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Mythologism of Modern Kazakhstani Prose: Lexico-Semantic Aspect

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Abstract. The research attempts to determine the nature of mythologism in modern prose of Kazakhstan, to explain the use of myths in the novels by Abdizhamil Nurpeisov, A. Zhaksylykov and N. Verevochkin, which are representatives of the spiritual and intellectual stream in the modern literary process. The subject of the authors' research is the multifunctionality of myth, its semantics and structure-forming function in the works of Kazakhstani prose writers of the late XXth — early XXI centuries. In the first part of the article, the main attention is paid to the mythopoetics of A. Nurpeisov's dilogy "Last Duty", the interpretation of mythologeme and the meaning of the actions of the protagonist, which we consider as a mythological hero. The second part is devoted to the analysis of the mythological plot of Aslan Zhaksylykov's novel "Singing Stones", the interpretation of the symbolism of the sacred stone Yin-Yang. The next section deals with the novel of Nikolai Verevochkin, which we treat as a myth-novel.

Keywords: myth, mythologeme, multifunctionality of myth, mythological plot, intertext, myth-making

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Мифологизм современной казахстанской прозы: лексико-семантический аспект

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Аннотация. Исследование проведено с целью определить характер мифологизма в современной прозе Казахстана, объяснить использование мифов в романах А. Нурпеисова, А. Жаксылыкова и Н. Веревошкина, являющихся представителями духовно-интеллектуального течения в современном литературном процессе. Предметом исследования авторов является полифункциональность мифа, его семантика и структурообразующая функция в произведениях казахстанских прозаиков конца XX — начала XXI вв. В первой части статьи основное внимание уделено мифопоэтике дилогии А. Нурпеисова «Последний долг», интерпретации мифологем и смысла поступков главного героя, рассматриваемого нами как мифологического героя. Вторая часть посвящена анализу мифологического сюжета романа Аслана Жаксылыкова «Поющие камни», толкованию символики священного камня Инь-Ян. В следующем разделе речь идет о романе Николая Веревошкина, трактуемого нами как роман-миф.

Ключевые слова: миф, мифологема, полифункциональность мифа, мифологический сюжет, интертекст, мифотворчество

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Introduction

Modern Kazakhstani prose is characterized by a steady interest in myths, both national, and Western European and ancient, which can be explained by the influence of postmodernism and the tendency to complicate the plot structure of works. On the other hand, the appeal of literature to ancient national sources, to eternal spiritual truths against the backdrop of the dehumanization of modern society also actualizes this problem.

The article makes an attempt to consider the poetics of the novels of modern writers of Kazakhstan Abdizhamil Nurpeisov [1], Aslan Zhaksylykov [2] and Nikolai Verevochkin [3] in the mythological aspect, to identify the functions of the mythologems, allowing to interpret certain plot situations using parallels

from mythology. In our opinion, a myth in a work of art can be used as a plot unit, and as a source of motives and images illustrating the author's idea. The mythological plot is created by myth-making thinking, that is, it is directly related to the author's myth. Such a research approach to the interpretation of the plot of myths in the novels we are considering allows us to understand the deep meaning of the author's intention.

Methodology and research methods

The methodology of the article is based on a multidimensional approach, which involves the use of several research methods:

- comparative-historical, allowing you to consider the similarities and differences of plot situations in the text based on direct contacts;
- historical-genetic — to identify the sources of myths, to understand the reasons for the mythologism of the novel;
- structural-semantic — in order to explore the features of the functioning of individual techniques in the artistic structure of the novel.

Literature review

The problem of mythologism in modern literary criticism has been developed quite thoroughly, but nevertheless, in Kazakhstani literary criticism there are many little-studied aspects and blank spots on this topic. Although in recent years there have been many serious studies on the mythologism of Kazakh literature, on the use of mythopoetic images by writers in their works. Determining for us is the statement of Yu.M. Lotman that “the constant interaction of literature and myth proceeds directly, in the form of a “transfusion” of myth into literature, and indirectly: through the visual arts, rituals, folk festivals, religious mysteries, and in recent centuries, through the scientific concepts of mythology, aesthetic and philosophical teachings and folkloristics” [4].

At the end of the 20th century, there is a steady interest in myth in world culture, which gives a person living in a crisis era faith in his rebirth. It is no coincidence that R. Barthes argued that “myth as a living memory of the past can cure the ills of our time” [5. P. 72–130]. Research practice of Yu.M. Lotman [4], V.N. Toporov [6], S.S. Averintsev [7] on the interpretation of the problems of the mythopoetics of the literary text allowed us to conclude that A. Nurpeisov [1], A. Zhaksylykov [2] and N. Vereochochkin [3] turn to mythological plots with the aim of modeling modern life according to the laws of mythological thinking.

M. Eliade warned in “Aspects of a Myth” that “... myth is one of the extremely complex realities of culture, and which can be approached and interpreted from various and complementary viewpoints” [8]. C. Levi-Strauss proposed to consider myth as “a category of our thinking that we arbitrarily use to combine under the

same term of attempts to explain natural phenomena, creations of oral literature, philosophical constructions and cases of the occurrence of linguistic processes in the consciousness of the subject” [9]. E. Cassirer considered the myth “a closed symbolic system, united by the nature of functioning and the way of modeling the world around us” [10]. Therefore, Roland Barthes calls modernity “the privileged field for mythologizing” [11] and, following M. Eliade, proposes to consider socialism as a new eschatological myth.

In recent years, researchers of Turkic mythology have been talking about the emergence of a mythological school in Kazakh literature, called itself “spiritual and intellectual stream” (S. Kondybai [12]; Z. Naurzbaeva [13]; E. Tursunov [14]; B. Zhetpisbaeva [15]; K. Zhanabaev [16]; T. Asemkulov [17]). Studies on mythopoetics, archetypes, symbols, mythologems that appeared as part of this trend formed the methodological and scientific basis for our study of the mythologism of modern prose. In their opinion, the mythologism of the prose of modern Kazakhstani authors is explained by the aspiration to investigate what is happening in modern life with the help of myth, to resist the chaos that destroys people’s lives and threatens modern civilization.

