



## **Anuar Alimzhanov's Aesthetic Position and its Artistic Realization**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the originality of Alimzhanov's aesthetic position, which is largely determined by the nature of the writer's understanding of the new scientific paradigm developed between the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first third of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Elements of the aesthetic system of classical Kazakh and Russian literature played a crucial part in the development of Alimzhanov's ontology. Anuar Alimzhanov's aesthetic position is a return to folk origins and his spiritual heritage, which conditioned the interest of the authors of this study in investigating the issues of foreign ethno-cultural aesthetic foundations and resources in artistic creativity, including the unconscious poetic element. Describing the myth, the authors of the study note its imagery, which is inherent in art. An important notion in Alimzhanov's concept of being is value in its ethical aspect. Alimzhanov asserts the ontological independence of the past, which is the reason that the writer often acknowledges the proximity of the recollected world with the relevance of the humanistic values of the present.

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## 1. Introduction

The relevance of this subject is motivated by the priority attention paid to Kazakh Russian-language literature in modern literature. Comprehension of the works of Kazakh bilingual authors and their literary criticism corrects the traditional, already established ideas about the Kazakh literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, changes positions in the history of Russian-language literature. The study raises an important issue of sharing mythological images, motifs, and their exuberance by modern ethno-cultural literatures. The focus on the study of the mythologism of poetics provides answers to the objective challenges of literary criticism of the late 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The paper discusses the meaning and role of folklore in the development of a moral attitude towards reality and the priority of Kazakh literary criticism among various writers and their influence on the artistic system, including artistic imagery, literary genres, plots, and narrative language.

A literary text is not only the most complex type of text but also the most significant from a cultural context, since, through the most striking and outstanding works of art, communication is carried out both between individuals and all mankind as a whole. National literature strives for links with the literature and cultures of other peoples, and there is always a factor of bilingualism. Each creative individuality is formed in the general cultural space, and in the linguistic and cultural atmosphere, and in the specific conditions in which the personal destiny of the writer takes shape. Bilingualism is a product of ties and direct contacts between peoples, formed as a result of certain historical, socio-economic, and political rapprochements and cooperation of peoples. Thus, by studying the embodiment of the aesthetic position and its artistic realization of the Kazakh bilingual author Anuar Alimzhanov, it is possible to trace the influence of his work on Russian literature and culture.

The purpose of this study was to consider the Soviet and post-Soviet periods of Anuar Alimzhanov's work in their integral aesthetic complexity. To describe the aesthetic views of the writer presented in his literary works and demonstrate the refraction of the writer's

philosophical and aesthetic views in his artistic consciousness through the study of the folklore literary equivalent and the coverage of the main forms of literature, acknowledging its importance in the system-typological aspect of the subject area under study. The objectives of this study include, the consideration of mythostructure, images and motifs, archetypes, mythologems, binary oppositions, the determination of various ways of mythologization in a literary text through the works of researchers who have determined the nature of mythologism in combination with the creative method, and the identification of the role of myth and epic in expressing the national worldview. The solution to these problems determines the theoretical significance and scientific originality of this study.

The theoretical significance of the study is demonstrated by filling certain gaps in the study of foreign and ethno-cultural literature of the mythological interpretation of the content. The practical significance of this study is rooted in the fact that the materials can be used in curricula of numerous literary, philological disciplines: “Verbal Folklore”, “History and Theory of Literature”, “Aspects of Literary Studies”, as well as upon reading lectures on the literature of the Kazakh people and its bilingual writers; upon developing special courses and seminars that cover the interrelation issues in the triangle of mythologism (myth–folklore–literature), and upon the development of modern foreign and ethno-cultural literature.

The scientific originality of this study lies in the fact that it determines the choice of the subject and the methodology of its philological description. For the first time in Kazakh literary studies, the philosophical and aesthetic system of Anuar Alimzhanov, embodied in his works of the Soviet and post-Soviet period, in the awareness of the uniqueness of the philosophical and ideological foundations of the writer's work, consistent tracing of the interference of mythopoetics of the content-structural basis, became the subject of a multilateral and multidimensional special study.

