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THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN KAZAKH LITERATURE DURING THE TOTALITARIAN PERIOD: HISTORY AND LESSONS (1960s-1970s)

Abstract

The article examines the national question in the works of the creative intelligentsia, particularly within Kazakh literature, from a historical perspective. It also considers the specific features of the development of Kazakh literature during the Soviet era and the ideological influence exerted on it. Particular attention is paid to the fact that the method of socialist realism became the primary artistic approach, with intellectuals adapting their works to serve communist ideology. The article notes that although Kazakh writers and scholars composed their works "in the spirit of the times" using the method of socialist realism, they still addressed national values and pointed out the negative impact of incoming elements on national identity. Soviet ideology pushed national values in Kazakh literature into the background, favoring works that promoted the virgin land campaign and the construction of socialism. Nonetheless, the article emphasizes that children's literature of that period preserved national traditions and played a significant role in educating the younger generation. In this literature, Kazakh idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and counting rhymes were widely employed, contributing to the preservation of the national spirit. The author demonstrates that despite the powerful influence of Soviet ideology, Kazakh literature endeavored to maintain its national character. The article comprehensively discusses the trends in literary creativity during this historical period and the struggle to preserve national literature.

Keywords: totalitarian system, creative intelligentsia, literature, language, nation, culture.

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ТОТАЛИТАРИЗМ КЕЗЕҢІНДЕГІ ҚАЗАҚ ӘДЕБИЕТІНДЕГІ ҰЛТ МӘСЕЛЕСІ: ТАРИХЫ МЕН ТАҒЫЛЫМЫ (XX ҒАСЫРДЫҢ 60-70 ЖЫЛДАРЫ)

Аңдатпа

Мақалада шығармашыл зиялы қауым еңбектеріндегі, атап айтар болсақ, қазақ әдебиетіндегі ұлт мәселесі тарихи тұрғыдан талданады. Сонымен қатар кеңес дәуіріндегі қазақ әдебиетінің даму ерекшеліктері мен оған жасалған идеологиялық ықпалға назардан тыс қалмаған. Әсіресе, социалистік реализм әдісі шығармашылықтың басты бағытына айналып, зиялылардың туындылары коммунистік идеологияға қызмет етуге бейімделгені атап өтіледі. Мақалада қазақтың заңғар жазушылары мен ғалымдары өз шығармаларын «заман талабына сай» социалистік реализм әдісінде жазғанымен, ұлттық құндылықтарды да айта отырып, келімсектердің ұлттық болмысқа кері әсер еткенін көрсетеді. Кеңестік идеология қазақ әдебиетіндегі ұлттық құндылықтарды екінші орынға ығыстырып, тың игеру мен социалистік құрылысты дәріптеуге бағытталған шығармаларды қолдады. Дегенмен, мақалада сол кезеңде балалар әдебиеті ұлттық дәстүрлерді сақтап, жас ұрпақтың тәрбиесінде маңызды рөл атқарғаны да айтылады. Бұл әдебиетте қазақтың тұрақты сөз тіркестері, нақылдары мен санамақтары кеңінен қолданылып, ұлттық руханиятты сақтауға ықпал еткендігі де зерделенеді. Автор кеңестік идеология қаншалықты күшті болғанымен, қазақ әдебиеті ұлттық болмысын жоғалтпауға тырысқандығын ділелдермен талдайды. Мақалада осы тарихи кезеңдегі әдеби шығармашылықтың бағыт-бағдары мен ұлттық әдебиеттің сақталуы жолындағы күрес жан-жақты қарастырылады.

Кілт сөздер: тоталитарлық жүйе, шығармашыл зиялылар, әдебиет, тіл, ұлт, мәдениет.

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НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ВОПРОС В КАЗАХСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ ПЕРИОДА ТОТАЛИТАРИЗМА: ИСТОРИЯ И УРОКИ (60-70-е ГОДЫ XX ВЕКА)

Аннотация

В статье с исторической точки зрения анализируется национальный вопрос в трудах творческой интеллигенции, в частности, в казахской литературе. Кроме того, рассматриваются особенности развития казахской литературы советского периода и идеологическое влияние на нее. Особое внимание уделяется тому, что метод социалистического реализма стал основным направлением творчества, а произведения интеллигенции адаптировались к служению коммунистической идеологии. В статье отмечается, что, несмотря на написание произведений «в духе времени» с использованием метода социалистического реализма, выдающиеся казахские писатели и ученые затрагивали национальные ценности и указывали на негативное влияние пришлового населения на национальную самобытность. Советская идеология вытесняла национальные ценности в казахской литературе на второй план, поддерживая произведения,

пропагандирующие освоение целины и строительство социализма. Тем не менее, в статье подчеркивается, что детская литература того периода сохраняла национальные традиции и играла важную роль в воспитании молодого поколения. В литературе широко использовались казахские устойчивые выражения, пословицы и считалки, что способствовало сохранению национального духа. Автор доказывает, что, несмотря на мощь советской идеологии, казахская литература стремилась сохранить свою национальную самобытность. В статье всесторонне рассматриваются направления литературного творчества того исторического периода и борьба за сохранение национальной литературы.

