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ЕЩЕ РАЗ ОБ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИИ ФОЛЬКЛОРА В ТРИЛОГИИ И. ЕСЕНБЕРЛИНА «КОЧЕВНИКИ»

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается роль фольклора как художественного средства отражения национального своеобразия и духовных ценностей казахского народа в трилогии И. Есенберлина «Кочевники», состоящей из романов «Зачарованный меч», «Отчаяние» и «Хан Кене». Актуальность данной работы обусловлена, с одной стороны, значимостью данного произведения для изучения устного народного творчества и его места в жизни кочевого общества и, с другой стороны, недостаточной изученностью данного аспекта творчества И. Есенберлина.

Ключевые слова: устное народное творчество, героический эпос, слова-назидания, айтыс, жырау, акын, военное искусство, свадебные торжества, погребальные обряды.

Abstract: The author of this work attempted to disclose the role of folklore in I. Esenberlin's trilogy "The Nomads" (Book 1. The Charmed Sword; Book 2. Despair; Book 3. Khan Kene) as an artistic means of reflection of national identity and spiritual values of the Kazakh people. The relevance of this work stemmed, on the one hand, from the importance of the novel for studying oral Kazakh traditions and their role in nomadic people's life, and, on the other hand, from the lack of a comprehensive analysis of I. Esenberlin's creativity in the use of folklore.

Key words: oral traditions, heroic epic, didactic sayings, aitys, zhyrau, akyn, military art, wedding festivities, burial rites.

Introduction

Kazakh national literature originated from oral traditions of people. Writers borrow themes, motifs, and patterns from folklore because the oral is an important aspect of the conceptual gene fund of the nation that includes centuries of experience and wisdom of people. Folklore realism is an unending source of realism for historical fiction. Merging with folk art strengthens the beauty of a writer's individual style. The true artist I Esenberlin has not merely reproduced fabulous folklore art pieces, but he also has enriched and developed oral traditions with the aim to reveal truly and fully life of Kazakh people in the XV-IXX centuries and to express their worldviews, ideas and aspirations [1].

This research is based on works of the famous Kazakh educators Ch. Valikhanov, I. Altynsarin, A. Kunanbayev who made a significant contribution to the general study of Kazakh folk art. In modern Kazakh scientific literature, main issues of national folklore were analyzed by E. Balabekov, B. Amanova, A. Mukhambetova, E. Tursunov, Sh. Alibekov, N. Shahanova. Selected aspects of I. Esenberlin's trilogy were studied by K. Aralbayev and M. Baltymova.

This study will provide evidence of the linkage between the nomadic way of life and oral traditions of Kazakh people. Folk art emerged in the ancient era and was instrumental in regulation of social life, as well as perpetuation and transmittance of cultural experience from one generation to another. The historian and writer I. Esenberlin includes a great many examples of folk traditions related to economic and military activities, family relations, wedding festivities, burial rites, and daily life in his novel. Additionally, oral literature is a source of artistic and national uniqueness of I. Esenberlin's writing style.

Methods

The subject of the research is the historical chronicle "The Nomads" by I. Esenberlin (1978). In the work we used comparative, mythological, and historical-functional research methods.

Discussion

The well-known Russian historian N.Z. Oshanov claims that the nomad's personality can be characterized with the term "hunter-nomad-warrior". I. Esenberlin used heroic epos of Genghis Khan era to describe military art of the Kazakhs. The famous "Code of Laws" compiled by Timur and then used by Genghis Khan and other successors to the throne regulated military, social and economic life of the ancient society: "Of all the laws established on the Kazakh land by the conquerors, the most terrible and cruel after Genghis Khan was the "Code of Laws on Criminals."

The war played an important role in socio-political life of tribal people. The nomads benefitted from their itinerant lifestyle and developed their own strategies of warfare: "A terrible horse avalanche was always rushing on the enemy tossing them with arrows. If the enemy was able to withstand their onslaught, they immediately turned docile horses back and disappeared in the haze of the steppe. The enemy, encouraged by success, sometimes could not stand and followed them. And suddenly a hurricane of arrows fell from all the ravines and steppe beams. The horseriders returned and completed the defeat."

Having sometimes worse military equipment and fewer soldiers, the nomads took advantage of their mobility and knowledge of geographical position: "It was the favorite technique of Abulkhair's lashkars – to lure the whole army of the enemy, to make them turn in another direction, collide with one other, get confused in their own weapons. And then it was easy to destroy the enemy army without letting a single soul out of the deadly ring." [2].

I. Esenberlin describes the specific way, the nomads used, to cross rivers. Since they were engaged in cattle raising, they used animal skins for this purpose: "Weapons and clothes were put onto a skin and then it was tightened with a string. The result was a large, tightly closed leather bag full of air. Usually this bag was tied to the tail of a horse and warriors floated holding on to it." The detailed description of the military tactics of nomads is based on folk Kazakh literature, as well as on scrupulous study of historical monographs on the theme.

