

Study of Transmedial and Artistic Representation of the Image of Kazakhstan in Modern Scientific Literature

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ABSTRACT

The proposed research problem is aimed at searching for the components of the Kazakh text in the entire space of modern world literature. The theoretical significance of the study lies in the analysis of various levels of poetics in samples of world fiction, containing an appeal to the image of Kazakhstan, to its realities, traditions, history and culture. In the modern world, the idea of a particular country is formed not only in the depths of its own domestic literature, but often the aesthetic process of understanding the world of another country can also occur at the expense of foreign literature. Cultural values were and are regarded as the foundation of national identity. The search and accumulation of cultures that form the core of the Kazakh mentality, located in domestic content, is a long-standing and successful process. This largely applies to fiction. At the same time, today there are neither local nor large-scale studies that would recreate the overall picture of the elements of national literature as a special artistic phenomenon. The resulting vacuum can be filled by the study of the so-called "Kazakh text" as a special phenomenon of Kazakh artistic culture.

The study of transmedial and artistic representation of the image of Kazakhstan in modern scientific literature is a study of how the image of Kazakhstan is presented and interpreted in various media and artistic forms. This may include analysis of cinema, literature, visual art, theatre, music and other cultural products, as well as how these images interact with political, social and cultural contexts.

The article aims to develop a theoretical framework for the representation of a unique Kazakhstani text in a global literary context. To achieve this goal, we will use the following methods: sociological, intercultural hermeneutics, historical-functional, intermedial analysis, etc.

1. Introduction

In the Addresses of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan, the major role of "effective use of the historical heritage and cultural potential of the country" is emphasized [1]. The President also emphasizes that "Kazakhstani education and science face a large-scale, urgent task – not just to keep up with new trends, but to be one step ahead, to generate trends" [1]. Hence the importance of putting forward such scientific ideas that would be aimed at identifying national cultural markers that make up the value intellectual fund of Kazakhstani society.

The study of transcultural processes allows us to see "ourselves in others." For example, the image of Russia in a variety of aspects appears in German, American, Japanese and many other literatures [2]. For young independent Kazakhstan, it is important to see ourselves through the eyes of others, to understand how recognizable we are in the world and what place we occupy in it. The project is an attempt to collect all the literary texts in foreign literature dedicated to Kazakhstan or implicitly / explicitly containing a "Kazakh trace". The study of the image of Kazakhstan in world literature will allow us to address such poetic issues as literary trends and movements, style and genre system, plot-compositional structure, characterology, chronotope, narrative strategies, etc.

The conceptual basis of the research being developed is two key points - an appeal to the phenomenon of the Kazakhstani text, on the one hand, and the features of the literary process of world literature, conditioned by globalization and various migration processes.

One of the current trends in modern literary criticism is an appeal to the so-called "urban text" [3]. From the point of view of these literary scholars, a city is a dynamically replenished text or, more broadly, a sum or system of texts. This trend is regarded as a manifestation of literary urbanism (N.L.

Potanina, M.A. Gololobov [4]).

Literature, throughout its history, has remained one of the primary tools for understanding the world and humanity. Among its most valuable functions is the formation of a country's image, intertwined with its culture, history, nature, and people. This topic holds significance for both authors, who create works about their homeland, and readers seeking to grasp the spirit of a nation.

The image of a country in literature is a synthesis of artistic techniques, symbols, and metaphors through which authors convey their perception of national identity. Within literary studies, this image is often analyzed using approaches such as cultural, historical, and imagological methods.

Literary works offer an opportunity to explore the complexities of national identity by capturing the nuances of society, the land, and its people. Whether through the depiction of landscapes, customs, or historical events, literature becomes a lens through which both the writer and reader come to understand the deeper essence of a country. This process of portrayal and interpretation shapes how nations are perceived on the global stage.

Moreover, the image of a country is not static; it evolves with changing political, social, and cultural dynamics. As societies undergo transformation, so too does the way they are represented in literature. The depiction of a country may shift from a focus on its natural beauty and historical grandeur to a more introspective examination of its internal challenges and aspirations. By capturing these moments, literature not only mirrors the past but also plays an active role in shaping the future perception of a nation.

Thus, the study of national imagery in literature serves as a vital tool for cross-cultural understanding and diplomacy. It helps to foster a deeper appreciation of the complexities that define a country's identity and offers a platform for dialogue and collaboration on the international stage.

