

# Mythical Motifs and the Modernity of Neo Mythology in the Works of Abai

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**Abstract** Mythology was fascinating first of all as a perfectly harmonized artistic system with its own laws and logic. A myth can reveal the essence of all the main problems and contradictions of the present, as it can accumulate in itself everything that goes beyond time and personal values. In mythological texts, figurative and expressive techniques are intertwined into a single whole, while creating a clear picture of events, with diverse plot twists. Greek and biblical myths have been deeply researched over the past two centuries, and the myths about the Muslim world and the ancient Turks, who are our ancestors, and the Altaians (the ancestors of the Turks) of ancient times have remained unexplored and untouched. Since this category of myths still remains unexplored, it is of interest for study and detailed consideration. At one time, they did not reach the same popularity as, for example, the myths of ancient Greece, so they were forgotten for centuries.

**Keywords** humanities; fiction; realism; literary movements; neo-mythologism

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## Introduction

Currently, realist writers share the opinion of critics about the “The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years” (“The Buranny Railway Stop”), in which mythology and science fiction were mixed. One famous scientist called his work “Zhanpidas” a “secret” book with an unusual artistic type. It intertwines “mystery,” “animal epic,” philosophical interviews and realistic stories. In turn, another scientist drew attention to the intertwining of the socio-psychological novel with the myth. In his works, Abai was able to summarize the best traditions of the world and present the general Turkic mythical creativity in the best possible light. As the history of world literature shows, the use of folklore and ethnographic materials by bilingual authors occurs in the context of the “National Folk Element.” The writer’s appeal to mythological symbolism and folklore served two functions in his oeuvre: ideological and aesthetic, and national. His work was studied by such figures as A. Nauryzbaeva (34), U. Dalgat (22), L. Lebedeva (3) et al. The mythological motif and folklore elements in his works penetrated directly into the very essence of the text, often expressing an obvious opinion. Due to this specificity, Aitmatov scholars introduced the term “Aitmatov mythologism” into literary circulation. The term was introduced because no one had tried to connect such different, at first glance, concepts, which, as it turned out, were very tightly intertwined into something extraordinary (Doszhan 41).

“The human eye is not full; the eye bone becomes heavy-copper or holy.” Abai often uses the plots of legends to promote his point of view, expressing his own thoughts with the help of a legend. The author embodies the main heroic actions on the basis of his thoughts, his worldview. The plot of the eastern legend is needed by Abai not just to tell a story, but to portray and convey an important issue from the past, the solution of which must be found (Suinshaliev 8). The plot of Abai’s unfinished saga “The Legend of Azim” resembles the story of Hassan, a jeweller known by readers from one of the Arabian tales—“The Thousand and One Nights.” The poet does not tell the story to the end, he tells only about how a deceived young jeweller passes stories from hand to hand, from mouth to mouth (Demchuk 24). The stories are about becoming rich, finding an easy way out, giving up the usual profession and showing the fate of a young man who hasn’t stayed away from the bar.

The story notes the naivety, inexperience inherent in a young man. He also exposes crooks who have no regard for human life, cheats a murderer, drives him to his death, throws him bones and does not hesitate to steal his gold. Thus, Abai's works have social significance, because they reflect mythical, romantic and realistic plots that can be found in real life.

### **Materials and Methods**

In the world literature, the works of T. Mann "Joseph and his brothers," F. Kafka's "The Castle" became one of the greatest discoveries in German literature. Their work turned to mythical thinking and became an example of the effective use of myth in fiction. The novel by G. Marquez "One Hundred Years of Solitude," which is based on world and biblical myths and Hindu mythology, in which the mythical creation became widespread in Hispanic literature, shook the world social and spiritual consciousness. The truth proved in the humanities lies in the proximity of artistic prose to philosophy, therefore, when a unique idea in it acquires the "wings" of imagination and gives literary expressiveness, then an era of complete stagnation of the former realism begins and new literary trends gradually begin to emerge. Neo-mythologism occupies a central place in the work of these giants of thought. In his work, the neo-mythologist writer refers to archaic, classical and everyday mythology; a cyclic model of time; mythological bricolage, a quotation collage from other works (fr. collage literally, glueing) and many other literary techniques.