The object of this study is the artistic creativity of Russian-speaking writers in modern foreign-ethnocultural literature. The subject of this study is the analysis and description of

Anuar's aesthetic position and the study of the issues of foreign ethno-cultural aesthetic foundations-resources in artistic expression. To solve the goals and objectives outlined in the study, the authors investigated the influence of mythopoeics on the content and structure of literary works considering research data in philosophy, psychology, mythology, folklore, literature, linguistics, history, cultural studies, ethnography, etc.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Mythology is a necessary condition and the primary material for all art. Mythology is nothing but a universe in a more solemn attire, in its absolute appearance, a true universe in itself, a way of life and chaos full of miracles in divine image-making, which is already poetry in itself and yet at the same time the material and element of poetry for itself. (Schelling, 1987, pp. 101–102)

Schelling (1983), the classic of German philosophy, believed that in the first phase of development – theistic consciousness – “the awareness and the beginning of the generating mythological process is already contained in the first real consciousness of man”, “the consciousness that believes God”. In the second – polytheism, mythology – “the way to liberation from the one-sided power of the One”, and the third phase – true monotheism “is now a real monotheism that has arisen and at the same time comprehended as an objective for consciousness itself. The initial impetus for the emergence of mythology was “the alienation from the divine self”, its development – the actual becoming of God in consciousness” and the image of the true God is restored in the last mythological consciousness” (Schelling, 1989, p. 103).

For the French aesthetician, semiotic Roland Barthes, myth is “a certain ‘way of meaning’, a certain form that has a historical basis but is completely independent of the nature of things” (Barth, 1994, pp. 85–87). The literary philosopher attempted to clarify the correlation of myth as a secondary semiotic system or as a metalanguage with language, combining myth with language and information. According to the Swiss psychiatrist and educator Carl Jung, the myth is connected with the psyche at the level of the collective unconscious, which is

“one of the earliest and most universal types of activity of the human mind” (Jung, 1968, p. 41). The Canadian researcher of mythology, literature, and language Northrop Fry used the Fraser's and Jungian approaches and represented the myth as a core, a primary cell, returning at a certain turn to its primary sources (Khalipov, 1994). The British folklorist James Fraser argued for the existence of a substrate of mythological consciousness, and the principle of systematization of diverse and multi-ethnic cults and rituals based on a single magical rite (“Golden Branch”) or the text of holy scripture (“Folklore in the Old Testament”) is close to the principles of dealing with the myth of the authors of the ritual-mythological novel (Gatsak, 1991).

The Russian folklorist Propp expanded the main ideas of Fraser in his book “The Historical Roots of a Fairy Tale” and demonstrated the rite of initiation, fragments of which have been preserved in a certain way by the fairy tale and myth (Propp, 1969). The concept of the Russian-Ukrainian linguist-writer Alexander Potebnya ascends to the solar-mythological school (the inner image of the word), which is based on the myth as a conscious act of thought and knowledge, often generated by the external and internal form of the word, and language is the main tool of myth-making (Potebnya, 1993). The Soviet philologist, Scandinavianist Mikhail Steblin-Kamensky noted that “myth is not a genre, an indefinite form, but a content, as if independent of the form in which it is expressed. A myth is a work, the original form of which can never be established” (Cited in Tugov, 1970, p. 88).

Another researcher of mythologism, a theorist of the relationship of myth and ritual, Eliade proposes a detailed structure of the myth (Likhachev, 1996): a) the history of the heroic deeds of supernatural beings; b) the story is absolute truth; c) the myth always refers to the creation, it tells how something came into the world or how any of certain forms of conduct, the establishment and work skills; that is why the myth is the paradigm of all significant acts of human behavior; d) knowing the myth, the man knows the origin of things, which allows mastering and manipulating them at will; it does not refer to external abstract knowledge,

but to the knowledge that is experienced ritually, during a ritual reproduction myth or during the ceremony (which it serves as a basis); d) the myth is lived through by the audience. According to Meletinsky and Tokarev, "myth is a narrative, a set of stories that fantastically express reality; however, it is not a genre of literature, but a certain idea of the world, which most often takes the form of a narrative" (Tugov, 1986, p. 18).