For example, the steppe in Kazakh literature frequently symbolizes freedom and cultural identity, serving as a recurring motif that reflects the nation's ethos. Works produced in various eras carry imprints of historical events and cultural transformations. Authors often anthropomorphize their countries, portraying them as characters within their narratives. For instance, 19th-century Russian literature often depicts Russia as "Mother Earth", emphasizing its nurturing and enduring qualities.

Literature invariably mirrors historical and cultural processes, and the portrayal of a country often depends on the era and socio-political conditions. For instance:

- In Leo Tolstoy's works, Russia is depicted as a harmonious amalgamation of rural simplicity, spirituality, and a profound connection to nature. His characters often seek alignment with the surrounding world.
- Fyodor Dostoevsky, on the other hand, portrays Russia as a land of social contradictions, where cities become arenas for the clash of human passions and moral dilemmas.
- In Western literature, countries are frequently characterized by exoticism and unique cultural traits. For instance, Japan in Pierre Loti's works is associated with traditions, rituals, and an air of mystique, showcasing its distinctiveness through the lens of an outsider.

By representing nations through diverse artistic prisms, literature not only reflects the essence of a country but also fosters a deeper understanding of its identity and complexities in a global cultural context.

Nature plays a pivotal role in shaping national character. For instance, in the works of Mikhail Prishvin, the nature of Russia becomes a reflection of its soul. Literature often incorporates elements of national culture – such as food, clothing, and music – to convey the color and essence of a country. Travel notes and works by foreign authors allow us to see a country through the eyes of an external observer. For example, the image of Russia in the books of Astolphe de Custine is colored by specific stereotypes,

providing a unique foreign perspective.

In the age of globalization, the image of a country becomes multilayered. Contemporary authors delve into themes of migration, loss of identity, and cultural fusion. For instance, in the works of Ermek Tursunov, Kazakhstan is represented through the steppe as a symbol of freedom, but also through the clash between traditional and modern worlds. The image of a country in literature is a multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the spirit of the era, cultural values, and the identity of the people. Through symbols, landscapes, cultural realities, and characters, authors create artistic portraits of their countries, offering readers the chance to gain a deeper understanding of their uniqueness.

Studying these representations reveals not only the nuances of literary craftsmanship but also how literature shapes and preserves cultural memory. Literature serves as a powerful tool for reflecting on and transmitting national identity across generations, and its representations contribute to the ongoing dialogue about a country's place in the world.

2. Literature Review and Methods

The appeal to the image of the city in literature gave rise to the creation of a fundamental scientific direction, within the framework of which attempts were made to study the “St. Petersburg” (V.N. Toporov [3]), “Moscow” (M.V. Selemenova, O.S. Shurupova [5-6]), “London” (L.S. Prokhorova [7]), “Yaroslavl” (T.I. Erokhina [8]), “Yakut” (S.E. Noeva [9]) types of urban text. In Kazakhstan, the problem is refracted through the concept of the “Almaty” text (E.S. Shmakova, I.T. Kakilbaeva, Zh.A. Bayanbaeva, Zh.B. Kermeshova [10-13]). We propose a new approach to the theoretical problem, introducing the term “Kazakhstani text”, which is understood as a unique complex reflecting the concepts of Kazakh self-consciousness in the form of ideas, themes, images, motives, means of artistic expression, artistic stylistics, artistic discourse in foreign literature. Also important is the aspect of the research proposed in the project, which needs to be popularized for Kazakh literary criticism - “intercultural hermeneutics”.

A complex of synergetic categories helps to rethink a number of traditional problems of literary criticism, anthropology, cultural studies, social and historical psychology, ethics, while revealing previously little-studied causal relationships.

The method of intercultural hermeneutics will allow us to see the place and development of the Kazakh theme in world literature.

The historical-functional method was used because it is important to understand the phenomenon of typological phenomena in synchronic and diachronic aspects. Intermedial analysis is necessary to identify interdisciplinary connections in the formation of the Kazakhstani text in world literature (cinema, music, theater, painting, etc.).

New methods in literary studies do not replace the old ones. None of them is universal or definitive. The systems-synergetic approach does not dismiss biographical, cultural-historical, comparative, sociological, formal, hermeneutic, psychological, or any other type of interpretation.

Therefore, among the methods for project research, a combination of comparative-historical and historical-typological approaches can be named. Modeling and cultural reconstruction methods are crucial for theoretical generalizations and analysis of literary processes. The use of comparative and cross-cultural methods helps to establish principles of specific historicism and a holistic approach to studying both individual-personal and social life.