The modern Kazakhstani prose in the person of one of its best representatives, Abdizhamil Nurpeisov [1], is an aesthetic whole that exists in a multicultural space and is actively included in the wider context of the world literary process. Researchers and critics call Abdizhamil Nurpeisov unconditionally passionate person, and his “Blood and Sweat” and “Last Duty” are the Kazakhstani five-books set, equal in value to the five-books of F.M. Dostoevsky. In eastern literature, this kind of work is presented in the khamsa genre, recall the “Five poems” by Nizami, Rumi, Navoi. But at the same time, Nurpeisov’s last novel has not yet received a proper rating: he is mainly mentioned in passing, in articles of an anniversary character.

The exception is the Moscow scientist N.A. Anastasiev [18], who considers the novels of A. Nurpeisov in the context of Western European literature, is looking for something in common with the novels of E. Zola, W. Faulkner, M. Proust. In the book “The sky in a cup of flower. Abdizhamil Nurpeisov and his books in the world literary landscape”, he emphasizes the spiritual correspondence of the Kazakh writer with the world space, talks about the “dialogue” of A. Nurpeisov with his teachers and contemporaries [18. P. 125], reveals the features of the intertextual component of prose of A. Nurpeisov and pays attention to the mythologism of his five books.

Despite the severity of the issues and topics raised by A. Nurpeisov [1] in the “Last Duty” dilogy, critics and literary scholars reacted with restraint to her appearance. Of the Russian researchers, articles by Lev Anninsky are especially significant in “Friendship of Peoples”, “Trail on the Ice floe” [19] and in the journal “Niva” “Day? Night?: notes on the dilogy of A. Nurpeisov “The Last Duty””; from Kazakhstani researchers of the writer’s work, A. Artsishevsky [20]; V.V. Badikov

[21]; V. Vladimirov [22]; Val. Mikhailov [23]; A. Mashakova [24]; E. Kakilbaeva [25] and others can be noted. Researchers unanimously note the special fatalistic attitude of the writer, suffering from the tragedy of the Aral Sea unfolding before his eyes. L.A. Anninsky believes that A. Nurpeisov is a truly strong personality who had to tell people how the world conquered and built by the Kazakhs after 17 was crumbling: The heroes of “Blood and Sweat” believed that the world that they had suffered would belong to them. Their grandchildren and great-grandchildren feel how this world is freezing and falling apart [19. P. 160–173]. In his opinion, it is precisely the feeling of an approaching universal catastrophe that determines the particular mythological thinking of the artist himself, which is reflected in cross-cutting and leitmotif mythologies. The circle of problems of the existential plan posed by the writer in the novel also requires philosophical reflection, which determines the peculiarities of the mythopoetics of the novel: who is guilty of the chaos and is responsible for the story? Therefore, “Last Duty” by A. Nurpeisov was called a catastrophe novel, an eschatological novel that predicts the end of the world.

The unusual nature of this poetry of the trilogy of the Russian-speaking writer Aslan Zhaksylykov [2] gave rise to the most unexpected conclusions and comparisons: the researcher Murat Auezov believes that it is close in style to Zhusupbek Aymautov’s “Akbilek” novel, Berik Zhylkibaev compares it with Bunin’s “Cursed Days”, more often comparisons and analogies arise songs of Asan Kaygi and the acts of Korkyt-ata. V. Badikov sees stylization in the spirit of the “stream of consciousness” in the novels, while others, focusing on the apocalyptic theme, insist on associations with Marcel Proust, Albert Camus, Jerome Bosch. A noteworthy comparison is with Gabriel Marquez, in whom the hero-colonel continuously sculpts goldfish, breaks and sculpts them again. One of the capacious characteristics of the novels belongs to Auezhan Kodar, who called the novels about human ecology, the encyclopedia of Kazakhstani life in terrible forms of infringement of human rights, infringement of the most elementary norms of existence. These points of view were expressed during the presentation of the book by Aslan Zhaksylykov on March 25, 2006 at the National Library [26].

Literary critic O.K. Abisheva explores “the shift in modern Kazakhstani prose associated with the publication of the novel, and to be precise, the cycle of novels “Dreams of the Cursed”, which was a literary event, not of the year, but of the last ten or fifteen years of our chaotic inter-time period” [27]. L.V. Safronova speaks of a completely obvious postmodern paradigm in the work of a Kazakhstani writer [28], Sh.T. Adibaeva in her study “The Poetics of Myth in the Artistic Prose of the End of the XX — Beginning of the XXI Century” [29] notes the elements of postmodern poetics in the works of A. Zhaksylykov in comparison with V. Pelevin’s prose. The novel we are considering in the aspect of plot composition and the identification of the functions of symbols in it was reflected in the works of O.A. Valikova, who examined the contextual field of “Singing stones” along with other novels by A.Zh. Zhaksylykov “Dreams of the Cursed”, “Another Ocean” with the aim

of establishing meaning-forming links between the domains of Russian-speaking (Kazakhstani) and classical Russian literature [30], and A.A. Dzhundubaeva, who devoted her work to identifying the features of the narrative strategy of the postmodern novel [31].