It is the attempts to connect the consciousness of one with the consciousness of another or to synchronize the consciousness of another with the consciousness of another, as it was shown by our writers who introduce these numerous innovations into the literary tradition, that indicate that there is a kind of modernist harmony in literature. The fact that once the Kazakh collective consciousness became rich-poor, and the modern Kazakh-speaking—Russian-speaking, in itself contributed to the transformation of the myth into an Anti-myth. Before the formation of the Kazakh neo-mythology and the approval of its generation, the creative development of the myth in the domestic literature proceeded in three directions. One of them is the use of purely mythical plots, the other is the use of mythical images, the third direction is the use of mythical archetypes in the text to reveal the image of the hero. Owing to these three directions, modern literature can develop mythology in even more diverse directions and freely use it to create new works.

The Kazakh mythological system since the beginning of the twentieth century, thanks to the creative searches of writers, slowly, and at the same time quickly moved to mythical creative thinking. Abai Qunanbaiuly stands at the origins of this

system. Abai, who laid the foundations of the new Kazakh literature, also continued to introduce old traditions—myths with the author’s concept, which is based on the core of the work of art. Many literary critics have noted that Abai Qunanbaiuly used legends, mythical, symbolic images and plots in his works in a modified, revised and improved form in accordance with the author’s concept. The myth lives in the origins of the art of words. Therefore, mythological concepts and plots occupy a large place in the oral literature of the Kazakh people. Mythological plots, images, personifications in the myth are a “golden spike” revolving around representatives of Kazakh literature. In the Soviet period, the Kazakhs were considered a people who did not have their own myths and legends, who did not have written literary traditions. But after a while, such writers as Abai proved that the Kazakh literary world is as rich as the world of Greek mythology.

### **Results and Discussion**

In the practice of the development of fiction, there has long been a tendency to use mythical plots, legends and stories in literary works as needed. The storyline in Kazakh mythical literature is consonant with world and Turkic mythical works. They can intertwine colourfully in some storylines, and in doing so, it is sometimes impossible to distinguish where the myth ends and the author’s literary world begins. It is obvious that mythology does not have a clear boundary between the external world and man, thought and feelings, substance and idea, the objective and subjective world. These boundaries appeared much later, and in mythology they were all perceived as a single understanding of the world. In the system of poetic thinking of the Kazakhs, there is often a search for some support in the mythological origins that could confirm the authenticity of mythological facts. One of the first who discovered the universal content and deep philosophical thought embedded in the legends is Abai. He first used mythology in his poems “Iskender,” “Masgut,” “The story of Azim.” Undeniably, the deep origins of mythologism lie in the depths of oral literature, folk poetry (Suinshaliev 10). In the poem “Iskender,” Abai exposes the arbitrariness, belligerence and peacefulness of Alexander the Great. He masterfully revealed these seemingly incompatible qualities in one person. The story of King Iskender the giant was called “the flying word of praise” because Abai created such a unique work that fully revealed the whole essence of the legends about this king (although in the legends his image was quite negative). In his story Iskender he showed that the master of the mind is on the side of the philosopher. Abai tells about life, about thoughts, about the deeds of Iskender. Such a “selfish, dissatisfied, with violent eyes, speaks of his mind against a hostile soul”:

Don't be proud of the fact that you are strong, know,  
When you are strong, you are reserved!

In this poem, there are various assumptions about where the original source of the plot of the "Eye Bone," taken by Iskender from the guards of the "gate to God," came from. Without a doubt, the poet was well acquainted primarily with the Eastern classics, including the work of Nizami, which stands next to him in terms of mastering this episode. It is not surprising that in this episode, the fragment about the eye bone used as a symbol of shamanism is an ancient nomadic plot that entered the Talmud about an ancient Jewish legend. Abai, as a great educator, uses in this work the entire history of such a commander as Alexander, and the legend associated with him in order to express the idea of morality in life. This was done in order to reveal the image of Alexander, tell his story, and give readers the opportunity to draw conclusions about him themselves. Abai's philosophy in this work was impressive, deep (Tlepov 18).

