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Initiation Narratives in A. Zhaksylykov's Novel "Dreams of the Damned"

This article examines the initiation plot in Aslan Zhaksylykov's novel "Dreams of the Damned" against the backdrop of collective nuclear trauma caused by the Semipalatinsk nuclear tests. The study is relevant due to the limited scholarly exploration of initiation plots in post-Soviet Kazakhstani literature and the need to interpret literary texts through the lens of historical, cultural, and philosophical trauma. In the context of global transformations, ecological and social catastrophes, preservation of cultural memory and understanding of collective experience acquire special significance, making Zhaksylykov's work a particularly important object of inquiry. The study aims to identify and systematize the initiation structures in "Dreams of the Damned" and interpret them through the conceptual models of Joseph Campbell, Victor Turner, and Arnold van Gennep, as well as to analyze how the text reproduces collective trauma and generates artistic-philosophical reflection. The methodological framework is interdisciplinary, integrating philosophical, literary, and cultural analysis. It employs Campbell's concept of the "hero's journey" and van Gennep's stages of the rite of passage, and Turner's ideas of liminality and communitas, allowing tracing of the main characters' transformation through separation, liminality, and reintegration into a new identity. Special attention is given to symbolic and mythopoetic elements, including dreams, ancestral images, the motif of the land, shamanic practices, and interaction between individual and collective experience within historical trauma. The novelty lies in interpreting the novel as a spatial initiation ritual combining local Kazakh cultural codes with universal structures of ritual and personal transformation. The article addresses issues insufficiently studied in Kazakhstani literary criticism: character metamorphoses under trauma, interplay of personal and collective narratives, and the role of philosophical prose in rethinking historical catastrophes. The analysis shows that "Dreams of the Damned" constructs a multilayered narrative and symbolic structure enabling readers to undergo initiation alongside the characters, comprehend traumatic experience and cultural memory, and assess literature's potential as a medium of cultural healing. Zhaksylykov creates not merely a literary work about a nuclear catastrophe but a universal philosophical text on the transformation of the individual and society under destruction, offering new approaches to studying post-catastrophic Kazakhstani prose.

Keywords: initiation, nuclear trauma, A. Zhaksylykov, collective memory, cultural identity.

Introduction

The prose of Aslan Zhaksylykov occupies a distinctive place in contemporary Kazakhstani literature, as it combines artistic narrative with philosophical meditation and cultural reflection. His novel-cycle "Dreams of the Damned" [1] was first published as a trilogy in 2005, though the first two parts appeared earlier: "Singing Stones" (1988), "Dreams of the Damned" (2000), "Another Ocean" (2005). Later, two additional volumes followed: "The Meerkat's House" (2008), and "The Return" (2011). Thus, the work is often read as a pentology. This five-part cycle demonstrates a rare synthesis of mythopoetic, existential, and posttraumatic discourses within post-Soviet literature. More than a literary text, it functions as a metanovel that interrogates the origins of narrative, the boundaries of consciousness, and the writer's responsibility to history.

This article does not claim to provide a comprehensive analysis of Zhaksylykov's pentology. Instead, it focuses on the elements directly relevant to the initiation plot, the transformation of characters, and the interpretation of collective nuclear trauma through the theoretical frameworks of Joseph Campbell [2], Arnold van Gennep [3] and Victor Turner [4]. Such a focus makes it possible to examine the ritual and symbolic mechanisms of the text without attempting to address all possible literary and philosophical dimensions of the work.

The Semipalatinsk nuclear test site forms the central historical background of the novel. Yet Zhaksylykov elevates this event beyond documentary or social critique. He transforms nuclear catastrophe into an archetypal matrix of initiation in which both characters and readers undergo trials, liminal states, and

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spiritual renewal. In this sense, the novel functions not only as trauma literature but also as a philosophical ritual of transformation.

The initiation plot is illuminated through classical anthropological theories. Arnold van Gennep's concept of the "rites of passage" clarifies the stages of initiation: separation, liminality, and return. Victor Turner extends this framework by interpreting liminality as a threshold state where individuals exist outside social structures but gain access to transcendent experience. Joseph Campbell's model of the "hero's journey" highlights the universal pattern of trials, helpers, obstacles, symbolic death, and rebirth.

Zhaksylykov deliberately weaves these models into his narrative. His characters appear as the "damned," excluded from ordinary social and existential structures but endowed with heightened sensitivity to transcendence. Their dreams, hallucinations, encounters with metaphysical images, and returns to mythological codes are not simply artistic devices but ritualized modes of experiencing trauma and transition.

