the text and work of fiction are one and the same should be strongly rejected. The text is one of the components of a work of fiction, of course, an extremely essential component, without which the existence of the fiction is impossible. But artistic effect as a whole arises from comparison of a text with a complex set of life and ideological-aesthetic performances”¹. The concept of structural analysis of the text was associated

¹ Y.M. Lotman, *The structure of the literary text. Analysis of the literary text*, Azbuka, St. Petersburg, 2016.

with F. Sossur² in the XX century. Based on the theory of structuralism, any work is formed structurally. Continuing the position of F. Sossur, K. Levi-Stros³ pays special attention to binary opposition in the text structure.

Given that “The initial human outlook is based on the knowledge and understanding of the nature of contradictions”⁴, it can be noted that all approaches to the structure of contradictions begin with the tectonics of binary opposition based on the nature. This binary opposition structure served the nature of struggle in fiction and identification of dyadic images. Ranging from clashes and fights of protagonist and antagonist to the division of hero's nature into two parts, binary opposition was absorbed into the work of fiction through oxymoron, antithesis, antonym, amphithesis, and acrothesis, and led to the personification of heroes⁵. Conflict in the hero's soul in national literature is reflected in such stories and novels as O. Bokey's “Saitan kopir” (The devil's bridge), T. Abdik's “On kol” (Right hand), “Parasat maidany” (The Battlefield of sanity), “Tugyr men gumyr” (Pedestal and life), M. Magauin's “Kypshak Aruy” (The Kipchak beauty), “Zharmak”, and Abish Kekilbay's “Anyzdyn akyry” (End of the legend), “Khansha Dariya khikayasy” (The story of princess Dariya), etc. in various forms. Along with the recognition of historical-legend personalities as a character of fiction, historical mission goes over to artistic and aesthetic mission. The reason for their desperate struggle and heroism is preservation of the country. When great personalities become a hero of fictions their behavior, action, intention and goals have different character and it seems that it was not they who preserved the state, but other ordinary people.

Transformation of the role of historical figures and legend motifs in the A. Kekilbay's prose

A. Kekilbay's works present the law of struggle and unity of contradiction, which is the driving force of development. White and black, good and bad, yesterday and today, honesty and evil intent, love and hatred, peace and war, contentment and greed, kindness and evil develop together in the novel “Anyzdyn akyry” and story “Khansha Dariya khikayasy”. These eternal themes, transformed in the writer's thoughts, are masterfully displayed

² F. Sossur, *General linguistics course*, Ural University Publ, Ekaterinburg, 1999.

³ K. Levi-Stros, *Structural anthropology*, Nauka, Moscow, 1983.

⁴ Y.M. Lotman, *The structure of the literary text. Analysis of the literary text*, Azbuka, St. Petersburg, 2016.

⁵ Z.A. Aimukhambet, A. Abdilmanatkyzy, K. Baitanasova, A. Seiputanova, and K. Kurmambayeva, “The poetic interpretation of binary opposition in the structure of myth”, *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 2017, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 25-39.

in the works. In the works of the famous writer Chingiz Aitmatov these concepts, based on a rapid struggle, are weighed through hero's actions.

A. Kekilbai's "Khansha Dariya khikayasy" is the work that reflects the legends in artistic knowledge, creating the contradictory nature of the historical personality by psychological depths. Folklorist S. Kaskabasov said: "The main content of a legend is one of the recognized facts of life. Of course, when passing on by word of mouth, from one to another, some details of this fact or general message about it can be changed, and sometimes even can be false"⁶. The scientist's opinion is attuned to the poetic lines, taken as an epigraph of A. Kekilbai's story "Khansha Dariya khikayasy":

*Is this true or false,
People, who know the truth
Time itself drove into grave ...*

When it comes to text structure, particular attention is paid to intertextual analysis. According to this analysis, the epigraph of the work is considered in the framework of paratext concept. The main plot of the story is the legend based on history. Before starting his work, the writer promotes the verse "is it true or false". So what does the work on the Tangut legend motif want to tell? In the author's brief presentation you can see in which way the story is oriented. "A river in East Asia is called as Hwang Ho – the Yellow river by the Chinese, Machu – the Red river by the Tibetans, and as Khara-Muren – the Black river by the Mongols. And everyone understands if you call it Khatyn-Gol – Khansha-Dariya. Why is that?"⁷.

