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# Mythopoeticisms in the epic poem Maulimniyaz-Edige

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## Abstract

The article considers mythopoeticism in the epic poem Maulimniyaz-Edige via comparative qualitative research methods. As a result, if the epic poem is dated the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, it seems quite reasonable that the verbal arts of the people were used as the main tool for promoting religious ideas. In conclusion, a preliminary review of the study and systematization of the state of the mythological content of modern Kazakhstan prose shows that the process of convergence of literature with myth as one of the main forms of expanding its conceptuality, achieving philosophical depth is a complex aesthetic phenomenon requiring further detailed study.

**Keywords:** Mythology, Pir, Murid, Edige, Maulimniyaz.

## Mitopoeticismas en el poema épico Maulimniyaz-Edige

### Resumen

El artículo considera el mitopoeticismo en el poema épico Maulimniyaz-Edige a través de métodos comparativos de investigación cualitativa. Como resultado, si el poema épico data de los siglos XIV-XV, parece bastante razonable que las artes verbales de las personas fueran utilizadas como la herramienta principal para promover ideas religiosas. En conclusión, una revisión preliminar del estudio y sistematización del estado del contenido mitológico de la prosa moderna de Kazajstán muestra que el proceso de convergencia de la literatura con el mito como una de las principales formas de expandir su conceptualidad, lograr una profundidad filosófica es una estética compleja. fenómeno que requiere un estudio más detallado.

**Palabras clave:** Mitología, Pir, Murid, Edige, Maulimniyaz.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Researchers of the 20th century disproved the notion of myth-consciousness as the primary - the primitive, the pre-scientific, and the distorted - the way of knowing and explaining the world around. For example, such works as the poetics of the myth written by MELETINSKIY (1976), Sign, Symbol, Myth by LOSEV (1982), Aspects of the myth by (ELIADE, 1995). With the development of reflex, logical, conscious thinking, the myth does not disappear: taking a latent form, it moves to the level of unconscious processes of the human psyche and continues to live in the form of archetypes, re-activated and being filled with new sociocultural meanings at one or

another stage of social development. As the researchers note, the activation of the mythological consciousness, as a rule, falls on transitional stages in the development of culture, the period of global crisis of civilization, the collapse of the ideals of rationalism (KUZNECOVA, 2004) and testifies about the fragile, unstable state of the individual in the world (KASIMOV, 2014).

Tension, uncertainty of the situation in a post-Soviet country led to a number of sociocultural, spiritual and moral issues (individualism, disunity, and loneliness, alienation from nature, conditions of globalization and unification, which caused fear of loss of the cultural integrity of the ethnic group and many others); the process of renewal of society, the search for a way out of the crisis situation, activated a special interest of art in the ancient, traditional worldview of the people, provoked the desire to recreate and rethink the ethnocultural archetypes in the context of modernity. The cultural-historical, mythopoetic past of the ethnos, its artistic re-creation becomes a special object of interest in modern Komi literature: writers appreciate the role of Christianization in the fate of the native people, inclined, as a rule, to the idea of losing, along with the pagan faith, not only national statehood but also cultural identity; they indulge in nostalgia, romanticize and anesthetize the ancient world of their native people as a space of wise, harmonious, strong personalities - cultural heroes, as a period of rationally organized society (ALWAHDANI, 2019: LI, 2019).