Ключевые слова: тоталитарная система, творческая интеллигенция, литература, язык, нация, культура.

Introduction

Relevance: Literature serves as a chronicle that narrates a nation's joys and sorrows, history, and destiny. It forms the foundation and nourishment of all art. During the Soviet era, Kazakh literature flourished, securing its place among world literature and evolving into a significant literary tradition. However, the Soviet system in the 1960s-1990s regarded artistic literature as a primary tool for cultivating the working class in the spirit of communism. Consequently, the majority of Soviet writers adhered to socialist realism as the dominant methodological approach in literature. According to this creative method, literature had to be class-oriented, meaning every work had to reflect the interests of the working class and peasants. Additionally, socialist society had to be portrayed as a space where communist ideals and morals invariably triumphed. As a result, writers adhered to the principle that irreconcilable or unresolved contradictions could not exist within Soviet life. Consequently, the "exemplary" and "ideologically advanced" works of this period avoided deep social and psychological conflicts, ensuring that such issues were neither excessively emphasized nor exacerbated. Official literary criticism actively supported such works and widely promoted them in the press.

Objective: This article aims to conduct a historical analysis of the national question in Kazakh literature during the mid-20th century, specifically in the 1960s-1970s.

Tasks: to achieve this objective, the following tasks were undertaken:

- examining the creative policies implemented in the totalitarian society of the 1960s-1970s, particularly in Kazakhstan;
- identifying the national stance of the Kazakh intelligentsia during this period and analyzing their works;
- conducting an analysis of official data from the given period.

Materials and methodology

The article is based on published materials as well as archival documents from the State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Archive of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The theoretical and methodological foundation of the study relies on key principles of scientific inquiry, including objectivity, historicism, systematic analysis, and a dialectical approach to historical events and phenomena. Additionally, the research prioritizes national interests alongside universal values. The theoretical and methodological framework of the article is shaped by the civilizational approach. In addition, leading foreign scholarly perspectives on this issue were also examined [1-5].

Main Body

The renowned Kazakh writer and literary classic Mukhtar Omarkhanuly Auezov also employed the method of socialist realism in his final novel, *Oskan Orken* (The Rising Growth). The official newspaper of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, *Pravda*, highly praised the novel, stating: "This novel is a work that can serve as an example and a source of inspiration for any writer seeking to address contemporary themes" [6, p. 4]. This recognition stemmed from the novel's alignment with the ideological needs of the time, as it portrayed Soviet life in a laudatory manner.

Auezov's primary motivation in writing a contemporary novel was to glorify the labor of communist builders and depict Soviet cadres—the leaders of socialist construction—as role models. This was the expectation of the time.

Having completed his magnum opus, *The Path of Abai*, Auezov later devised a new ambitious literary project. His plan was to create a five-volume series that would continue from the historical period depicted in *The Path of Abai* and illustrate Kazakh life in the 20th century. The first volume was to cover the period from 1905 to 1917, the second—the years of the Civil War, the third—Soviet industrialization and the first Five-Year Plans, the fourth—World War II, and the fifth—the 1950s and 1960s. However, rather than beginning with the first volume, Auezov was compelled to start with the last one, focusing on contemporary Soviet life. This decision was dictated by ideological requirements. Mukhtar Omarkhanuly himself acknowledged this ideological constraint, stating: "A writer's responsibility to their era is the foremost and most significant duty. To uncover the deepest truths and the essence of our time, our struggle must align with that purpose" [7, p. 47]. However, due to his passing, only one volume of the planned series was completed, which was published in 1962 under the title *Osken Orken*.

