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ETHNOCULTURAL VALUES IN CONTEMPORARY KAZAKH POETRY

(based on the work by poet A. Shegebay)

Abstract. This article delves into an examination of the ethnocultural values prevalent among Kazakh people, drawing insights from the corpus of modern Kazakh poetry. Specifically, the works of the esteemed poet A. Shegebay are scrutinized within the context of ethnocultural values. The significance of investigating national values and ethnocultural worldviews through the lens of poetry is paramount. The phenomenon of globalization and the political transformations witnessed in modern Kazakh history have left an indelible mark on the nation's culture, spirituality, and, notably, its poetry. Embedded within the fabric of Kazakh society are enduring moral precepts, transmitted across generations, which constitute the bedrock of national values. The language, mindset, customs, literature, and artistic expressions of v collectively represent a reservoir of spiritual wealth that has been meticulously preserved through the ages. It is through these spiritual moorings that the national and cultural identity of the Kazakh populace finds its enduring anchor. Against this backdrop, this article undertakes a meticulous analysis of select poems by A. Shegebay, namely "Besik," "Kara Shanyrak," "Kokpar," and "Taba Nan," from the vantage point of ethnocultural values. It is recognized that the essence of any people and their worldview are inexorably shaped by national and cultural constructs, finding eloquent expression in poetry as the quintessential vehicle for the collective consciousness of a people. Through empirical investigation, this study identifies and delineates the national-cultural concepts embedded within contemporary Kazakh poetry. Moreover, it discerns that the character of the ethnocultural worldview articulated in Kazakh poetry is a product of historical, social, and individual factors. The ideological and thematic contours of Kazakh poetry in the age of globalization are thus discerned to be intricately entwined with ethnocultural values and the collective identity of the nation.

Keywords: poet, poetry, mentality, artistic consciousness, national memory, ethnocultural value, spirituality.

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Қазіргі қазақ поэзиясындағы этномәдени құндылықтар (ақын Ә.Шегебай шығармашылығы бойынша)

Аңдатпа. Мақалада қазіргі қазақ поэзиясы өкілдерінің шығармаларын қарастыра отырып, қазақ халқының этномәдени құндылықтары зерделенеді. Осы негізде ақын Ә.Шегебайдың шығармалары талқыланып, этномәдени құндылықтар аясында қарастырылады. Ақынның шығармашылығы арқылы

ұлттық құндылық, этномәдени дүниетанымды зерттеудің маңыздылығы жоғары. Заманауи қазақ тарихында, мәдениетінде, руханиятында орын алған жаһандану процесі, саяси бетбұрыстар ұлттық поэзияға ықпалын тигізуде. Кез-келген халықтың, ұлттың болмысында сан жылдар бойы бабадан балаға мирас болып келе жатқан адамгершілік қағидаттары ұлттық құндылықтармен сараланады. Қазақ халқының тілі, ділі, салт-дәстүрі, әдебиеті мен өнері жалпылап айтиқанда, рухани байлығы — ғасырдан-ғасырға жеткен халықтың қазынасы. Сол рухани құндылықтар арқылы ұлттық, халықтық болмысымызды сақтап отырмыз. Осы негізде мақалада ақын Ә.Шегебайдың «Бесік», «Қара шаңырақ», «Көкпар», «Таба нан» сынды жырлары этномәдени құндылықтар тұрғызынан зерделенеді. Кез-келген халықтың болмысы, өмірге деген көзқарасы ұлттық, мәдени концептілер арқылы қалыптасып, поэзияда халықтың ұлттық танымы ретінде бейнеленетіні белгілі. Зерттеуде қазіргі қазақ поэзиясындағы ұлттық-мәдени концептілер анықталды. Қазақ поэзиясындағы этномәдени дүниетаным сипаты тарихи, қоғамдық, тұлғалық факторлар арқылы берілетіні сарапталды. Жаһандану дәуіріндегі қазақ поэзиясының идеялық-тақырыптық ерекшеліктері ұлт болмысы, идентификациясы этномәдени құндылықтар арқылы анықталды.

Кілт сөздер: ақын, поэзия, ментальдық, көркемдік сана, ұлттық жад, этномәдени құндылық, руханият.

