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THE THREE-STAGE WORLD AND THE EMBODIMENT OF THE FIRST WEDDING MOTIVE IN THE POEM «QISSA QULAMERGEN»

Abstract. The article provides an overview of the first worldview of marriage depicted in ancient epics. The two main themes of this epic are the image of a three-stage world (space, earth, man, subterranean) and the motive for the hero's marriage, each of which affects the symbolic and cultural significance of the epic. These levels represent different aspects of existence. In addition, the motives for marriage in the epic reflect not only a social event but also symbolic signs that reflect harmony between different forces. Purpose of the study: To analyze the three-stage degree of the world and the peculiarities of the embodiment of the first wedding motif in the poem «Qissa Qulamergen», to identify their symbolic meaning and influence on the development of the plot. That is, the marriage motif in the epic is seen as a symbolic sign of different worlds or opposing forces, such as hero and woman (totem image), earth and sky, man and god (spirit). On the basis of this study we can expect these results as, revealing the peculiarities of the three-stage world order in the poem and its role in the plot structure. Also, the analysis of the wedding motif and its semantic load in the context of the work.

Keywords: folklore, ancient epic, motive, plot, three-stage world.

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«Қисса Құламерген» жырындағы үш сатылы әлем және алғашқы үйлену мотивінің бейнеленуі

Аңдатпа. Мақалада көне эпостарда бейнеленген үйлену сарынның алғашқы дүниетанымына шолу жасалады. Адамзат өркениеті дамуының алғашқы кезеңдеріндегі елеулі туындылардың бірі – «Қисса Құламерген» жыры. Бұл эпостың екі негізгі тақырыбы – үш сатылы дүниенің бейнелеуі (ғарыштық, жер, адам, жер асты) және батырдың үйлену мотиві, олардың әрқайсысы эпостың символдық және мәдени мәніне ықпал етеді. «Қисса Құламерген» жырындағы ғаламның құрылымы көптеген әлем эпостары мен мифологияларына тән түрі. Бұл деңгейлер болмыстың әртүрлі аспектілерін білдіреді. Эпостағы үйлену мотиві әлеуметтік оқиға ғана емес, әртүрлі күштер арасындағы үйлесімділікті көрсететін символдық белгілері ерекше көрініс берген. Батырдың үйленуі оның инициация сынағы мен белгілі бір нәтижесі ретінде орын алуы, оның деңгейлік кезеңіне өтуі және қоғамдағы мәртебесінің нығайуы ерекше сипатталады. Осыған орай, аталған тақырыбыздың негізгі мақсаты, дүниенің үш сатылы дәрежесі мен «Қисса Құламерген» эпосындағы үйлену мотивінің өрнектелу ерекшеліктерін талдап, олардың символдық мәні мен сюжеттің дамуына әсерін анықтау. Яғни, «Қисса Құламерген» эпосындағы үйлену мотиві тереңірек деңгейде батыр мен әйел (тотемдік бейне), жер мен аспан, адам мен құдай (рух) сияқты әртүрлі аймақтардың немесе қарама-қарсы күштердің символдық белгі ретінде қарастырылуы. Бұл көбінесе әр әлем күштерінің тепе-теңдігін, үйлесімділікті қалпына келтіруді немесе тағдырдың орындалуына жетелейді. Осы зерттеуге сүйене отырып, эпостардағы үш сатылы әлемдік

тәртіптің ерекшеліктері мен оның сюжеттік құрылымдағы рөлі ашылды. Сондай-ақ шығарма аясындағы үйлену мотиві мен оның мағыналық жүктемесіне талдау жасалды.

Кілтті сөздер: фольклор, көне эпос, мотив, сюжет, үш сатылы әлем.