In order to find the answer the writer revived the legend in the art space. The most critical issues of the present are raised in Abish Kekilbay's prose fiction through the revival of ancient mythic knowledge and development of mythic structure. In the textual components of his works archetypal foundations have become the source of artistic system, legend motifs and plots occupy an important place. Connecting the past and present, showing the vital problems of life, delving into the roots of beneficence by describing the nature of a complex and contradictory human being demonstrate the maturity of the author's talent. It is natural to start the words on the expressive structure of Abish Kekilbay's prose, first of all, with the writer's language.

Identifying the function of the language as the basis of any work, Y.M. Lotman, who studied the structure of a literary text, classifies them as "natural, artificial, and auxiliary language i.e. the language of a second level" and finds the language of fiction as "the system of a second level"⁸. He says that fiction should have "special language", as one of the mass communication

⁶ S. Kaskabasov, *Zhanazyk*, Audarma, Astana, 2002.

⁷ K. Levi-Stros, *Structural anthropology*, Nauka, Moscow, 1983.

⁸ Y.M. Lotman, *The structure of the literary text. Analysis of the literary text*, Azbuka, St. Petersburg, 2016.

types, and it is directly related to natural language. Given the fact that the language of fiction is a functional-stylistic layer of the national language, this layer is a special function in any work of fiction. As the primary means of transmitting thoughts and main idea in speech, the language gets a new coloring and meaning. In other words, a work of fiction requires it from the language. A word originating from language formation moves from natural character to artistic activity. And when it falls into the hands of a talented mature writer, it becomes even more beautiful and demonstrates its limitless possibilities.

In Abish Kekilbay's⁹ prose the conflict is identified by the revival of opposition concepts in the nature of a hero. This revival is structural in nature. The passage of the poem by E. Ibitanov in the epigraph of the story "Khansha Dariya khikayasy" has the lines: "Is this true or false ...". These lines indicate the nature of struggle that became the basis of the work. The concept "lie" that defines "truth" is continued by the struggle of good and evil, and goes further. The main characters of "Anyzdyn akry" and "Khansha Dariya khikayasy" cannot be put into one concept of a protagonist personality. Looking from the point of this concept, we notice that the behavior of a protagonist is not characteristic of these main characters. The protagonist personality must be connected not only with the concepts of strength, superiority, but also beneficence and kindness. From this perspective, the protagonist personality in two works corresponds to Younger khanym and Gurbelzhin khanym, but not Overlord and Great ruler.

Abish Kekilbay's creative path is characteristic of the period when the historical events and history of people became the basis of the Kazakh literature, that is, from the 60s of the XX century. In the thematic and genre selection of novels and stories that delved too deep into the time of conflicts and struggle, majority of them are regarded historical-chronic and historical-ethnographic. And Abish Kekilbay approached the development of historical theme in another way. In the stories "Kui", "Khansha Dariya khikayasy", "Shynyrau" (Abyss) and the novel "Anyzdyn akry" he talk about the current issues, reviving the ancient legend stories and paying attention to the psychological and moral aspect of the past.

In the introduction to Abish Kekilbay prose "Dala balladalary" (Steppe Ballads, published by "Molodaya gvardya" publishing house in Moscow¹⁰, Kazakh classical writer Abdizhamil Nurpeisov said: "The writer avoids using the names of famous historical figures in his works... He seeks deep philosophical and psychological understanding of the time and nature of the

⁹ A. Kekilbay, *Tandamaly. Eki tomdyk*, Zhazushy, Almaty, 1999; A. Kekilbay, *On eki tomdyk shygarmalar zhinagy*, Olke, Almaty, 1999.