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Этнокультурные ценности в современной казахской поэзии (по творчеству поэта А. Шегебая)

Анномация. В данной статье рассматривается феномен этнокультурных ценностей казахского народа на основе анализа творчества представителей современной казахской поэзии, с особым акцентом на произведения поэта А. Шегебая. подчеркивается высокая важность исследования этнокультурного мировоззрения и национальных ценностей через призму поэзии. Процесс глобализации и политические изменения в современной истории, культуре и духовности Казахстана оказывают влияние на национальную поэзию. Национальные ценности, унаследованные от предков и переданные через поколения, выступают важным элементом казахской идентичности. Язык, менталитет, традиции, литература и искусство казахского народа представляют собой неизмеримое богатство, пронесшееся сквозь века. Эти духовные ценности являются сокровищами, способными сохранить нашу национальную идентичность и связь с корнями нашей культуры на протяжении времени. В статье анализируются этнокультурные аспекты нескольких стихотворений А. Шегебая, включая «Бесик», «Кара шанырак», «Кокпар» и «Таба нан». В ходе исследования выявлены национально-культурные концепции, присутствующие в современной казахской поэзии. Также проанализирован характер этнокультурного мировоззрения, передаваемого через исторические, социальные и личностные аспекты. Идеологические и тематические особенности казахской поэзии в условиях глобализации оказываются тесно связанными с этнокультурными ценностями и национальной идентичностью.

Ключевые слова: поэт, поэзия, ментальность, художественное сознание, национальная память, этнокультурная ценность, духовность.

1. Introduction

Contemporary global phenomena and innovations are unfolding across all sectors of society, placing humanity at the forefront of transformative change. Throughout history, social and political conditions have exerted multifaceted influences on human society, some-

times propelling civilization forward and at other times instigating struggle, resistance, and the pursuit of freedom.

In contemporary Kazakh humanities, cultural and ethno-cultural studies hold a prominent position. It is recognized that this process is intricately linked with the phenomenon of global globalization. Domestic humanitarian science, which encompasses the exploration and recognition of phenomena within the human mind, cognition, and thought processes through literary art and cognitive literary studies, as well as the examination of the expression of national culture and worldview in artistic imagery, exhibits both convergent points and distinctive features in approaching research subjects from various perspectives.

Each phase of artistic consciousness provides insight into the essence of a particular historical epoch and is mirrored in poetics accordingly. Furthermore, the transition between types of artistic consciousness delineates the principal trajectories and orientations of historical development within poetic forms and categories. Acknowledging the absence of rigid boundaries and demarcations that sever the connections among types of artistic consciousness, we delve into traditionalist (normative, canonical) literary concepts. The examination of traditional artistic consciousness represents a thoroughly explored subject in both Eastern and Western civilizations. When Western scholars analyze the stages of evolution and progression within European civilization, they distinguish its ancient, medieval, Renaissance, classical, and baroque periods separately.

Researchers investigating the universal principles governing the evolution of world literature identify three distinct types of artistic consciousness:

- 1. archaic or mythical-poetic consciousness,
- 2. traditionalist or normative consciousness (poetics of style and genre),
- 3.individual creative or historical consciousness (author's poetics) (Kamzabekuly, Omaruly, Sharip, 2013: 13).

2. Methods and materials

2.1 Research methods

Among the talented young individuals who emerged in Kazakh poetry towards the end of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century, the poems by Alibek Shegebay immediately stand out for their profound insight and strong Kazakh identity. Shegebay, a graduate of the Faculty of Journalism at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, show-cased his literary prowess early on. In 1997, he clinched the top prize at the Republican student youth song festival commemorating the 100th anniversary of M. Auezov. Since then, he has garnered accolades in numerous song competitions, including the prestigious T. Aybergenov prize in 1998 for a series of poems published in the Republican magazine «Zhalyn.» His recognition continued to grow, with him being named the Laureate of the International Festival «Shabyt» in Astana in 2002 and receiving the «Serper» award from the Youth Union of Kazakhstan in 2004 for his outstanding creative achievements. Shegebay has been a member of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan since 2001. His published collections of poems, including «Ak zhauyn», «Tamshylar», «Alakeyim», «Aynekke usken ay saule», and «Ak kauyrsyn» further attest to his prolific literary output.