Abai Nizami "Did not become a repeater, imitating Iskender-name." He created a completely different "node" of opinions and made efforts to present the legends about Iskender in the "real" world of his work. In the poem Iskender, the famous philosopher Aristotle is portrayed as a simple man. And his thoughts, words, and actions do not have such a high, sacred meaning as in most legends of that time in Eastern literature (Auezov 41). "Masgut" by Abai and "The Story of Azim"—are sagas based on the plot of legends common in eastern countries. The content of Abai's "Masgut" is described in the novel of I. Turgenev "Eastern Legend" (Auezov 45). There is a similarity between these two works, namely, the basis of both stories is an eastern folk legend. But each author interpreted it in his own unique way. I. Turgenev in his work simply outlined the plot of the legend about the salvation of the elder, while not particularly adding anything new to the plot. Abai, on the contrary, used the legend plot to write an absolutely new work. The "Masgut" described various problems and troubles that fell on his life path. In fact, almost all the events in the plot, even if they seem unimportant, carry serious thoughts that the author wanted to lay down with his work. Myths and mythical images representing the spiritual world of mankind were used not only for a new artistic purpose, but also to solve the pressing problems of the era, to find a way out of seemingly hopeless situations. The main features of the spiritual development of the historical era were revealed through the myth. Symbolic images were created, collected by mythological motifs. In addition, mythical images were created that reflect the spirit of the era.

K. Gabitkhanuly (34) explains the words expressing mythical knowledge as follows: “Islam, Christianity, Buddhism in different epochs spread at different levels in our culture, notably, they became the basis for the creation of a new traditional religious culture, such as the cult of the beast and bird (totemism), the cult of natural phenomena—the sun, moon, stars, etc. (fetishism), the cult of fire, witchcraft (magic), the cult of ancestors, Tengri, Umai, shamanism, etc. It cannot be denied that it has a certain influence on our language, writing, traditions” (Gabitkhanuly 35). From when should the history of the study of Kazakh mythology begin? Here it is necessary to have special studies devoted to these topics, since the history of the beginning of research itself can be quite extensive. The scientific idea about the problem of neo-mythologism in national prose, about the poetics of myth is often formulated either according to the opinions of Russian-speaking scientists of the CIS, or on the examples of foreign literature. The issues of mythical creativity in Kazakh prose, its essence and nature have been widely studied in literary studies and folklore studies in recent years. National literary studies are intensifying the study of the prose of the author, who created mythopoetic models for their work. It is no coincidence that neo-mythology, vividly manifested in our literature, arouses great interest with its constant search for reliable facts, with its secret knowledge of being, features of describing life, logical assumptions in conveying historical knowledge to its readers. Therefore, studying each “historical decade” of this unique phenomenon in the Kazakh literature of the XXI century, the recognition of the characteristic archetypal signs and properties of mythological layers that differ from each other during 2000-2010 and 2011-2020 becomes an urgent issue of modern Kazakh literary science. At the same time, the study of mythical motifs in neo-mythological works of Kazakh writers is, in particular, the study of archetypal symbols: the recognition of mystery in artistic texts, the assessment of aesthetic artistic potential in the world literary space.

The beneficial influence of the national neo-myth on the creative potential belonging to a particular ethnic group cannot be denied. Today, Kazakh prose writers in their work have begun to pay special attention to ancient myths and give the reader new stories, which are based on old legends that carry an important part of human life worthy of emulation. The dominant archetypal, mythological and mythological forms encountered by modern Kazakh prose writers include totem/aruak, trickster, cultural hero, national image and eternal moments. Catharsis in the works of prose writers (gr. *κατάβασις* and lat. *descensus ad inferos*, and ger. *Höllenfahrt*) the mythologeme of being in hell and anabasis (ancient gr. *ννάβασις*—the literal meaning (ascent, and the actual meaning in art and literature) the mythologeme of

the historically traversed path is intertwined together, creates the basis for nature and civilization, its own and other, rural and urban self-consciousness, embodies the motivating staff. The researcher Arslan-Ayaydin speaks about the embodiment of the hero and the embodiment of mythological motifs of life, Twins, death and life in modern Kazakh-Russian-speaking domestic writers (Arslan-Ayaydin et al. 59).

