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Poetics of historical and heroic epics

The article deals with the problems of studying the poetics of the Kazakh historical epic. A systematic study of the poetics of the historical epic devoted to the national liberation movement of the Kazakh people in the 16th–19th centuries and the beginning of the XX century has been considered. The objective reasons for the process of cyclization of historical songs, legends, epos, associated with the events of the socio-political reality of a nomadic society, have been clarified. The connection of typology and poetics of the Kazakh historical epic has been examined. The factor contributing to the cyclization of historical legends, songs, and epics is, first of all, the uniform time of their existence, which was expressed in the events of the plot narration. The principles of cyclization are shown in all works of the historical epic.

Keywords: epics, historical eposes, historical poems, songs, literature, epic tradition.

Introduction

The scope of work on collecting, expressing an opinion, study of the epos is the large field of Kazakh folklore. A plenty of scientists, travelers have expressed different ideas on the nature, development options, artistic features of epos. Even though epos matters have not been studied specifically and systematically, their comparisons, conclusions and assumptions had a great importance in past centuries.

As long as the Kazakh people have lived, so much is the heritage of songs, epics, legends. Some of these heritages, passing from generation to generation, survived in verbal form for many years. A verbal heritage, including samples of poems, starts from XI century with “Dictionary” of Makhmud Kashgari and it is not without a reason.

In addition, the fact that the “Kutadgu Bilig” of Yusuf Khas Hajib is a general heritage not only for Kazakh people but also for the whole Turkic languages proves our above view.

There is no doubt that Orkhon-Yenisey manuscripts (V–VII centuries) are among the oldest heritages for nations who used to live in Ancient Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

However, it is disappointing that they have not been thoroughly studied by folklor specialists, historians, and linguists. Nevertheless, popular scientists such as Ph.E. Korsh, A.N. Bernshtam, P.M. Melioranskiy have valuable views on stylistic peculiarities of Orkhon-Yenisey script.

For instance, A.N. Bernshtam, who studied manuscripts for Kultegin’s honor, notes that this is the one of the earliest examples of the Kyrgyz-Kazakh literature. P.M. Melioranskiy specifies that some of the parts of the Orkhon-Yenisey manuscripts are similar to proverbs and sayings of present people in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Comparing “Manas” Kyrgyz epos with Orkhon scripts A.O. Auezov states as follows: “What is Orkhon manuscripts? They have been studied as the records of linguistic history. Additionally, aren’t they also records of the most ancient folkloric samples? These scripts have minor and brief anecdotal patterns of epic poems” [1; 243]. Alongside, one of the most talented turkologists carrying out specific study on Orkhon-Yenisey scripts, I.V. Stebleva affirms that poetics of Turkic peoples sources from these Orkhon-Yenisey scripts [2; 12]. Therefore, the issue of recording epic writings in the history of the Kazakh epos study implies to the ancient times. Eposes have passed through centuries. Their internal development form and types of genres are various. Particularly, one of the leading but less studied fields — “Historical eposes”. The History of Kazakh literature published in 1960 declares as follows: “In XVIII century, the structure of the epic genre in the Kazakh people poetry experienced a set of transformations”.

Research methods

In the work, the following methods were used: comparison, text analysis, systematization, historical-typological, historical-genetic methods.

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Experimental

It is impossible to separate the Kazakh folk historical eposes and historical poems from the Kazakh heroic eposes, from the common epic traditions of the Turco-Mogul peoples. Since they are a legitimate continuation of the epic tradition, existing from the ancient period. Common patterns inherent in historical eposes about the heroes of the eighteenth century find their origin from heroic eposes. We notice this from how the heroic eposes and historical eposes start. It can be seen from eposes of “Alpamys” and “Kobylandy batyr” which started as follows:

Once upon a time
 On the land of Zhideli
 In tribe of Konyrat yeli
 There was a man, Baibori...
 And epos of Kobylandy batyr started in the following way:
 One time ago
 Karakypshak Kobylandy.
 His parent is Toktarbai,
 Who was rich there's no lie
 His wealth is uncountable
 With livestock very valuable
 Lived in Kozdi kol
 All Kypshak nation [3; 17] — once said.
 Now, consider the beginning of historical epose “Kabanbai batyr”:
 Kabanbai is the start of every tale
 There is no tale without men who is brave
 His heroism from Kazak-Kalmyk war
 Is known for everyone therefore — [4; 1].
 Now let us draw attention to the beginning of epos “Bogenbai batyr”:
 How wonderful life had our Kazakh
 Everyone would be surprised
 In times of Kalmyks

