

Problems of the theory and methodology of modern Kazakh literary studies

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Abstract: Formation of the latest scientific and methodological principles and the determination of the most important directions of the paradigm of the analysis of artistic creativity and text have been represented as actual problems of the theory of modern Kazakh literary criticism. The purpose of the work is to consider and analyze the modern concepts of Kazakh literary criticism, to evaluate the contribution of scientists from the period of independence of Kazakhstan in the development of theoretical analysis and interpretation of the artistic originality of national literature. The article discusses new trends in the theory of Kazakh literary criticism, changes in methodology, which are due to the leading positions of world literary criticism. In this regard, the article offers an analytical review of the main scientific and theoretical studies in the field of literary criticism, defines the evolution of the concepts of scientific and theoretical thought, identifies the principles and main aspects of the study of literature in a new way, shows certain achievements in close relationship with historical stages, as well as tasks future research; literary-theoretical and philosophical-aesthetic searches in modern Kazakh literary criticism are evaluated, the prospects for its development are determined.

Keywords: literary criticism; theoretical concepts; methodology; Kazakh literary; literary studies

1. Introduction

The independence of Kazakhstan marked a turning point in the development of modern Kazakh literary criticism. This period has witnessed significant transformations in understanding and evaluating national literature, leading to its integration into the broader context of global literary science. These changes require rethinking not only the cultural and historical heritage of the Kazakh people but also the methodological tools and principles used to study literature.

This study aims to analyze contemporary trends in Kazakh literary criticism by exploring theoretical approaches, methodological transformations, and their alignment with global literary processes. A particular focus is given to the evolution of research paradigms that reflect changes in the perception of artistic creativity and its societal role. This analysis also highlights the influence of structuralism, postmodernism, narratology, and mythopoetics, which have become integral to modern Kazakh literary studies.

The research is driven by several questions:

- 1) What methodological principles define the current stage of Kazakh literary criticism?
- 2) How do new global theoretical concepts influence the analysis of national literature?

3) What role does national self-identification play in the development of modern literary studies?

The novelty of this work lies in its comprehensive review of theoretical studies and their application to Kazakh literary criticism. By synthesizing international approaches and local perspectives, the study aims to establish a more nuanced understanding of the theoretical and methodological foundations of Kazakh literature.

The methodological framework includes a combination of systemic and comparative analyses, hermeneutic methods, and an interdisciplinary approach that bridges literature, history, and philosophy. These methods allow for a detailed exploration of the artistic and aesthetic principles shaping modern Kazakh literary studies.

Thus, this research not only evaluates the achievements of Kazakh literary criticism but also outlines its potential directions in the context of global scientific and cultural trends.

2. Materials and methods

The methodology of this study is based on a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical, historical, and analytical methods, ensuring an in-depth analysis of modern Kazakh literary criticism in the years of independence. The selected methodological framework allows for an integrated study of theoretical concepts, methodological principles, and their application to the analysis of national literature.

The research employs the following methods:

(1) Theoretical analysis:

This method focuses on the study of the main theoretical works in Kazakh literary criticism, such as the application of structuralism, postmodernism, hermeneutics, and narratology. These approaches are used to explore the evolution of Kazakh literary theory in the context of global trends. The study also includes a review of key concepts such as mythopoetics, communicative poetics, and the artistic and aesthetic principles of literature.

(2) Historical and contextual analysis:

The development of Kazakh literary criticism is analyzed in connection with significant historical events, including the rehabilitation of Kazakh writers in the late 20th century and the influence of independence on the formation of the national idea. The research examines how these historical milestones shaped the methodological and theoretical directions of Kazakh literary criticism.

(3) Comparative analysis:

By comparing Kazakh literary criticism with international theoretical trends, the study highlights the influence of global methodologies, such as those developed by Russian formalists, European structuralists, and postmodern theorists. This approach also identifies the unique features of Kazakh literary criticism that distinguish it from global trends.

(4) Hermeneutic and semiotic approaches:

Hermeneutic methods are used to interpret the underlying meaning of literary texts, focusing on the relationship between author and reader, while semiotic analysis is applied to uncover the symbolic and structural elements of these texts. These methods provide tools to explore the communicative and artistic dimensions of literature.

(5) Systematic and interdisciplinary methods:

The research adopts a systematic approach to identify patterns and connections within Kazakh literary criticism, including its philosophical, aesthetic, and methodological dimensions. Interdisciplinary methods, integrating insights from literature, philosophy, and cultural studies, are also applied to examine the broader implications of national literature.

The chosen methodological framework reflects the multifaceted nature of modern Kazakh literary criticism. It ensures a thorough examination of theoretical advances, the evolution of methodological principles, and the integration of global trends into national studies.

3. Results and discussion

A deep understanding of the theoretical and practical materials accumulated in the field of modern Kazakh literary criticism, and a comprehensive study of modern theoretical concepts are currently rising to a new level. The problems of receptive poetics, style, literary comparative studies, hermeneutics and communicative poetics require special attention.