Modernist (innovative) neo-mythologism, adapted to the process of the existence of a certain nation, invests in the essence of the creative content, the boundaries of reality and thought. The artistic image is based not on a life model, but on the mythological conditionality of the creative unconscious. A nation that has not found its place in life opposes “other religious principles” that are forcibly imposed, based on the category (categories) of its own aesthetic values. German writer G. Hesse (19), the author of the work “Steppenwolf,” wrote about this: “[...] we live in the ether, / we do not know what youth and old age are, / we are not devoted to age and gender / we are astral (lat. astralis, gr. Aster-star) is located in the deep bowels of the ice” (Hesse 19). Russian scientist-mythologist D. N. Nizamiddinov in his work “Mythological Culture” talks about two conventions in literature and art, claims that the life reflected in a work of art and the existence of the hero in it do not coincide with reality in real life, and calls this the first conditionality. The second category of conventions includes myths of the epic genre, oral and literary examples, legends, fairy tales, fables (Nizamiddinov 14). Yes, “one of the main thoughts for the writer is to find the value of the human race, to strive to obtain this truth” (Platonov 13). In the late XX-early XXI century, Kazakh writers conventionally used the myth in their works, recognizing it as the highest value of the human race.

The famous scientist K. S. Ergobek spoke about how myth has come to be known in our literature: “The literature of every nation is evolving, improving, the artistic heritage of humanity, creativity is returning to folklore. Every time we return, we go beyond the national framework, immerse ourselves in universal thoughts. Together with other peoples, Kazakh literature is now striving for this process. On the way to folklore, the first example of the use of a folk epic in a work of fiction cannot pass by the experience of the novel ‘Sulushash’” (Ergobek 79). In their creative processes, Kazakh prose writers see only the first stage towards an understanding of folklore and the mysterious world of myth. And we feel that the national “jewellers of the literary word” have passed the school of long and noble searches on the way to the realization of their neo-myths. Thus, mythical stories began to serve as a ready-made artistic form in Kazakh prose. All Kazakh writers who participated in the literary process of that time recognized the myth as an artistic knowledge, turned it into a literary interest, encouraged the artistic content to ac-

quire a new character. Thus, in the literature of the nation, the disclosure of mythical lines, forms of answers to the eternal “damned questions” stored in the myth, and the difficulties of today, correlated with the ancient myth, unfolded.

Abai is a great poet, composer, philosopher, one of the founders of Kazakh literature. He was well familiar with the ancient Kazakh folk customs, laws, Sharia rules through books in Arabic and Turkic languages. Researchers say that Abai wrote more than two hundred poems, including more than 170 lyrical poems, about 30 translated poems and other poems. It contains 45 words of edification, articles, 49 prose works. He made an invaluable contribution to the literary life of the Kazakh people. After all, his works in our time have become an invaluable cultural treasure and a huge storehouse of knowledge in mythology. Abai’s resourcefulness and wisdom are boundless. He learned the culture of his people, mastered the East, studied the basics of European mythology. In the literature of the East, especially Muslim, in stories and wise sagas, the basis was laid on the pictures of an endless fantastic life, in which immense powers mingled beyond the limits of the world of human possibilities. Abai speaks about them in the poem “Eight legs”:

Алыстан сермеп,  
Жүректен тербеп,  
Шымырлап бойға жайылған.  
Қиуадан шауып,  
Қисынын тауып,  
Тағыны жетіп қайырған—дейді. (Abai 65)

The mythical image in this poem is in another. A seeker chasing a fleeing throne. In the ancient way of life of the people there was a saying “Kashagan chase,” “Kashagan descent,” and the people who bred horses knew this well. Many horses do not have a bridle around their neck, and when they feel threatened, they run away from the herd and lose their temper. There were ways to catch such a Kashagan. But since there is no bridle, it was almost impossible to do this. Because of this, this expression literally means: “To run after something that is almost impossible to catch.” There is also the concept of “blue wolf.” Wearing the “blue wolf” is the connection of the origin of mankind with animals and birds, historically integrated, historical and genetic ties of the Turkic peoples. Over time, this image became a sacred animal, the spirit of imitation of individual people.

The veneration of totemic animals spread until the period of the creation of the Turkic Khaganate, and in later epochs, mythical concepts underwent changes due

to the establishment of large khaganates, which allowed the creation of other prose genres of legends. In general, most of the prose samples of these legends not only reflect the archaic knowledge in the Oguz Khaganate, but also reflect the unity of space. There are legends among the people that the famous batyrs Kerey, Zhanibek, Tata Yeset were protected by gray wolves (Kaskabasov 9). The scientist C. Kaskabasov said: “In the history of Kazakh mythology there was the same approximation as in Greece and Rome. This is a reminder of Zeus and Jupiter during the Turkic Khaganate, when Tengri towered over other gods. Since the mythology of the Turkic Khaganate has not fully survived to this day, it is difficult to say and describe exactly what it was. Nevertheless, unlike the ancient Turkic writing and the research of scientists, during the Turkic Khaganate, myths apparently became somewhat cyclical, but due to the rapid disintegration of states, they merged into one system. In the Holy Scriptures, a blue beaver is depicted, who was a thinker, an initiator of the path. According to the country’s beliefs, heroism with great power originates from above, from Tengri himself. The wolf is the giver of special attention to Tengri” (Kaskabasov 12).