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Трехступенчатый мир и воплощение первого свадебного мотива в поэме «Кисса Куламерген»

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается обзор мировоззрения о браке, изображенного в древних эпосах. Одним из самых ярких произведений на ранних этапах развития человеческой цивилизации является поэма «Кисса Куламерген». Двумя основными темами этого эпоса являются образ трехступенчатых миров (космос, земля, человек, подземелье) и мотив женитьбы героя, которых влияет на символическое и культурное значение эпоса. Структура мироздания данного эпоса характерна для многих мировых эпосов и мифологий. Эти уровни представляют разные аспекты бытия. Мотивы женитьбы в эпосе отражают не только социальное событие, но и символические знаки, отражающие гармонию между различными силами. Особенно характерно то, что женитьба героя происходит как испытание инициаций определенного результата, его переход на ступень и укрепление статуса в обществе. Цель исследования: Проанализировать трехступенчатую степени мира и особенности воплощения первого свадебного мотива в поэме «Кисса Куламерген», выявить их символическое значение и влияние на развитие сюжета. То есть мотив брака в эпосе рассматривается как символический знак различных миров или противоборствующих сил, таких как герой и женщина (тотемный образ), земля и небо, человек и бог (дух). Это часто приводит к восстановлению равновесия, гармонии или исполнению предназначения между силами каждого мира. Исходя из данного исследования можно ожидать результаты как, раскрытие особенностей трехступенчатого мироустройства в поэме и его роли в сюжетной структуре. Также, анализ свадебного мотива и его смысловой нагрузки в контексте произведения.

Ключевые слова: фольклор, древний эпос, мотив, сюжет, трехступенчатый мир.

1. Introduction

This is an important cultural heritage reflecting the ideas of the worldview and values of the people in ancient archaic epics. One notable example of Turkic epic traditions is the epic «Qissa Qulamergen» containing complex symbolic imagery and motives. In this work the key place is occupied by the image of a three-stage world traditional for many Turkic peoples and the motives for marriage which plays a decisive role in restoring the order of becoming a hero. The three-stage model of the world, including the upper world (Heaven and Gods), the middle world (people) and the lower world (death, underground forces) is not only the structure of the universe but also the system of interaction of various levels of reality. The hero of the epic passes through all these worlds, faces trials and finally finds a balance between them. The interconnection of these worlds in the epic reflects man's ideas of harmony and order which play an important role as a mediator. The motive for marriage in the epic «Qissa Qulamergen» is also important. The marriage of the hero is considered not only as a social necessity or personal achievement but also as an important procedure

that reflects the integration of a person into society and the restoration of harmony between various sectors of the world as well. Thus, reflecting the objective motive of marriage according to a three-stage worldview in the epic «Qissa Qulamergen» allows a deeper understanding of the worldview foundations of Turkic culture and its initial ideas. As evidence from the first plots, the principles of the formation of human consciousness and culture are considered, that is, the reflection of images of ancient concepts from all sides.

Studies were conducted related to the genre features of ancient epics and the exploration of the work of scientists in order to reveal the core of this topic. The epics of the Turkic peoples are based on the works of R.S. Lipets, V.Y. Propp, E.B. Ovalov and others related with their world plots. We can name the comprehensive study of the ancient epic «Qissa Qulamergen» by our national scientists Sh. Ibrayev, B. Azibaeva, R.O. Kerimkulova etc., their thorough analysis and ideas as the most noticeable researches. Studies on the transformation of mythical characters in Kazakh folklore are considered in different ways.

2. Research methods and materials

The subject of the article is analyzed by plot motives from the epic «Qissa Qulamergen», conveying the concepts of a three-stage world. As the research methods we have chosen the plot features, cultural and cognitive, and accumulative techniques in the epic. The epic «Qissa Qulamergen» characterizes the earlier life of our people including the facets of premarital initiative, and totemic images.

The content of the poem «Qissa Qulamergen» leads to the development of interesting plots. Nevertheless, the epic's impressive description of totemic imagery reflects the song's self-knowledge. We considered them as periods of the appearance of the first cultural and cognitive images. During the analysis, the specifics of the topic, which is still relevant, were comprehensively analyzed.

The method of description is used in the research work as well as the analysis of the substantive structure, plot, type of motive, and examples of an artistic image is also given. Based on the work of research scientists conducted within the framework of this topic specific arguments were reasoned. After analyzing the worldview of the topic, we were convinced that world themes are also found in Kazakh epics. Therefore, we would like to take into account that this topic is still relevant.

The relevance of this topic is because the motif of heroic marriage in Kazakh epics not only reflects the traditional ideas of the people about family, love and duty, but also contains universal worldview categories inherent in different cultures. The study shows that this motif has both national and universal significance, which makes it relevant in modern scientific and cultural studies. To collect and analyze information, we studied the works of domestic and foreign researchers devoted to the Kazakh epic, as well as works on motifs, comparative literature and mythology. Also, conducted content analysis to study the texts of Kazakh epics to identify patterns in the depiction of heroic marriage, features of artistic language and symbolism.