In this novel, Auezov centered the narrative around a representative of Russian culture—Nil Karpov, the secretary of the regional party committee. He was depicted as an individual of exceptional intellect, a true "party man," a paragon of "great humanism," and a model "soviet leader." He actively engaged in all aspects of life around him, immersing himself in various events and demonstrating a keen interest in people's well-being. Karpov visited shepherd communities, provided assistance, and intervened when necessary. He was portrayed as deeply involved in issues concerning Kazakhstan's livestock industry, the living conditions of shepherds, cultural matters, and local customs. The novel positioned Karpov as the voice of reason, assigning him the role of expressing the thoughts and concerns that, ideally, should have been voiced by Kazakhs themselves. For instance, he denounced traditional Kazakh nomadic practices, stating: "Some people claim that Kazakhs are accustomed to it—that shepherds can continue living in yurts even in winter, in the freezing cold, just as their ancestors did... But that is a lie, a cruel lie devoid of compassion" [6, p. 242]. This statement was dictated by the ideological agenda of the time. Soviet Kazakh literature of that period was required to feature Russian characters with broad intellectual horizons, rich spiritual depth, and unique cultural sophistication. Meanwhile, Kazakh characters were expected to admire, learn from, and revere these Soviet Russian figures, presenting them as role models worthy of emulation.

Mukhtar Auezov's *Osken Orken* did not ignore the evaluation of unfavorable conditions in pre-revolutionary Kazakh society. The novel includes the story *Aluanın Azhaly* (*The Death of Alua*) [6, p. 93]. It describes the suffering and tragic fate of a young, beautiful woman named Alua, who was married to a seventy-year-old merchant, Kanai. Following Soviet ideological standards, pre-revolutionary Kazakh society was often portrayed as dark and ignorant, where defenseless girls were sold like cattle, and their elderly husbands were depicted as extremely jealous, harsh, and ruthless. There was no alternative but to write in this way. While recounting this event, Mukhtar Auezov also presents how the issue of Kazakh women in the Soviet period was resolved through the example of a girl named Aisulu. In the novel, Aisulu's father died in the war, leaving only her mother and younger brother. A young man named Sagit attempts to abduct her by force. However, when her brother tries to prevent this, Sagit kills him and flees. Despite the attempts of his influential relatives to save him from punishment, thanks to the "wise party," justice is served, the guilty are punished, and everything ends as it should. The novel showcases how the Soviet system provided "care and protection" for Kazakh women and the Soviet family, offering them a "wonderful" life.

Additionally, the novel vividly depicts the life, history, culture, and traditions of Southern Kazakhstan. The great writer first wrote and published several of the events and characters introduced in the novel as essays. These essays were not only the "scouts" of the future novel but also necessary experiences for deeply understanding the social relations and specific features of that society. The writer published them after traveling to the southern regions, including Talap ta,

taqyryp ta – tek maqta (Both Demand and Topic Are Only About Cotton), Qadymnan Malim Qaratau (The Anciently Known Qaratau), Qaratau Taji – Kentau (The Crown of Qaratau – Kentau), and Shayandyq Sheshen Kereken (The Orator of Shayan – Kereken).

In conclusion, we believe that the reason why a great writer like M. Auezov chose a topic that promoted the ideology of that era was the necessity of portraying the builders of a new society, which arose from the demands of the time.

From the second half of the 1950s, the topic of virgin and fallow land cultivation became the central theme in literature. Essays about virgin lands by S. Mukanov, M. Auezov, and I. Shukhov gained recognition throughout the Soviet Union. The Soviet literature of Kazakhstan was perceived by the all-Union readership as multinational literature. During the first decade of Kazakh literature and art in Moscow (1936), only a few copies of Russian authors' books were published in Kazakhstan. However, by the late 1950s, more than 150 books by Russian writers from Kazakhstan had been published in the republic, 20 of which were printed by Moscow publishers [8, p. 62].

In April 1956, a meeting of literary and artistic figures dedicated to the resolutions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU was held in Almaty. Gabiden Mustafin delivered a report titled "On the Tasks of Literature and Art in the Framework of the Resolutions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU". The report stated: "In many novels, novellas, poems, and plays by the republic's writers, there are no full-fledged portrayals of Soviet people. One of the greatest events in Soviet Kazakhstan's recent history—the development of virgin and fallow lands—has not been reflected in the works of writers, dramatists, or artists.

Kazakh writers and artists have not created works about the labor feats of the builders of the Irtysh Hydroelectric Station, the coal miners of Karaganda, the copper smelters of Balkhash, and others.

The leadership of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan has shown liberalism in evaluating works, and the Ministry of Culture of the Kazakh SSR has not properly demanded quality in the selection of repertoire materials. Of the 28 multi-act and 5 one-act plays approved over the past five years, most turned out to be unsuitable for theatrical production," [9, p. 76-77], he said. The ideological agenda of that period, characterized by campaign-driven policies, is evident in the words of this Kazakh classic. However, this topic did not inspire the creation of works that would leave a lasting mark in history. When national interests were pushed to the background, it was natural that literature and art could not enthusiastically glorify the "great" campaign. The authorities placed the theme of virgin land development on the agenda, actively promoting works about it, and sought to elevate Sabit Mukanov's novel Tyndagy tolqyndar (Waves on the Virgin Lands), even though the manuscript had not yet been fully discussed, was not written from the heart, and ultimately failed to gain support from either the public or literary circles.