Another essential feature is the translanguing quality of Zhaksylykov's prose, which oscillates between Kazakh and Russian linguistic codes. This dual cultural belonging bridges national mythology and the universal structures of world literature. It enables the novel to transcend local concerns and engage with global discourses of post-traumatic writing.

However, the study of the initiation plot in conjunction with nuclear trauma and through the theoretical frameworks of Campbell, Turner, and van Gennep has not yet received systematic scholarly attention. Yet, precisely this perspective makes it possible to grasp more profoundly both the artistic and philosophical dimensions of the novel.

The relevance of the present research is determined by several factors. First, the theme of nuclear trauma remains insufficiently conceptualized within the humanities in Kazakhstan. Second, the initiation plot constitutes a universal cultural code which, in Zhaksylykov's prose, acquires a distinctive national specificity. Third, analyzing the novel through the lens of ritual anthropology and post-traumatic literature allows one to move beyond the regional canon and integrate the text into the global literary-critical discourse.

Accordingly, this article undertakes an analysis of the initiation plot in Zhaksylykov's pentalogy "Dreams of the Damned" through the prism of nuclear trauma, understood as a liminal space of collective experience. The theoretical foundation of the study is provided by the concepts of Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner, and Joseph Campbell. The primary aim is to demonstrate how Zhaksylykov mobilizes the universal structures of the initiation rite to artistically conceptualize a national tragedy, and how, as a result, he creates a new type of post-Soviet philosophical novel — a meta-novel of initiation.

"Dreams of the Damned" is not merely a work of trauma literature but a text that aspires to function as a philosophical ritual in which the reader is drawn into the very process of initiation — experiencing liminality, confronting traumatic memory, overcoming fear, and arriving at an appreciation of remembrance and hope. The novel thus becomes a space where nuclear catastrophe is transformed into symbol, and symbol into a pathway of transcendence and renewal. In this lies its philosophical, cultural, and profoundly human significance.

Materials and Methods

The primary material of this study is Aslan Zhaksylykov's "Dreams of the Damned", examined as an integral philosophical and artistic work that reflects both individual and collective experiences of trauma associated with nuclear testing in the Semipalatinsk region. The textual analysis is directed toward identifying structural, symbolic, and ritual-initiatory elements that shape the artistic and philosophical coherence of the narrative.

The methodological framework combines interdisciplinary approaches, including literary, philosophical, cultural, and anthropological analysis. As its theoretical foundation, the study draws upon Arnold van Gennep's concept of the stages of the rite of passage, Victor Turner's notions of liminality and *communitas*, as well as Joseph Campbell's universal "hero's journey" schema. These perspectives enable the identification of the ritual-initiatory structure of the novel and the interpretation of the protagonist's transformation within the context of collective historical trauma.

The applied methods ensure a comprehensive analysis of both form and content. A mythocritical approach is employed to examine archetypal images, dream motifs, elements of shamanic healing, and figures of ancestors and spiritual mentors, thereby elucidating their function in constructing the symbolic system of the text.

The combined use of these methods provides a complex interpretation of the novel, revealing its ritual-initiatory framework and demonstrating how the work operates as a philosophical and cultural instrument for conceptualizing historical and existential trauma.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of Aslan Zhaksylykov's "Dreams of the Damned" demonstrates that the work represents a rare synthetic space within post-Soviet literature, where mythological criticism, ritual anthropology, trauma narratology, and postcolonial theory intersect. On the level of form, the novel appears as a metanarrative that reflects on the origins of the text and the author's responsibility for cultural memory; on the level of content, it is an initiatory drama of a community that has endured both technological and historical catastrophes; and on the level of cultural politics, it functions as a translanguaging bridge between Kazakh and Russian semiotic worlds.

An examination of the novel's structure confirms that each of its five parts — "Singing Stones", "Dreams of the Damned", "Another Ocean", "The Meerkat's House" and "The Return" — possesses independent significance, yet collectively they form the culminating initiatory trajectory of the protagonist. The structure of each book is built upon ritual elements and archetypal imagery, where the hero undergoes the stages of separation, liminality, and return, thereby reflecting the classical initiation models of van Gennep, Campbell, and Turner. The symbolic reworking of nuclear trauma through the protagonist's inner experiences integrates both personal and collective memory, producing a complex space of transformation.

According to Arnold van Gennep, initiation follows a tripartite scheme: separation — liminality — incorporation.