We know it from Bogenbai, — [5; 3]. Some of historical eposes start with prose, for instance, the eposes “Shakshak Zhanibek” and “Syrym Batyr”. Such cases are also found in heroic eposes. As an example of it the beginning of the eposes “Er Targin” and “Kurmanbek” [6; 10] can be provided. That is, acquaintance with the hero in heroic eposes is also found in historical eposes. Here, the statement of Malik Gabdullin comes to mind: “All heroic eposes are based on some event, there is no epos without a plot. The structure of the plot of the epos is formed from the description of the state of the hero, his relatives, friends and their relationships, joys and sorrows, their campaigns, the actions of their enemies” [7; 158]. The cases mentioned are also found in historical eposes. For example, in eposes about Abylai, taletellers began with a description of the hero: who is he, his entourage, where he grew up, then gradually went over to his heroic actions. These characteristics can be seen in the versions of the eposes “Kabanbai batyr”, “Shakshak Zhanibek”, “Olzhabai batyr”, “Otigen batyr”, “Syrym batyr”, “Aralyk batyr”. The words of the edification “who does not know his lineage back the seventh generation, then he is ignoble” have always been especially noted in eposes. Historical eposes also did not disregard people who were the mainstay of the main hero in the epos. Also, a common feature of historical eposes and heroic eposes is a friend of the hero, as they say “horse — the wings of a young man”, his horse. For example, in the epos “Kobylandy batyr”, there are lines of conversation between the hero and his horse Tayburyl on the way to the capture of the city “Kyrly” of Kazan:

“My winged horse, listen to me
 I sold livestock on the market
 We have been friends for a long time
 Your mother said you have wings
 From the trap of Kalmyks
 From six floor down
 We get free together, my Buryl” [3; 68–69].
 Kabanbai batyr in the epos about him talks to his horse Kubas:

“My Kubas, Kubas
 My treasure friend against enemy
 You are the one of a kind
 Others will never have one like you
 This is the last time I attack my enemy
 Don’t let them to struck the son of Baizhigit” [4; 63–37].

Describing the hero's horse in such way shows a special characteristic of epic traditions. In the versions of historical eposes of the eighteenth century, Taikok of Olzhabai batyr, Kuren of Shakshak Zhanibek batyr, Narkyzil of Bogenbai, Karakok of Otigen, and others resemble Bayshubar of Alpamys, Karakaska of Kambar, Tarlan of Targyn in heroic epics. If Almapys in the epos “Alpamys batyr” chose the Baishubar among number of horses, having felt the connection with it, then in the historical epos Shakshak Zhanibek himself saddled Kuren. From this, we understand the meaning of M. Auezov's words: “Friends of hero, especially his horse, influence his fate. Together with the hero, the name of his horse was also glorified among the people and turned into a legend” [1; 192]. Kubas of Kabanbai, Taikok of Olzhabai and others in historical eposes separately became a legend. In the oaths of the heroes there are the words “if I fall in battle, I will fall in the name of my people”. This can be found in historical eposes as well.

Moreover the “Betashar” has a significant role in the beginning of historical and heroic eposes. “Betashar» is a song that is sung when the bride's face is unveiled at the wedding. A new family, new people are not familiar to the bride. It is necessary to acquaint them” [1; 164]. Therefore, to introduce the hero to the readers, the storytellers used the law of betashar.

Results and Discussion

The words of farewell found in the oaths of heroes with the horse and equipment are taken from the “farewell songs”, which appeared on the basis of tradition. Other similarities between “heroic eposes” and “historical eposes” can be seen in the duels of the characters. Duel of Kobylandy with Kazan is described as follows:

Two had a sword fight
 On their horses with spear
 With rage
 Coughing up blood
 Enervated.
 Ripping the armour,
 Kobylandy at that time
 Hit Kazan from the horse [3; 68–69].
 Such description can be found in the epos “Kabanbai batyr” in the scene of fight with Ateke:
 “The swords are being broken
 Both are not going to stop
 With bloodthirsty gaze
 How will it end?”
 Sword, spear
 Being pointed at each other
 They are fighting to death
 Masterfully using armament
 Gracefully sitting on the horse
 They are fighting again and again
 No one is going to give up
 Kabanbai eyed his armour
 Noticed his button broken
 He adjusted his sword
 Aimed it at enemy
 Kalmyk fell dead” [4; 12].