One of the theoretical problems of the literature of independence is the study of Kazakh national literature in connection with the world literary trends in the development of art. The scientist Maïtanov (2002) defines various methods and directions of artistic thought in Kazakh literature as follows: “Conventionally, S. Seifullin laid the foundations of the historical and biographical genre, S. Mukanov of the historical and social genre, Zh. philosophical novel. For the first time Freudian, as well as existential motif penetrated into the Kazakh consciousness in the prose of M. Auezov, M. Zhumabaev, Zh. Aimauytov, and in the distant 20s they rose to the heights of world literature” (our translation—A. M.).

In 1988–1989, the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) rehabilitated the works of Sh. Kudaiberdyuly, A. Baitursynuly, M. Dulatuly, M. Zhumabayuly, Zh. Aimauytov, considering the nature of art without a dominating ideology, guided by the basic principle: “the content of literature should be measured by national qualities” (Zhumagulov, 2008).

With the independence of Kazakhstan, Kazakh literary criticism relies on the basic concept of national self-identification, the national idea. At present, the historical characteristics of the national idea (S. Kirabayev, T. Kakishuly, M. Bazarbayev, Sh. Yeleukenov, M. Myrzakhmetuly, R. Nurgali, T. Zhurtbay and others), the foundations of the Enlightenment (O. Abdimanuly, E. Tleshov, D. Kamzabekuly and others), the period of unity, the centralization of the national idea (T. Zhurtbay, B. Omaruly, A. Sharip, E. Tleshov and others), and the value of the works of Alash figures in the formation of the national idea (R. Nurgali , A.

Ismakova and others), literary comparative studies (Sh. Satpayeva, G. Belger, M. Madanova and others).

It was natural to combine free authorial thought in the literature of the period of independence with the national idea. Taking literature as the main source of the national idea in Kazakh scientific literary criticism, the scientist Sharip (2010) outlined the ways of understanding the existence and consciousness of the people through artistic thought: “As the historical consciousness of ethnic groups developed, instead of the “folk spirit”, the concept of “national spirit” was increasingly used”. And, thus, he continues his thoughts: “..., it is clear that the formulation of the problem of the national character in literature to some extent also acts in the figuratively expressed state of the national spirit and national self-consciousness” (Sharip, 2010). Therefore, when new literary trends began to appear that changed the structure of the work, the national idea became the main core.

It should also be noted that there has been an increased interest in scientific methods and methodologies that contribute to the integration of Kazakh science into world science and culture. At present time, the national literary science is replenished with new theoretical concepts, analytical methods of world literary criticism, such as hermeneutic, semiotic, structuralist, postmodernist.

One of the key phenomena in the development of contemporary world literature is postmodernism, which has established a strong presence in Kazakh literature.

Postmodernist literature is characterized by fragmentation, paradox, implausible plots disconnected from reality, parody, paranoia, black humor, and other distinctive features. Postmodernist texts serve as a reaction against the dogmatic stance of modernist approaches to thought and literature.

The key concepts of the term “postmodernism” were shaped by the views and ideas of Toynbee (1991), Hassan (2001), Lyotard (1979), and among others. The philosophical and aesthetic foundations of postmodernism include the ideas of poststructuralists and post-Freudians on deconstruction (Jacques Derrida), schizoanalysis (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari), as well as the concepts of irony proposed by Italian semiotician Umberto Eco and American neopragmatist Richard Rorty. The renowned Russian cultural theorist and literary scholar Epstein (2005) conducted a philosophical and aesthetic exploration of Russian literary postmodernism, its origins, and its key stages of development in the 20th century, along with its cultural and historical distinctions from other aesthetic systems.

Theorists who have studied postmodernism (e.g., Jean-François Lyotard, Douwe Fokkema, Theo D’haen, Judith Butler, David Lodge, Julia Kristeva, and Karl Menger) introduced concepts such as “world-chaos”, “world-text”, “intertextuality”, “double coding”, “authorial mask”, “pastiche”, and “metanarrative”, among others.

Historical, political, and socio-economic changes in Kazakhstani society facilitated the emergence of postmodernism in Kazakh literature. During the period of the country’s independence, Kazakh literary studies initiated research dedicated to postmodernism and its manifestations in Kazakh literature. Significant contributions to this area include the works of prominent literary scholars: “On the question of postmodernism in Kazakh literature of the 1950s–1980s of the XX century” (2002) by Eleukenova, “A word on postmodernism” (2006) by Kodar, “Postmodernist literature and contemporary Kazakh literary studies” (2006), “A few words for

innovative youth about a new trend” (2010) by Shaken, “What kind of phenomenon is postmodernism” (2010), by Zharilgapova, the collective monograph “Kazakh prose: modernism and postmodernism” (2015) by Zharilgapova et al, “Today’s postmodernism”, “Contemporary issues in global literary studies” by Isamakova (2018), “Postmodernism in contemporary prose” (2023), by Saulembek, and among others. These studies have explored the unique trajectory of postmodernism within Kazakh literature.