After the 20th Congress of the CPSU and in the early 1960s, Soviet literature and art abandoned theoretical constructs such as the fabricated "theory of contradictions." Despite the limitations of the "thaw" period, new magazines began to emerge in Kazakhstan. In 1956, the first issue of the satirical magazine Ara was published in both Kazakh and Russian under the Writers' Union. In 1958, the children's magazine Baldyrgan was launched, with the distinguished Kazakh poet Muzafar Alimbayev as its first editor. Talented children's writers Berdibek Sokpabayev and Kadir Myrzaliev, who worked as section editors, made significant contributions to the magazine's development.

It is well known that during the Soviet era, pressure was exerted to suppress the portrayal of national traditions as ideological and artistic values in children's literature. However, scholars have proven that detachment from one's native cultural roots—sooner or later—leads to spiritual decline [10, p. 28-29]. These children's writers freely and confidently incorporated complex, layered idioms, proverbs, and counting rhymes reflecting ancient national worldview values into their works. The reason behind this was their commitment to the traditional national upbringing aimed at shaping children into strong individuals from an early age. At that time, children's writers helped shape a holistic artistic thinking system in Kazakh poetry based on national concepts, sculpting

the national artistic image of the Kazakh people for the younger generation. This issue remains highly relevant today. Since children represent the future of the nation, writing poetry for them carries great responsibility. To create such poetry, one must possess a deep understanding of ethnopedagogy, be well-versed in child psychology, and be deeply rooted in national values and cultural heritage, without severing ties with their ancestral roots.

On December 25, 1960, a letter titled "On Significant Shortcomings in the Publishing Organs of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan" was addressed to N. Zhandildin, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. The letter, signed by S. Beissembayev, head of the Science, Higher Education, and School Department, criticized the Kazakh Adebieti newspaper, edited by Satybaldiev, for continuing to publish "ideologically unacceptable materials that lead readers into the dark past". Specifically, issues No. 30-33 featured articles (by B. Kenzhebayev, M. Akynzhanov, and K. Kuryshzhanov) praising religious and mystical poets of the past under the pretext of intellectual debate. The newspaper justified this by claiming the discussions aimed to determine the origins of Kazakh written literature. However, the letter accused the editors of fabricating this debate without scientific basis and of failing to consult authorities before publishing such materials. Consequently, the department was forced to intervene and halt the discussions. Moreover, on July 29, the newspaper published an anonymous announcement about literary heritage, mentioning plays by M. Dulatov, Zh. Aimauytov, and K. Kemengerov—authors labeled as bourgeois nationalists. Along with Kazakh Adebieti, the Zhuldyz and Prostor magazines were also criticized for continuing to turn their readers' attention to historical themes. The letter noted that over two years, these publications featured significant historical works such as: G. Mustafin's *After the Storm* (Dauyldan Keyin), A. Nurpeisov's *Blood and Sweat* (Kan Men Ter), Kh. Yesenzhanov's *White Zhayik* (Ak Zhayik), T. Zharokov's *Sandstorm* (Kumdagy Dauyl), among others. This episode illustrates how efforts to study and explore Kazakh literature remained under strict state surveillance and were ruthlessly suppressed.

In matters of artistic management, Nikita Khrushchev made the Soviet stance explicit: "The Party does not share its leadership with anyone. We have had, have, and will have only one spiritual leader—the Great Communist Party. Literature and art must remain a sharp ideological weapon, ensuring they do not decay. Literature must serve the Soviet people and the Party, always ready to resist enemies. Many shortcomings in literature and art stem from Party committees failing to sufficiently intervene in creative unions. Our duty is to control the ideological direction of creative work, stay informed about artists' lives, guide discussions properly, summon them to us, or visit them ourselves" [11, p. 77]. Thus, the creative intelligentsia had no choice but to comply with this ideological framework and produce works aligned with Soviet doctrine. Under Soviet rule, literature was a tool for shaping ideology, and any deviation was met with suppression.

The classic of Kazakh literature, poet, public figure, and academician Sabit Mukanov made significant contributions to dramaturgy, criticism, and literary studies. He wrote over 200 literary-critical articles. He researched Kazakh oral literature, collected and published folklore and ancient written heritage. He authored research works on literary history and the works of enlightenment democrats, offering profound insights into prominent representatives of folk poetry. His 1974 historical-ethnographic review *Halyk Murasy* (The People's Heritage) became a particularly valuable research work, covering the culture, art, language, and material values of the Kazakh people.