This multi-methodological approach acknowledges the complexity of literary phenomena and emphasizes the importance of integrating different perspectives to gain a more complete understanding of literary works. By applying these methods, researchers can reveal the interplay between literature and its broader social, cultural, and historical contexts, allowing for a richer interpretation and analysis of literary texts.

3. Results and Discussion

Russian literature has served as a mirror for centuries, reflecting the images of various countries, including Kazakhstan. In the works of Russian writers, the image of Kazakhstan was shaped through descriptions of its vast steppes, culture, history, and people. These images were often based on the authors' personal impressions, their historical and cultural views, and political contexts. In this essay, we will explore how the image of Kazakhstan was created in Russian literature, starting from the classic works of the 19th century and ending with modern interpretations.

The image of Kazakhstan in Russian literature cannot be separated from historical processes. In the 19th century, Kazakhstan was part of the Russian Empire, and many writers visited the region as officials, military personnel, or researchers. Their perceptions and descriptions of Kazakhstan were shaped by a colonial perspective, combining elements of fascination with its exoticism and a desire to understand an unfamiliar culture.

An example of this is Alexander Pushkin, who visited Ural in 1833 and wrote the essay *The History of Pugachev*. Although the central theme of the work is Pugachev's rebellion, Pushkin pays attention to the Kazakh steppes and describes them as symbols of freedom and untamed nature.

Leo Tolstoy also left his mark on the creation of the image of Kazakhstan. In his work *Cossacks* (1863), the steppe becomes an important element of the artistic space. Tolstoy portrays the Kazakh lands as a place where a person can find harmony with nature and oneself. The characters in the novel, especially the main character Olenin, experience a sense of awe at the grandeur of the steppes and the freedom they breathe.

Tolstoy emphasizes the contrast between civilization and nature, making the Kazakh steppe a symbol of pristine purity. However, it is important to note that the author's views remain Eurocentric: he perceives the Kazakhs and their culture through the lens of Russian experience.

Kazakhstan has often been depicted by Russian writers through the lens of Eastern exoticism. In the poetry of Mikhail Lermontov, the image of the Kazakh steppes and nomads is filled with romantic melancholy. In the poem *The Prisoner*, Lermontov mentions “the grasses, scented at night”, creating a sense of mystery and solitude.

Another vivid example is the works of Vladimir Dahl, known for compiling the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language*, turns to ethnographic observations in his stories. His descriptions of the lifestyle and customs of the Kazakhs are detailed and respectful, although they sometimes reflect ethnographic stereotypes.

During the Soviet era, the image of Kazakhstan underwent changes. Within the ideological framework, literature focused on the integration of Kazakhstan into the USSR and the achievements of Soviet power. Works from this period emphasized collectivization, industrialization, and the struggle against “the remnants of the past”.

An example of this is the novel *And Quiet Flows the Don* by Mikhail Sholokhov. Although the action takes place in the Don Cossacks' territory, many themes related to collectivization echo Kazakhstan's reality. Soviet literature of this period often portrayed Kazakhstan as “new land” that needed to be transformed.

Contemporary Russian-speaking authors, such as Chinghiz Aitmatov, incorporate the image of Kazakhstan in their works through themes of identity, loss of traditions, and globalization. In Aitmatov's works, the steppe remains a central symbol, but now it is seen as a space under threat of disappearance due to the loss of cultural distinctiveness.

Additionally, modern writers use the image of Kazakhstan to discuss interethnic relations and cultural interaction. Kazakhstan is portrayed as a multinational space where various traditions and worldviews intertwine.

The image of Kazakhstan in Russian literature is a complex and multilayered phenomenon. It reflects both the admiration for the Kazakh steppe and the influence of historical and political processes. Russian writers, from the classics of the 19th century to contemporary authors, have created artistic portraits of Kazakhstan that helped to reveal its uniqueness and significance. Studying these works allows for a deeper understanding of how literature shapes the images of countries and peoples, preserving their cultural memory.

American perceptions of Kazakhstan have varied greatly depending on the historical period, political context, and sources of information. During the Soviet period, Kazakhstan rarely stood out as an independent region in the American consciousness. The country was seen as part of the USSR, and its images were linked to the broader picture of the “Iron Curtain”. Knowledge of Kazakhstan was often limited to information about the Baikonur Cosmodrome, which the Soviet Union used for launching spacecraft. This lent the region an aura of scientific and strategic importance.

In American culture, fascination with the East was associated with exoticism, and Kazakhstan was perceived as part of the vast Eastern space, though specific knowledge was limited.

After Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991, many Americans began to learn about the country through media that focused on its vast resources of oil, gas, and uranium. Kazakhstan became associated with great potential, but also with the challenges of establishing itself as a new independent state.