Among the scientists who applied innovative approaches to the study of literature (narratological, discursive analysis, etc.) we can name Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Maïtanov. In Maïtanov’s monographic works, periodic limitations of research materials are traced—a pattern born by the scientist’s leading conclusion about the artistic and aesthetic features of the text within the narratological system. The proof of this is that the scientist determined the place of the narrator in the narrative system of Kazakh novels, the categories of the author and the reader, the system of images of the novel, the objective world and the stylistic features of the work. The researcher’s works: “The author in the narrative system of the Kazakh novel” (2003), “Poetics of the Portrait” (2006), “The Structure of the Monologue” (2006) and others—made a significant contribution to modern Kazakh literary criticism (Maïtanov, 2006).

Literary scholar Saulembek (2017), in her doctoral dissertation “Postmodernism in Contemporary Prose”, emphasizes that postmodernism in Kazakh literature differs significantly from its Western counterpart. While postmodernism in Europe and America emerged as a reaction to canonical modernism, in post-Soviet countries, it appeared as a return to interrupted modernism. Thus, postmodernism in Kazakh literature has a different essence compared to the West (Saulembek, 2017).

A vivid example of postmodernist tendencies in Kazakh literature is the work of writer Adbikuly (2012), *Parassat Maidan (The Fiery Battle of Reason)*, which stands out as one of the earliest examples of the genre. The author presents his narrative in the form and style of a diary, enabling a more precise and profound depiction of the protagonist’s character. The diary entries are filled with reflections, an urge to analyze one’s actions, and a desire to “look inward” and confront inner solitude. In this work, the author employs postmodernist techniques such as the narrative simulacrum, intertextuality, chaos, and playful engagement with the reader. The text incorporates 17 quotes from renowned figures, including Abai, Nietzsche, Balzac, Gandhi, and others. This extensive intertextual framework significantly enriches the semantic content of the work and broadens its interpretative boundaries, integrating Adbikuly’s narrative into the “grand intertext” of world literature. A detailed analysis of the narrative aspects of *Parassat Maidan* can be found in Jundubayeva’s doctoral dissertation, *Narrative Strategies in Postmodernist Prose* (Jundubayeva, 2015).

Postmodernism in Kazakh national literature reflects a symbiosis of traditionalism and postmodernism. It manifests in unique stylistic forms, artistic techniques, and methods, while thematically addressing national roots. This is exemplified in the works of contemporary writers such as A. Zhaksylykuly’s *Dreams of the Damned*, D. Nakipov’s *Circle of Ash*, T. Asemkulov’s *The Treasure of Bektory*, D. Amantai’s *Flowers and Books*, Zh. Korgasbek’s *The Gaze of the*

Gioconda and Immortal Birds, A. Baibol's the Gathering in the Forest, M. Kosyn's. The Error of Tostik, Bouvet Island, and The Nerd, among others. The innovative content and forms in these works often provoke intense criticism within the domestic literary community. Issues of simulacra, metaprose, intertextuality, and irony in the postmodernist texts of A. Zhaksylykuly, T. Asemkulov, D. Amantai, A. Baibol, M. Kosyn, and A. Ikhsan, among others, are examined through concepts such as self-doubt, privileging the text over the author (Barthes' *The Death of the Author* and Foucault's *What Is an Author?*), rejection of meaning in chaos, parody of meaning-seeking, and playful narrative forms. These developments underscore how changes in public consciousness lead to new demands on literature and its methods of interpretation (Saulembek, 2017).

Despite the differences in objectives, some techniques are shared by both modernism and postmodernism. Consequently, the aforementioned authors and others are often classified as representatives of both movements. This duality defines the unique nature of postmodernism in Kazakh literature. Postmodernist works of world literature are characterized by features such as illusion, intertextuality, hallucination, the death of the author, chaos, ambiguity, fragmented perception, decanonization, rhizome, pastiche, parody, and others. These concepts, as creative techniques, also find expression in Kazakh prose, shaping a unique narrative style.

In contemporary Kazakh literary studies, the hermeneutic method is widely applied. This approach investigates literary works not only in interaction with the author but also with the consciousness of the reader. Hermeneutics provides the methodological foundation for this approach. It encompasses key concepts of literary studies such as "understanding", "interpretation", "meaning", and "dialogicality".

Today, hermeneutics is perceived as both a theory and practice for recognizing and interpreting diverse ideas present in texts, judgments, and symbols. Significant contributions to the development of this field were made by thinkers such as F. Schleiermacher, F. Schlegel, W. Dilthey, G. Simmel, E. Husserl, M. Schiller, E. Betti, H. Gadamer, M. Landmann, P. Ricoeur, and M. Heidegger, among others. The methodological pluralism of hermeneutics allows for the interpretation of literary works as historically dynamic phenomena (Gadamer, 1993). One of the prominent figures in literary hermeneutics is E. D. Hirsch. His foundational works include *Validity in Interpretation* (1967), *Three Dimensions of Hermeneutics* (1972), and *The Aims of Interpretation* (1976).