### 3. Methodology

The theoretical and methodological framework of this paper included studies of a general philosophical, general philological nature, research from the subject area of literary studies, studies of leading researchers of mythology, and verbal folklore (Gatsak, 1991; Jung, 1968; Meletinsky, 1976, 2008; Propp, 1969).

A universally significant myth correlates with the entire world by its ambiguity, the diametric opposite of its reproduction. Among the studies of mythology in literature, the following are of significant importance: 1) the linguistic concept of Muller, 2) the anthropological school (Tylor, Lang, and others), 3) research works of the representatives of the philosophy of life (Nietzsche, Bergson, and others), and introducing new shades and adjustments to the interpretation of the concept of myth (Anikin, 2016). The 20<sup>th</sup> century started with re-mythologization observed in various aspects of European culture: structuralism (Barth, 1994), ritualism and functionalism (Fraser, Malinovsky), the French school of sociology (Durkheim, Levi-Bruhl), symbolic theories (Cassirer), analytical psychology (Basin & Polyakov, 1975; Jung, 1968), and the Russian and Soviet science of myth-making. Based on a rich theoretical and methodological framework, the authors of this study covered the concept of the myth itself:

Mythologism is the basis of the expressive poetics of many writers, including Anuar Alimzhanov, a talented Russian-speaking writer of Kazakhstan, who created his works in the language of different ethnicity. In relation to literary creativity, the factor of awareness of such a feature is inherent both in the past and at the present time. Being ethnic Kazakhs, Alimzhanov, Sanbaev, and Suleimenov

created their masterpieces in Russian and exhibited an ethnic worldview that differed from the Russian one (Turovskaya, 2016). Mythologism and the use of folklore in the works of Alimzhanov are one of the main sources of cognition of the worldview and national identity of the Kazakh people. The formula for demonstrating the ethnic worldview of the Kazakh people can be presented as follows: Folklore + literature = verbosity, the verbal art of Anuar Alimzhanov's creativity.

### 4. Results and Discussion

Kazakh people have an indefinite flow of literary facts, where the self-identification of a writer living outside the metropolis plays an important part. The ethnic picture of the Kazakh people, conveyed by Russian-speaking writers, occurs within the framework of a different linguistic substance. The mythologism of foreign and ethno-cultural literature is the formative beginning of borderline phenomena. The allelopathy of folklore and literature is represented by the unity of artistic consciousness. This is confirmed by the studies on mythologism. Gamzatov (2019, p. 113), in his study "Folklore: the measure of historicism" writes that "the interaction of literature and folklore is one of the fruitful laws of their general development, preservation and multiplication of the basic principles developed by the people over the centuries and embodied in the modern era through humanistic ideas". Modern fiction notes the aesthetically complicated folklorism, which focuses on the traditions of folklore, its aesthetics, and diversity for comprehending the inner world of a certain foreign, ethnic culture and the author. The specific genetic code of the national literature is determined by the features of the aesthetic views of each writer, poet, and their experience in artistic literature.

In the scientific article "Modern literary myth: genesis and traditions", Doctor of Philology Khakusheva (2016) defines the myth and its reflection in modern literary science and elaborates on the term "novel-myth". In the dissertation thesis of the Doctor of Philology Paranuk (2009, p. 28) "Mythopoetics and the artistic image of the world in the modern Adyge novel", "mythopoetics substantially influenced the artistic state of the modern



Adyghe novel, its content and structural components. The conceptual meaning of the myth was expressed in the content, plot-forming, genre-forming, and modeling functions". The neo-mythologism of modernity and the inversion of various ways of mythologizing suggest typological convergence to their own folklore and mythological origins.