Separation. Nuclear testing and forced evacuation create the primary traumatic rupture: disabled children, the Mugalim (Teacher), and the Journalist find themselves excluded from the established order. The Mugalim's theft of ration cards and the "illicit" decision to remain in the abandoned town represent ritual gestures of withdrawal from institutional control: the subject shifts from the status of "dependent" to that of the "initiate."

Liminality. The deserted settlement becomes a threshold space (Turner's "betwixt-and-between" state): stratified realities — dreams, visions, hallucinations — intertwine with communitarian life absent of rigid hierarchy (children with the Mugalim). Demonic rats, materializations of entropic evil, permeate this space. Protective figures and signs (including the Daoist Yin-Yang symbol appearing in one fragment of the cycle), "texts within the text" (children's Chronicles/Notebooks, the Mugalim's mentorship), and mythological codes of the steppe tradition (Tengri, totems, shamanic archetypes) actively operate in this liminal zone. This characterization of the liminal space in Zhaksylykov's novel resonates with Catherine Alexander's concept of the "chronotope of expansion". In her anthropological study of a Kazakh nuclear town, Alexander shows that local communities resist spatio-temporal constraints imposed by the state, which seeks to delimit and erase the traumatic legacy of the Semipalatinsk test site. Similarly, in Zhaksylykov's narrative, the abandoned settlement functions as a spatial mediator of nuclear trauma: its topography and imagery both record the catastrophe and enable the protagonist's initiatory transformation [5].

Return. In Zhaksylykov, resocialization takes the form of testimony: the "boon" is not the restoration of a lost order but rather the language of witnessing (the written book/Chronicles/voice). Return, therefore, is ambivalent: while an ethics of memory is affirmed, trauma remains unresolved. This is why the cycle progresses toward a pentateuch: "Singing Stones" → "Dreams of the Damned" → "Another Ocean" → "The Meerkat's House" → "The Return". The final book registers a partial initiation (ethical maturation) but not a "happy normalization."

An important conceptual framework is provided by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, where he introduces the universal scheme of the "monomyth" or the "hero's journey" [2]. In this model, the subject receives a call to a spiritual journey, encounters trials, crosses the threshold between worlds, undergoes a symbolic death, and returns transformed. Zhaksylykov's protagonist follows this structure in full measure: from a world of illness and fear, he descends into the deeper layers of the collective unconscious, where mythological images, dreams, and premonitions guide him toward the truth about himself and his nation. Within literary studies, the novel may be situated in the field of postcolonial writing, where collective trauma becomes a central focus of narration. Postcolonial theorists such as Homi Bhabha [6] and Edward Said [7] emphasize the importance of voices emerging from within cultural trauma and the re-examination of historical narratives. Zhaksylykov inscribes himself in this discourse, representing the traumatic experience of the Kazakh people through the prism of national mythology and spiritual quest.

In addition, research in the field of trauma narratology (Cathy Caruth [8], Dominick LaCapra [9]) highlights repetition, fragmentation, and the disruption of linear temporality as characteristic forms of trauma representation in literature. These features are clearly visible in the novel's composition — cyclical dreams, symbolic repetitions, and temporal displacements underscore the impossibility of directly experiencing the catastrophe and the necessity of its symbolic articulation through myth. Kazakh and Central Asian criticism, in turn, more frequently focuses on cultural and ethnic identity, on restoring the relationship between human beings and the land, disrupted by modernization and colonial policy.

Campbell's mythological model of the "hero's journey" also undergoes significant transformation. Mapping Zhaksylykov's narrative against Campbell's schema reveals a multi-layered "path of the hero":

- Call — catastrophe, dreams, the voice of Memory
- Refusal/Doubt — fear, bodily deficiency, editorial rejections, "shame"
- Mentor —Mugalim
- Threshold — decision to remain within or leave the "system"
- Road of Trials — hunger, rats, illness, search for meaning
- Abyss — hallucinatory episodes, visions of scorched earth, existential desert
- Illumination/Apotheosis — narration of the Golden Age, experience of inner silence, "assembly" of mythic codes
- Gift — the book (as both object and act of speech), the name (as re-claimed subjectivity), memory (as a collective resource)
- Return — witnessing and the "answer to the living."

Crucially, the "journey" is collectivized (the hero = the community), while the "gift," as a discursive (language/text), corresponding to the logic of trauma literature. Zhaksylykov indeed introduces the motif of the "call to wandering" and symbolic journey, yet the protagonist is unable to pass through all the stages of the "great circle." Traditionally, the hero, having endured trials, returns to society with new power and knowledge. In "Dreams of the Damned", such return does not occur. The collective experience of nuclear catastrophe blocks the possibility of completing the cycle: the hero loses not only his connection with the community but also the very perspective of wholeness. Thus, the "monomyth" in Zhaksylykov's novel turns into an "unfinished myth," pointing to a cultural crisis in which initiation becomes impossible.