Special attention was paid to the typology of heroes, the structure of the narrative, the role of traditional values in the formation of the motif of heroic marriage. The relevance

of the topic is conditioned not only by its significance for understanding the Kazakh epic tradition, but also by the possibility of including this motif in the context of the world epic heritage.

2.2. Description of the material

The genre features prevail in the ancient epic. Taking into account the genre associated with fairy tale and epic, the concept and culture of the first three-stage world depicts a special embodiment of the genre. The storyline of the hero in the poem «Qissa Qulamergen», the embodiment of events in the life of three worlds are presented in a very attractive way. The hero's goal in Kazakh epics is to complete various tasks inspire of any difficult path he faces in his way. It can be seen that the main goal is to create a family, keep the peace in the country, provide human integration and achieve many other educational goals.

3. Discussion

The image of the three-stage world and the embodiment of the motive of marriage in the epic «Qissa Qulamergen» is characterized by the structure of the universe and the social and spiritual values of the Turkic culture. The epic «Qissa Qulamergen» has a special symbolic and functional meaning. The upper, middle and lower levels of the world interact with each other and form a single system. That is, such heroic epics as «Qissa Qulamergen» are explained by the importance of maintaining balance between these worlds and the fact that in case this balance is broken it often leads to disasters. It is also possible to view the trials and struggles characteristic of many epic works as the culmination of a winning process.

Kazakh epic is a rich heritage that reflects mythological ideas, historical events and cultural values of the people. «Qissa Qulamergen» is one of these epics. This plot motif is widespread in many myths and epics, but in the Kazakh tradition it displays peculiar features related to the hero's trials, the struggle for the beloved and the symbolic transition between worlds.

In this regard, the fact that Joyamergen got into the country of Zhylanbek has become the basis of our topic. The journey begins with Joyamergen seeing a hole in floating in the river while hunting alone on a desert island. When Joyamergen wanted to find out what it was, he was taken away with this horse and was taken to the bottom of the water in the steppe. Unaware of this, he noticed six wing white orda (a sacred place or the abode of higher powers) and when he walked towards it, a white-bearded man appeared before him. He turned out to be the great-grandfather of Muslims – Kizyr Baba (spiritual mentor), who told Joyamergen that he came towards the underground country of Zhylanbek (Words of ancestors, 2008, 109), explaining the reason why the hero ended up in this place:

«Zhylanbek fell in love with your courage

But you will still be criticized.

I will see his braveness if he is a hero,

«I will give Kunsulu» he promised.

Kunsulu is his only daughter,

She has a bright face like a sunbeam.

Many are not fit for work,

He killed every hero himself», – saying that a wizard named Gayin, sent by the king,

turned into a hole and brought the hero inside (Words of ancestors, 2008, 110), and disappeared. With this the help provided to the hero by Kizyr Baba came to the end, who, as a rule, is considered to be Muslims' protector. This passage describes the storyline associated with the hero's trial before receiving the hand of Kunsulu, his only daughter. This motif of heroic marriage is common in epics. The hero must prove his bravery to earn the right to marry. Zhylanbek, Kunsulu's father, evaluates the courage of his daughter's suitor. Kunsulu is described as a beautiful girl, worthy only of a worthy husband. The condition set by Zhylanbek is that the hero must prove his bravery before he can earn his beloved. Thus, this passage emphasizes the traditional theme of heroism, trial and worthy union, which is achieved through feats.