Unfortunately, the film *Borat* (2006) by Sacha Baron Cohen had a significant impact on the perception of Kazakhstan in American society. Although the film was a satire and had nothing to do with the real culture of the country, it became a source of many stereotypes. The Kazakh government responded actively to this, making efforts to promote a more accurate image of the country.

Kazakhstan is perceived as a strategic economic partner. American companies participate in oil and gas extraction projects, which increases interest in the country among business circles.

Kazakhstan is promoted as a country striving for international stability. Its involvement in peacekeeping missions and initiatives, such as the renunciation of nuclear weapons, has improved the country's image as a responsible participant in global politics.

Kazakh students, cultural exchange programs, and initiatives such as exhibitions and festivals are gradually helping to foster a deeper understanding of the country.

In recent years, the American press has increasingly highlighted unique aspects of Kazakh culture, nature, and tourism. For instance, articles about the steppes, Lake Kolsai, national cuisine, and cultural traditions generate interest and sympathy for the country. However, the ongoing challenge remains to combat stereotypes that arose from *Borat* and other simplified interpretations.

The American perception of Kazakhstan has evolved from ignorance and stereotypes to a more profound interest in the country as a strategic and cultural partner. Promoting a positive and realistic image of Kazakhstan in the U.S. requires continued efforts through cultural diplomacy, educational programs, and exchanges.

Study of the recognition of the image of Kazakhstan in the world artistic and cultural space. We call such facts “Kazakhstani trace”. Collection and systematization of facts of the presence of “Kazakhstani text” will allow us to determine the factors and trends of the spread of Kazakhstani codes throughout the cultural world space.

Urban text is considered by researchers as an interdisciplinary phenomenon [14], which justifies the need, among others, for an intermedial approach to the phenomenon under study. The choice of semiotic positions that consider a special system of signs as a text allows us to expand the concept of text. Intermediality and semiotics in understanding the text makes it possible to study the “Kazakhstani” text in various fields of art, and not just literature [15]. Thus, within the framework of

the proposed project, it is assumed that musical, pictorial, architectural, film texts, design texts containing Kazakhstani cultureemes will be analyzed.

“Kazakhstani trace” is often observed in Hollywood films. The film *Borat* dominated Western perceptions of Kazakhstan in the 2000s, and modern Hollywood productions have begun to move away from stereotypes and portray the country in more complex contexts. The film also drew criticism from Kazakh officials. However, despite the negative reception, it did draw attention to the country, which had unexpected results: increased tourism to Kazakhstan and efforts to create a more accurate image of the country on the international stage.

In the film *The World Undercover* (2013), for example, Kazakhstan is mentioned in the context of international geopolitical events. In this film, Kazakhstan becomes part of a complex political plot involving nuclear weapons and international diplomacy. Although Kazakhstan itself does not play a central role in the plot, its mention indicates recognition of its importance in global security issues.

Another example is the film *Spy Game* (2001), starring Robert Redford and Brad Pitt. In this spy drama, Kazakhstan appears as an important setting for global intelligence activities. Although the images of Kazakhstan here are more neutral and realistic, they are still associated with the theme of political tension and threats.

One of the most positive and realistic images of Kazakhstan in Hollywood films is associated with the Baikonur space complex. Baikonur, which became a key point of the Soviet and post-Soviet space program, is mentioned in films such as *Space Cowboys* (2000) and *Gravity* (2013). In these films, Baikonur is presented as an important center space exploration, which highlights Kazakhstan’s contribution to global scientific and technological advances.

Overall, it is hoped that with the growth of globalization and cultural exchange, Kazakhstan will increasingly appear on screen as a country with a rich history, diverse culture, and significant contribution to the global community.

Contemporary world literature increasingly turns to Kazakhstan as a place with a rich culture and history, reflecting the growing interest in regions that were previously on the periphery of the global literary process. Writers and poets from Kazakhstan are gaining recognition abroad, their works are translated into different languages, and become part of the global literary scene.

Thus, the novel “*Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes*” by Guzel Yakhina, although dedicated to a Tatar woman, also touches on the themes of the deportation of peoples, including Kazakhs, during the Soviet years, which allows us to understand the common tragedy of many peoples of the former USSR. Kazakhstan is becoming part of a larger cultural context in which issues of migration, identity, and memory are explored.

In the 21st century, Kazakhstan continues to be a subject of interest in English-language literature, although its depiction often reflects a complex mix of stereotypes and contemporary realities. The portrayal of Kazakhstan in these works can range from references in a global context to more in-depth explorations of Kazakh culture and history.

