



Culture and the Image of the People in the Publicism of the Folk Writer

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Article History	Abstract
Received: 06 June 2023 Revised: 05 Sept 2023 Accepted: 11 Sept 2023	<i>This article analyzes the journalistic works of T. Kaipbergenov, a folk writer from Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan. The specific features and uniqueness of the writer's publicist works on cultural issues as a fundamental manifestation of the people's spirit and consciousness are studied and revealed. It is argued that culture and the image of the people are crucial aspects in the writer's publicism.</i>
CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0	Keywords: <i>Publicism, specificity, culture, folklore, image of the people, national, distinctive character.</i>

1. Introduction

There are different types of publicism. One of the most multidimensional and interesting among them is literary publicism. It is characterized by a panoramic, profound, and diverse vision of the world. The writer is not only a journalist but also a thinker of a broader nature. They perceive life or events as a philosopher, more significantly, and more attentively than an ordinary journalist, possessing exceptional observational talent. As a result, these qualities become distinctive features of literary publicism. All of these characteristics are inherent in the publicism of Tulepbergen Kaipbergenov, a folk writer from Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan.

2. Materials And Methods

T. Kaipbergenov is known not only as a talented but also as a prolific writer. Karakalpak literary critic S. Akhmetov wrote, "His publicism plays a special role in recognizing the writer's wide popularity" [1], we agree with this idea.

3. Results and Discussion

Actively interested in the current issues of the nation and society, Kaipbergenov has always focused on the problems of culture and made a significant contribution to the development of this theme, not only as a writer but also as a publicist. Moreover, one of Kaipbergenov's fundamental tasks, as a publicist with a writer's mindset, is to vividly reflect the image of his people and their distinctive national character.

The theme of culture is one of the "transversal" elements in his works and has its own peculiarities. If we start with the main one, we can see that the culture of the Karakalpak people, for the writer, has a distinctly national and ancient character. It is part of global civilization and is realized primarily through epics, parables, legends, and so on. Kaipbergenov's attitude towards folklore fundamentally coincides with the position of the renowned Uzbek writer and publicist G. Gulam. In his article "Learning from Folklore" (1939), the latter wrote: "The remarkable feature of folk creativity is that it knows no national divisions and geographical boundaries" [2, p. 43] (our translation - A.A.).

Let us turn to the publication "Measurement of Time" published in the journal "Literary Review" (No.11, 1984). It is dedicated to literature and culture. It is difficult to determine the boundary between them because it focuses on oral folklore. After all, oral folklore is both literature and culture at the same time. Regarding the historical origin of the leading feature of Karakalpak culture, he

writes, "The people were nomadic for a long time, so they did not create palaces, temples, frescoes, mosaics, sculptures, paintings... But they (representatives of the people - A.A.) created and carried through years and spaces beautiful creations of folklore: dozens of epics, hundreds of songs, thousands of proverbs, sayings, speeches, riddles" [3, p. 48]. Thus, the publicist succinctly but powerfully expressed the most important characteristic of his nation's culture.

The fact that the culture of the Karakalpak people is most vividly expressed through oral folk creativity has directly influenced the writer's publicism. Therefore, almost every public appearance by T. Kaipbergenov includes folk parables, legends, proverbs, and so on.

The leading idea highlighted by Kaipbergenov in his publicism is the issue of his people's culture: culture, history, and folklore. The transitions from culture to history, and from history to folklore, reveal in his publicism not only a skilled writer but also a person with a scientific mindset, capable of discovering the universal connections of phenomena and relying on them.

An important characteristic of Kaipbergenov's publicism dedicated to culture is his constant references to history. This suggests that the Karakalpak people possess a unique culture and an incomparable historical distinctiveness.

It would not be wrong to say that this theme, the theme of national culture, is better illuminated in the writer's artistic works than in his publicism. This observation has been noted by literary researchers such as P. Shermukhamedov [4], M. Nurmukhamedov [5], Z. Nasrullaeva [6], K. Sultanov [7], and others.

It would also be incorrect to claim that the culture of the Karakalpaks is only assessed in Kaipbergenov's publicism from a general or historical perspective. It has a contemporary and realistic dimension for him as well. In his articles, sketches, and interviews, the author addresses various manifestations of his people's culture and writes about it skillfully, with profound knowledge, encompassing cities and the most remote villages, the life of the intelligentsia, workers, and particularly peasants.