In a monograph on the heroes of the Turkic-Mongolian epic and the features of their names R.S. Lipets noted: «In Qulamergen» there are layers that in the stage plan represent a symbol of the era of matriarchy. This is especially noticeable in the image of an old woman named Kurtka who «got to the bottom of evil» (Lipets, 1988, 68) by which he meant the first mother of the remnants of the early period. Here he settled on his ideas about the harmony between man and nature. Comprehensive analysis was carried out that the image of women in epics is largely associated with magic, and also performs important functions. Kizyr Baba and Kurtka play important roles in the epic tradition, acting as guides or helpers of the hero in his journey and trials. Both characters are associated with the sacral function of intermediaries between the worlds. If Kizyr Baba helps the hero through his trials in the underworld by providing him with knowledge and warnings. He embodies the masculine, prophetic power associated with Islamic tradition. That Kurtka, as R.S.Lipets says, bears traces of matriarchal symbolism, which may indicate ancient ideas about female forces influencing the hero's fate. It can be assumed that Kizyr Baba is a spiritual mentor and protector of masculinity, while Kurtka personifies the archetype of a female guide or obstacle on the hero's path. Their opposition reflects the clash of traditional and older beliefs, the transition from matriarchal to patriarchal motifs in the epic tradition.

In the same way, in order to understand the main difference between the samples of the heroic epic and the fairy tale genre, V. Ya. Propp described the way to achieve the hero's goal in the genre of a fantastic fairy tale as follows: «For his assistant, his desires are» only a servant, not a service». In the future, the hero plays a purely passive role. Everything is done for him by his assistant or he acts with the help of a magical means. The assistant takes him to distant lands, kidnaps the princess, solves her problems, beats a snake or enemy war, saves her from pursuit. Nevertheless, he is still a hero. The assistant is an expression of his strength and ability». (Propp, 1986, 166). The scientist's statement about the role of the hero's assistant in the epic reflects the main features of folklore stories. This explains the dynamics of the interaction between the character and his assistant to justify the concept. That is, as a symbol of the power of the hero's assistant, the assistant often performs tasks for the hero in epics and fairy tales. This can be compared to ancient mythological initiatives where the hero may not necessarily defeat his enemies himself but his inner qualities, such as justice or God's protection, attract forces ready to fight for him. Also, the symbolic meaning of magical and supernatural means indicates magical means

that help the hero in epic works achieve their goals. These can be magical objects, animals or living things that are an integral part of mythological thinking. That is, the assistant (magic horse, smart aksakal or fairy beast, etc.) noted that part of the character's strength that allows him to act at a high sacred level. Thus, the assistant personifies the strength and abilities of the hero, serves as a reflection of his choice and connection with the world of higher powers.

In this regard, the hero of the heroic fairy tale Joyamergen who, imprinted in the poem «Qissa Qulamergen» cannot be limited only to the actions of his magical assistants as in a prosaic fairy tale. This situation is posed to him by one of the two magical assistants of the protagonist of the work in question his racing horse Dildash. He knew that a white horde (Royal palace) full of snakes was visible in front of them, and they greeting Joyamergen by the whistling of mythical serpents, the white snake, the gray snake, and the yellow snake, one by one entering the pants leg of the main character, scrolling through it, they came out of his neck band, and after them the red snake, predicting that he would go inside, pass through the stomach, pass through all the spines.

The wisdom of his horse Dildash lies in the fact that it speaks humanly, can predict the upcoming events, tells the owner what the owner should do in dangerous moments and gives him the necessary advice... etc. and it reminds of images of racing horses, and magical assistants in fairy tales of other peoples. The scientific opinion of the researcher R.O. Kerimkulova in the article «The mythical concept can be the image of mythical characters of a foreign country, totem animals of this country (bear, wolf, snake, etc.). It was they who were the first to confront the hero who visited a foreign land. Because the main protective force and connector of the genus are totem animals», (Kerimkulova, 2021, 164) – and totem images of this topic. That is, research scientists associate that a horse, together with animals such as a bird and a snake, is one of the animals recognized as totems in all peoples of the world, and that these three, like other totems, provide relationships between kingdoms living in a three-stage world – sky, earth and underground. Similarly, I. M. Boldyreva's analyses in an article on the three worlds of the epic... «tales are rich in archaic motifs and elements. The hero of the fairy tale miraculously manages to visit the upper and lower worlds, survive difficult trials and achieve the ultimate goal (Boldyreva, 2018, 145). Under the middle world is the lower world which is accessible only to the main character of fairy tales and epics», (Boldyreva, 2018, 148) and a research work on fairy tales and epics provides for conditions when heroes often have to overcome the boundaries of the simple world and enter the upper and lower spheres of the world reflecting his spiritual and personal development. In this regard, the hero's journey between these worlds revealed his ability to surpass a simple human essence and come into contact with forces that are out of his control. These changes reflect a mythological understanding of the world. The scientist A.A.Kuzina». When describing ethnic code is used in describing the earthly, underworld, and heavenly worlds. For example, the Tungus hero often travels through the forest. The place of contact between heaven and earth resembles a thing belonging to the Russian: «Nuchcha kihi homuquolun timeincurduk/Sir-hallaan aalyk ar/Sirhallaan ipsalna taas hayatygar (Like a button of a camisole of a Russian man, /On a stone mountain connecting