Renowned scholar R. Nurgali emphasized that "the key to assessing a writer's journey lies in his biography and the environment in which he was born and raised" [12, p. 489]. Taking this into account, Sabit Mukanov's scientific and creative biography is best supplemented by his work *Omira Mektebi* (School of Life), which serves as a primary source. And this work is invaluable not only because it documents the author's own life but also because it provides insights into the lives of many key figures in Kazakh literary history.

In *Omira Mektebi*, the author presents many fascinating details about the way of life of his ancestors at the beginning of the 20th century, making it a historical record of that era. "The Kazakh people lived in darkness before the establishment of Soviet rule" is a belief that the

seventy-year-old Soviet ideology deeply instilled in people's minds to such an extent that later generations tended to view that time as bleak and colorless. However, Sabit Mukanov refutes such perceptions by vividly recounting the joys of his childhood. His stories capture the excitement of rural children—gathering wild onions and berries, searching for delicious fish hidden beneath reeds, hunting baby waterfowl, and playing traditional games like *asik* (knucklebones), *aksuyek*, *sokyrteke*, and *buraqotan*. "One day's game continues into the next... Oh, friend, you were a true friend to children! The fun days I spent on your shore during my childhood remain in my mind, shining brightly as they were... When those days come to mind, I long for you deeply, my friend!". These words reflect the deep connection between village children and nature and the sincerity of the writer's nostalgia, showing his longing for the simple joys of the past.

The scholar Rymgali Nurghali: "It would be possible to create an entire library from the works of a writer. Some writers write quickly and exhaust themselves just as fast. Sabit's talent is a fertile and rich talent. The reader witnesses all the successful stages of his long literary journey. His talent can be compared to the vastness of the steppe. Sabit is a writer with a broad breath and scope," [12, p. 487] as stated, his creative biography, consisting of a whole library, is a world of its own.

From the 1960s until the years of independence, it was impossible to openly write about the erroneous policies of the Soviet government in any work. However, towards the end of the 1960s, in a few works that were published, signs of the idea of freedom began to appear, even though the manifestation of colonial oppression was depicted against the backdrop of the Soviet government's enemies: the Provisional Government and White officers. For example, in the novels "The Only House in the Steppe" (*Zhapandagy zhalgyz ui*) (1965) by Saken Zhunisov, "The Dangerous Crossing" (*Katerli otkel*) (1967) by Ilyas Yesenberlin, and "The Death of the Kulan" (*Kulannyn ajaly*) (1969) by Akan Nurmanov, there were indications of criticism of the cold sting of colonial policies. In "The Only House in the Steppe" (*Zhapandagy zhalgyz ui*), Agafiya Yapishkina, a treacherous Russian woman who came to exploit the land reclamation for her benefit, took all the wealth of the private landowner, who lived on his own terms, and his life savings in a chest, in one day. In "The Death of the Kulan" (*Kulannyn ajaly*), a brave hunter, Kulan Batyr, who wanted to establish his own village by gathering his scattered relatives along the banks of the Kairakty River, died in a trap at the hands of the heartless White officer, Efim Kutskiy. Both characters in the two works are victims of the totalitarian system. Through this, both authors raised a social issue, namely that the invaders, who destroyed the well-being and wealth of the people who had freely lived on the vast steppes, were foreigners. Akan Nurmanov conveys the harsh realities of the era through his character's inner monologue, while Saken Zhunisov incorporates the old man's seven stories, told in a monologue-dialogue form, into the plot of the novel under the title "The First Tale of Old Kurgerei" (*Kurgeri karttyn birinshi jyry*).

Soviet power assessed Saken Zhunisov's "The Only House in the Steppe" (*Zhapandagy zhalgyz ui*) as being dedicated to the land reclamation campaign, stating that it depicted "the triumph of collectivist sentiment over individual property ambitions" [13, p. 109]. In reality, the novel's events begin before the October Revolution and are confined to the reclamation period. Saken Zhunisov's statement: "I was against the arrival of anyone who came to the virgin lands. I would say everywhere that only 20 percent of the people coming from Russia were decent, the rest were just thieves and criminals" [14], is not without reason. However, in some contemporary works, and in the special chapter (pages 576-606) about Zhunisov in the History of Kazakh Literature (Volume 9), there is a well-constructed conclusion. It is demonstrated that colonialism, implemented through the virgin land campaign, not only weakened the demographic balance of the local people but also aimed to annex the virgin lands to Russia through new settlers. Moreover, it was later revealed that the land subjected to reclamation suffered massive erosion. The first attack on this issue is precisely shown in "The Only House in the Steppe" (*Zhapandagy zhalgyz ui*).

Another Kazakh writer who worked during the Soviet era was Ilyas Yesenberlin. The writer devoted much attention to researching the history of his people.