The article employed general theoretical methods such as analysis, comparison, and generalization to study Shegebay's work and analyze his artistic techniques for conveying thoughts.

2.2 Materials description

The artistic principles and formal characteristics of literary works published during the period of independence are undergoing change. Members of the younger generation are not engaging with all genres, including fables, rhymes, twisters, parables, riddles, lyrics, fairy tales, stories, fables, and dramas. It is desirable for young writers to aspire to follow global literary trends. However, it is imperative that fiction retains a national character, especially in children's literature. It is crucial to preserve our national heritage. It is observed that the younger generation's inclination towards writing realistic works is diminishing, indicating a research gap in this area.

The deepening of global phenomena significantly influences the cultural development of humanity on a global scale. As global processes deepen, the world is witnessing the emergence of a diverse array of new values within the realm of intercultural relations. This evolution aligns with the endeavor to integrate into other cultures and collaborate on a collective response to global changes.

Cultural value encompasses:

- 1. moral and aesthetic ideals, rules and patterns of behavior, i.e. moral values;
- 2. national traditions, language, culture and works of art;
- 3. the outcomes and methodologies of scientific research in cultural activities, with historical and cultural significance, i.e., scientific value, knowledge, and science;
- 4.objects, territories, technologies, institutions that are unique to a particular nation in terms of historical and cultural relations, i.e. historical value (Kosova, 1994: 48-49).

3. Discussion

The national identity of Kazakh people is characterized by values such as hospitality, nobility, solidarity, loyalty, passion for knowledge, and freedom. Throughout history, traits like careerism and flattery have also emerged due to various historical events. The concept of freedom among Kazakh people is comprised of three pillars: freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and personal liberty, forming a triad category rooted in our cultural philosophy of freedom. The transformation of Kazakh literature in the post-independence era has been influenced by the continuation of journalistic traditions, the revival of zhyrau (poet-singers) traditions, the Turkic worldview, and the reinforcement of national consciousness. The identity of the nation is shaped by factors closely linked to independence, highlighting the spirit of Kazakh people as a defining characteristic of our ethnicity.

Drawing from ethnic memory and consciousness, the significance of culture, tradition, and worldview has been elucidated. The archetypes «dala» (steppe), «zhol» (road), «shanyrak» (the apex of a yurt), «zher-Ana» (Mother Earth), and «kut» (blessing) are instrumental in shaping the ethno-cultural worldview of Kazakh people. Furthermore, the authentic definition of Saryarka, a historical and cultural region, has been articulated. The national worldview is further delineated through behavioral stereotypes, traditions, upbringing, and religious beliefs, revealing its connection with national consciousness and sentiment. The essence of the ethno-cultural worldview in Kazakh poetry is conveyed through historical, social, and personal factors.

The ideological and thematic characteristics of Kazakh poetry in the post-independence period reflect the nation's identity, character, and ethos. During the period of independence, the depiction of historical themes and figures, previously suppressed by Soviet censorship, experienced a resurgence, leading to the creation of inspired poetry. Authors were guided by liberated ideas and an ethno-cultural perspective in their creative vision.

The poems by A. Shegebay resonate with profound meaning, touching upon themes of longing and sadness, while remaining relevant and multifaceted. Reflecting the zeitgeist, these poems capture the evolving characteristics of society and human nature, echoing the poet's heartfelt cries for truth. Shegebay's works are beloved for their portrayal of yearning for the homeland, childhood innocence, the realm of goodness, enigmatic lyricism, and poignant melodies.

4. Results

In the poetry by Alibek Shegebay, the essence of Kazakh people is unveiled through the virtues of hospitality, generosity, and well-natured. However, this essence is not solely depicted in a positive light; rather, it encompasses both positive and negative aspects. Among the positive attributes are Kazakh people's resilience in defending the vast steppe to the death, their eloquence, prowess in spear-throwing and marksmanship, mastery of musical instruments, adherence to traditional customs such as bride-stealing, and their commitment to supporting widows and eschewing the construction of prisons. The nomadic lifestyle of the population presents as the negative characteristics.