¹⁰ A. Kekilbay, *Ballads of the steppes*, Molodaya Gvardya, Moscow, 1975.

hero, paying attention to the social condition of human life. This enhances the veracity of stories¹¹.

The main individuality of the artistic space of a highly skilled writer Abish Kekilbay is that he revives ancient legend motifs at the historical-philosophical level and modernizes them. He finds the eternal ideals, common to all mankind, in the depths of legends. Lighting up the truth of ancient times with the rays of modern era, he preaches life goals and humanistic ideas. So we should find Kekilbay's artistic excellence on this side. The opinions of prominent writers and critics about his works are also in this regard. Chingiz Aitmatov says that he touched on "the most important issues of the past and present", and Abdizhamil Nurpeisov draws attention to the fact that "socially important ideas are the basis of his work". If you look at the structure of his works, you will notice that the writer seeks to convey the complex nature of a man and the causes of his various actions. The artistic-aesthetic power and socio-philosophical depth in the writer's works become wider in the historical-psychological novel "Anyzdyn akry". In the novel Abish Kekilbai showed his mastering the legend history in the text structure. The legend motif in his work is depicted in psychological details, and served to reflect the strengths and weaknesses, causes of inner fury and spiritual disappointment of the main hero, protagonist - Amirshi (Overlord), as one of the mere mortals.

In the novel "Anyzdyn akry" the plot of the legend is combined with the text and penetrated into the psychology of heroes¹². The red wormy apple that Great khanym sent to Overlord and a big tower draw attention as an object or detail in the complex psychological depth by the stream of consciousness in the plot about Overlord, Young master, and Younger khanym. The author figuratively gives the construction of tower, absorbed by a sense of love, inherent to man, comparing psychological meaning with lyrical melody. When it comes to love, lyricism is inevitable. The feelings of kindness and mercy, discouragement that impedes superiority and inner sadness in formidable Overlord, who inspires fear with his severity, shows his complex nature. What about the state of Young master, overwhelmed with emotions? How can we blame the tenderness and innocence of Younger khanym? Here the author skillfully combines this multi-layered line of events into one channel and seeks the fate of a person in the hidden subtext of the legend.

Here we express Ch. Aitmatov's saying about A. Kekilbay's artistic skill in turning the mythological structure into the basis of modern fiction, talking about the legend as the uniqueness of folklore heritage: "Having studied the mythological system and structure, talented Kazakh prose writer A. Kekilbay touched on important issues of the past and present. According to a high philosophical point, this book is a mixture of legend and truth and the

¹¹ S. Kaskabasov, *Zhanazyk*, Audarma, Astana, 2002.

¹² A. Kekilbay, *Khansha-Darya kbikeyasy. Balladalar men roman*, Atamura, Almaty, 2003.

experience of the past and present. All these components (of course, including the prose writer's talent), in our opinion, not only enrich the content of the work, but also increase its artistic quality”.

In order to reveal the behavior, goals and life principles of the characters of the “Khansha Dariya khikayasy” through their actions and events, the legend story is on the hidden layer of the text structure. The human frailty of the Great ruler of the world ultimately leads to his death. The author makes the heroes dependent on an invisible ladder between rise and fall. At first Great ruler is at the top of this ladder and Shidurge-Gurbelzhin are at the bottom, but in the end everything becomes the other way around. Of course, Great ruler seems arrogant, trying to destroy the entire Tanguts country, killing their ruler and taking his wife. This is a deceptive picture. In fact, as a result of the situations, the couple Shidurge-Gurbelzhin go up the stairs, and the ruler goes down. This way we will see the result of the conflict at the structure of the text.