In contemporary English-language literature, Kazakhstan is often considered in the context of global political and economic processes. In such works, Kazakhstan is depicted as part of a new global economic and geopolitical arena. For example, Adam Robert's novel *The Wonga Coup* (2006), about an attempted coup in Equatorial Guinea, mentions Kazakhstan as a country playing a role in the global economy and politics. In such works, Kazakhstan is seen as a strategically important state whose influence extends beyond its borders.

Travel writing and essays about Kazakhstan also occupy an important place in contemporary English-language literature. These works are often aim to present the country as an exotic and unexplored place for the Western reader, but at the same time with an emphasis on the cultural diversity and unique

traditions of the region. For example, in the book “The Lonely Planet Guide to Central Asia” (2007), Kazakhstan is described as a country with unique natural landscapes and a rich cultural heritage. Such works help to break down established stereotypes and offer a more detailed and personalized view of Kazakhstan.

The theme of migration and cultural identity also occupies an important place in modern English-language literature, where Kazakhstan often appears as a country of origin or cultural background for characters. In the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel “The Orphan Master's Son” (2012) by Adam Johnson, one of the episodes is connected with Kazakhstan and reflects its influence on the lives of characters involved in complex political intrigues. Although Kazakhstan is mentioned in passing in this book, its image still plays an important role in the context of global processes.

Another interesting case is when Kazakhstan appears in English-language science fiction. In such works, Kazakhstan may act as a setting for future technologies or geopolitical changes. For example, in Kim Stanley Robinson's novel *Red Mars* (1993), although Kazakhstan is not the central setting, it is mentioned as part of a global space program involving the colonization of Mars.

4. Conclusion

Today, Kazakhstan is actively involved in global processes, ranging from peacekeeping initiatives to environmental projects. The country draws the attention of the international community through events like EXPO-2017 in Astana and participation in international organizations such as the UN and SCO. However, in order for these efforts to be as effective as possible, it is crucial to examine how they are perceived abroad. For instance, Kazakhstan is promoted as a country with sustainable development, a rich culture, and a hospitable people. However, it is necessary to analyze how well this image aligns with the real perception abroad.

Literature is always regarded as a phenomenon influenced by social and cultural context. Any historical event can determine the priorities of artistic direction, genre preferences, and the system of images in literary works. One such significant phenomenon is emigration. Migration processes have always impacted the history of national literatures at various stages of their development. The history of independent Kazakhstan contains numerous social and cultural events that influenced the dynamics of the literary process. One of these significant historical trends was the migration processes. In the 1990s, following the collapse of the USSR, more than 2 million people left Kazakhstan, according to statistical sources (data from the “We, Kazakhstan” statistical yearbook by the Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan). A significant wave of emigration was also observed during the global crisis of 2008-2009, which affected the macroeconomic situation of the country, and after 2014, when the status of the national currency declined. At the same time, as part of state programs aimed at bringing Kazakhs back to their historical homeland, representatives of the Kazakh diaspora abroad arrived in the country.

This migration has not only influenced the demographic structure but has also left a significant mark on the literature, as writers who experienced or witnessed these events have contributed to a broader understanding of Kazakhstan's place in the world. The themes of belonging, identity, and the preservation of culture became central in the literary works of those who returned and those who left, enriching Kazakhstan's literary landscape and adding a layer of depth to its national narrative.

The image of Kazakhstan in Hollywood cinema is gradually evolving from caricature stereotypes to more complex and multifaceted representations. Although films such as *Borat* still influence the perception of the country, new projects are emerging that attempt to present Kazakhstan in a more positive and realistic light. It is important to note that the future portrayal of Kazakhstan in Western films will depend not only on Hollywood's interest, but also on the country's active participation in international film projects, as well as on efforts to promote its culture and history on the world stage. Contemporary English-language literature of the 21st century, touching on Kazakhstan, demonstrates

a variety of approaches to its representation. Kazakhstan is presented as a country playing an important role in global political, economic and cultural processes. Images of Kazakhstan range from exotic and little-studied to complex and realistic, reflecting the growing interest in this country in world literature. The study of Kazakhstan's image abroad is an important step toward building successful international cooperation. The ability to understand how the country is perceived by other nations allows for the adjustment of promotional strategies and the strengthening of national identity on the global stage. Kazakhstan, with its rich cultural and historical heritage, has every opportunity to take a rightful place in the global community and become a symbol of harmony and progress.

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