Throughout the poet's works, national identity is delineated through the lens of traditions and customs. The national character is shaped by both internal and external factors, with external influences stemming from established customs and traditions. Thus, the poet articulates the essence of his people through the lens of centuries-old traditions and customs.

The awakening of national and historical consciousness is intimately tied to the period of independence. Key issues during this era include resistance against the Soviet system, a renewed appreciation for national history, the repatriation of compatriots from distant lands, the discovery and preservation of historical data, the promotion of literary and cultural heritage, and the fostering of spiritual growth. Through his work, Shegebay identifies both the positive and negative traits of Kazakh character, delving into the essence of Kazakh people through a hermeneutic framework. In the literature of the new generation post-independence, he conveys the national and cultural ethos, ushering Kazakh literature into a new era.

In her research of Kazakh poetry during the period of independence, S. Yerzhanova underscores the poets' portrayal of the Soviet era, highlighting the rapid pace of historical changes juxtaposed with the slower evolution of consciousness. Through literature from previous generations, it becomes apparent that older generations often romanticize the past through the lens of Soviet ideology, exhibiting a reluctance to embrace future changes. However, as time progresses, Soviet ideology is destined to become a relic of the past. Yerzhanova suggests that consciousness of existence entails not only acknowledging external actions but also engaging in internal introspection and exchange (Erzhanova, 2009: 24).

In his poem «Kokpar,» the poet illustrates the freedom and bravery of Kazakh people while urging them not to succumb to insignificance. The poet's depiction of the national character tends to lean towards the negative, but it is approached in a dialectical manner.

Through his work, the poet reveals that regardless of the challenges they encounter, Kazakh people steadfastly maintain their courage.

A mindset broadens your horizons, Your fiery passion for kokpar stirs. Great art bequeathed to posterity, By visionaries of their time, my ancestors!

History etched in stone, Revealing astonishing discoveries. Howl at the moon wild dogs — The Kazakh, who put a squeeze on wolves. (Shegebay, 2018: 27)

Kokpar, a widely practiced game across Central Asia, is known as «kok boru» or «ulak tarush (tartuu)» in Kyrgyz, and «buzkashi» in Tajik. Similar national equestrian games, such as kokpar tartu are also found in other Eastern countries. The game buzavish, prevalent in Afghanistan bears striking resemblance to kokpar. Additionally, there existed in Argentina an equestrian game akin to kokpar.

Researcher B. Nurimanov, in his study, emphasized the significance of cultural values, which evolve in response to societal demands (Nurimanov, Kishkenbayeva, 2021: 98-110). This underscores the notion that cultural values serve as a reflection of national characteristics, particularly during the period of independence.

Scientist S. Yerzhanova highlighted the importance of the Turkic language in XX century poetry (Yerzhanova, 2009: 22). It is evident that the policy of elevating individuals and events during the Soviet era did not primarily reflect the ethno-cultural worldview in poetry.

The poem «Kara shanyrak» by A. Shegebay:

Why conceal my wounds,
Why inflate my worth.
I aided in relocating my mother,
Who never strayed from her village abode.
Left behind, the village wails,
Left behind, the rippling waters.
Left behind, the abandoned home—
A cherished sanctuary for forty years.

In those lands, I was born, Throve and flourished amidst them, As dear to me as my father's gaze, Oh, my beloved home! (Shegebay, 2018: 134)

«Shanyrak» embodies a concept associated with notions of family, happiness, peace, and unity. In the folkloric worldview, «shanyrak» represents the unity of time and space.

Its symbolic significance in depicting life and existence is profound, akin to the radiant spread of sunlight. A «high and robust shanyrak» symbolizes the well-being and harmony of the people. It was a cultural imperative for Kazakh people to safeguard the integrity of the shanyrak, revered as the most sacred element of the yurt. Moreover, the notion of the «black shanyrak,» connoting the father's household, signifies a large, inherited shanyrak passed down to the youngest son. The poet delves deeply into the significance of the black shanyrak, exploring its nuanced implications. It is imperative to elucidate the association of the «Kara shanyrak» with the concept of «Homeland,» emphasizing its role as a cherished legacy for every Kazakh.