earth and sky,/Where the earth and sky touch)» (Kuzmina, 2024, 261 p.) supplemented our work. The article often uses the motif of wonderful instruments or magical assistants where the heroes of works can overcome the boundaries of the world. These magical objects (rings, buttons, etc.), living creatures (flying horses, birds) or magical powers that allow the hero to reach a new world. World powers managed to demonstrate a connection with each other.

So, when Joyamerger has passed through the trials of the first three snakes and stopped moving, these snakes turn into humans and sit on the throne. When the action of the last red snake becomes a conclusion, the hero sneezes and moves his legs. And when the snake was about to come out his father shouted: - Do not hit, oh, Kunsulu! Then the snake turned into the beauty of the choir and fell out of the nose of Joyamerger.

Then all the snakes turned into human being from which the Zhylyanbek came out of the royal throne, mounted Joyamerger on it and told about the arrival of the hero in the kingdom of underwater world:

- I charged a wizard named Gaiyn,

To take you here on my orders.

You are brave, (Words of Ancestors, 2008, 114).

Zhylyanbek instructs Joyamerger to bring a golden cauldron under the gift. Although he came to the river mentioned by the khan he could not see the cauldron under it, and Dildash told his owner that it was true that there was a cauldron at the bottom but Joyamerger wouldn't be able to take it. In the passage of this epic, the motif of «going after the bride» is the basis of the plot, emphasizing traditional ideas about fate, trials and heroic destiny. Zhylyanbek, giving Joyamerger a task, puts a test before the hero, which is a classic element of «marriage through deed». The water test can be said to be one of the stages of proving the hero's strength and fortitude necessary to win the bride. He said that he would go himself to take it, and that the condition for his salvation was that that Joyamerger should wait for him without moving, in three days the water would come to his knees, and in five days the water would reach the breast of Joyamerger, on the sixth day the water would come up to his chin, to his nose, and his eyes, having reached the top, he said that he would bring the cauldron, and that his survival depended on the persistence of the hero:

«Don't move, sniper,

If you move, I will die», he repeated over and over again (Words of Ancestors, 2008, 115).

In the epic it is described that only at the end of the six-day trial Joyamerger committed a dangerous action:

«The water came to his eyes,

From eyes to eyelids.

And he rose to see Dildash,

When he moved his legs» (Words of Ancestors, 2008, 116).

After the water fell again and the cauldron rose to the surface of the river, after the horse Dildash did not appear, Joyamerger continued to complain and plead with God for six days. Then Dildash, who died, came alive again, returned to his owner and explained him that his movement caused his death, and his praying to God and the support of Kizyr Baba

made him come alive again. Here it can be seen that the magical assistant cannot cope with the task without the patience of the hero. That patience lies in six days of abstinence and six days of continuous prayer. Due to his patience Joyamerger married Kunsulu, with the support of Zhylyanbek came to the surface and met his parents again. In epics, the bride is not a random choice of the hero – their meeting is predestined from above, reflecting the motif of «the bride's connection with the hero by fate itself». However, in order to find her, he must prove that he is chosen. Here, the trial involving the water element and the golden cauldron can be seen as a symbolic purification and a test of the hero's destiny. The loss of Dildash at the moment when the cauldron finally rises to the surface may hint at the hero's partial victory, achieved at the cost of losing his magical assistant, thereby making his journey to his bride even more challenging. Despite his strength, Joyamerger is bound by the higher laws of fate, and the slightest mistake results in severe consequences, adding to the dramatic tension of the narrative.

In this regard, in the scientific article of the researcher R.O. Kerimkulova, who conducted a comprehensive study based on «Qissa Qulamergen», «In the culturally backward tribes» worldview, the first ancestor is open seen as the totem ancestor. The first ancestor in the form of a half-human, half-animal mixed with animals is the result of mythical consciousness. Concepts about them are reserved in myths, fairy tales and legends. The totem myths of the Turks, descended from the blue wolf, are also connected with this», – (Kerimkulova, 2021,132) notes the totem images found in epic works. The analysis of marriage between virginity and feminine spirit reflects the union of man and totemic power.