Of particular importance is Victor Turner's concept of the "liminal" and "communitas." In Turner's terms, the community of children and Mugalim represents communitas: a temporary anti-structure in which roles are redistributed and mutual care becomes central, where everyday rituals (food gathering, spatial "re-appropriation"), and the collective "re-creation of myth" (oral stories of the Golden Age, children's writings) substitute for the functions of school and family. This communitas produces a new ethics: compassion outweighs law; memory surpasses documentation; the rituals of sharing, writing, and listening replace institutional structures. It is sustained by liminality: the ruined city, the "silence" of infrastructure, statuses of "neither children nor adults," "neither sick nor healthy." Liminality here is a prolonged initiation, stretched out, for trauma is not singular but chronic.

In Zhaksylykov's novel, liminality manifests as a condition between life and death, past and future. Yet unlike the initiation practices described by Turner, in which the liminal stage culminates in new unity, Zhaksylykov's narrative generates an "anticommunitas": not solidarity but estrangement, not cohesion but disintegration. Liminality becomes not a temporary phase but a total and permanent state, transforming the novel into a chronicle of "suspended initiation."

Archetypes, Culture, and Ecology in the Interpretation of the Novel by Kazakhstani Scholars

Kazakhstani scholars have made a substantial contribution to the study of A. Zhaksylykov's pentalogy "Dreams of the Damned." S.M. Altybayeva emphasizes its dystopian and ecological dimensions, underscoring that the fantastic layer of the narrative is causally anchored in concrete historical reality [10]. O.A. Valikova and U.M. Bakhtikireeva situate the text within a bilingual cultural field, describing it as a translingual novel in which Russian serves as a medium for articulating Kazakh ethnic worldviews [11, 12]. A.A. Jundubayeva identifies remythologization and neomythologism as key narrative strategies that mitigate postmodern epistemic uncertainty [13]. Zh.B. Ibraeva and co-authors interpret "Singing Stones" through a fairy-tale plot, thereby clarifying its mythological organization [14]. O. Abisheva examines archetypal structures and onomastics, showing how mythological elements recode folk traditions and reflect shifts in values and moral norms [15].

Particular attention has been paid to the work of L.V. Safronova. In her study of “Another Ocean,” she investigates the novel’s “ornamental fields,” revealing its visual-symbolic texture and complex compositional layers. Together with T. Zhanysbekova, Safronova analyzes oneiro-poetics as a form of realizing the author’s worldview in literary fairy tales and fiction, demonstrating how dream imagery functions as a structural and symbolic mechanism within the narrative [16]. This approach is directly relevant to Zhaksylykov’s “Dreams of the Damned,” where dream and vision act as central vehicles of the protagonist’s initiatory transformation. In another co-authored study with B. Baizhigit and E. Shmakova, Safronova explores the functionality of dream reality in émigré literature, emphasizing correlations between oneiric structures and cultural identity [17]. These insights align with the present article’s interpretation of dreams and visions as mediators between trauma, memory, and archetypal models of initiation.

Other scholars offer complementary perspectives. A. Sh. Askarova reads the pentalogy as a multi-layered text in which modernist, postmodernist, and neorealist tendencies complement one another, producing a distinctive depth of artistic consciousness [18]. In addition, the article by G.E. Ensebay and A.S. Demchenko offers a comprehensive overview of Kazakhstani scholarly approaches to Zhaksylykov’s novel “Dreams of the Damned”, analyzing the methodological diversity of its interpretations within national literary criticism. Their research demonstrates how the pentalogy has been situated simultaneously in the contexts of mythopoetics, trauma studies, and postcolonial discourse, thereby confirming its interdisciplinary status. Incorporating this perspective allows the present study to further substantiate its argument regarding the initiatory and symbolic functions of the text and its significance for the development of contemporary Kazakh literary tradition [19].