S. Kaskabasov, who at one time relied on the historical basis of legends widespread among the Kazakh and Kyrgyz peoples, warned that the Turkic—Kazakh myths and legends are one of the Turkic origins: “Ancient myths, legends of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz people, including the legends of the lower nomadic Turkic tribes of the old times—the gray wolf, “Тобе көз”, one-eyed giant” (Kaskabasov 15). Thus, the totemic role of the wolf occupies a special place in the knowledge of the Turkic peoples. The Kazakh people equate brave, courageous men with gray wolves, and works of art depict a wolf as a symbol of courage and heroism. This animal image is also present in Abai’s poem “Жүрегім менің қырқа жамау”:

Жүрегім менің қырық жамау  
 Қиянатшыл дүниеден.  
 Қайтып аман қалсын сау,  
 Қайтқаннан соң әрнеден. (Abai 85)

In the poetic lines, the word “forty” also has some symbolism. The Kazakh people not only remembered almost every expression, but also preserved the advantages of each number, differentiating its characteristic features. In the representation of the Kazakh people, there is often a mention of the number “forty” in connection with religious totemic concepts. From this concept can emerge such uses as commemoration forty days after death, giving forty, forty days, forty nights, found in

oral literature (Ibraev 24). S. Valikhanov writes: “According to the Kazakh concept, the spirit visits its home by forty days, after which it leaves it forever” (Valikhanov 1). The religious concept of forty exists in other countries as well. For example, the Istanbul Turks have donations that come to someone with the number forty. At forty, if you give the money, then there will be no fear. In Abai’s poem, the phrase “қырқа жамау” expresses an inner feeling, fun, however, according to the mythical understanding of the number “forty,” it has a sacred recognition associated with the mythology of the ancient era. In addition, in Abai’s poem “Жазгытұры,” expressing the warmth of summer, the poet said: “When mother bends the earth, she, like your father, creates the sky above her head...”—the author likens the earth to a merciful mother, the sky to a caring father. The evening of the earth in the image of the mother is characteristic not only in Kazakh mythology, but also in the minds of other peoples. Faith, understood as the father of heaven, occupies a place in the consciousness of man in early, ancient times. And also in the lines: “The sun is the groom, the earth is the bride” it is clear that the natural picture of the life of the Kazakhs is reflected (Abai 97).

According to ancient mythical beliefs in many countries, the sun is associated with a legend that tells about passion, love for the Earth:

Күн—күйеуін жер көксеп ала қыстай,  
 Біреуіне біреуі қосылыспай,  
 Көңілі күн лебіне тойғаннан соң  
 Жер толықсып, түрленер тоты құстай.

Abai created a mythological image of the bride and groom -the earth (Kunanbayev 7). Speaking about the language of Abai, it is important to mention his poetic power, the artistic power of the language. N Gabdullin said: “Abai’s poems... it’s like an expression—I don’t want you to know that I can’t” (Gabdullin 17). In the language of a poem, in a general artistic word, the artist creates a mythological image by choosing one feature of a particular object or phenomenon, an action and comparing it with other concepts or actions. Which he, in turn, embodies in words. For example, in the poetic lines: “Күйлі, күйлі байгеге Қажыты көнім көшауып’ a completely new image of ‘көңілдің байгеге шабуы’,” and in the poetic lines “Күйлі, күйлің байгеге күйлі күйлі, күйлі күйлі күйлі” is another figurative phenomenon. During the development of the national prose of the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century, a monologue, a memory, a deviation, a dream began to reflect a myth that unexpectedly intertwined with the line of the work in artistic techniques born with

the aim of a deeper disclosure of the spiritual world of a person in literature. In innovative works mixed with mythology in the line of the composition, a person is a victim of an unrecognized hostile force, an artistic textual mythical system has been formed on the part of our authors. The characters in these mythical works do not live in historical time, but in a mythological time where past, present and future times intertwine. The fact that the prose genre of Kazakh literature at certain stages of its development is again immersed in a myth is better sought not in the nature of the genre, but in the artistic world of the writer.