Consequently, the last two parts of the given poem indicate that the reason for this act of Zhylyanbek was the heroism and courage of Joyamerger shown in the events, in connection with which the lord of the snakes intended to use him to his advantage. Thus, it can be argued that the owner of the hero's special natural strength is the mythical signs of another unknown world.

4. Study results

The poem «Qissa Qulamergen» was passed down from generation to generation in Kazakh oral traditions. The work reflects the main role of nomadic life and war in the life of Kazakh society. In this regard, the leading considerations and scientific conclusions of the folklorist Sh. Ibrayev helped: «The form of the song, formed in ancient times, laid the foundation for the epic traditions of later epics, especially heroic ones» (Ibrayev, 1993, 60). The historical events described in the epic begin at different stages of the history of Central Asia including the conquests of that time and the first culture of the Kazakh people, the traditions of faith and childbirth, and the struggle between tribes. The epic «Qissa Qulamergen» contains several basic elements characteristic of the archaic epic. The main character Qulamergen is a hero, distinguished by courageous actions and bravery, fighting and his abilities in marriage. He opposes the enemies of his people, defends his land, his family, and shows courage. Achieving the ultimate goal as a symbol of victory over the world and over himself. This is the salvation of loved ones, the search for wisdom, overcoming evil or achieving justice. But, most importantly, the hero's goal is his inner victory, the completion of the hero's spiritual path and his readiness for a new life. The

epic also features elements of mythology and imagination, such as magical nature, divine intervention, and extraterrestrial events. These elements help to show the greatness and uniqueness of the hero's feat. In the underworld, the meeting of Joyamerger with the choral girl of the snake, the elements of the transformation of the snake into a person reflected a combination of a totemic image. For that purpose, the symbolic significance of the journey between the worlds is the meeting of the hero with the god from the higher world (the world of spirits) Kizyr Baba and the journey of the lower world to the royal country of Zhylanbek. The higher world personifies values such as humanism, wisdom, and spiritual improvement. The lower world is a world of dark forces, temptations, fears that the hero must overcome in order to prove his strength and courage. Travel between worlds often means a struggle between light and darkness, life and death, order and chaos. In the end, the character not only «passes» through the worlds, but also combines their powers and gains strength.

This reveals important mythological and spiritual meanings inherent in folk tales and ancient epics where heroes combine harmony between worlds and forces, equalizing light and darkness.

In this regard, the first cognitive research of our research work in the poem «Qissa Qulamergen» led to a comprehensive analysis of plot subtleties reflecting the ideas of ancient people about the three-stage world.

5. Conclusion

The book «Qissa Qulamergen» is an important element of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. It reflects not only the historical events and mythological ideas but also conveys the basic values and ideals that shaped the Kazakh essence. The study and preservation of such epic works helps to understand and appreciate the richness and diversity of world cultural traditions.

Plots about the exploits and adventures of Joyamerger in the poem «Qissa Qulamergen» were studied by methods. Based on the «Worldview of the Hero's Marriage Motive» studies were conducted on various hard trials among the characters and characters of the fairy-tale image. That is, the valuable opinions of researchers in the scientific works about Joyamerger's various adventures in the country of Zhylanbek are taken as a basis of the research. Evidence that Kazakh epics reflect concepts about the formation of an ancient concept, the prerequisites for the formation of human consciousness and early culture. We know that the upbringing of the nation through the ancient Kazakh heritage affects the level of development of primitive culture, spiritual consciousness. Thus, Kazakh epics not only reflect the ancient concept of formation of consciousness and culture, but also serve as an important tool of education of the people. The analysis of the epic «Qissa Qulamergen» has shown that the motifs of overcoming obstacles, predetermination of fate and the hero's connection with the higher powers are the key elements of the narrative structure. This confirms the need for further study of epic plots from the point of view of their influence on the formation of worldview. Further research can be aimed at a comparative analysis of the Kazakh epic with mythological traditions of other nations, as well as at identifying its pedagogical potential in modern education.

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