In Yesenberlin's "The Dangerous Crossing" (Katerli otkel), the fate of three different poets is depicted, reflecting the three different forms of resistance to Soviet power in the early 20th century. Firstly, the most valued task of educated Kazakhs was to call the people to national independence and to strive for an independent nation. If this process continued, they said, there would be no land left for the Kazakhs to graze their sheep. At thirty-five, Akan found himself lost, unable to find a place for himself. The image of Akan in the novel leads to various reflections... The idea that the so-called "friendship of nations" was just a method of deceiving the people, and that the Kazakh people, having lost their culture and language, were facing the threat of extinction, is emphasized. Akan, disillusioned and hopeless about the future of his people, fell to his death from the balcony. Akan's death symbolized the collapse of the aspirations of the Alash citizens. Both of Akan's students were opposed to the political campaigns fiercely pursued by the new government and were distressed by the root changes to the centuries-old national traditions of the Kazakh people. The second character, Akpar, opposed the Soviet government with his teeth and nails because of the violation of ancestral customs and traditions. However, unlike Akan, he did not succumb to despair. Akpar's father, having lost all his wealth, was forced to flee to China, and now Akpar's goal was to follow his father to China. The marriage of his only sister, Khanshayim, to his political enemy, the communist Hasen, added to his grief. Unable to forgive his sister for this, Akpar, in his final act of revenge, slaughtered both his sister and her husband, marking his final farewell to the new era. The image of Akpar is that of a person who spares no mercy to his sworn enemies, someone who is willing to commit brutal acts without hesitation, someone who embodies the idea of "blood for blood, vengeance for vengeance" [15]. Harshness for harshness is inherent to human nature.

In "The Dangerous Crossing" (Katerli otkel), the third poet, Burkit, although initially influenced by Akan, gradually adapted to the life of the new era. Despite Karazhan's repeated attempts to block him, Burkit eventually gained the trust of the new government and became an active member. Burkit, marrying a Russian woman, presented an example of "true" interethnic friendship. In the early years of Soviet power, many talents, uncertain of which path to choose, were unjustly labeled as "enemies of the people" and suffered greatly. Characters like Karazhan, who were involved in these acts, are depicted convincingly, using the grotesque reality of the time as a fitting element in the literary work. The novel's conclusion is shaped by Burkit's choice of path, as he adapted to the new era and actively participated in its formation. However, at the beginning of the novel, the image of the humanist poet Akan, described briefly in just two or three pages, casts a shadow over Burkit's character, and the author's own thoughts are clearly reflected in this. In any case, Ilyas Yesenberlin, in "The Dangerous Crossing" (Katerli otkel), truly attempted to reveal the reality of the era through the life principles of three poets with different perspectives.

Discussion

During the early 20th century, amidst the intense period of party surveillance, it was only through a few works from the 1960s and 1970s that the fate of the nation and the spark of national spirit could be clearly seen. These works, despite the strong control of the time, described historical realism and artistic detail on a wide scale.

The plot lines of the novels depict the fate of each character and reveal their personalities, often providing a clear representation of the setting. In shaping these images and uncovering the diverse traits of the characters, the writer's main goal was to emphasize our national values. Drawing from national ideas, interests, aesthetics, and psychology, while elevating life's realities into artistic truths, could only be achieved by a refined talent who is infinitely devoted to their homeland.

Ilyas Yesenberlin, when no one else dared to tackle historical themes, wrote the "Nomads" (Koshpendiler) trilogy, which consisted of "The Sword of Almas" (Almas qulysh), "The Struggle" (Zhantalas), and "Wrath" (Qahar), in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These works were groundbreaking, stirring the national consciousness of the Kazakh people, who were gradually becoming detached from their history during the Soviet era. In these works, Yesenberlin portrayed

the formation of the Kazakh Khanate, the era of Abylai Khan, and the struggle of Kenesary Kasymuly for independence from Tsarist Russia.

The famous historian E. Bekmahanov's "case" led to a situation where historians themselves became "afraid" to study the history of the country. At this very moment, Ilyas Yesenberlin's novels contributed significantly to preserving the national character of Kazakh spiritual life and the essence of the Kazakh people, elevating their spirit.