Drastic changes at the turn of the 1980-1990s occur in Komi poetry (KUZNECOVA, 2004). A new type of aesthetic thinking is being formed, which is connected with the urgent need to update the value paradigm developed by the poets of the previous generation, the need to expand ideas and knowledge about themselves and the world order, which in turn entails going beyond the boundaries of rational world view. The socially significant loses priority over the personality, the need for self-identification increases, and therefore a poetic dialogue with the reader, saturated with life-affirming, optimistic, inspiring pathos, replaces self-reflection (the lyrical, lyrical and philosophical dialogue of the hero with himself, fate, life, higher forces) - poetry level of psychological and ontological revelations, the shattering of the former value system, the discrepancy formed by the poets of the 1960s. The poetic picture of the world of reality makes the authors turn to the fact that against the background of exhausted ideals it seems unshakable and eternal. The artistic consciousness of these years, among other qualities renewing Komi poetry, begins to explicate the signs of mythopoetic and even myth creation: poetic images often get archetypal, symbolic and philosophical content, fulfilling the function of mythopoetic allusions, and the role of irrational experiences of the lyrical heroes grows in shaping the image of the author, fantasies, premonitions, visions) (MALEVA, 2014; MALEVA, 2017), which expresses the need for a contemporary to expand the boundaries of reality, to rehabilitate the supersensible principle of consciousness, which was rejected in the Soviet period.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The poem Edige that is part of the cycle of zhyrs (epic works) of the epic poem Kyrymnyn kyryk batyry (Forty batyrs of the Crimea) was poetized under the name Maulimniyaz-Edige by the famous Kazakh zhyrau (poet) Nurtugan Kenzhegululy (the Kazakhs styled him shaiyr). The poetic language of zhyrs has peculiar language features which characterize the religious mythology of the Kazakh people. Such concepts as the world tree, the interconnection between cosmos and chaos, connection between the beginning of life and water that are characteristic of the mythological world view of the peoples in the world are reflected in the zhyrs. All this shows that the initial version, the original of this work is deeply rooted in centuries. The use of the words *pir*, *murid*, *zikr*, *angel*, and others that are the basic linguistic attributes of Islam, evidences that the formation of the zhyr Maulimniyaz-Edige as an epic poem took place in the 12th-13th centuries under the influence of religious concepts of the written Turkic literature of Central Asia. In the zhyr Maulimniyaz-Edige language, peculiarities of religious and mythological concepts characterize the conceptual world view of the Kazakhs, Nogais, Tatars, Karakalpaks, and other ethnic groups on the basis of which the original version of the zhyr was created.

National versions of the epic Forty Batyrs of Crimea. The zhyr cycle Krymnyn kyryk batyry (Forty batyrs of the Crimea) is the historical-heroic epic poem about events that took place during the

epoch of the Golden Horde. This poem is found in the literature of the Kazakhs, Nogais, Karakalpaks, Tatars, and Bashkirs. The results of the research on the origin of the epic poem, its content, structure, historicism, language, text were published during the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nevertheless, there are different opinions and hypotheses about the specific period during which the epic poem was created, its authors (author), the initial version, its language (which of the modern languages – Kazakh, Nogai, Tartar, Bashkir, Karakalpak – is more similar to the language the initial version was written in?), and connection with historical facts. As can be seen from the name, the zhyr cycle *Krymnyng kyryk batyry* consists of zhyrs glorifying feats of about forty batyrs that lived at different times. If one wants to deal with the poem peculiarities in connection with its stages (chronologically), the first stage (in some versions this stage follows the stage glorifying Papariya's deeds) is connected with the feats of the batyr Edige – the father of all batyrs.

According to the researchers there are several versions of the zhyr about the batyr Edige which exist only in the Kazakh literature. The best-known versions are Edige, Myrza Edige, Maulimniyaz-Edige, The batyr Edige. We consider the version Maulimniyaz-Edige written down by the first Kazakh scholar and poetized by the zhyraushaiyr Nurtugan KENZHEGULULY (1992) is the most valuable one for research in terms of content consistency, presence of old language forms, artistic content, language features. As this article deals with the analysis of the mythopoetic cognition in the language of the zhyr, we



will start by studying the religious and mythological aspects of the content and language use (JAFARIGOHAR ET AL, 2015).

Linguistic foundations of the religious and mythological content of the epos. Though the epic poem mainly depicts events that took place in the Nogai Horde in the 14<sup>th</sup> century in the reign of the khan Toktamys (TREPAVLOV, 2002), the author begins the introductory part with portraying events that took place in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The main ideological basis of the zhyr is the spiritual mission of Islam that helped to unite separate related ethnic groups into one religious association. The fact that the events described in the zhyr took place during the times of formation of Islam is evidenced by the following lines: “Көне дін жаңа дінмен жайғаса алмай, Сол күнде неше түрлі ұрыс болған...” (KENZHEGULULY, 1992: 22). The old religion was unable to live in concord with the new one, those days saw a lot of strife. The poetic thesaurus of the zhyr Maulimniyaz-Edige by the zhyrau Nurtugan contains the terms that are characteristic of Islam such as pir (a spiritual counsellor), murid (in the Muslim countries this word means a person who wishes to devote himself to Islam and to master the basics of the mystical teachings called Sufism), shaitan (an evil spirit), zikir (Islamic spiritual practice which consists in repeated recitation of a prayer formula glorifying God), tauba (satisfaction with one’s own fate), aslyh (blasphemy), daret suy (water for ablution), nur (light), uagyz (preach), but it also contains mythical concepts that are typical of pre-Islamic zhyrs-dastans: peri (a peri), ahsarybas ku (a white-headed swan), көркем тепек (a graceful poplar), дya (a spell),