The first version of epos “Kobylandy batyr” was heptasyllabic, and the last was hendecasyllabic. Here, there is a regularity. The first eposes were mainly created with the help of a kobyz. Professor Auelbek Qonyratbaev said: “The means of prediction was kobyz, the tun is the kyu, and a measure is the epic. The first professional narrators in the Turkic-Mongolian tribes were the predictors. In the XV–XVI centuries, the

zhyraus separated from them. Predictors adhered to cult eposes, and zhyraus took poetry for the mainstream. Therefore, it is inappropriate to assume that professional zhyraus appeared only in the XV-XVIII centuries" [8; 105]. From this, we know that Dombyra replaced kobyzy. Epos is considered as an art of Zhyrau, but we also notice that in the 19th century the Zhyrau and poets were unilaterally involved in it. So, hendecasyllabic works began to appear. The main reason for this is that the epos is connected with the event.

In addition, it is worth paying attention to conceding the right of first strike in fights, described in heroic or historical eposes. In historical eposes about the uprising in the XVIII century, the main heroes Kabanbai, Bogenbai, Abylai, Olzhabay, Otegen batyrs all followed the order, and when their turn comes, they defeated the enemy. The narrators, describing the duel in this way, showed the justice and courage of the batyrs. For example, Otegen batyr:

"Duel, batyr. Duel
Asked he.
The first turn for you
Are scared Otegen
"You seem older,
Take this turn" he said
Kazakh Kalmyk started it
Duel for the men
Is way back tradition" [9; 17–18].

The main similarity of the aforementioned historical eposes with heroic eposes lies in variance. The fact that there are many variants of heroic eposes is proved in science by different scientists.

The initial versions of "historical eposes" are found in the form of legends. Historical eposes also exist in different versions, like heroic eposes. For example, there are more than ten versions of the eposes about Abylai, and about fifteen eposes about Kabanbai. Scientists, who considered the multivariance of eposes, E. Ismayilov, M. Gabdullin, A. Margulan came to the following conclusion: "In the development of the epos, poets play a very important role. The idea of the epos determines various changes in connection with historical events and that the epos is born from history. That is, the expressed thoughts are directly connected with the appearance of historical eposes, and their multivariance" [10; 25].

There are also differences between "historical eposes" and "heroic eposes". The main differences are: 1) Batyrs in the eposes of Kobylandy, Alpamys, Er Targin, Kambar, Karabek, Torekhan, Korugly (Murin zhyrau's work), batyrs from the epos "Forty Batyrs of Kyrym" always attack the enemy alone. This is the fruit of the people's dream.

In historical eposes, heroes attack the enemy with the army. The famous Abylai participated in the war against the Kalmyks, having experienced various kinds of difficulties. In that war, he became famous for his fight. The names of different batyrs, who were with Zhanibek, are described in eposes as follows:

The bravest men
Zhanibek head of Ordsm
Kaz dauysty Kazybek
Karakerei Kabanbai
Kanzhygali Bogenbai.
Ozlhabai from Suindik
Basentiin Syrym
Malaysary together
Zhantai, Barak, Zhaulybai
Baganali Barlybai

Outstanding men in the march. In the epics about the heroes glorified in the Kazakh-Kalmyk war of the XVIII century, these heroes have always fought together, and performed feats together. 2. Another feature of historical eposes is shown by K. Zhumaliev as follows: "... Heroes of heroic eposes are described as strong, bulletproof, and with such guardians as Baba tukti Shashty Aziz, Kyryk shilten, and heroes of historical eposes are close to reality of ordinary people" [11; 72]. Along with this, in the epic "Alpamys batyr", it is described how batyrs motivated themselves:

"Then Alpamys spoke
My dear God
Don't let me be humiliated
I will fight to death

I am still young

And father didn't stop me too" [4; 111]. Such cases occur in eposes like Kobylandy, Er Targin, Kambar. The narrator said that the batyr's prayer to God eventually leads to victory. In historical eposes, the heroes also pray. Basically, they pray to their ancestors. It can be noticed in the epos Olzhabay batyr:

Praying to God

Olzhabai cried

There is one God for everyone.