Thus, the author tells the legend of Khansha Darya, the main personality Tangut princess, that is, the legend hero with the name of the great river in the east, the Asian princess. Great ruler also cannot stay outside the enjoyment of life's pleasures. But he cannot do it. His thoughts of power surpasses everything. Paying attention to the character's idea, the writer offers these psychological details at the beginning of the work. The author describes the last years of the victorious ruler's life in a grey autumn time and consonant mood: “He woke up when the cold light of an autumn morning began to spread inside the tent. This morning, when he got out of bed, he lost that sweet dream he admired. The times when you take a nap, leaning on a saddle and holding your whip, without even hearing the clatter of horses around, and so you become vigorous, are things of past”¹³.

It's not for nothing that the ruler recalls the past, looking at the precious rings in his hands. His memory of those encouraging events of the past, at the time when the strength and spirit left him, seems to indicate the certain event: “... during sleep he touches all his fingers with precious rings, as if afraid that someone would cut them”¹⁴. These precious rings on his fingers are a sign of invincibility and triumph, but not unlimited power. Even the ring of Solomon has the inscription “everything will pass”.

“A red ruby ring is from the severed finger of an arrogant woman, who did not bend in front of him during the conquest of Bukhara, a silver ring taken from an old blacksmith during an attack on Otyrar, a pearl ring taken from the hand of a muslim who did not stop praying during the capture of Samarkand ... Although the ruler collected these rings from the fingers of spiritualized people, who showed resistance, it cannot give eternal power”. Then the next situations as the psychological image of the Tangut ruler

¹³ K. Levi-Stros, *Structural anthropology*, Nauka, Moscow, 1983.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

Shidurge and his wife Gurbelzhin khanyim are given by the method of consciousness flow. The moments of too confusing psychological conflict between Great ruler and Shidurge-Gurbelzhin happen side by side. The moments of the ruler's joy of victory are too short. According to the prediction of her husband, the Tangut princess Gurbelzhin killed Great ruler. This is a great triumph of the "snow-white" princess Gurbelzhin over the pride and evil.

The archetypal layer of this work is the victory of kindness over evil on the battlefield of life, and kneeling of dark forces before tenderness and purity. The defeat of the cruel ruler, who shocked the world with his fury, on the battlefield of goodness is one of the most valuable aspects of our mind, which has deep roots in mythic motifs.

Mythic and legend motifs in Ch. Aitmatov's works

Imagery in A. Kekilbay's work is characterized by the revival and rebirth of ancient legends in the fiction. The philosophical view as a man's fate and roots of truth in the subtext of legends stands out in the poetic space of such a mature artist as A. Kekilbay in the deepest, highest and infinite form. The Kyrgyz writer Ch. Aitmatov made Genghis Khan a character of his work and showed him from the other side. The fate of his work "Shyngys khannyn ak bulyt" (The white cloud of Genghis Khan) about the clash of good and evil, great sorrow for man from cruelty and superiority, simple human happiness, love, and endless joy of feeling of procreation was not easy. Originally written as one of the events of the novel "Borandy beket" (Snowstorm station), this work was "expelled" from that work.

On the whole, this work can be particularly distinguished among Ch. Aitmatov's works with mythopoetic images such as "Teniz zhagalai zhugirgen targyl tobet" (Spotted dog running along the seashore), "Ak keme" (The White steamship), and "Borandy beket" (Snowstorm station). The mythic "layer" of the story "The white cloud of Genghis Khan", which was once shortened from the novel "Snowstorm station", and was published abroad under the title "A story for the novel" in 1992. V.V. Agenosov writes: "Myth in Ch. Aitmatov's works is not just a folk legend narrative and mythic stylization. Interpreting mythic legends at a higher level, the writer always seeks to treat modernity with a deep understanding"¹⁵.