Қап тауы (Mount Kap), дию (a monster), талсам, шайтан, алашұбайт (magical substance added to food of peris for cleansing them of wickedness). The birth of the main character (Edige) is described in the stories based on both myths and religion. The noble sheikh Shashty Aziz had 105 murids (disciples in religion). The best disciple, Maulimniyaz, said: I will not marry in this life and will have no children, I will not accumulate riches or increase my sins, I will only heat the water for ablution of my pir, and devoted his life to serving his pir (pir means a teacher in Islam). The fact that the devotion to the teacher is considered to be the main merit of a murid can be understood after reading the following lines from the zhyr: Шықпайды еткен ісі дін жолынан, Бәрінен күллі мүридтің абзал болып, Қызметін алып жүрді ұстап құмған (KENZHEGULULY, 1992: REZAEI & NEMATI, 2017).

His acts do not contradict the religious canons, Better than all other murids, He served, With a kumgan jar in his hands. One day Maulimniyaz saw a peri girl in his dreams. The girl told him: Find me by all means. Maulimniyaz violated his oath of allegiance to the teacher and decided to find a peri girl. This digression from the straight path was the main cause of renunciation of the rest of life. Having stumbled, the disciple stands before the teacher and asks for his permission: “Ақыреттік пірім-ай! Айрылып тұрмын әдептен, Қалып тұрмын әдеттен, Тақсыр-ай, өзің білесің, Мүридіңе кәр етсең.” (KENZHEGULULY, 1992: 10), My teacher till the days of Akhirah! I have lost my civility, I have betrayed my principles, Your

Grace, it is only up to you to decide, If you should become angry with your murid. Baba Shashty Tukti Aziz who knew about the uncompromising disposition of his disciple said: Енді саған сөз қонбас, Болыпсың мықты алаң-ай, Көрген түсті жорытсаң, Болмайтын ба еді маған-ай?! (KENZHEGULULY, 1992) Now you cannot be stopped by words, you are too much carried away, you should have told me about your dream, and told Maulimniyaz that he made Allah angry by doing his pir wrong. Maulimniyaz often says himself that not keeping one's word and violating oaths is something that Allah's beloved slave and a real man will not do: "Дүния кезсін сандалып, Уәдеден тайса, кім бұрын! Асы болма, асылдар Терістеп Хақтың бұл ісін" (KENZHEGULULY, 1992: 14). Let them knock about the world, they have violated their oaths! Do not blaspheme, dear ones, Denying the acts of the Highest.

After a long and tiring journey, Maulimniyaz finds the peri on Mount Kap, near the brook under the majestic baiterek tree under mysterious circumstances. Mount Kap in the universal model of the world is chaos, the Kazakhs believe that it is the country of peris. The Kazakh fairy tales and legends, heroic epic poems often contain stories about Mount Kap – the other world that people cannot enter. In the zhyr the image of water (the boundary between chaosom and cosmos) linking two worlds is presented as a place where Maulimniyaz met the peri girl, the image of the universe in the mythical poetry is the world tree (the tree of life) that is presented as a place where Maulimniyaz met his child born by the peri. In other words, the emergence of a new

life form from contact between chaos and cosmos is associated with the world tree.

Mythopoetic parameters of the epos. TOPOROV (1982) suggests studying the mythopoetic model of the world in connection with the following parameters of the universe: 1) spatio-temporal; 2) causal; 3) ethical; 4) quantitative; 5) semantic; 6) character-based. The next stage of the analysis of the zhyr Maulimniyaz-Edige is connected with the parameters mentioned above. The spatio-temporal parameter of the mythopoetic model of the world is presented through the world tree, Mount Kap – the country of peris that is considered to be the boundary between two worlds.