Karatay give me power

Bogenbai be my guardian

Get ready Zhasybai,

Kalmyk haven't run,

Olzhabai startled

Praying to ancestors [9; 58].

Also, in heroic eposes, heroes receive blessings from their parents and relatives, and in historical eposes, this usually occurs before the fight, and blessings are heard from the mouth of the khan or the bey. This brings the realities of historical eposes closer. Another difference of historical eposes is the image of a woman. In the heroic eposes, Alpamys, Kobylandy, Kambar perform their first feats in the name of their beloved ones. Besides, in these eposes, behaviors and characteristics of the wives of the batyrs are illustrated.

In historical eposes the image of a woman is not highlighted. On the contrary, instead of this the hero's friends are described, their exploits. The issue of friendship in historical eposes is also found in related nations. The union of Kazakhs and Kyrgyz against the Dzungars is described in the eposes "Four Batyrs" or "Shyrdakbek". In heroic eposes, the heroes' horses sometimes even fly like birds, and even talk to heroes. Such miracles do not occur in historical eposes. There are linguistic differences between heroic eposes and historical eposes. Psychological parallelism, the antithesis inherent in heroic eposes are old types of personification, compared to them, in poetic poems (historical eposes — B.R.) the used pictorial words are much less common, and psychological parallelism is mostly absent [12; 221]. However, it must be taken into account that during the description of fights, in zhoktau and farewell songs of historical eposes, the antithesis and hyperbole are often found. So, there are such differences between the historical epos and the heroic epos. Here, we support the idea of E. Ismayilov: "As far as the historical event is fresh, there are so few elements of the epos in it, and elements of realism prevail. Undoubtedly the basis of the eposes Kobylandy, Alpamys, Kambar, Er Targin is the historical event, the life of the hero. But from year to year those eposes were transmitted verbally and only echoes of the original history remained in them, and turned into an epos" [11; 172–173] and notice the regularity in the appearance of historical eposes. The main similarity of the two types of epos lies in the theme and idea.

Conclusions

The Kazakh epic arose on the basis of real historical events experienced by the Kazakh people at different times. The theme in these eposes is heroism, and the idea is the protection of the people and the land. To highlight this problem, the society in which the batyr was raised is chronicled. Studying and researching the history of own nation through the prism of epic works is important and necessary, since it allows to actualize the successive links between the past, present and future.

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Б.М. Айтбаева, Б.С. Рақымов

Батырлар жыры мен тарихи эпостың поэтикасы

Мақалада қазақтың тарихи эпосының поэтикасын зерттеу мәселелері қарастырылған. XVI–XIX ғасырлардағы қазақ халқының ұлт-азаттық қозғалысына арналған тарихи эпостың поэтикасын жүйелі түрде зерттеу. Көшпелі қоғамның әлеуметтік-саяси шындығымен байланысты тарихи жырлардың, аңыздардың, эпостардың циклдану процесінің объективті себептері нақтыланды. Қазақтың тарихи эпосының типологиясы мен поэтикасының байланысы қарастырылған. Тарихи аңыздардың, жырлардың, дастандардың циклды болуына ықпал ететін фактор, ең алдымен, сюжеттік баяндау оқиғаларында көрінетін олардың өмір сүруінің жалғыз уақыты. Циклизация принциптері тарихи эпостың барлық шығармаларында көрсетілген.

Кілт сөздер: эпос, батырлар жыры, тарихи поэмалар, әдебиет, эпикалық дәстүрлер, циклизация принциптері.

Б.М. Айтбаева, Б.С. Рахимов

Поэтика героических и исторических эпосов

В статье рассмотрены проблемы изучения поэтики казахского исторического эпоса. Предпринято системное исследование поэтики исторического эпоса, посвященного национально-освободительному движению казахского народа в XVI–XIX и начале XX вв. Выявлены объективные причины, обусловившие процесс циклизации исторических песен, преданий, эпоса, связанных с событиями общественно-политической действительности кочевого общества. Изучены связи типологии и поэтики казахского исторического эпоса. Фактором, способствующим циклизации исторических преданий, песен, эпоса, является, прежде всего, единое время их бытования, что выражается в событиях сюжетного повествования. Показаны принципы циклизации во всех произведениях исторического эпоса.

Ключевые слова: эпос, героический эпос, исторические поэмы, литература, эпические традиции, принципы циклизации.

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