In the 1960s, not only Kazakhstan but the Soviet Union, as well as world poetry, saw the emergence of Olzhas Suleimenov, who became a unique and inimitable figure in the literary world. For many young Kazakhs, he became a "ruler of the mind," an ideal to look up to. In the harsh ideological conditions of the Soviet era, Olzhas Suleimenov's works played a special role in defending the historical dignity of the Kazakh people, restoring it, advancing its culture to a new level, and promoting the Kazakh nation. The works of this Kazakh poet, written in Russian, have captivated the attention of international public opinion for more than half a century during his lifetime. From the perspective of "individual independence," between the 1960s and 1980s, one of the most prominent intellectuals among Kazakh intelligentsia in terms of freedom was O. Suleimenov. He continuously expanded the inner "territory" of national spiritual and intellectual freedom. His influence was significant in shaping the worldview of Kazakh youth, increasing their civic awareness, and fostering a high regard for their national dignity. Suleimenov's research equipped Kazakh youth intellectually and methodologically, revealing Soviet false scientific stereotypes and encouraging them to take a more engaged approach to their own history and culture [16, p. 5].

The poems and scientific articles of the poet from 1966-1967 made the issue of historical topics in Kazakhstan even more relevant. Apart from Olzhas Suleimenov, most Kazakh writers lacked the perseverance for individual scientific inquiry. The documentary scientific foundation of their works was weak, and most importantly, the labor before the creation of their works was not visible and was limited to recent history. Objectively, the cognitive power and appeal of such poetry and prose works were weak. The issue was not only ideological and political obstacles but also in the creative capabilities and scientific-theoretical potential of the writers. Among the historians of Kazakhstan, there were very few researchers willing to explore the Middle Ages and ancient national history, as official studies in this field conflicted with their personal interests and everyday experiences. For most historians, it was important to choose research topics that promoted ideology, while national civic interests were forgotten. Even after defending their work and achieving their goals, there were very few individual scholars. Among those who did not forget national interests were a handful of scientists like A. Margulan and A. Mashanov. The early poetry collections and research articles of Olzhas Suleimenov were regularly published in the republican journal "Prostor", which he edited, during the 1960s and 1970s. It was in these years that the journal became well-known within the Union and abroad for its new materials and free-thinking, earning the nickname "Shukhov's Prostor." The journal's particular popularity was certainly due to the substantial contributions of one of its active authors, Olzhas Suleimenov, whose scientific research articles played a significant role. In 1970, the editor of the central journal "Novy Mir", A.T. Tvardovsky, was forced to leave his position. According to the publicist-journalist Sergey Baymukhametov, after "Novy Mir" was dismantled, Tvardovsky, before his death, said: "It's nothing... Shukhov is still there, and Prostor magazine is still there," referring to the Kazakh journal as a source of support [17]. Additionally, Suleimenov's research on the "Igor's Campaign" (Igory polki) published in Prostor during the 1960s was in great demand among researchers across the Union.

The first among Kazakh intellectuals to show scientific interest in "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" (Igory polki) was Mukhtar Auezov. Like the unparalleled folklorist M. Auezov, who was able to engage in free discussions with Kalmyk specialists about the "Jangar" epic and Armenian folklorists about "David Sasunski", Auezov could have discussed "The Tale" with any Russian "epic scholar," but he did not have the time or life to write a special research article. One of the experts on the "epic," poet Mark Tarlovsky, wrote: "I cannot name a single Kazakh who

knew *The Tale of Igor's Campaign* as well, in such detail and depth, as Auezov. He had many completely unique and interesting thoughts on this ancient Russian poetic monument. Auezov thinks historically, and at the same time, he is a poet" [18, p. 55]. It was Olzhas Suleimenov who fulfilled one of Auezov's unrealized dreams.

Suleimenov's book "*Az i Ya*" (1975) marked a new milestone in the development of historical thought in Kazakhstan and the Soviet Union. The novelty of the work begins with the book's title, genre, and narrative style. As the author himself immediately points out, the genre of the book is "history through the eyes of a poet" and "a book for the well-meaning reader". From the title and genre alone, the book's opponents were agitated. It exposed the weaknesses, even bankruptcy, of Soviet history, linguistics, and other social sciences, first and foremost their moral and creative powers and potential. The book is the result of more than ten years of Suleimenov's diligent research in Slavic studies and Turkology, beginning in 1962. The specific object of study was the Russian medieval treasure, "*The Tale of Igor's Campaign*", and in the course of this study, the author uncovered a vast new source of linguistic, ethnographic, and paleographic material, which had been neglected in Soviet historical science. He made groundbreaking and surprising conclusions about the medieval history of Eurasia, sharing them with readers. The immense political and cultural role of the close relationship between the Great Steppe and ancient Kievan Rus' was highlighted, and against the traditional historical view that "they were always in a state of war," Suleimenov proposed: "No, they were not always at war or in a hostile state, they were often allies, friends, trading partners, and engaged in cultural exchanges" [16, p. 169]. One of the undeniable linguistic pieces of evidence in the "*Tale*" was that the author "was a man of his time and class, and in the text of the epic, he not only freely and naturally used invisible Turkic words, but also, without fear that his reader might not understand, used vivid Turkic terms and lexical formulas. The epic was meant for the bilingual audience of the 12th century," says Suleimenov. "Several centuries later, as the significance of the Turkic language in Rus' became irrelevant, it was forgotten, and many foreign linguistic elements in *The Tale* were no longer noticeable—they were integrated into the text and became invisible (words like 'Chaga,' 'ort'ma,' 'yaponschitsa,' etc., which were not part of the Russian language). The linguistic situation in the cities of Kievan Rus' in the 12th century reminds me of the bilingual situation of the upper Russian class in the times of Pushkin and Tolstoy" [19, p. 182-183].