For a Kazakh individual, nothing holds greater sanctity than the family unit. It is believed that the nourishment of life, essential for the growth and development of an individual's mind, emanates from the family. The behaviors witnessed within the family, both positive and negative, profoundly influence a child's emotional state, while all knowledge and wisdom are perceived to originate from familial teachings. Consequently, family education occupies a revered position within Kazakh culture, representing a cherished tradition. Within the family dynamic, the father assumes the roles of provider, protector, and guardian, while the mother embodies warmth and sets out moments of enduring sweetness. Together, they form the cornerstone of the family unit. Offspring nurtured under the guidance of these fundamental values are destined to become esteemed citizens who illuminate their nation with the radiance of benevolence. The aspiration of every parent is to instill within their children the virtues of goodness and well-being in their purest and most transparent form.

A skillet bread.
The entire world illuminating,
Like dewdrops at dawn.
A nostalgic yearning
Lingers in the aroma
Of my mother's skillet bread. (Shegebay, 2018: 24)

Furthermore, the poet's verse is imbued with profound human values, showcasing mastery in evoking mysterious psychology and captivating romanticism. In the poem «Taba nan,» a skillet bread is portrayed as a symbol of warmth and benevolence.

A cradle

Amidst the recounted.

Their nurturing deeply entrenched.

This signifies nobility, indeed.

Regardless of the trials endured,

My Kazakh forebears, to the cradle, remained tethered.

The expanse of noble stature rivals that of the Kazakh steppe,

Its arch akin to a horseshoe.

The life is short, if one can notice,

Like the distance between a lip of a jug and it's base. (Shegebay, 2018: 28)

For countless centuries, the cradle has served as the nest of the nation, the cornerstone of Kazakh education, and the revered possession of our ancestors – a symbol of life steeped in gratitude, tranquility, and seclusion. Cradles hold such esteemed value that Kazakh elders pass them down through generations, from children to grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and even to descendants beyond, underscoring its significance in familial heritage. The tradition of cradles extends beyond Kazakh culture, resonating with a vast population across Asia, the Caucasus, India, and China. It represents more than just a wooden bed where children sleep; it is a sanctuary where they wake, play, and are nourished by their mother's milk, shielded from the malevolent gaze of the evil eye. Kazakh people, deeply rooted in nobility, prioritize the education of their children. Education patterns, shaped by the aspirations, dreams, and moral principles of the people, serve as invaluable tools in nurturing the younger generation. The process of national education, rooted in ancestral teachings, is replete with remarkable insights into the customs, traditions, and spiritual journey of Kazakh people – from ancient Turkic times to the present day. Throughout history, the Kazakh nation has placed great emphasis on the spiritual enrichment of its youth. From birth, efforts are focused on fostering proper cognitive, physical, and emotional development. In addition to the aforementioned works by the poet, noteworthy poems such as «Laengi,» «Zhety Shelpek,» «Kelin hikayasy,» «Kelin,» and «Tasattyk» also celebrate our national identity and heritage.

5. Conclusion

Ethno-cultural value not only serves as a portrayal of national identity but also constitutes an assessment intricately linked to the spiritual essence of the nation, occupying a significant position within national consciousness. In the recent works of the poet, the fate of Kazakh people emerges as a central theme. Indeed, the overarching motif of the poet's verses revolves around envisioning the future trajectory of Kazakh nation, harboring aspirations for advancement alongside civilized societies. Such perspectives on the historical trajectory of our people are imperative in contemporary times, particularly concerning the preservation and prosperity of language and traditions, which are integral components of the national fabric. The notion of national interest encompasses a spectrum of thoughts and actions directed towards the growth, development, and prosperity of the nation. Undoubtedly, considerations of national interest are closely intertwined with concepts of patriotism and the intricacies of national character. Amidst the process of national development, a thorough examination of the identity and psychological makeup of a people holds profound implications for their positioning within the global civilization framework, serving as a harbinger of their future trajectory. The delineation of Kazakh people's national character through artistic expression traces its origins to the literary legacy by Abay and persists through the contemporary literary landscape. The enduring relevance of the discourse on national character in the works of modern Kazakh poets underscores its significance. Poet A. Shegebay, in particular, delves deeply into customs, language, and societal issues in his verses, offering reflections from the vantage point of national interests.

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