Neo-mythologism originates from the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century within the framework of the interaction of the novel with mytho-folklore elements. The allelopathy of the modern novel to the myth and its ontological foundations is an important stage in the development of foreign and ethno-cultural literature. Broad generalizations are created within the national worldview, which correspond to planetary representations. The appeal to mythologism in Kazakh literature allows foreign and ethno-cultural literature to reach a global scale and contribute to the creation of a new artistic and aesthetic system that reflects the artistic study of present-day global issues: 1. human and nature, 2. human and war, and 3. human and society.

In contrast to a purely realistic vision, "Human" shifts the emphasis towards the microcosm, which is the inner world of a person. The macrocosm wherein a person resides is represented in the works of the writer Alimzhanov (2013) as a complex multidimensional world. Re-mythologization to a certain extent contributed to the revival and activation of a set of certain national laws and the oldest moral and ethical precepts developed by all humankind. Universal cosmic laws, the observance or violation of which determines a single metaconflict, represented by the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, and harmony and chaos. The real hero of the Kazakh mythologized novel is a person who coordinates one's life activity with the life of the people and the surrounding world. The heroes of the works live according to the laws of the cosmos and are part of a single integral organism. They certainly have a planetary mindset and feel like a cosmopolitan, and then of a particular country, and the Kazakh people. This is the essence of the universalism of mythological thinking, the basis of the mythopoetic world modeling of

which in modern foreign and ethno-cultural literature is the mythoepic tradition, which has Kazakh mythology and the Kazakh epic as an archetype. Kazakh mythopoetics is an inexhaustible life-giving source from which images, plots, motives, and eternal metaconflicts are drawn.

Folklore and myth are closely interrelated. Among Kazakh people, the myth is represented by numerous etiological, cosmogonic, and astronomical factors, the images of which can be found in folklore texts, traditions and rituals, sacred architecture, and music. The 20<sup>th</sup> century in Kazakh literature is described by the modification of poetics, legends, and collisions. The spiritual and moral foundations of the Kazakh epic, its high moral and aesthetic paradigms remain the criterion of the heroes' morality in the modern novel. The presentation of the theme, idea, and plot in the works of the bilingual writer Alimzhanov ensues in various space-time plans: it covers the time parameters of the reality depicted by him both retrospectively and prospectively and the events narrated in the novels develop in the real and spiritual worlds.

For example, in the novel "The Return of the Teacher" (Alimzhanov, 1979), the author emphasizes the interval between himself and the unfolding events. He considers events through the lens of time, and in the story "Cognition" Alimzhanov becomes the main character of the work, a direct participant in the events described, narrating the story in the present tense. The works of Alimzhanov feature characters who cultivate light and house (fire), archetypically ascending to mythoepical characters. The cultural traditions of the Kazakh people deified animals. Since ancient times, four types of cattle were considered (тәрт түлік), they had their patron spirits: the patron of the camel – Oysyl Kara, sheep – Shopan-ata, cow – Zenge baba, horse – Zhylykshy-ata. Alimzhanov's prose is polyphonic; describing some events, he cites the statements of the participants of the unfolding events, which brings together the individual times and spaces of the characters in a single chronotope and allows participating in their lives; the characters created by the author in the ensemble express their judgments

about what happened (Garaeva & Nurieva, 2020).