Nikolai Verevochkin's novel "Tooth of a mammoth (chronicle of a dead city)" became the object of attention of researchers and critics immediately after appearing in print in 2003. One of the serious works devoted to this work is an article by Kazakhstan cultural expert Zira Naurzbaeva "Adzhigerey, Ruslan and M: the three fates of Kazakhstan's culture. Non-mythological notes about the modern Kazakhstani novel" [13. P. 199]. In her opinion, Verevochkin's novel is dedicated to the fate of modern man in the modern world. The researcher calls it philosophical and myth-making and considers the plot of the novel as "a myth about the fate of the Russian intellectual culture in Kazakhstan" [13. P. 200]. Of particular interest to the critic and literary critic Leonid Terakopyan is the fate of people who find themselves in the breakdown of eras, which he calls ascetics [32. P. 206]. A Moscow researcher perceives what happened to the virgin city of Stepnorsk, which was built in Soviet times on the site of the flooded village of Ilyinka, as a tectonic cataclysm and compares its effect with the Big Bang in the Universe, which suddenly released the decay energy.

K.O. Tattimbetova [33], like her colleagues from Al-Farabi Kazakh National University A.S. Afanasyeva [34], B.U. Dzholdasbekova [35], believes that the story about the life of the North Kazakhstan virgin town is mythological, and the symbolism is multi-layered. B.U. Dzholdasbekova in the article "The genre of the novel in Russian literature of Kazakhstan of the end of the twentieth — the beginning of the eleventh centuries" mentions that "...Nikolay Verevochkin raises a serious topic for our time: where can a modern person find *pou sto* in a world in which everyone is familiar, at first glance, reliable, unshakable structures collapsed..." [35]. Researchers are unanimous in defining N. Verevochkin's novel as mythological, they believe that it was created under the influence of postmodern poetics, but its "surrealism" does not contradict the "truth of life" [35. P. 220].

Results of the research

"The Last Duty" by Abdijamil Nurpeisov as a novel-myth

The process of revival of myths became especially intense in the literature of Kazakhstan in the new era, when it became possible to free oneself from ideological fetters, from censorship, and a "free, non-pathetic attitude to myth, in which an intuitive understanding is complemented by irony, parody and intellectualistic analysis and which is carried out through probing the mythical fundamental principles often in the simplest and most ordinary things and notions" arose [36].

Dilogy of Abdijamil Nurpeisov's "Last Duty" is a kind of continuation of the epic "Blood and Sweat", but in social conditions that are completely modern for us. The novel of myth conveys the pain of a writer who turned out to be a happenstance witness to the death of a unique creation of nature — the Aral Sea. The plot action in the dilogy has clearly defined spatial and temporal boundaries: it fits in one day, which is reflected in the titles of the parts "There was a day" and "There was a night". But the inner plot is inexhaustible, permeated by the work of memory and intuition, the work of the mind and heart. Not only the drama of the main character was found in it, but also the drama of each of the characters, the chronotope knows no boundaries, hence the constant access to the heavenly and transcendental worlds.

The influence of the Bible, especially the chapters on the creation of the world: "And there was evening and there was morning" is especially clearly felt in the structure of the dilogy. According to the writer, this is not only about the fate of the Aral Sea, but about all the catastrophes of the world.

Human destroys the nature created by God. The artist's mythological thinking is set to show the path of humanity and of an individual person from the creation of the world to its death. In 1984, he called the first part "Duty", and in 2000 gave the book a different name — "Last Duty", changing intonation and including it in a different context ("Farewell to Matera" and "Deadline" by V. Rasputin, "Last Bow »V. Astafiev) and in another, mythological space. The writer gives everyone the opportunity to consider the novel as mythological, tragic, and therefore shows the "slow process of transforming the Aral Sea into a kind of independent substance, unbridled, unpredictable. He answers the challenge with a challenge, inviting into tallied forces which are much more powerful than the notorious Big House. And the dull resistance of these forces determines the tragedy" [25. P. 54]. In this context, the epigraph to the novel, taken by the writer from the "Book of the Dead", which is a statement of the acts of a mortal man and is perceived as a reproach to all mankind, has a special function:

I did not do evil to people ...

I did not kill ...

I did not block the path of running water ... [1].

The symbol-image that gives rise to the main mythologem that unites space and time is the Aral itself, drying out, full of personal and public tragedies, which is shown as having memory, living in the memories of nature, people, fish and animals. It is open to people and recalls the former beauty of the miracle of nature that arose among the sands, it was strong and powerful, and now it has become "a victim of human greed and recklessness". It is no coincidence that the Kyrgyz director Bolot Shamshiev, who made a film about the Aral Sea based on the novel by Nurpeisov, calls the writer an eyewitness to the Aral Sea Hiroshima, and Bel-Aran, a small village on the shores of the Aral Sea, where the action takes place,

is the epicenter of despair, calling for help in the face of impending catastrophe, threatening death all of humanity.

There is no coincidence that the image of the ice floe in the plot, which became a mythologem during the story's unfolding: the three main characters — Jadiger, Bakizat and Azim turned out, by chance, on an ice floe torn from the island, which is carried away by a strong wind into the open sea, that is, into eternity: “A frantic storm raging by night, blew a snowy snowstorm in vague darkness, rampaged and raged throughout the earth...The Aral Sea was wildly howling and humming, the waves roared, a dull universal circle of darkness laid heavy shackles on the whole huge raging world...” [1]. The madness of nature that is happening in front of people is a symbol of the violation not just of everyday life, but of the being of human existence, an apocalypse that happened through the fault of people, a formidable warning of nature, expressing protest against people. Therefore, the ice floe takes on universal dimensions, is likened to the cosmos, and the mythological thinking of the writer A. Nurpeisov himself is reflected in this transformation-symbol. Chaos is not only on this dangerous ice floe, but throughout the universe, and it is akin to Pasternak's “It snowed and snowed, the whole world over ...”.