The hermeneutic method is particularly effective in literary studies, as it facilitates the comprehensive application of mythopoetic, structural-semiotic, and genre-system methods of analyzing artistic texts. It is worth noting that while contemporary literary studies are not limited to these methods, they remain among the most relevant and widely used by philologists today.

One of the latest developments in hermeneutics is reception aesthetics or reception theory, which enables a deeper interpretation of texts. Its theorists include Hans Robert Jauss, Roman Ingarden, and Wolfgang Iser. Reception aesthetics shifts focus not only to the author but also to the reader, their inner world, and positions the reader alongside the creator. This approach fosters an aesthetic appreciation and evaluation of the poetic system and imagery in literary texts. In contemporary

Kazakh literary studies, hermeneutics aims to explore the relationship between author and reader, as well as the inner world of the individual.

The formal method began to be replaced by more targeted ways of analysis that assess the aesthetic value of a literary text, as well as works that study the image and position of the author, the relationship between the author and the reader: “Introduction to literary analysis” (1991), “Poetics of a literary text” (2012), “Theory of a literary text” (2015), T. Yesembekova, “The image of the author in fiction” (1998), B. Shalabay, “Artistic anthropology” (1999), V. Savelyeva, “Artistic aspects of the development of modern Kazakh literature” (2001), B. Karibayeva, “Author and creative process” (2003), “Author’s position” (2017), M. Orazbek, “Typology of literary trends in national prose” (2011), “Genre and artistic method” (2011), Zh. Zharylgapova, “The image of the author and the character” (2014), K. Zhanuzakova and others.

One of the researchers of the relationship between the level of artistry in the poetics of the text and the communicative relations of the author and the reader is Doctor of Philology, Professor G. Muchnik. Theoretical concepts about the communicative features of the artistic word are reflected in his works: “Problems of communicative poetics” (1995), “Text in the system of artistic communication (perception, analysis, interpretation)” (1996) (Muchnik, 1996). It also discusses the reader’s interpretation of a literary text, the author’s position, the strategy of the text, examples of communication shortcomings, the functions of stereotypes and ways to create them.

Currently, the following scholars are conducting research in the hermeneutic field: Erkinbai “Hermeneutic, Structuralist, and Semiotic Approaches in Modern Literary Studies” (2017); Aldambergenova and Panzabek “Hermeneutics in Literary Science” (2018); Omirbekova “Hermeneutics and the Interpretation of Literary Texts” (2018); Januzak “Hermeneutics: The Theory of Interpretation” (2019); and Otarbayeva and Jumakayeva “Interpretation as a Method of Understanding and Comprehending Literary Works” (2021), among others. Hermeneutics is crucial for contemporary Kazakh literary criticism as it provides a framework for interpreting texts.

The works of modern Kazakh authors such as A. Altai, D. Ramazan, N. Kuantaiuly, K. Abilkaiyr, and S. Ordashova demonstrate innovations in textual construction. For example, Abilkaiyr’s short story “Blind Hope” (Abilqayyr, 2017) employs hermeneutic methods of interpretation, exploring the manifestation of “the other” in the literary world and revealing deep semantic layers of culture, nationality, and ethnicity. Similarly, Ordashova’s story “A Hero in Search of His Author” (Ordasheva, 2015) highlights Kazakh literature’s successful adoption of new hermeneutic approaches.

A special place in Kazakh scholarship is occupied by philosopher G. Esim’s hermeneutically-oriented work, Hakim Abai. This book analyzes the worldview of Kazakh poet Abai, systematically organizing his philosophical thoughts. Hermeneutic methods are applied to interpret Abai’s profound philosophical insights, as well as his poetry and prose, presenting his philosophical concepts in clear terms.

Hermeneutic practice in interpreting texts is a multifaceted and complex process that requires preparation, close attention to the text, and the ability to engage in dialogue with it while considering numerous factors. An interpreter can understand more than the author, as they examine the author's era, stylistic nuances, and subconscious elements in the text. This allows the interpreter to grasp the work at a deeper level than the author might have consciously intended. In interpreting literary texts, the creative thinking of both the reader and the author interacts, but the reader must engage in a personal interpretation, reevaluation, or "rewriting" of the text.

In Western literary studies, hermeneutics remains a cornerstone for examining key methodological principles in literary theory, forming the foundation of the field. In contemporary Kazakh literary studies, hermeneutics is regarded as a comprehensive and effective method for text interpretation and the analysis of textual content with a profound understanding.

Another relevant literary approach in modern Kazakh studies is structuralism. Structuralism examines literature as a system where elements integrate and transform. It emerged under the influence of adjacent disciplines (linguistics, semiotics, logic, ethnology) and as a reinterpretation of the Russian OPOYAZ legacy and phenomenological aesthetics.

Literary structuralism began developing in the 1960s, drawing on the linguistic methods and concepts introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916). Saussure's work laid the foundation for the methods, terminology, and key concepts of structuralist theory. Founders of literary structuralism include Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, and Roman Jakobson. Other notable contributors are historian Michel Foucault (1926–1984), Freudian philosopher Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), semiotician Julia Kristeva (b. 1941), and philosopher Louis Althusser (1918–1990). Foucault's works, such as *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1966), *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), and *The Discourse on Language* (1970), are particularly influential. Structuralists view literary creation through the lens of linguistic systems (Losev, 1982).