In the introduction, the author shares his own reflections and experiences on how "*The Tale*" should be read, offering readers substantial scientific and moral advice. Thus, he paid special attention to four methodological issues related to the study of "*The Tale*":

For two centuries, all literature related to "*The Tale*" has been focused on one issue: Is it true that "*The Tale of Igor's Campaign*" was authentically written?

"In such a situation, the most valuable figure in science is the skeptic. The skeptic is like an ignorant gardener who does not allow the bees to land on the flowers in the garden. But it is precisely these bees that land on the flowers and pollinate them. While protecting the valuable nectar from the thick-throated bandits, we are destroying the future fruits".

"All research on '*The Tale*' has brought nothing to science. In the last decades, Soviet 'Slovistics' has remained stagnant. The issue is not in science itself but in the surrounding issues".

"The main reason for the failure is the patriotism of the supporters of '*The Tale*' who have suffocated the scientific inquiries of the skeptics: for two centuries, during the years of fervent oratory, hundreds of book titles appeared in the bibliography on '*The Tale*', but in all of them, the arguments and evidence are stuck in the same old patriotic mud, not advancing. If mathematics and physics were subjected to such overwhelming patriotism, humanity would still be riding in two-wheeled carts", [19, p. 10-12].

The prominent Kazakh writer Mukhtar Magauin said: "Olzhas Suleimenov, the great son of the Kazakh people, spoke not only on behalf of the Kazakh nation and the Turkish states but also on behalf of the entire Asian continent in his book "*Az i Ya*'. He fiercely criticized the Western and Russian-centric views that had developed on the fringes of the Soviet empire. He proved where the true source of the word began. He revealed which direction the dawn would rise from" [20, p. 45]. Indeed, the book sharply demonstrated the intellectual level of Kazakh science and artistic

culture. The writer Bakhytzhan Momyshuly, deeply understanding the place of the poet's creativity, stated: "If I stop writing, humanity and world intellect will lose nothing. But if Olzhas Suleimenov's pen falls silent, what will happen to our future?" This view was supported by the poet-critic S. Aksunkaruly, who said: "A wise word! Olzhas speaking in Russian is like the Kazakh people speaking to the world" [21, p. 11]. According to the writer-critic Askar Suleimenov, "Whether it was written by fate or by fortune, Olzhas's book is, in this sense, eternal within Time" [22, p. 722].

Indeed, through Olzhas Suleimenov's works, one can recognize him in many dimensions. On one hand, he is a Slavist and Turkologist, on the other hand, a historian, linguist, and literary scholar; thirdly, he is an ethnographer, paleographer, and chronicle expert; fourthly, a poet, playwright, and publicist; and ultimately, as a citizen and public figure, he shines brightly in all these aspects.

Research findings: Starting from the 1920s and 1930s, as a result of the implementation of ideological supremacy in all sectors, a military-style control and punitive system was established in the country. The key ideological organs were the Central Committee and its Politburo, as well as individual departments dealing with ideology and culture. The penetration of political censorship into all spheres of public life transformed Glavlit into the main ideological body in the field of literature. The Soviet authorities, guided by the principle of "socialist realism," rejected pre-revolutionary history and regarded spiritual values as remnants of the past. Soviet society was excessively glorified. Despite the strict censorship of Glavlit, in the 1950s and 1960s, the prominent stars of Kazakh literature managed to convey the Kazakh world, worldview, and mentality in their works, albeit through a veiled artistic language.

Conclusion

After the 20th Party Congress, the writers and artists of Kazakhstan produced works we can be proud of. The central themes of the works created were the nation and the land, language and culture, and the issues of national literature and culture. They were able to feel the pulse of Kazakh society in a timely manner and created works with national flavor that were in demand. Through their works, which were colored with national spirit and ideas, they contributed to the formation of national consciousness. Despite the pressure of ideology, they continued to promote the Kazakh idea, albeit subtly. Therefore, the ability of Kazakh intellectuals to effectively convey the Kazakh idea in literature further demonstrates their craftsmanship, innate talent, and unique individuality.

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