In the novel, a special role is assigned to the main character, Jadiger Amirzhanov: the collective farm chairman, honest worker, fisherman with a university diploma, as his wife contemptuously dignifies, “Top Performer” — as the mother-in-law pronounces mockingly. He was shown by the writer to be far from an ideal hero, crushed by hard work, a constant desire to fulfill the overstated plan for fishing, descended from above. Jadiger in everyday life is an uncomfortable person in communication, corresponds to the semantics of his name: “a thing in itself”, he is merciless in relation not only to himself, but also to others, furious in anger, unkind to people. But deep down, he is a bearer of active goodness and compassion, he has a tender and defenseless soul, with faith in the best, in the bright, which he hopes to achieve not only for himself and his family, but for all of humanity.

The action in the novel begins with a description of the traces of this hero: “The tall dark-faced man, stooping, looked back at his traces” [1], “the uneven, heavy traces of the tired man” evoke dull anguish in the hero, he notes something absurd in them, not combining with the outside world. For the hero, they evoke associations with his own fate, which his wife, the beautiful Bakizat, perceived as absurdity. Thoughts about the footsteps of his steps grow into a metaphor symbolizing his life: “escalating gloom”, “listless”, “like homeless stray dogs”, “imprints of your failures” that started once and break off once, but by force the mythological character of this image of the symbol means that the clipping of traces means a new beginning: on the chest of the dying Jadiger, a small bird — the messenger of the eternal, is heated and saved by his heat. That is, the symbol develops into the myth of Eternity.

In his dreams, nightly fantasies and daydreams, Jadiger sees Kok-Oguz, he appears before the hero between sleep and reality and in the last minutes of his life. Kok-Oguz is a symbol of the end of the Aral Sea, and, as a result, a symbol-

mythologeme of the end of the world. He is insatiable and wants to drink the whole sea to the bottom. In the first dream, he descended from the western side of the island, instills terrible fear into the hero, causes streams of tears, from which Jadiger wakes up. Before his death, on the ice floe, the freezing Jadiger again sees the Kok-Oguz giant, descending from a height who wants to drink the remaining water in the shrinking sea. This dream is deeply mythological: the monster's intention coincided with the death of the hero, that is, the death of the sea also means the death of the hero.

In the plot of the novel, the mythology of the fiery red fox with the roguish muzzle, into which turns Bakizat, the teacher, the mother of two children and the unfaithful wife are also significant. She is unhappy in her personal life, a thirteen-year marriage with Jadiger, to whom she married after her beloved Azim, for the sake of a career, preferred another girl, a more profitable party, falls apart before the eyes of all Bel-Aran residents. The consequence of her uncomplicated life is unloved children born with physical disabilities (her son is over ten years old, but he is silent, a beautiful daughter without three fingers), unloved work, unloved habitat of Bel-Aran, which she has long dreamed of leaving.

Her other essence manifests itself at the moment of transformation into Mother Belorybitsa itself, whom Jadiger sees next to himself at the head of a school of fish in a dream: his fish-wife has a “young body”, “flexible, elastic, like molten silver,” she “sparkled with her dazzling scales” [1]. The writer endows his heroine with the natural initial qualities of a female, endows the ancient instincts of a predator, emphasizes the eroticism of her feminine. Jadiger admires his wife, and also pities her because of her failed life, and tries to understand her departure to Azim, perceives everything that happened to him and her as a gift of destiny, and a curse, fate.

Jadiger is fatally alone as a carrier of guilt towards the Aral Sea and nature, and this is his peculiarity as a mythological hero who is in a state of “inseparability” with the sea and with the rest of nature, with its inhabitants. Let us recall a dream in which the hero turned into the leader of a school of fish Gray Ardent and, together with the White Fish (Belorybitsa) swims to clean water, he tries to save everyone and takes special care of the little White Fish. In real life, sleep episodes confront Jadiger. When he looks at the caught catch of the fishermen, he sees a big white fish and a small White Fish, he seems alive, but the hero failed to save her: one of the fishermen, an old man Koshen spite him crushing this helpless creature.

N. Anastasiev [18] considers the death of Jadiger, a mythological hero, justified. He is responsible for the evil happening before his eyes, not being guilty of his actions. On the contrary, he, as he could, opposed this process of destroying order, but could not prevent the tragedy of the Aral Sea, therefore he considers himself guilty of what happened to him, his family and the Aral Sea. Let's remember that the mother of the hero was of the same opinion, and folk wisdom speaks through her mouth. Jadiger dies, and a hungry wolf is ready to attack him. But at the last

moment, a small piece breaking away from a large ice floe takes the predator into the sea. But Bakizat, who rushed to her husband's cooling body, sees a warbler on his chest.

Anatoly Kim admired the ending of the plot: "It is so simple, the apocalyptic pessimism is overcome, without any rhetoric." N. Anastasiev believes that "the laws of mythological thinking apply here. For example, the law of totemism, according to which the human soul is placed in the chest of an animal" [18. P. 130]. There are plots in Turkic myths when the soul of a deceased person moves to a bird that is ready to fly. As you can see, the writer A. Nurpeisov was guided by these well-known mythological interpretations, but offers his perusal of this final tragic situation: Bakizat, putting her hand to Jadiger's chest and feeling a stir, comes to life herself.

Here one more optimistic microtheme arises that overcomes the tragedy of the current situation: the resurrection of Bakizat. The magic formula "I'd like to fall victim to you" — a magic charm that saves the soul of a loved one, strictly works in the stories of love and death of young people in Kazakh dastans and a romantic epic.

Mythopoetics of A. Zhaksylykov's novel "Singing Stones"

The trilogy of Aslan Zhaksylykov [2] with the multifunctional title "Dreams of the Cursed", written at the beginning of the XXI century, represents a new level of mythopoetic mastering of reality not only in the writer's work, but, it can be said without exaggeration, in all Kazakh literature in Kazakh and Russian. Most likely, this can explain the semantic discrepancies of novels, in which, according to the remark of A. Zhaksylykov, first of all, a real pain sounds due to the shredding of the human race and the "warning at the end of the world". Well-known critics, cultural scientists and literary critics, in their very first statements, were extremely frank and completely shared the anxiety of the author, who was not indifferently observing the anthropological catastrophe taking place in the world. It is clear that from this perspective, the trilogy outgrows the scope of a purely artistic work and becomes a landmark phenomenon in the cultural life of Kazakhstan.