Creativity of famous Kazakh akyns was dedicated to joyful celebration of batyrs' heroism. Poets participated in military campaigns inspiring warriors to great

deeds and sang them praise: “Kaztugan Zhyrau sang blood and raids, seeing the meaning of life in them. He called for new battles, for war for the sake of war in a beautiful strong voice. Only in this way can a person fulfil himself.”

Using written and oral sources, I. Esenberlin describes national hunting traditions which stemmed from ancient times. Hunting provided a balanced diet for the community, allowed to practice future military operations, and prepared young people for battles: “When there is no war, where, except hunting, can one show himself? Anyone who plunges a sharp three-sided arrow to the forehead of a running huge boar at the depth of four fingers will do the same with an iron-clad enemy in an open fight. No wonder that they called hunting a fair of courage in the steppe.” [2] Sometimes young men entered into a fight with a bear or a wounded boar. In the trilogy I. Esenberlin, retells an old legend about Genghis Khan’s eldest son Dzhuchi, who was attacked and wounded mortally by a kiang.

Before each big hunt a wise national storyteller zhyrau would read a blessing that had a positive psychological effect on tribesmen. Thus, the hunt acquired a sacred meaning for nomads: a “victory” over a game foreshadowed a holy victory over a real enemy.

I. Esenberlin shows burial rites of the Kazakhs which reflected people's religious ideas about the universe and essence of being, their beliefs in the afterlife, genealogical legends, and worship of nature’s forces and ancestors’ ghosts: “The didactic legend is told about the burial of the Khan Munke. The Lord was put into the grave together with his most beloved and dedicated slave. He was buried and dug out three times and, if he was still alive, he was freed for good, because he had inherited his master’s sins. Finally, the lord's body was buried. They put a pot with meat, a large pitcher with milk, and gold and silver jewelry with him into the grave. Nobody should know the burial place. Immediately after the funeral all witnesses were killed and a herd of horses trampled all traces. This is done to protect not from grave robbers, but from warring relatives.”

The following ancient legend, rehashed in the novel, reflects the nomads’ belief in heavenly existence after death: "Once there was a custom among the

Kipchaks according to which a wool doll, similar to the deceased wealthy man, was made on the seventh and fortieth day after his death and put among feasting people. Kipchaks believed that the soul is immortal and is always near his close relatives... On the memory of the funeral stone idols of obatas and balbalas were carved and put up.”

The author describes funeral ceremonies which were performed in honor of the deceased on the third, seventh, and fortieth days after someone’s death. Memorial feasts included a grand meeting where important tribal issues were discussed, because the deceased was considered to be involved in what was happening and to give his consent to decisions. Additionally, various public activities, such as an election for a new Khan, sport competitions and horse racing were undertaken.

The novel contains numerous examples of funeral folklore of the Kazakhs: estirtu (sad news about someone’s death), farewell, litanies, zhubatu, and konil aitu (condolences):

“Two lions fell prematurely. the brothers who knew no fear,
They trusted the insidious enemy!
Oh, how despicably were they lured into a trap
And, unarmed, brutally killed.”

In mournful songs of zhubatu merits and good deeds of the deceased were listed and frequently overemphasized.

The song estirtu did not inform a listener directly about someone’s death, controversially, it was a listener himself who should figure out the sad news. A legend about Dzhuchi’s death says that no one dared to report to Genghis Khan on his son’s dying. The Khan guessed the distressing news from mournful sounds of the old Kotan-zhyrau’s dombra:

"The sea was choppy at its source.
Who will calm the waves, oh, my Khan?
The aspen was broken in the middle by the storm.
Who will mend it, oh, my Khan?"[3]

Wedding traditions, depicted in the novel, provide significant ethnographic and historical knowledge about life of Kazakh people in the past and reflect moral and ethical rules of society. The writer includes a great many folk songs in his work. For instance, a song called “zhar-zhar” was sung by young people before a bride’s leaving her parents’ house; a “toy bastar” song opened a wedding ceremony in a bride’s house; a sad song of “synsu” was sung by a bride when she was saying good-bye to her relatives and friends:

“Girls' dreams melt like a mirage in the steppe.

It seemed to me that the rose blooms just for the nightingale in the garden.

My heart hurts about the fate of this rose:

Instead of the nightingale a fearsome eagle flew to her.”[3]

I. Esenberlin created artistic images of famous zhyraus, folk story-tellers of the past, in his trilogy. They all took part in contests of poets-improvisers called “aitys”: “Throughout the steppe there were rumours about the upcoming competition among singers-storytellers: Kipchak Kaztugan-zhyrau and the Argyn improviser Kotan-zhyrau, Akzhol-biy’s father. Kaztugan-zhyrau had the language of fiery red cloth and the teeth which were sharper than a sword, but less tall than a rook. Kotan-Zhyrau was over ninety, but his voice sounded much younger. The great Asan Kaigy was invited as a judge... He was worshiped as a saint in the steppe during his lifetime.”