Structuralism in literature also encompasses a specialized field—"morphology", which focuses on the organization and structure of texts. The term was introduced by Vladimir Propp in his work "Morphology of the Folktale" (Propp, 1928). Other scholars, such as K. Tiander, A. Zeitlin, T. Munro, and M. Kagan, have also contributed to this field. French-Lithuanian philologist and literary scholar Greimas (Greimas, 1966) examined texts through structural-semiotic analysis, employing actantial theory in his *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method*.

In contemporary Kazakh literary studies, numerous scholars actively explore and apply the structuralist approach.

Among those who adhere to new trends in understanding literary phenomena, we can name Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Savelyeva. The scientist considers the structure of literary theory as a system of ideas and concepts, using the possibilities of studying structuralists, post-structuralists, semiotics, cultural studies and receptive aesthetics. In the research work of Savelyeva "Artistic text and the artistic world: problems of organization", for the first time in scientific theory and practice, the concepts of "artistic text" and "artistic world" are distinguished, a

model of the artistic world is developed as an alternative reality, reproduced by the reader's method of reception through the interpretation and analysis of a literary text (Savelieva, 1996). The artistic world is studied in terms of its figurative structure, space and temporal organization, and event dynamics.

The next literary critic working in the field of structural poetics is Kulymbetova. The scientist develops a systematic approach to identify the formal and semantic properties of a literary text. At the same time, Kulymbetova considers the specifics of the literary style of a literary critic in connection with the concept of Bakhtin's chronotope. Scientific observations and conclusions are presented in the monographs: "The style of the Kazakh story and narration" (1993) and "System analysis of a work of art" (2002) (Kulymbetova, 2002).

The studies of Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Abisheva can also be considered within the framework of the structural method. The monographic work of the literary critic "The Poetic System, The World of Nature: Structure and Semantics" (2002) serves as proof (Abisheva, 2002). Abisheva analyzes the semantics and structure of a figurative word, composition, cycle, system of images on the example of poetic materials of Kazakh-Russian poets.

Sadykov is one of the literary scholars convinced of the effectiveness of the structural analysis of the text. An example is his textbook "Theory of Literature" (2002) (Sadykov, 2002), where the author considers verbal art as an aesthetic system, placing the structure of a literary text above its semantic features. A scientifically significant study on the theory of literature is the work of Makpyruly (2009) "The Art of Human Studies". This study guide discusses in detail the following issues: the nature of a literary word, the unity of the content and form of a work of art, the personality of a person in a work of art, the language of a work of art, the type and genres of literature, literary methods and trends. The works of world and domestic writers and poets are analyzed in interrelation: V. Shakespeare, A. Pushkin, Edgar Allan Poe, N. Gogol, F. Dostoevsky, N. Nekrasov, L. Tolstoy, A. Kunanbayuly, Guy de Maupassant, S. Kudaiberdyuly, A. Chekhov, S. Zweig, S. Seifullin, B. Mailin, M. Auezov, G. Musrepov and others.

The differentiation of the properties of the artistic word, built on such a complex dispute (drama), is evident in the studies of Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Yesembekov. Yesembekov, relying on the methodological base of the structuralist, post-structuralist, psychoanalytic, postmodern approaches to the differentiation of a literary text, draws new conclusions depending on the properties of dramatic genres. The dramatic property of a literary text is revealed from the point of view of the "author's" approach. The relationship between the sequence of each artistic element and the author's position is revealed. The practical significance of these theoretical conclusions is proved on the basis of the work of literary critics A. Tarazi, S. Zhunusov, O. Bokey, M. Magauin, A. Kekilbayev, D. Isabekov. From the point of view of the structuralist approach, drama serves the artistic unity of the text. These studies are covered in the works "Drama and Kazakh prose" (1997), "Poetics of the artistic text" (2012) (Yesembekov, 1997).

The structuralist approach in literature has opened new horizons for Kazakh literary scholars, influencing methods for analyzing mythopoetics, psychoanalysis,

and cultural-historical foundations, as well as comparative methods. It has initiated a new era in the development of Kazakh literary studies.

Structuralism, as a theoretical method for analyzing the internal structure of texts, provides a fresh critical perspective on Kazakh literature, revealing connections between symbols and meanings in literary works. For instance, in O. Bokey's work "Arisin tosip ali otir" ("Still Waiting for Her Support", where "support" metaphorically refers to "husband," translated by A. M.), symbols rooted in national culture play a significant role:

Black: Symbols like the black cow, black shadow, black-gray sky, steppe in black attire, black stone, and black scarf represent grief, misfortune, and sorrow.

Candle: In the narrative, the candle barely burns, about to extinguish. The author draws a parallel between the dying candle and the protagonist, as well as her elderly mother, symbolizing a fading life.