Within the framework of this article, our attention is drawn to the peculiarities of the author's mythological thinking, an attempt to create his own original system of mythologemes in order to fill one or another image with universal meanings and analogies.

The first part of "Dreams of the Cursed" — "Singing stones" is a story about the awakening of a person after physical and moral upheavals. The comprehension of real, true values of being takes place in the soul of the hero with the name Zhan, unusual for the Kazakh.

The semiotic fullness of this name is sacred: zhan (soul), in contrast to the flesh, lives in hope and desire to comprehend the beautiful. Therefore, the initial

episodes in the hospital associated with the “entry” into his life of a nurse named Saule play such an important role. Her appearance in Zhan’s sore, tormented by pain and memories consciousness is associated with beauty. It is Saule with the name — symbol “ray”, which absorbs warm, bright, inexpressibly feminine and surprisingly pure (these epithets are gleaned from the text) — which gives hope for salvation from nightmares and painful dreams.

The assembly composition perfectly meets the plan of the narrator hero, who is in a state of almost an embryo, to recall the past, to understand the reason for the tragedy that happened to him. And the next plot movement is connected in the character’s consciousness with another woman, indicated in this episode by the pronoun you. In the beginning, everything that happens to her now, at the moment of “remembrance”, is recalled. The hero is ironic and even sarcastic in evaluating the performance, carefully staged and played by his wife: and the neighbors sympathize with her, who goes to the hospital every day to her husband, to the “heavy drinker”, “bonker balls”, which “is not worth it”. Zhan’s wife created and polished every day the image of “a beautiful, lonely, sad woman-picture worthy of the brush of a romantic man”, “trustworthy to conjugal duty”, “lonely and suffering” — this is how she appears to others. And only her husband is “helpless, flattened in a hospital bed”, long since become a stranger, knows her value.

In this multi-layered story, a short segment from the life of the protagonist, who is also a narrator, is narrated. The description of the process of memory is justified psychologically. The hero is in a borderline state between the present and the past: “The past is only an image, a whirlwind, long, persistent. The reality is a hospital bed to which I have been confined for an eternity” [37. P. 27]. This phrase, said by the hero, before plunging into the past (“eternity”), performs several functions: denotes the tragic essence of what is happening, introduces the hero into a bizarre labyrinth world of memories and allows him to survive the process from insight to a full realization of the inevitability of what happened to him: “The circle was closed so that everything would be repeated”. This last sentence of the novel completes the framework of the first part of the trilogy.

In the stream of thoughts of the hero between life and death, the inevitability motive becomes the leading one, and the movement of the plot (thoughts) of the hero, who recalls his whole life, is in the most direct connection with this motive. The main thing in this novel is not a description of the hero’s defeat, but his liberation from falsehood, the awakening of truth. Aslan Zhaksylykov uses the principle of “discord” here, which allows him to combine events that are different in time and significance, the hero’s experiences, his thoughts, feelings, sudden associations, which are constantly intertwined “bizarrely and unusually”, interrupt each other.

The hero, realizing and accepting the idea of lying, artificiality and falsehood of his own life, the life of society and people close to him, deliberately “leaves” the bustle of the world around him. And now loneliness and self-deepening become his usual state. “Stream of consciousness” is a technique that is one of the plot-forming

principles in Aslan Zhaksylykov's trilogy. Zhan recalls, comments, searches for the causes of the tragedies not only in his personal life, but also in the fate of those around him.

In the real world, in the eyes of those around him, he is “a hopeless old man, moreover, crushed by misfortune — a serious illness”. The present is a hospital, pain, the eternal smell of bleach, delirium, a nightmare, fear. Now life for him is enclosed in the guise of eighteen-year-old nurse Saule (the detail “wet, surprisingly clean eyes of a deer girl” becomes a leitmotif in episodes with this heroine-antipode of a woman-temptress Ainur).

Zhan ended up in this huge hospital in the middle of a smoky, wondrous city after he didn't get to China and was found on the banks of Khorgos by border guards. Between bouts of pain, he understands the most important thing that happened in his life: a marriage with Ainura, which did not bring happiness, but was “not useless”, as it opened his eyes to many things. The hero understood from his own experience that his wife was a “Natural Born Actress”. The insight of the “unsuccessful” hero occurs late. The motive of loneliness that arose in the plot is perceived by him as infinity in time and space. Catharsis in his life came two years ago: this time is conceived by him as fatal. The memory episode has a symbolic meaning: Arman, an experienced tempter, destroys their fragile, ghostly union. The motive of betrayal is embodied in the image of his wife Ainura, the “woman temptress”, and bosom-friend Arman.

Arman, as the embodiment of the best masculine qualities, has everything necessary for a comfortable existence: parents — rich, wealthy people; father is a professor at a medical university, Arman graduated from the university, works in an important ministry, makes a career, is an enviable bach, has an apartment in the city center and a luxury car, travels abroad. In contrast to him, the main character, in the past — an excellent student, graduate student, university teacher, poet who never completed his dissertation, and the money collected by relatives for defending his dissertation he spent on furniture, (at the insistence of his wife), they got an apartment after eight years of standing in line, a book of poetry, appeared in print is not even noticed by critics”.

In the eyes of his wife, her family and friends, Zhan was the embodiment of absurdity and folly. His attempts to revive shamanism, friendship with station vagabonds, peculiar dervishes, picking up natural wonders, following ritualistic rites (In the eyes of his wife, uraza is just fanatical asceticism, leading to hungry fainting) are perceived as eccentricities: “Poor thing, he did not realize what time he lives. He was completely devoid of a sense of reality...” — the interpretation of his actions not only by Ainur, but by the whole society, which turned him into an outcast. But Zhan has his own idea of honor and dignity, his own system of moral values. Therefore, in reality, he is a failure (the approbation of the dissertation did not take place because of a polemic with an influential professor, whom Zhan accused of scientific incompetence).