Kaipbergenov does not overlook such an important theme as the historical memory of the people. Memory represents the accumulation of knowledge in the form of facts, events, and the identification of general patterns of national cultural development based on them. The issue of historical memory of the people has always been and remains one of the most relevant indicators, not only of artistic culture but also of the overall level of the civilization of a nation. The publicist touches upon this question in various journalistic works. For him, the people's memory, which is composed of the memories of individual publicists, writers, scholars, peasants, workers, and other representatives, is one of the decisive components of the general culture. "A person remains human as long as respect for their own past and the past of the entire nation is alive within them. This is also one of the cornerstones of spirituality," he said in an interview titled "Deficit of Spirituality," published in the newspaper "Uchitel Uzbekistana" (1987, April 4). In order for a person to respect their past, they must know that past. And not just know it superficially but know it deeply to ascertain its authenticity and significance to their nation's history.

When Kaipbergenov writes about the history of his people, he is likely not thinking about what other writers say on the subject. In any case, it is unlikely that when speaking of "respect for a person's own past and the past of the entire nation," the publicist is referring to the image of the *mankurt* created by another popular writer from the neighboring Kyrgyz nation, Chingiz Aitmatov. However, the central meaning of the *mankurt* is precisely the necessity for a person and a nation to have historical memory. Those who lack memory can kill their own mother, as vividly demonstrated by Aitmatov, or fail to appreciate their own homeland and nation, as depicted in Kaipbergenov's journalistic works. Two renowned writers, independently of one another, echo each other in their works because they are able to comprehend the life of their people in its philosophical sense.

In his publicistic works, Kaipbergenov not only consistently focuses on cultural issues, but his publicism is also based on folk culture and nourished by its vital juices. Kaipbergenov often merges with folk culture, forming a unified whole with it.

In one of his journalistic works, he says, "My people are ancient, and evidence of this lies in the ancient chronicles and records of many kingdoms and nations" [8, p. 48]. Initially, the words "my people" may sound bold and immodest. However, by delving into their meaning within the context of Kaipbergenov's publicism and literary activities, the reader becomes convinced that this is the only appropriate position. The widespread popularity and recognition as a folk writer give him the right to say "my people." These words imbue with great meaning what Kaipbergenov further expresses. As a result, the overall impression on the audience becomes significantly stronger, enhancing the effectiveness of his publicism. We believe that others can join in this evaluation of the writer's publicistic works on cultural themes.

In Kaipbergenov's publicism, his reflections on the fate of his people are frequently encountered. The Karakalpak people are always present in his publicism, and they are inevitably reflected in it, either directly or indirectly. Their destiny, historical origin and development, the evolution of national self-consciousness, their place in the community of nations—these and other topics concerning the people hold a prominent place in the writer's publicism.

As a publicist with a writer's disposition, he is immersed in the midst of everyday life, traveling extensively to cities and villages across the republic, constantly meeting with readers, potential characters for future works, and observing remarkable social phenomena and processes in the contemporary reality that surrounds him. He later presents his observations and thoughts in newspapers or magazines, in the form of essays or other forms of expression.

It is widely known that a nation is comprised of individual, concrete people who live their everyday lives. Therefore, in Kaipbergenov's publicism, the people are embodied in the characters of specific individuals, and in his works, individual destinies merge into the collective destiny of the nation. This is one of the fundamental patterns in his publicism. He does not depict an abstract, mythical people. Instead, he portrays the Karakalpak people with their historical past, their specific representatives, their nomadic way of life, rich folklore heritage, historical traditions, and so on.

Kaipbergenov works in various prose genres and continuously seeks and finds new paths and methods to address his favorite theme. Literary critics have long recognized this quality in his writing and publicistic style. For example, V. Sakharov, in an article titled "With Thoughts on the Fate of the People," compares various prose works by Kaipbergenov and writes: "...we see the scale of the creative search of the prominent Karakalpak writer, who managed to tell us about the destiny and character of his people, reveal the historical extent and complexity of this fate, the resilience and spiritual wealth of the national consciousness" [9]. Sakharov perceives the writer's works as a consistent creative exploration of the theme of the people's destiny. Another literary critic, Yu. Karasev, expresses the following opinion about the writer's work: "At its core, Kaipbergenov's creativity, rooted in the people, helped our multiethnic readership to become acquainted with and love the Karakalpak people, the land of Karakalpakstan, to delve into its past and present, to understand and appreciate the soul of the nation from which the writer emerged" [10, p. 96].