We know that the mythopoetic description deepens the content of Ch. Aitmatov's "Spotted dog running along the seashore". From the very beginning, the story leads into the world of ancient legends. In the introduction to the work that begins with the words: "In the impenetrable darkness full of moisture and coldness of seaside night, all along the Sea of Okhotsk, along the entire line of the land and sea, there was an eternal, relentless battle between

¹⁵ V.V. Agenosov, *Soviet philosophical novel*, Prometey, Moscow, 1989.

the two elements. The land prevented the sea movement, the sea did not tire of stepping on land” the constant battle of the world is transmitted philosophically”¹⁶. Here the myth about creation of the earth is associated with Louvre duck. The boy’s imagination at night before going out to sea appears with the “creation” of the earth by Louvre duck. The author recreates the story of the Louvre duck that assumes creation of the world, as a creative hero in archaic myths. The mythic motif that the earth was created from an egg of a flying duck is common among many peoples of the world.

Mythopoetic images in Ch. Aitmatov’s works “The White steamship”, “Snowstorm station”, “Spotted dog running along the seashore”, “The white cloud of Genghis Khan” seem in harmony with deep philosophical thoughts. The mythical motifs in these works, violating the strict principles of socialist realism in the Soviet period, and having studied a new way of depicting the great ideals of mankind and problems, are skillfully combined with the artistic image, and demonstrate the writer’s position. In the story “The white cloud of Genghis Khan” a wandering old soothsayer told Genghis Khan that the sign of Tengri’s (Sky God) support for him was a white cloud above his head. “As for the sign, I’ll say that a cloud will appear above your head and follow you - It will be Tengri’s finger, blessing your highest position on earth. But you must protect this cloud, for if you lose it, you will lose your powerful force”¹⁷. The predictions of the soothsayer came true, and indeed a little cloud appeared over Genghis Khan’s head.

In the world mythology great attention is paid to the connection of clouds with destiny of a man. Most stories about this mystical creature are connected with magic. The lives of prophets are closely connected with clouds. It is also true that long-standing knowledge lies on the connection between clouds in heaven and man on earth. However, modern science also does not exclude this connection. According to some mystics, clouds are distinguished by mood, ability to think, grieve, etc., like ordinary people. Examples in the ritual folklore, such as calling upon clouds and changing weather, are probably related to the belief in the connection between clouds and man. In the content of these verses we see addressing to a living conscious spirit:

*Come, come, the cloud, come;
Cloud, a child of two mothers!
From the strong currents
Come and be friendly, cloud.
From the grassy lands
Hurry and run, cloud!*

¹⁶ Sh. Aitmatov, *Ғасырдан да ұзақ түн*, Atamura, Almaty, 2005b.

¹⁷ Sh. Aitmatov, *Ақ кеме. Повестер*, Atamura, Almaty, 2005a.

In this verse of cognitive nature, there is faith, which speaks to the cloud as a conscious spirit. These beliefs of ancient times turn into artistic character and aesthetic function in modern literature. The use of cognitive meaning in the samples of ancient ritual folklore subsequently acquired ideological and aesthetic significance and expanded its functions in fictions. In the literary works there are many examples on the connection between the mythical consciousness, seeking to understand the mysteries of nature, and the poetic consciousness, depicting the world in a different way.

There is reason to believe that Chingiz Aitmatov took the plot of the “white cloud” from the life of Mukhammed (peace be upon him), who was the last prophet. According to religious stories, when Prophet Mukhammed (p.b.u.h.) in his youth was traveling with a caravan from Mecca to Sham, a cumulus cloud above his head followed him to protect from heat. When the caravan stopped and the Prophet went to rest under a tree, the cloud stood above the tree, covering it. People noticed and admired it. Everyone perceived this cumulus cloud as a sign and proof that Mukhammed (p.b.u.h.) is God’s beloved prophet and messenger.