Songs of the aitys were similar to Kazakh heroic epic. Akyns absorbed all richness of oral folk language: epic motifs, proverbs, sayings, colloquial phrases, words of edification. They preserved and transmitted the ancient wisdom to successors, moreover, they created vivid metaphors and aphorisms which subsequently entered folk language and contributed to the formation of the Kazakh literary language. For instance, the old chronicle epic, included in the trilogy, helped to conserve most important historical events in the memory of future generations:

“In the same unfortunate year

Had a battle with the Dzungars...

Syban Raptan, skilled in military Affairs,

Was their warlord.

The walls were Kazakhs and Dzungars,
Checking how many cowards are in each army,
Five sons Aneta grandfather died from the arrows.
And Kazakhs trembled.”

Thus, songs of the aitys reflected world outlook of the Kazakh nation and resourcefulness and eloquence of the language.

The novel is replete with didactic sayings of akyns, which served to provide guidance to people and imbue them with patriotism, camaraderie and sense of justice: “Everyone wants to remain good in the memory of descendants. And people's memory is the chief judge;” “An old friend will never be your enemy, for his blood mingled with yours during the oath... And the old enemy will never be a true friend, for his blood is shed by your hand;” “If the shepherd himself does not believe in the safety of the herd, the wolves will be fed;” “Will a blood-fed eagle drink anything else? The Khan will not do without violence;” “The stone has no veins filled with blood, the Khan has no heart.”[4]

Kazakh proverbs and sayings, used in the novel, show solidarity and mutual assistance accepted into nomadic society: “Again, if you get into trouble, no one will give you out, at least out of respect for your family. Not to mention the fact that there is not more heinous crime in the steppe, than to betray the warrior.”[4]

I. Esenberlin traces most important characteristics of Kazakh national mentality back to folk traditions and creatively reflects them in his trilogy. The author reveals such a basic national trait of character as hospitality. This quality contributed greatly to establishment of good relations between clans, helped to prevent or smooth out any possible conflicts: “Entering the yurt, we sat on the right side on silk quilts. Asan Kaiga was seated above the others and even above the Khan himself. Every detail in the steppe hospitality is of great importance, and everyone understood this dumb conversation without words.” The description underlines respectful treatment of guests in Kazakh society.

I. Esenberlin studied folk legends about the prominent storyteller Bukharzhyrau and created an image of a wise man who embodied best national

characteristics, the man who always acted in accordance with high moral principles of the good and justice. Bukhar-zhyrau was a real historical person who served Abylai Khan as advisor. He urged Kazakh tribes to forget old feuds and to unite against their common enemy, dzhungars, “Our steppe needs peace. It is the only way to breed, strengthen and confront enemies.”

Bukhar-zhyrau believed that Abylai Khan would become the person to unite scattered Kazakh tribes, approved and supported his policy. However, he condemned the ruler’s cruel attitude towards people:

“Oh Ablay, don't choke with rage,
Hearing the word of truth,
You have reached the top of fame,
But bursting with fat bais
And starving common people
Will not fit in one caravan!”

The author describes everyday life of tribesmen realistically, because all the information is based on oral sources of Kazakh people: “Meat, wool and leather were as necessary for nomads as for the settled population of the whole Central Asia. After all, all the goods, such as famous Khorasan, Bukhara and Khiva carpets, the world's best leather, wool and cloth produced in abundance by the Middle East for markets of China, India and Europe, were somehow obtained from nomads.”

Another legend describes the tradition of inaugurating a new ruler of the Kazakh Khanate, “He was washed in the milk of forty snow-white mares and raised on a white felt carpet.”[5]

I. Esenberlin combines oral sources with artistic imagination and creates vivid pictures of national life in his trilogy: “The feast lasted for a week. On the first day three hundred selected horses raced in the baiga near the lake Shaindy. The first prize was awarded to the famous Tarlankok, the horse of Khan Abulkhair, on which the seven-year-old Khan's grandson Mohammed Sheibani rode. The excited Khan promised to arrange a special feast on the occasion of the significant victory. Then there was a wrestling competition, and the wrestler Karazhan with his hands, thicker

than the legs of an old camel, won.” The reader has the sense as if he or she witnesses or directly participates in the events. Thus, author’s imagination as a means of creating unique literary images is one of the main characteristics of the historical fiction [5].

Conclusions

Thus, I. Esenberlin used a huge amount of folklore materials in his trilogy, which is justified by rich ancient culture of the Kazakh nation. The author showed that national oral traditions are closely linked to nomadic lifestyle and reflect the worldview and all aspects of social, political, economic, and cultural life of the nomads in the past.

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