Studying Kaipbergenov's publicism, we can add that these words, spoken about his literary works, can also be attributed to his publicism. If one reads the writer's publicistic works attentively, an interesting regularity can be discovered—repetitions of images of historical personalities, not only of people but also of landscapes, villages, and nature. By uniting all these elements into a comprehensive, unified picture, we find that one of the main themes of his publicistic works is the portrayal of the nature of his homeland and the character of his people. It is from these elements that Karakalpakstan takes shape, serving as the backdrop for the life in which the publicist lives and writes. Such a holistic image cannot be created artificially; it would be a mechanical combination. In Kaipbergenov's works, each piece has its own meaning, theme, expressive means, and details, and together, they create a vivid, unified image. This is the publicism of a great writer.

The love for his people is most evident in Kaipbergenov's publicism. This quality of his creative style manifested itself early on in his first essays, written in the mid-1950s. It was during this time that Kaipbergenov began writing stories and essays, which were published in newspapers and magazines of the republic. In 1961, a collection of his stories and essays titled "The Notebook Speaks" ("Bloknot

so'yleydi") was published [11, p. 144], representing the initial stage of his creative work and his publicism.

In these works, the author describes the feats of ordinary workers from Karakalpak villages, identifying genuine and ordinary heroes among them, convincingly and vividly reflecting the image of his native people, their national and distinctive character, with all the skill of a publicist and writer.

The publicist devotes a lot of attention to the history of his people, their origins, and their development. In the work "Two Interviews on One Topic," he writes: "I believe that we should look at the history of our people from the perspective of the history of humanity. And the history of humanity is the history of people coming together, the history of interethnic understanding" [12, p. 24]. Here, a writer's or, in other words, a humanistic approach is clearly evident. It could have been said differently, for example, that the history of society is the history of class struggle. But Kaipbergenov adheres to different categories—ones that we now call universal human categories. These categories are one of the most prominent manifestations of the image of the people in the writer's publicism. As a result, we can conclude that even back in 1984, when this material was published, universal human values stood higher for Kaipbergenov as a writer, even though class criteria, as the official ideology of the communist party, still held full force.

The publicist's approach to the theme of the Karakalpak nomadic people's search for a permanent place to live is interesting. He writes: "And my people went around the world searching for a name. They were on the Danube, traversed the steppe along the Volga, approached the Ural Mountains, wandered along the banks of the Syrdarya River, approached the borders of Persia, returned to the Aral Sea, and people realized that God had forgotten about them, that he would not give them any name..."

The main idea of the interview is the portrayal of Karakalpak society through the eyes of the national writer. Even regarding the questions, he poses to himself, it is evident that he is primarily speaking about the fate of the people: "I wrote about the fate of a people who spent whole centuries in what could be described as historical inaction..."

The theme of the history of the Karakalpak people's life is closely related to the theme of their traditions. The publicist understands well that traditions are one of the decisive factors for the existence of any nation. Therefore, in many of his journalistic works, one can find descriptions of local customs. The article "Living and Dead Traditions" published in the newspaper "Pravda" on June 29, 1985, is entirely devoted to this topic. The author focuses his attention on two main traditions that represent the image of the Karakalpak people: Eastern hospitality and strong traditional family ties. In the article, the writer actively supports national and Eastern traditions.

One of the common techniques used in creating the image of the people in T. Kaipbergenov's journalistic works is speech characterization, as well as self-characterization. With their help, the author creates an image almost directly through his characters, which is a persuasive and effective method.

This technique is used in an original way in the essay "The Face of Kindness" published in the newspaper "Pravda" in September 1985. A significant part of the publication consists of an interview. Through it, the publicist reveals the image of his specific character, and through him, the image of the entire society:

- "Will you be building houses for someone?"
- "No, this time it's not a house," his smiling eyes become serious. "In our new brigade, about five kilometers from here, there are no nurseries, no medical clinics..."
- "But isn't that clearly the responsibility of the collective farm?"
- "Ah, so you say... Right, everything is correct, but it still doesn't exist! The children are struggling, so are the mothers, the sick have nowhere to turn..." [13, p. 12]

Thus, the author creates the image of an ordinary person who wants to help his people. Although the slogan "The plans of the party are the plans of the people" was widespread at that time, the top

leadership of the Communist Party did not genuinely care about the people. Therefore, ordinary workers and farmers, as well as conscientious leaders, sought opportunities to help the people themselves. The publicist, in a way, bypasses all the "intermediate links"—the party committee, the regional committee—and writes directly about the people. And here, he reveals himself as a publicist—a popular writer.