The hero has not been doing his job for a long time. But marginality is not determined by this circumstance: it seemed to have failed in the gap of being — at the break of history. After the experience, he realizes that he has now lost his homeland, familiar environment, friendship and family ties, he has no family, no reliable roof, nothing unconditional, that is, there was a complete disconnection with real life. The stumbling block is that Zhan as a person does not exist in reality, but in the phantom of an already non-existent past. Therefore, the author introduces into the story a mass of parallel lines and characters, which, like a system of mirrors, reflect the struggle between good and evil principles in the hero's complex, unsettled soul. And it seems that it is precisely the lonely path of separate from the rest of the world personality is the hope of overcoming the insuperability.

In the darkest moments of drunken delirium and turbidity, Zhan remembered one thing: somewhere in the south-east of Kazakhstan there is a shaman named Duysen baksy. He once wrote down legends about him during the folklore expeditions of university philologists. In the dilapidated mind of the alcoholic, the light of desperate hope was still glimmering — to find the shaman and rush to his feet with a prayer for salvation. Thus, the impulse of the dying Zhan is neither more nor less than the spontaneous impulse of the subconscious, a powerful unconscious push towards the return to the world of the old, traditional.

In the novel “Singing Stones”, Zhan finds the Yin-Yang stone at the most decisive and crucial moment in his life, the day before the decision to die. He understands that this is a certain sign, a hint of fate. Something must happen in his life so that everything changes. Zhan and the shepherd met in an incredible way, through the subtext of the novel we see that they were connected by a stone in a special way. The boy was brought to the meeting place by a stone that hit his head, and Zhan saw him as soon as he found a round pellet stone with the symbol of Yin-Yang. And then the boy's pain was transmitted to him, and his sufferings infected the soul of a shepherd. After all, the Yin-Yang symbol in an esoteric sense is a sign of a superhuman being which has managed to combine all the opposites, especially male and female principles. Perhaps the writer wants to say that in reincarnation this is the inevitable path of evolution of every soul.

Zhan regained his former will, the consciousness of an intellectual and his creative personality. He again began to see the field of his fate as a Maidan, that is, a battlefield, and he wanted to fight. And then the dream returned to him again. He wanted to go to Tibet in order to live in a monastery and meditate beyond the limits of meditation. He knew that there was a rocky hill towering above the border river Khorgos. He hoped that when he was in the river, the course would take him to the other side, that is, to the land of China. He needed to decide to jump. And once during an emotional race he made up his mind. Reading mantras and prayers, shouting thanks to the shaman, completing the marathon, he rushed up the slope, ran onto a rock and jumped into the river. That is, he turned himself into stone and as though he threw himself into another space. He ended up in a river.

However, Zhan did not take into account one thing that the riverbed is blocked off with a metal net, everything that gets into the water from our shore will be in the net. And he, half-deafened, in a semi-unconscious position was caught by border guards. Zhan was in the hospital, and having learned that he had a wife in Almaty, NSC investigators called her to come here. And almost the entire plot of this novel is Zhan's confession to his wife sitting at the hospital bed. Zhan repeated the fate of Mtsyri (Novice) of Lermontov. In the novel of A. Zhaksylykov laid circular, cyclic composition. Everything that happens next in other novels of this cycle is a new round of development of the fate of one hero — Zhan, that is, the human soul, which is always alone and the same on the total level.

The plot composition of the mythological novel of N. Verevchkin "Tooth of a mammoth"

The poetry of Nikolai Verevchkin's novel "Tooth of a Mammoth" [3] is multi-layered, that gives rise to a sense of its genre diversity. A. Zhaksylykov calls this novel historical, because it is devoted to the history of the life of the virgin town from its creation in the 60s and 70s to the devastation in the 90s, and philosophical, because one of the main characters Kozlov is a real philosopher who proves to everyone by its existence, that if "God exists, then he lives in the province". Other critics and researchers call him mythological. The novel "Tooth of a mammoth" by Nikolai Verevchkin is a complex genre formation, as all researchers say without exception. It has a slightly intriguing subtitle — "Chronicle of the Dead City", it presents Soviet reality in great detail, details of the ups and downs of life of the first virgin land workers in the North Kazakhstan steppes. The point of the account of history is the village of Ilyinka, which went under the water for the new city of Stepnomorsk, which became the embodiment of the myth-dream of paradise: he absorbed all the best that was in the Soviet city and the old peasant village, and there are special people here, living in conscience and in harmony with oneself, nature and society. In the plot of his novel, Nikolai Verevchkin created a myth about the fate of Russians in Kazakhstan, about the fate of the Russian intellectuals as a carrier of high culture in Kazakhstan. Therefore, from our point of view, the novel is riddled with mythological details and symbols: the village that went under water is a memory of Atlantis; a new city — a symbol of a new sinless world; the ark that did not save from the flood; the mammoth tooth, which was the beginning of all the misfortunes of the people of this city.

In this multi-layered narrative, several plot layers can be distinguished, one of them is mythological, in which the following mythologems are especially significant: the village of Ilyinka that has sunk under water (the myth of Atlantis); man-made sea and a new city (interpretation of the Soviet myth of a new world); Ark City (association with Noah's Ark, where the elect gathered in one pair); mammoth as a punishment for this sacrilege.