The story also employs retrospection to develop its theme and ideas, along with spatial-temporal organization, descriptions of landscapes, and characters' speech levels. The protagonist's character, appearance, and essence are conveyed through dialogue, internal turmoil, and the perspectives of other characters. This demonstrates how structural analysis is applied to contemporary Kazakh literary texts.

It is well known that semiotics is a key method within structuralism. Semiotics, the study of symbols, signs, and sign systems, functions as a means of communication (storing, processing, and transmitting information about people, culture, and nature). As an interdisciplinary field, semiotics arose at the intersection of linguistics, philosophy, and cultural studies. Its principles are widely applied in literary studies for text analysis.

The founders of semiotics are Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Peirce. Saussure introduced the concept of the sign, while Peirce unified fragmented earlier theories about the symbolic nature of human reality, developing a comprehensive concept of semiotics. He defined key notions (sign, object, interpretant) and categorized signs into indexical, iconic, and symbolic types.

In the second half of the 20th century, semiotics was prominently represented by the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School, including figures such as Yuri Lotman, M. L. Gasparov, and Yu. V. Levin. The works of E. M. Meletinsky, B. A. Uspensky, and French scholar Roland Barthes also reflected semiotic principles.

In literature, semiotics examines texts as complex systems of signs, where words, images, and symbols acquire additional meanings tied to cultural and historical contexts. This approach enriches the understanding of literary works by uncovering the deeper symbolic layers embedded within them.

Doctor of Philological Sciences, prof. Zhetpisbayeva, in particular, analyzes the specifics of the ethnological and cultural genesis of the Turkic peoples, their history of cultural self-identification. Zhetpisbayeva (1999) considers the system of symbolic thinking of nomads on the material of Kazakh literature in the research monograph "Symbol in the Movement of Literature" (1997). In the monographic work "The Imaginative Worlds of M. Zhumabaev" (2008), the scientist subjects the verses of the forbidden poet to a holistic study, determining the main sources and

peculiar parameters of M. Zhumabayev's myth-thinking, his creative relationship of correspondence with Russian symbolism.

It is worth noting that in Kazakh literature, symbols and myths are closely interconnected. The scholar Aimukhambet highlighted the role of symbols in myths: "The most essential and primary attribute of a myth is the symbol. It is through myths that we came to understand symbols" (Aimukhambet et al., 2021).

A significant contribution is made to the study of mythology in modern Kazakh literary criticism by the scientist Aimukhambet. The research work "Problems of mythology in the prose of Oralkhan Bokey" (1999) present a scientific analysis of the nature of mythologism based on the prose of Oralkhan Bokey. The scientist analyzes the functions of myth in folklore and written literature. The doctoral dissertation "The Poetic Function of Myth" (on the example of modern Kazakh poetry) (2010) is based on a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of myth: from the cognitive activity of myth to its various systems of description and image, their internal classifications (Khassenov et al., 2022). Scientific innovations are reflected in the works: "The World of Myths and the Artistic World" (2003), "The Artistic Sphere" (2009), "The Function of Myth in Poetics" (monograph, 2010), "In the World of Literature" (2012), "Myth and Modern Literature" (2012), "Mythopoetics" (2013), "Poetry and Myth" (2014), "Myth. Mythology. Mythopoetics" (2016) (Aimukhambet, 2016). Aimukhambet pays special attention to the problems of mythology, generally considered by previous researchers, and makes his own in-depth analysis: he clearly indicates internal divisions and draws convincing conclusions, reveals the nature of individual images. He also substantiates in detail the mythopoetic, mythologemic characteristics of the concepts "inner world", "celestial body", "mountain", "bird", "native land", develops independent classifications and brings them to the conceptual level; reveals complex ways of cognition and perception in the system of poetic thinking of a mythological nature (Baltabayeva et al., 2024). Along with immersion in the inner layers of the literary text, the scientist, when revealing his own stylistic realities, determines not only the initial language usage, but also highlights the author's (auto-metaphors). Thus, Aimukhambet, based on the scientific concepts of world mythology, brought new ideas to Kazakh mythology and new concepts to the scientific circulation of modern Kazakh literary criticism.

In Kazakh literature, symbolism occupies a special place because symbols are closely tied to the national consciousness. In this context, it is worth noting that works such as M. Jumabaev's "Ot", "Payghambar", "Künshygys", "Men kim?", and "Syrym" are written in the style of symbolism. Similarly, symbolism can be observed in the works of other poets and writers, such as S. Toraygirov's "Shakirt oyi" and M. Makatayev's "Samal esti". In contemporary Kazakh literature, the use of symbols, especially mythological symbols, continues. For instance, in D. Ramazan's short story "Aksakal men ak zhylan" (The Old Man and the White Snake), symbols connected to Kazakh mythological perceptions, such as "the old man entering a dream," "the serpent's power," "the sacredness of water," and "dreams," are employed. By using these mythological symbols, the author revitalizes the prior knowledge embedded in the people's perception, presenting the cognitive layer of the literary text through the mythological map of the world in the national

consciousness. The symbols used help the author convey a complete thought and shape the cognitive layer of the text. The unified thought or cognition in the artistic text can be expressed as: “The hero’s future will be bright, his path open. He will be a person who serves his country and becomes a figure honored by his people.” Through the symbolic use of mystic forces, the author conveys the significance of national beliefs and phenomena in human life. In contemporary Kazakh literature, symbols reflect the national culture and code.