An interesting fact is that in some works of Anuar Alimzhanov (2013), times and spaces that are not connected in meaning and logic are intertwined (the fate of Nukesh-ata in the story "Cognition"). The villagers' recollections of the teacher and the voice of his father talking about Dikash-aka. Proverbs and sayings of the Kazakh people have been added to the conversations of the heroes. The characters can explain any event with a contextually suitable proverbial expression or aphorisms. The genres of verbal folklore are represented in the work by paroemias, which demonstrates the unity of the spirit of peoples and the kinship of various ethnic cultures, noting the significance and eternal nature of the conflicts covered in the work. The spatiotemporal mythopoetic congruence, which reproduces the national cosmos in modern foreign and ethno-cultural literature, has a monistic nature. The spatiotemporal formats of the created model of the world are associated with the "Kazakh land" and gravitate towards the universe. The well-known elements – fire, water, earth, air, – which are involved in this world, symbolize the integrity and interdependence of the processes that occur in it and form the overall Kazakh artistic worldview. And the mythopoetic model of the world, comprising the upper (the world of gods), the middle (the world of living people), and the under (the world of the dead) worlds, underlies the basis of mythopoetic world modeling in foreign and ethno-cultural literature.

Myths were used in literature only for artistic purposes. This is explained by the fact that the term poetics of myth (poetics of myth-making, poetics of mythologizing) adapts the specific features of the myth in the aspect of the prehistory of literature with abstraction from religious issues. Invocation of the subject "Anuar Alimzhanov's aesthetic position and its artistic realization" is associated with a conscious transition to mythology as one of the main tools of the artistic organization of the work, as well as a means of expressing the eternal psychological principles both by foreign writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (O'Neill, Joyce, Kafka, Lawrence, Yates, Eliot, Cocteau, Mann, Marquez, etc.) (Meletinsky,

1976), and Kazakh writers (starting from Abai Kunanbayev – the epics "Korkyt-Ata" and "Oguz-Name" and up to the works of Sanbayev, Alimzhanov, Kekilbaev, Simashko, Alimzhanov, Zhanaidarova – the myth of the world tree Baiterek, the symbol of the capital of Kazakhstan) (Makovsky, 1996). The features of mythologism characteristic of Kazakh people are in the works of such Kazakh writers as Alimjanov, Kekilbaev, Simashko, Zhanaydarov, and Sanbaev (Turovskaya, 2016).

In literary studies, the ritual-mythological schools of Bodkin and Fry (Bodkin, 1963) describe a literary work in terms of ritual and myth, where every poetics is represented by the poetics of myth. The relevance of mythologism and its invocation in the texts of fiction exposes particular facets of scientific and cultural issues in various phases of development. The emergence of neo-mythologism in modern fiction marks an interest in the theory of myth. The value of folklore heritage is associated with the study of the development issues inherent in the artistic literature of various peoples, including the Kazakhs. Foreign and ethno-cultural literature is a constant and a symptomatic method of artistic representation of the novel. The borders of the Kazakh world are mobile, and the general space of the Kazakh world is clear, open, and released. Certain loci of the Kazakh space constitute a model of a closed space, mini-models of the Kazakh community. The features of this space that are common with others can include harmony and integrity opposing the chaotic, lack of integrity, and disintegration of space.

The time category in modern foreign and ethnocultural literature is expressed ambiguously: mythological time, cyclic time, stopped time, reversible time, irreversible time, integrating time, historical time, and linear time. In the mythopoetic model of the world of the referent writer, a cyclical single image of time is defined, which allows discussing spatialization. In the fiction of the writers of foreign and ethno-cultural literature, mythological time displaces objective historical time, which serves as an aid to the conglomeration of cosmospatial chronotopes. The mythopoetic tradition is reflected in the

reproduction of mythostructures and laws of archaic thinking:

- creating a whole image, developing the theme of the confrontation between good and evil,
- using the principles of binary oppositions and geometric symbolization at all levels of the text,
- re-actualizing the mytho-ritual semantics of the mythologeme of the path, building a world model according to the mythopoetic model, and creating an author's myth.

The novel "The Return of the Teacher" by Anuar Alimzhanov (1979) is a labyrinth – the embodiment of the vexatious path of knowledge, a symbol of time, where the author introduces the mysterious and intriguing life of the medieval East, where they constantly want to hide from the eyes of the spies of the Caliph, confusing their tracks. The image is connected with the image of the main character, the connection of this image with the images of the dungeons and the city, and the bazaar. The teacher walks through the labyrinths of his thoughts and reasoning like a city or a bazaar. The image of the teacher demonstrates the uncertainty of the chronotopes of time and a person's ideas about his people; there is a combination of labyrinths of myths and legends (Oboko, 2020).