In the stories (also in Kazakh stories) about the saints there are many motifs about the clouds that accompany the saints. Aitmatov’s work is evidence of “a cumulus cloud”, distinguished mainly by mythopoetic form of mystical nature, and plays an important role in the fictions on the problems of humanity. The mythologem “a cumulus cloud” with a special “function” of connecting a man with the Creator demonstrated the human nature of Genghis Khan. When the soothsayer repeatedly warned him not to lose the cloud, a sign of support of Tengri, the arrogant khan asked: “How can I keep a floating cloud in the sky, will it obey me? Or should I take a horse with wings and send my faithful shepherd to the sky to watch the cloud? If so, why not curb it? So what do you think, can I keep it in the windy sky?” The soothsayer answered briefly: “This is your case”¹⁸. The author attaches great importance to this short dialogue between the khan and soothsayer. In fact, the wise khan must have known what to do in order not to lose the attention and support of Sky God.

As the soothsayer warned, Genghis Khan could not save the cloud like the apple of his eye. Sky God supported Genghis Khan when he did great things, and turned his back on him, when the khan unjustifiably blamed and executed people. When one of the commanders Erden and a flag embroiderer Dogulang violated the ban that strictly prohibited the birth of a child during the campaign, and were sentenced to death, Sky God turned against him. Altun, a slave woman who had fallen behind and too far from the army of the khan, moving west, and left in the desert with an orphaned child that just opened the door to this world, could not find shelter in the steppe and enough food for the child. The author describes this moment as “there is no haze or

¹⁸ V.V. Agenosov, *Soviet philosophical novel*, Prometey, Moscow, 1989.

light in the vast steppe. Deserted steppe stretched the around, the eye has nothing to stop! The boundless steppe and bottomless blue sky, only a white cloud circled overhead”¹⁹. The author does not mention this cloud in vain. Tengri turned to poor child and woman, left in the boundless steppe. The white cloud over the head of the great ruler is now over the head of an orphan and slave Altun.

Thus, the Great goodness that became the golden core of Ch. Aitmatov’s work was discovered. The cloud takes care of the slave Altun and the orphan not for nothing. The man’s fate on earth is only in the hands of the Creator. Even the great ruler like Genghis Khan cannot make a decision. The cloud, like a messenger of the heaven to earth, was a witness and the reason that the old slave woman, who was not married and had no children, had milk and was breastfeeding a hungry child. Genghis Khan, who was heading west, came back, as “leaning his trembling palm over his eyes, no, not delayed, the white cloud didn’t lag behind, and it was neither in front nor behind. Having reached the Edil, Genghis Khan realized that Tengri had turned away from him. He did not go further”²⁰.

The essence of the mythologem “a cumulus cloud” with a deep hidden meaning throughout the work is developed in direct connection with human destiny. All are responsible for the survival of mankind and future generation. The author expresses this great idea, making a glorious historical figure the main character. But the fact that the cloud is moving from Genghis Khan to an orphaned child will swap these two characters. That is, at the beginning the main character was the khan, and at the end it was a newborn child, because he has just taken his first step into this world as the continuation of life and future owner of the country.

Conclusions

Historical events are the basis of A. Kekilbay and Ch. Aitmatov’s works that we have analyzed, and historical figures as great rulers, who created a great empire and fought for the inviolability of this empire are the main characters. Both writers approach the problem from humanistic and philosophical perspective, referring to the great ideals of humankind. Thus, the Tangut princess Gurbelzhin (“Khansha Dariya khikayasy”), who fought for her people until her death, Young master and a good-natured Young khanym (“Anyzdyn akryy”), who won the ruler over with her art, a newborn orphaned child and an old slave Altun, who took care of the child (“The white cloud of Genghis Khan”).

¹⁹ *Ibidem.*

²⁰ *Ibidem.*

They become the protagonist heroes of these works, demonstrating the eternity of human ideals that guarantee the triumph of peace and heroism. The mythic and legend motifs at the heart of the works of these two writers played an important role in expressing this idea.