According to the causal parameters, the prime cause of Maulimniyaz's digression from the true path was seeing the daughter of the peri in the dreams, joining the caste of dervishes is the betrayal of the daughter of the peri. The ethical parameters of the mythical cognition can be explained in the following way: the representatives of two worlds cannot accept each other. For example, Maulimniyaz's mortal life seems strange to the peri, Maulimniyaz finds the appearance of the girl (holes in the armpits, double heels) ugly and repulsive. Due to these ethical differences between two different worlds they cannot live together. Therefore, cosmos and chaos are incompatible because they are opposite phenomena.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The conceptual world view of the Kazakhs and Nogais in the epic poem is presented through glorifying the basic religious attributes and concepts. Baba Shashty Tukti Aziz and Arystanbab mentioned in the introductory part of the epic poem are Sufis that are well-known on the territory of Kazakhstan and Central Asia (bab, baba means Teacher in Sufism, great thinkers: Turkistanda Tumen bab, Sur boiynda sansyz bab. The words pir, murid, uagyz, zikr, toba, takua, nur are the conceptual attributes of Sufism. Academician SYZDYK explains these language signs in the following way:

One can notice the style of Yassau School in this epic poem, the school adhered to the Islamic ideas and existed for a long period of time. It was located on the bank of the Syr, in the western part of Kazakhstan: the words shaih, sharapat, murid zikr is not found in other epic works (2009: 103).

According to our assumptions, if the epic poem is dated the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, it seems quite reasonable that the verbal arts of the people were used as the main tool for promoting religious ideas. In the versions written by Shokan and Kanysh the descent of Edige's kin is drawn from Baba Tukti Shhashty Aziz (BERDIBAEV, 1967), which is evidenced by the way Edige speaks to Toktamys in order to threaten him: Баба Омар бабамды батамда көргенмін, Баба Түкті Шашты Өзізге, Арқа беріп жүргенмін, Мен Өзірейіл періштеге Алты күн арыз еткенмін, Жәбірейіл періштеге Жеті күн арыз еткенмін, Мен Омар менен Оспанға, Өбүбәкір Сыздыққа, Өзірет Өлі бабама

Арқа беріп жүргенмін, Мен Мұхаммед атты піріме, Мекке деген шәріңде Барып арыз еткенмін, Тәңірәуи Мекені, Үш айналып, күнайымнан пәк болып, Сонда аралап қайтқанмын, Менің түсімде аян береді, Ақ шалмалы бір кісі, Оқымысты дүр ісі... (BERDIBAEV, 1967), When I was praying, I saw the ancestor Omar Baba, I regard Baba Tukti Shashty Aziz as a spiritual teacher, I addressed my prayer to the angel of Azrael during six days, I addressed my prayer to the angel Jibrail during seven days, I rely on the support of SYZDYK (2009), the ancestor of Aziret Ali, I addressed my prayer to the spiritual master Mohammed visiting the city of Mecca, Having walked around the sacred abode three times, I absterged myself from my sins, In my dream I saw an omen from above, A scholar with a white turban on his head... As we can see, Edige relied on the support of the prophets and saints of Islam. On the contrary, this Muslim motive is not present in the versions written down from the story told by the zhyrau from West Kazakhstan (the zhyrau Muryn). The explanation for this peculiarity is not the absence of the religious connotations in the text of the original version, but an abridgement of such contexts at a later time due to certain circumstances.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Myth-making in modern literature and art acquires the character of a total cultural phenomenon. Being genetically related to

mythology, literature cannot but integrate the significant mythopoetic potential into artistic narration through innovative experiments with myth, mythological, mythological metaphorism, etc.

In the theory and practice of literature there is hardly another problem that is so ancient and at the same time not losing its actuality as a relationship between the mythological tradition and literary work. The mythical modeling of the world inherent in archaic cultures, in later epochs, was preserved as a certain level or fragment of culture. Literature is connected with the mythical modeling of the world by the genetic connections and figurativeness of a language.

The article solved the problem of systematics and the classification of mythological images and motifs of modern Kazakhstan prose, analysed the elements of its mythopoetics and the ideological and thematic foundation in the context of which they are formed and function.

In conclusion, it can be noted that a preliminary review of the study and systematization of the state of the mythological content of modern Kazakhstan prose shows that the process of convergence of literature with myth as one of the main forms of expanding its conceptuality, achieving philosophical depth is a complex aesthetic phenomenon requiring further detailed study. In the 21st century, history, the concept of culture and personality are being reinterpreted

in a new way, interest in the unconscious and myth/neomyth, as an important trend of Kazakhstani modern prose, is renewing.

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