The new theories discussed above and the analyses showcasing their manifestation in Kazakh literature demonstrate the integration of traditional literary directions with the globalization process, while preserving the uniqueness of the national culture.

During the totalitarian regime, topics that contradicted the official ideology were not addressed in Kazakh literature. After gaining independence, issues such as historical gaps, language, religion, and national identity emerged. The theme of religion was one of the most prohibited subjects in Kazakh literature during the Soviet era. However, after independence, there was an opportunity to restore national spiritual values.

In modern Kazakh literary criticism, a significant place is occupied by scientific research of Ph.D., prof. Ismakova. The scientific research of the scientist is directed to the sphere of theoretical understanding of the genre features of literature banned in the post-Soviet period and modern Kazakh prose. In the research work “Poetics of the Kazakh artistic prose of the early twentieth century (theme, genre, style)” (1998), Ismakova considers national prose in connection with world concepts of the development of literature on the example of works of art by Sh. Kudaiberdyuly, M. Dulatuly, Zh. Aimauly, M. Zhumabayuly, M. Auezov and other literary texts. In her scientific works, the process of formation of national prose is analyzed, the novel is studied as the final genre of the development of Kazakh literature in the 20s (Ismakova et al, 2020), the novel is studied as the final genre of the development of Kazakh literature in the 20s. Ismakova works in the field of intersection of structural and post-structuralist, comparative historical literary criticism, as well as narratology, since only such synthetic problems of literary criticism can adequately reflect the complex processes taking place in modern artistic reflection (Safronova, 2009). This methodological approach was implemented in one of the last monographs “Return of the Pleiades. Existential problems in the works of Sh. Kudaiberdyuly, A. Baytursynuly, Zh. Aimauly, M. Zhumabayuly, M. Dulatuly and M. Auezov” (2002). The scientific research “Literary criticism in the period of independence” (2016) (Ismakova, 2016) summarizes the theoretical problems of Kazakh literary criticism of the specified period, modern postmodern studies and works of literary scholars.

Both artistic texts and scientific literary works of Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Zhaksylykov deserve special attention. Examples of a new analysis of eternal, spiritual themes in a work of art can be traced more clearly in the works of Zhaksylykov, the scientist reveals one of the previously taboo topics in literary criticism—the relationship between religion and literature. In the research work “Images, motives and ideas with religious content in the works of Kazakh literature. Typology, aesthetics, genesis” (1999), the scientist pays special attention

to the development of the national prose of the twentieth century from the point of view of the genesis and existence of religious and mythological issues, highlights the causes and essence of the historically determined gap in the development of this factor in the literature of the 30–60s, its revival in the new prose of the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century (Zhakulayev et al., 2024).

Zhaksylykov draws systematic conclusions about the influence of religious and moral, spiritual and aesthetic, philosophical and ethical principles on the artistic word of the Kazakhs of different eras. These conclusions are reflected in the scientific, educational, methodological and monographic works of the scientist “Enlightenment of Ahmad Yasawi” (1996), “Religion and literature in an aesthetic relationship” (1997), “Religious motives in fiction” (1998), “Comparative typology of images and motives with religious content in the works of Kazakh literature” (2012) (Zhaksylykov, 2012). Freedom of the spirit and love for the creator, according to the scientist, serve to determine the true image of literature.

A number of scientists also contributed to the formation and development of new concepts of literary theory: Nurgali (1998), Ashimkhanova (2020), Dzhuanysbekov (2000), Ibraev (2020), Zhurtbay (2020), Yeleukenova (2013), Ishanova (2013), Praliyeva (2003), Madanova (2003), Akhmetov (2004), Ismailova (2003), Tleshev (2005), Zhanuzakova (2015), Yerzhanova (2014), Zharylgapov (2020), Erkinbay (2017), Saulembek (2017), etc.

Modern integration of the humanities in the context of synergetics requires more diversified searches. It should be noted that the project “New Humanitarian Knowledge. 100 new textbooks in the Kazakh language” was carried out (New Humanitarian, 2017).

During the implementation of this project, fundamental scientific works and academic bestsellers were translated into Kazakh, covering various areas: from sociology and linguistics to film studies and oriental philosophy. In particular, well-known books have been translated on literary criticism: “Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction” (2017) by Ryan (2019), “Literary Theory: An Anthology”, vols. I, II, III, IV (2019) (Rivkin and Ryan, 2019). The main task of translation is to introduce new areas of research in the theory of world literature. These works present an analysis of theoretical concepts: Russian formalism, globalization, cognition, emotion, evolution, the goals of literary criticism and theory. American and Russian formalism is structured in chronological order, marked by a heuristic character. The book discusses new approaches of structuralism, post-structuralism, narratology, phenomenology and their main representatives: M. Foucault, J. Baudriard, J. Derrida, L. Althusser, J. Kristeva, J. Lacan, R. Barthes, J. Deleuze, J. Lyotard et al. The works contain articles in which works are analyzed, the perception of literary texts, the role of literature in the development of mankind are studied.