Each of the characters in the novel is a realization of the author's myth of the "chosen ones": the image of Marat Aubakirov, Maratik is symbolic (let's pay attention to that Verevochkin gives a name with a diminutive suffix only to him), he is almost the same age as Kozlov and Mamontov, the youngest (except demented Bulat) hero-Kazakh. He is the embodiment of a mythological story about a hero: a bulldozer driver, an extra-mural student of a construction institute, a motorcyclist, a football player, a drummer of a local VIA. The conflict with the foreman Kozlov, who wants to build on the burial site of mammoth, has deep implication: Marat, like every Muslim, has a sacred attitude to the graves of his ancestors, to their memory, but he was born and raised in the Russian environment, in a Russian village, in the virgin lands, the hero seeks to become the same as everyone around. But at the decisive moment comes the understanding that this is impossible. And his death as a mythological hero is inevitable. From our point of view, the writer is trying to understand the problem of "getting used to" representatives of a different, non-Russian nationality in a different environment. The inhabitants of Stepnomorsk, who indiscriminately and infinitely love the city and life here, try to understand the cause of the catastrophe that happened with their hometown and in such situations become philosophers, the plots about them seem symbolic, full of secret signs, with the help of which the author realizes his plan — to show how the fate of Russian intellectuals in Kazakhstan. Nikolai Verevochkin creates a modern myth about ordinary people in an unusual situation, when a person realizes that the only way to save himself is to save others. In each of the heroes lies a myth created by the writer: the hero-ascetic is a simple pensioner Kuzmich, who saves priceless exhibits of the ethnographic museum; true to his rare profession aerospace surveyor, Su-25 Grach, who believes in reviving his unnecessary profession; romantic Kozlov, the first builder of this virgin city, who remained in the dead city as a grave digger; idealist Baykin, who sincerely believed in the possibility of creating an island of communism on his state farm. The writer shows the fate of these heroes, who believe in the ideals of their time and are left with nothing and in a state of shock after the collapse of Soviet power. Particularly symbolic is the mission of the forced grave digger Kozlov, who buries not only the remaining people in a dead city, but also his ideals, faith in a bright, dignified life on this earth.

Analysis of the study results

A study of the poetics of the aforementioned modern Kazakhstani novels allows to argue that the myth is present in them in different guises, first of all, not just as a form of "a second or another reality", but as a way of perceiving the characters and the author himself. In A. Nurpeisov's dilogy, "The Last Duty," space and time lose their boundaries, there is a shift to Eternity, and events related to the fate of Bel-Aran fishermen occur in the light of eternity: "Sub species aeternitatis". In the plot of the dilogy, the Aral sea appears in various forms, of which the main

is the symbol of life, therefore, the memory of the doomed people lives a memory-legend, passing from mouth to mouth about the Aral as a blue bowl of water, the carriers of this dream are simple fishermen, headed by their collective farm chairman Jadiger Amirzhanov is opposed to the death of the sea, and their own. They do not want to leave this long-suffering patch of land, although they admit that the sea has become shallow.

This is the real state of the Aral Sea and its shores in the twentieth century (the action takes place in the seventies and eighties, during the Brezhnev stagnation). A. Nurpeisov does not indicate the exact time limits of his narrative, because it is important for him to emphasize the mythological timelessness of what is happening, reflected in the headings, tend towards the biblical: “And there was a day”, “And there was a night”, and in the author’s passionate confessions.

The image of the sea is so complex, in different plot situations it doubles, bifurcates, acts as a background, a place of action, where events take place, landscape, but above all this stands the Aral Sea as a symbol of eternity of life, as a symbol of life itself, as a creation of God, which other his creatures — people are trying to destroy.

Jadiger, like the writer himself, who created this tragic hero, is mythological. Therefore, the poetics of this image are thoroughly penetrated by mythologemes. He is a bearer of popular consciousness, or rather, of a tribal, universal human consciousness, he tirelessly thinks about the Aral Sea and about people, about the troubles that fell on them, and about who is to blame for everything that happens: shallowing of the Aral Sea, about fish escapement, about everyday difficulties of ordinary fishermen, about children to whom he feels special guilt for their injuries and inferiority. He does not relieve himself of responsibility for all the troubles that have fallen on him, his family and his countrymen, cannot agree with the decision of the authorities to relocate Bel-Aranians from these familiar spots.

The memory is the strongest feature in person’s fate — the main motive of the plot about Jadiger as a carrier of tribal memory, his wife Bakizat, who understands that she can’t build a new life, and his former friend Azim, who became the enemy, one-eared uncle Sary Shaya, and Zhaken, who became a candidate of sciences, Koshen, Red Ivan, chauffeur Kozhban, Bydyk, Mukan, who understands and perceives the tragedy of the Aral and Bel-Aran as his personal one, but is not a mythological hero, like Jadiger are endowed with the same memory about native places. For them, what is happening with the Aral and Bel-Aran is also a disaster, like the surrounding nature, along with fish, birds and animals, they tragically feel the shaken order of life, they understand that this will lead to disaster. The motive of the unity of the world of people and nature is developing intensively and grows into an eschatological motive for the end of the world and life on earth. And each of the heroes comes to the realization of his role and functions on this earth.

Jadiger on an ice floe, stirring up the past, recalls the old poplar near the student dormitory. Some critics and researchers see in this episode a roll call with

Tolstoy's oak from "War and Peace", a symbol of eternal life. We prefer the hunch of N. Anastasyev, who proposed parallels with the Koran, with its 95 surahs, and the Aral Sea with water "brought down from heaven and watered the earth" [18]. In the same mythological vein, the conversations of the "gray-bearded elders" about the end of the world heard by the hero are perceived: "By the end of the world, water will dry up in the bowels of the earth, the girls will hang on young men without shame", and the legend-myth of the island of Barsa-Kelmes, "just one name of which caused people excitement and heart tremble". According to legend, in ancient times there was a terrible jute, pestilence, snow fell: "In a word, a global flood. Then, on the eve of the end of the world, a hundred-year-old elder showed the tribe the way to paradise — to the island, where, they say, from the day of the creation of the world no man's foot has stepped, there was a serene kingdom of birds and animals; the grass there was tall, dense; spring water, was like a honey; both animals and birds did not know fear" [1].