The mythologism of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (myth, ritual, and folklore) synthesizes in its system different-time traditions and becomes a bright and important phenomenon for foreign and ethno-cultural literature, including both developed and relatively young national literature,

capable of expressing, illustrating, designating, and symbolizing an extremely wide palette of meanings. A myth, perceived both as an image of the world and as a conceptual system, can be considered as total and comprehensive or fragmentary and tautological. Even the structural basis of the myth is distinguished in different ways: myth is a word, myth is a narrative, and finally, the nature of the myth is ritual, the word is secondary, and the mythological narrative is a commentary on the ritual action. And each of the interpretations

outlined above generates additional gradations. (Nadyarnykh, 1993, p. 111)

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Summarizing the above, the following can be noted:

1. mythologism in the foreign, ethno-cultural literature of the Kazakh people is universal;
2. mythologism covers the fundamental principles of existence: nature, the life of a tribe, a people, humanity, the universe;
3. in myths, the binary opposition chaos-order (cosmos) and the preference of the cosmos for chaos are especially important;
4. the meaning of the myth is experienced by those for whom it exists, as something indisputable, true, not subject to doubt and analytical consideration;
5. the myth is irrational, epistemologically paradoxical: it is recognized as a myth only from the outside, from the outside of the consciousness involved in it. For those who accept the myth, it exists as a complete and self-sufficient truth, not as a myth;
6. the flexible and varying form of myth determines a wide range of forms of myth-making and the existence of myths.

The genetic communication of myth and literature not only finds similarity and compatibility in the typological aspect of the nature of these forms of culture, which determines the phenomenon of artistic mythologism. The expression of the content of the myth in a certain sensual form explicates it with verbal creativity. The detachment of myth and poetry from objective reality, their non-utilitarianism and a pronounced focus on spiritual spheres conclude the main difference between them. As a result of the study of the topic "Anuar Alimzhanov's aesthetic position and its artistic implementation", the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The 20<sup>th</sup> century of literature – modernization of classical mythology, re-mythologization, and mythopoetic re-creation of stories. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the works of authors, myth is a trans-historical phenomenon, a constant category of human life.
2. The terms mythologism, mythologems, and mythemes are general scientific, structural, and content-related units of the text.

3. Scientists-researchers distinguish two ways of penetration of the archetype into a literary text: 1) unconscious (direct), about subconsciously embodied elements of myth consciousness; 2) conscious reproduction of mythological images and structures.

4. The model of the world is a person and the environment in their interaction, the result of processing information about the environment and about the person themselves. The human content is extrapolated to the environment, which is described in the language of anthropocentric concepts.

5. The tendencies of neo-mythologism of an ethno-folklore or lyrical-meditative nature are inherent in the Kazakh literature of the late 20<sup>th</sup> – early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

6. The mythoepic tradition of the Kazakh people is of paramount importance for foreign and ethno-cultural literature from the very beginning of their origin, since due to the lack of writing until then, folklore and epic traditions were the main basis of development in parallel with the world classical and Russian literature. This is a characteristic phenomenon for the literature of the modern period in closely related literature that have common ethnogenetic roots.

7. The myth has decisively invaded the semantic and structural space of modern foreign and ethno-cultural literature, affecting changes in the style, plot, and genre modifications of literature.

By studying mythologism in foreign and ethno-cultural literature, one can identify archetypal unity, dialectical dynamism in the national character and the reflection of these processes in the literary modification of the national character, the analysis of the creative character, the peculiar handwriting of Russian-speaking foreign writers, thereby determining the specific features of the artistic thinking of the Russian-speaking East, and the correlation of phenomena similar in form and content, established through the definition of features of Russian-speaking foreign-national creativity upon creating the identity of their people.

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