Scientific editors of translations in literary criticism are the following scientists: Sh. Yeleukenova, A. Ismakova, A. Sharip, Zh. Aimukhambet, D. Mukhamadiyev, N. Kudaibergen. The following translations in linguistics should be noted as well: “Language as Instinct” (2007) by Steven Pinker, “A History of Languages: An Introduction” (2011) by Tore Janson, “Introduction to Linguistics” (2014) by Victoria Fromkina, Robert Rodman, Nina Hyams, “Language and intercultural communication” (2017) by Svetlana Ter-Minasova; in Philosophy: “25 Key Books

on Philosophy” (2015) Remy Hess, “A Brief History of Philosophy: Socrates to Derrida” (2014) Derek Johnston, “Recent History of Western Philosophy: Ancient Philosophy”, Volume I (2014), “Recent History of Western Philosophy: Philosophy of the Middle Ages”, Volume II (2014), “Recent History of Western Philosophy: The Beginning of Modern Philosophy”, Volume III (2014) by Anthony John, Patrick Kenny and others. Thus, as a result of this project, Kazakhstan has a unique opportunity to gain knowledge from the best textbooks included in the curricula of advanced educational institutions such as Cambridge, Oxford and Harvard.

4. Conclusion

In the modern theory of Kazakh literary criticism, there are enough works in which it is possible to highlight the analysis of individual artistic categories in a work of art, in particular from the point of view of structuralism, structural poetics. Much attention is paid to the methods of hermeneutics, semiotics as determinant artistic approaches to literature.

We have cited a number of studies to reflect the state of today’s reality of modern national literary criticism. This review and analysis of the works of modern Kazakh literary critics show that the global trends in literary science have given a new impetus to the development of the literature of Kazakhstan, and have found special reflection and development in national studies. Modern Kazakh literary criticism, therefore, not only revived during the period of independence, but also laid the foundation for new concepts and trends in the development of the humanities.

The main factor for the success of contemporary Kazakh literary studies is the openness and receptiveness to leading examples of world literature, participation in the global context of literary research, and the preservation of national culture. Amid all the global processes, the defining feature of modern Kazakh fiction literature is its integration into the global literary space.

The prospects for the development of modern Kazakh literary studies in the context of its integration with world literary studies represent a multi-faceted process that can be viewed in several key directions:

4.1. Development and formation of theoretical aspects and methodological approaches

The introduction of advanced theoretical and methodological concepts, adapted to the specifics of Kazakh literature and cultural traditions, will open new possibilities for analyzing artistic texts and provide new contexts that were previously unexplored in national literary studies. For example, a feminist approach could offer a deeper understanding of the role of women in Kazakh literature.

4.2. Intercultural dialogue and synthesis

The intensive integration and globalization of Kazakh literary studies into the global academic community open up prospects for intercultural dialogue. Kazakh literature, with its unique historical and cultural features, can be studied in the context of and in comparison with the literatures of other peoples. This will provide an opportunity to reveal the peculiarities of Kazakh literature and establish its place

within various cultures and literary processes. Given the multilayered nature of cultural interactions, such studies could lead to the creation of new conceptual frameworks.

4.3. Development of joint research projects

Participation of Kazakh and foreign scholars in international research projects, exchange programs, literary symposia, and conferences will create opportunities for closer dialogue and a deeper understanding of Kazakh literature in a global context.

4.4. Development of new forms of integration through translations of scientific and literary works

One of the key prospects is the active dissemination of translations of Kazakh literature into other languages, as well as the integration of global works into the Kazakh context. The development of translation activities and intercultural research will contribute to the enrichment of scientific and cultural traditions.

4.5. Digitization and new technologies in literary studies

Digitization in the world of literature is a popular trend. The implementation of new technologies in Kazakh literary studies will provide scholars with the ability to create electronic archives, databases, and use artificial intelligence for more in-depth analysis of artistic texts. The development of information online platforms for accessing literature and research, as well as the participation of Kazakh scholars in international digital projects, will accelerate the integration process of Kazakh literature into the global literary research community.

4.6. Preservation and promotion of cultural heritage through media platforms

Given the tremendous global interest in cultural and literary traditions, Kazakh literary studies have the potential to play a key role in preserving and disseminating the unique literary monuments and cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. In this context, the use of modern media and social platforms will play an important role in popularizing Kazakh literature, creating documentary projects, virtual exhibitions, and online lectures. This will provide a global audience for Kazakh literature and enable it to become part of the global cultural process.

The integration of Kazakh literary studies into the global academic community opens new perspectives for scholars in Kazakhstan to deeply understand and analyze Kazakh literature within the framework of global literary trends. This approach will enrich Kazakh literary science with new concepts and theoretical approaches, while also making Kazakhstan's contribution to the world literary research community and culture more noticeable and significant.

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