The picture of a lost paradise, separated from the rest of the world by waters, is akin to the legendary stories and myths about the city of Kitezh, about Belovodye, about Zheruyyk. But the opposite process takes place in the story of A. Nurpeisov: the abundance that reigned not only in the paradise of Barsa-Kelmes, but also on the islands and on the shores of the miracle — the Aral Sea, was lost, the sea became shallow, the fish and bird were destroyed, the animals left, the land was abandoned, only men and old women remained. The myth has been turned into a harsh, even eerie reality: a pilot from a rescue squad, who set off in search of missing people, does not recognize his native places, houses are abandoned everywhere, there is no sign of life, that is, an apocalyptic picture of the end of life on earth.

According to Moscow researcher O.A. Valikova [30], in the mythological novel of Aslan Zhaksylykov "in the center of the artistic space there is a "myth-generating device". The main character passes through all circles of hell and purgatory. Unexpected transitions from the present to the long past (In memories): wandering, homelessness, perception of the "bottom of life" and rebirth — allow the author to show the possibilities of the human soul. But the question of whether the complete healing of a person exhausted not only by physical but also moral ailments will take place remains an open question.

Zhan spent two years outside the usual space and tangible time — he lived a long and difficult life on the banks of the Tyshkan River. A man who gave freedom to others (his wife, Arman), seeking to find inner freedom, after a long ordeal was in the hands of an old Chinese man, expert and connoisseur of precious stones. Now he is deprived of everything, from his inheritance he has only dreams in which he relives his whole life and wants to find out who he is and what are the reasons for his inner fear.

In the novel of A. Zhaksylykov, the stone found by Zhan is endowed with a multidimensional function: first, as an architectonic component, it performs a construction function. Already at the beginning of the novel, we see that a stone

hit the head of the boy — the future shepherd, and his mind has irreversibly changed. He now and then falls into a trance, sees the future, realizes his fate as a roaring stone that flies into his head. In white verses (verlibra) of the novel the word “stone” often sounds. They reflect the changed state of the hero. In a trance, the shepherd not only sees the future, but also experiences it in a state of suggestion (psychological contraction). And this suggestion brings him unbearable pain, since the boy, having not yet met with Zhan, already lives his life, and he perceives all these incomprehensible episodes as a stone. The stone transforms poetically: it is a butterfly, and a blade of grass, and a snowflake, but these ephemeral creatures bring him pain and suffering. Therefore, in the novel, the stone functions as a suggestive image of pain, concentration of moral feeling, a kind of spiritual and philosophical quintessence, that is, the magic philosophical stone Yin-Yang.

According to A.S. Afanasyeva [34], prose researcher N. Verevochokhin, “his visual technique focuses on the game of scale, detalization and blurring of contours, grotesque mixing of colors, as a result of which the depicted world loses conditional realism and turns into an existential caricature”. In the novel “Tooth of a Mammoth,” Steptomorsk was punished for sacrilege, this was understood by the former foreman who was left to dig a grave in the dying city of Kozlov. Another mythologem is the special inhabitants of the city, a kind of mammoths, strong physically and mentally, creators and romantics who did not have a place in the new life that came after restructuring. All this allows to talk about the mythological nature of this novel. The action takes place simultaneously in several spaces and at different times: the lifetime of the heroes in Almaty, the time of life in the dying, enduring ecological catastrophe of the North Kazakhstan city of Steptomorsk. And the whole novel is riddled with the plot of a revived and wandering mammoth, which is presented either as a dream, a hallucination of two main characters — Kozlov and Ruslan, or as a revived mythrelict. The plot of the mammoth passes refrain through the whole story. But it should be noted that the author, in interpreting the meanings of various mythological plots, allows to “play around” with them: a mammoth, personifying the death made by hands of a man, inspiring inexplicable horror, “smells like a dog”, a skyscraper built by people’s hands, called a “tower”, is erected from adobe in the place where the mammoth bones lay for centuries, and at night it is completed by the deceased. The city with the symptomatic name of Steptomorsk turns into a chimera, is doomed to extinction, becomes a necropolis. The novel describes in detail its transformation, which in Soviet times was not just a regional center, but also a mythological paradise that existed in harmony with nature.

Conclusion

Our study of the novels of modern Kazakhstani writers, oriented both to ancient myths and to the creation of copyright mythological plots, allows to conclude that myth becomes a special way of reflecting modern reality,

makes it possible to universally comprehend the events in the face of eternity. An attempt to decode the potential and hidden meanings of the texts of Abdijamil Nurpeisov, Aslan Zhaksylykov and Nikolai Verevochochkin proves their attraction to mythological plots. A. Nurpeisov in his dilogy about the dying of the sea and people, pulled into one plot node both the life of ordinary Aral fishermen and the life of Nature, which exists according to the original laws of Being. It is no coincidence that when answering the question about what this novel was about, he replied: “Without a twist of my soul, I could answer, — about ecology. I could, on the other hand, say that this is a novel about love, about the eternal struggle between good and evil. But for some reason I want to say that, in general, in this novel — here is my settlement with a century, with time. All of me is in it” [39]. The writer, who settled with the century, is sure that he did not block the path of running water, he is clean in thoughts and deeds, but is ready to bear responsibility for the deed of man. In A. Zhaksylykov’s novel “Singing Stones”, the protagonist is a representative of the “lost generation” of the 70s of the 20th century, a person with a broken fate, searches for his self in the real and surreal space, not understood by anyone in the outside world, he turns to himself and gains the truth. Nikolai Verevochkin used new opportunities for the reconstruction of old myths and developed new methods for using the mythological plot in the myth-novel “Tooth of a Mammoth”.

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