The systematization of the above approaches supports the conclusion that “Dreams of the Damned” cannot be confined to a single literary paradigm. Rather, it operates as an intergeneric and interdisciplinary text: a dystopian and ecological novel (Altybayeva), a mythopoetic and archetypal narrative (Abisheva, Safronova), a translingual and cultural-bridging work (Valikova, Bakhtikireeva), a narrative of remythologization (Jundubayeva), a fairy-tale structure (Ibraeva). The present study integrates these diverse perspectives and advances the discussion by (1) reading the initiation plot through nuclear trauma as a transformative ritual; (2) synthesizing classical mythological theory (Campbell, van Gennep, Turner) with Kazakhstan’s cultural-linguistic specificities; and (3) foregrounding oneiric motifs as pivotal to the symbolic reworking of trauma and initiation.

Conclusion

A. Zhaksylykov’s novel “Dreams of the Damned” constitutes a unique artistic and philosophical work in which the nuclear catastrophe and its aftermath function not only as the subject of narration but also as the profound existential background for the initiatory path of a human being who has lost familiar points of orientation and exists in a liminal state between life and death, reality and dream, the earthly and the sacred. Through the image of the protagonist undergoing transformation amid spiritual and physical disintegration, the author creates a universal narrative of suffering and transfiguration that seamlessly resonates with models described in classical theories of passage and initiation, such as those of van Gennep, V. Turner, and J. Campbell.

Initiation in the novel is presented not merely as an internal process but as a mode of interpreting collective historical trauma associated with the nuclear tests in the Semipalatinsk region, thereby endowing the text with cultural and historical significance. The study has demonstrated that the narrative structure, the system of symbols, images, and motifs, as well as the stylistic features of the text, all serve to reproduce a ritual scenario: from separation through liminality to a conditional return. A distinctive role in the novel is played by the logic of dreams and visions, through which Zhaksylykov immerses the reader in a mythopoetic space where dialogue with the collective unconscious, with the voices of the ancestors, and with the traumatized land — conceived as an indispensable participant in the hero’s spiritual journey — becomes possible.

The application of interdisciplinary methods — mythological criticism, the anthropology of ritual, postcolonial analysis, and cultural studies — has made it possible to examine the multilayered structure of the text, to reveal the inner harmony between form and content, and to demonstrate how a literary work may perform the function of cultural healing and symbolic reworking of collective trauma. In this sense, “Dreams of the Damned” is not only a literary response to a technogenic catastrophe but also a philosophical treatise on the fate of the human being in a shattered world, on the capacity to preserve dignity and meaning even at the edge of annihilation.

It is, ultimately, a novel-ritual in which the reader becomes both witness and participant in profound metaphysical processes that expose the essence of human nature, memory, and hope. In the context of the contemporary epoch, where trauma — personal, cultural, or ecological — has become an increasingly universal experience, Zhaksylykov's work acquires exceptional relevance, offering not only an interpretation of pain but also a path of overcoming through culture, text, and inner renewal.

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А. Жаксылыковтың «Сорлылардың түстері» романындағы инициациялық нарратив

Мақала Аслан Жаксылыковтың «Сорлылардың түстері» («Сны окаянның») романындағы инициация сюжетін Семей ядролық полигонындағы сынақтардың салдарынан туындаған ұжымдық ядролық жарақат аясында қарастырады. Зерттеудің өзектілігі посткеңестік қазақ әдебиетінде инициациялық нарративтің жеткілікті деңгейде игерілмеуімен, сондай-ақ көркем мәтінді тарихи, мәдени және философиялық қасиет тұрғысынан пайымдау қажеттілігімен байланысты. Ғаламдық трансформация, экологиялық және әлеуметтік апат жағдайында мәдени жадты сақтау мен ұжымдық тәжірибені ұғыну мәселелері айрықша маңызға ие болып отыр. Бұл Жаксылыков шығармасын ғылыми зерттеудің аса қажетті нысанына айналдырады. Зерттеудің мақсаты — «Сорлылардың түстері» романындағы инициациялық құрылымды айқындап, оларды Дж. Кэмпбелл, В. Тернер және А. ван Геннеп концептуалдық үлгілері арқылы жүйелеу, сондай-ақ мәтіннің ұжымдық жарақатты қайта жаңғырту және философиялық-көркемдік рефлексия жасау тәсілін талдау. Зерттеудің әдіснамалық негізі — философиялық, әдебиеттанулық және мәдениеттанулық талдауды біріктіретін пәнаралық тәсіл. Ол Кэмпбеллдің «қаһарман сапары» концепциясына, ван Геннептің өтпелі ғұрып сатылары теориясына және Тернердің лиминалдылық пен «коммунитас» ұғымдарына сүйенеді. Мұндай амал басты кейіпкерлердің бөліну, өтпелі кезең және жаңа тұлғалық болмысқа оралу сатылары арқылы трансформациясын қадағалауға мүмкіндік береді. Арнайы назар символдық және мифопоэтикалық элементтерге — түс көрулерге, ата-баба бейнелеріне, жер бейнесіне, шамандық мотивтерге, сондай-ақ тарихи қасиет контексіндегі жекелік пен ұжымдық тәжірибенің өзара ықпалдастығына аударылады. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы романның кеңістіктік инициациялық ритуал ретіндегі кешенді интерпретациясында жатыр. Бұл интерпретация жергілікті қазақ мәдени кодын ритуал мен тұлғалық трансформацияның әмбебап құрылымымен сабақтастыра қарастырады. Мақалада қазақ әдебиеттануында әлі де аз зерттелген мәселе — ядролық жарақат ықпалынан кейіпкерлердің метаморфозасы, жекелік пен ұжымдық нарративтің өзара тоғысуы, тарихи апаттарды ұғынуда философиялық прозаның рөлі қарастырылған. Жүргізілген талдау нәтижесінде «Сорлылардың түстері» романы оқырманға кейіпкерлермен бірге инициация үдерісін бастан кешуге, ұжымдық жарақат пен мәдени жадының тереңдігін тануға, сондай-ақ әдебиетті мәдени сауығудың құралы ретінде бағалауға мүмкіндік беретін күрделі нарративтік және символдық жүйе жасайтыны анықталды. А. Жаксылыков тек ядролық апат туралы көркем шығарма ғана емес, тұлға мен қоғамның күйреу жағдайындағы трансформациясын бейнелейтін әмбебап философиялық мәтін ұсынады. Бұл посткатастрофалық қазақ прозасын зерттеудің жаңа бағыттарын айқындайды.