We can attribute everything to a myth, and only a fiction to literature. From this point of view, we cannot detect an ontological difference between myth and literature without discovering the specifics of both genres. Each epoch has its own modernism. The most common form of mythization of the literature of the twentieth century is the use of traditional mythological plots and images. The traditional mythological plot is reflected in a work of fiction, either by interpreting it by the author in a certain situation, or by subjecting it to change (transformation). The mythic and anti-mythic nature that we encounter in our literature from the twentieth century to the present day is largely convincing. In a word, the interpretation of traditional mythological plots and images is the disqualification of mythological parallels, the actualization of individual archetypes and mythologies and the introduction of a traditional mythological plot into an unconventional context; the transformation of traditional mythological plots and images is “adaptation to new conditions,” “mockery” and the embodiment of anti-myths in life. In this regard, if talking about the writers who stood at the origins of the embodiment of anti-myths in life, M. Auezov’s “The Way of Abai” comes to mind first (Auezov 79). He was the first writer in Kazakh literature to bring his authorial myth to life. In the epic “The Way of Abai,” the author brought to life his literary hero Kunanbai and Shakir, using the reverse effect of the traditional literary mythology introduced by Franz Kafka. Now many researchers of the history of literature believe that in such works, reality is life. This work is a literary heritage of the Kazakh neo-mythical origin.

When considering the literary evolution on the way of changing the traditional mythical storyline on the part of writers in the prose genre, the presence of two large literary search directions can be stated. In this regard, Ya. E. Golosovker expresses the idea: “The author, who stylized the narrative as a myth, does not undertake to embody a mythical metaphor, equivalence, but actively uses them, turning it only into a component of the text, that is needed, rather than embodying it into the essence of the narrative” (Golosovker 15). The Turks, who failed to preserve their national myth like the ancient Greeks, today began to turn their writings into sacred

mythology, because in art and literature the mythical sphere mixed sacredness and poetry, and art “was closer to the truth than to the reality of fictional life.” Therefore, now in the writer’s work, the myth and the play are ontological (gr. *ontos*—being, *logos*—teaching). In this regard, J. Heizinga notes that: “Myth comes to life in one harbor with poetry, telling a story that goes back to antiquity. A story that comes to life” (Heizinga 42). It is the conditionality that has determined such trends in modern Kazakh neo-mythologism as the ideal narrative, the absolute equivalence of reality. The myth in modern Kazakh prose carries an aesthetic function as an artistic symbol of real life, embodying a new verbal and stylistic form, finding meaning in reflections and speeches, in the narrative about the personality. In modern art the artist, as a product of a cultural myth, cannot help revealing its essence, but instead prefers to model a picture of the world in an artistic work, relying on an authentic life model, considering life as “phantasmagoric” and expressing it in various ways. In this regard, E. M Meletinsky expresses a motivated opinion: “The conscious reaction of writers of the twentieth century to mythology was carried out, as a rule, by means of artistic interweaving of materials” (Meletinsky 11).

### **Conclusion**

For many writers, Kazakh myths have become creatively recognized as a kind of symbolic language that reflects the nature of the absolute equivalence of reality. These legends became a real breakthrough in their time, the “storehouse” of knowledge that remained untouched for many years. And now, years later, connoisseurs of ancient culture can enjoy the works of Abai, who gave a “second life” to the legend, breathing new images into them. In his works, legends play one of the main roles. Through the legends, the author shows his reader what a vast and multifaceted world exists very close by, all that remains is the willingness to explore it. Abai was able to masterfully emphasize those very mythical images that have no value separately from each other, but at the same time, in tandem, they play the role of those literary images on which the storyline is based. The reader can track the same images in different works of Abai, but the similarities in the story itself, which is “told” by each creation of the great master will not be found. Modern researchers of Abai’s work came to the conclusion that it is thanks to him that Kazakh legends and myths “live” to this day and the reader has the opportunity to plunge into the author’s world, to learn the fundamental part of Kazakh culture. Almost all the works contain symbolism, without which it is impossible to describe the culture of that time, and at least in some places it may seem that it is not clear with whom and how the main character cooperates. In the course of the story, Abai reveals each image separately

and seems to “breathe life” into his characters. Abai’s works still represent a valuable material for study.

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