Кілт сөздер: инициация, ядролық жарақат, А. Жаксылыков, ұжымдық жад, мәдени бірегейлік.

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Инициационные нарративы в романе А. Жаксылыкова «Сны окаянның»

Статья посвящена анализу сюжета инициации в романе Аслана Жаксылыкова «Сны окаянның» на фоне коллективной ядерной травмы, вызванной последствиями Семипалатинских ядерных испытаний. Актуальность исследования обусловлена недостаточной разработанностью темы инициационного сюжета в постсоветской казахстанской литературе, а также потребностью в интерпретации художественного текста через призму исторической, культурной и философской травмы. В условиях глобальных трансформаций, экологических и социальных катастроф, вопросы сохранения культурной памяти и осмысления коллективного опыта приобретают особое значение, что делает произведение Жаксылыкова особенно востребованным объектом научного изучения. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении и систематизации инициационных структур в романе «Сны окаянның» и интерпретации их через концептуальные модели Дж. Кэмпбелла, В. Тернера и А. ван Геннепа, а также в анализе способов, с помощью которых текст воспроизводит коллективную травму и формирует художественно-философскую рефлексию. Методологической основой работы является междисциплинарный подход, объединяющий философский, литературоведческий и культурологический анализ. Используются концепции Кэмпбелла о «путешествии героя», ван Геннепа о стадиях обряда перехода и Тернера о лиминальности, что позволяет проследить трансформацию главных героев через отделение, пограничное состояние и возвращение к новой идентичности. Особое внимание уделяется анализу символических и мифопоэтических элементов, включая сновидения, образы предков и земли, шаманские мотивы, а также взаимодействие индивидуального и коллективного опыта в контексте исторической травмы. Новизна исследования заключается в комплексной интерпретации романа как пространственного инициационного ритуала, сочетающего локальные казахские культурные коды с универсальными структурами ритуала и трансформации личности. Рассматриваются ключевые проблемы, недос-

таточно освещённые в казахстанской литературоведческой традиции: метаморфозы персонажей под воздействием травмы, взаимодействие личного и коллективного нарратива, роль философской прозы в осмыслении исторических катастроф. В результате анализа выявлено, что «Сны окайанных» формируют сложный нарративный и символический слой, позволяющий читателю пережить процесс инициации вместе с героями, осознать глубину травматического опыта и культурной памяти, а также оценить потенциал художественной литературы как инструмента культурного исцеления. Статья демонстрирует, что Жаксылыков создаёт не просто литературное произведение о ядерной катастрофе, но универсальный философский текст о трансформации личности и общества в условиях разрушения, предлагая новые подходы к изучению посткатастрофической казахстанской прозы.

Ключевые слова: инициация, ядерная травма, А. Жаксылыков, коллективная память, культурная идентичность.

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