There is a lot of dialogue in the essay "The River Must Flow into the Sea" (Pravda, February 10, 1984). The dialogue is presented in a very accessible, "folksy" language of the character with whom the publicist is conversing. The author does not force the character's speech into a template or try to make it ideological and smooth. In fact, the dialogue in the essay is composed of colloquial language. In this case, Kaipbergenov acted as a writer, managing to shape the speech of his character, providing it with a simple, accessible, and free style.

Thus, through speech characterization, the essay creates the image of a person who is not young anymore but not so old that they have nothing else to occupy themselves with. The character in the essay says, "You see, son, I've been retired for twelve years—left early. There was resentment, pain... Well, I don't want to remember! But you see—I see that I have strength, but where does it go? To what? It doesn't seem to go to the right things... Not to the main things... Here's the thing: the river must flow into the sea!" [14, p. 7]. These words have a double meaning. Firstly, literally, the river indeed must flow into the sea, otherwise the sea will dry up, as has happened to the Aral Sea. The second meaning is equally important: each person represents a small river that, by merging together, forms the sea, meaning their own people. The publicist does not explicitly state this; such a direct statement would not stimulate the reader's thinking. He hints at it as if in the background, as subtext. This enhances the effectiveness of Kaipbergenov's journalistic work.

Speech serves the author as a means of creating national color. By analyzing and describing life situations, he weaves them into a complex and challenging but beautiful struggle of the Karakalpak people's lives. In a small section of the essay "The River Must Flow into the Sea," he synthesizes certain details that carry great significance, connecting very serious matters with just two or three words. For example: "- Oh, yes, you are a generous host!... - Of course!" he smirked cunningly and yet somehow innocently. Usually, cunningness and innocence are opposites, but here they are inseparably combined. Such a combination is precisely a writer's observation. Then the character says, "- I am from Karakalpakstan! And Karakalpaks are a generous people." Cunningness, innocence, and generosity are three different qualities. However, Kaipbergenov, being a master of capital-P Publicism, managed to blend these characteristics together and create a unique and colorful image of a hardworking and generous master of the Priaralye land.

An investigator of the popular writer's journalistic work, in which various forms of the image of the people frequently appear, may ask themselves, with the help of which specific means does the publicist manage to create this image? We have studied the writer's journalism from this perspective and have come to the following conclusions. Kaipbergenov's works often include portrait characterizations of the heroes. For example, in the essay "The River Must Flow into the Sea," he writes: "A slender man in white walked across the field, heading towards the house. This, of course, was Matnazar Masharipov, whose name I knew, like everyone in Karakalpakstan, from newspapers. He was awarded the title of Hero of Labor back in '56. At that time, he was the chairman of the collective farm, and seven years later, he became the brigadier of a gardening brigade..."

Another method of creating the image of the people is to combine this image from various individual characters. Here's how this technique is implemented in a conversation with the critic V. Oskotsky, published in the journal "Literaturnoye Obozreniye" (No. 9, 1982): "When I studied this history, before me stood the fate of my people in the image of a helpless boy among adults, in the image of a sick person among the healthy, in the image of a powerless, defenseless woman" [15, p. 29].

The article, reports, essays, and interviews by the writer are not limited to the mentioned portrayals. The author presents other typical images of people that, together, form the concept of the "Karakalpak people." The crucial factor here is that these are images of ordinary and relatable individuals for the mass readership. While such images may seem out of place in the journalism of an investigative

reporter or a renowned economist, in the journalism of a popular writer, they fit naturally and appear very convincing.

One of T. Kaipbergenov's achievements as a publicist is his demonstration of the idea that the Karakalpak people acquired their name in history and a place to live thanks to their love for labor. In a conversation with the critic E. Sergeev, he stated: "Two and a half centuries ago, my people, after long centuries of wandering, came to the shores of the Aral Sea, to the mouth of the Amu Darya." He went on to describe these places, showing how his people transitioned from nomads to settled inhabitants. For settled life, agriculture was necessary. Here, the writer creates the image of the hardworking Karakalpak people: "Then people began digging canals and ditches. Over the centuries, with shovels and picks, they created a whole network of irrigation structures. The steppe is crisscrossed by them... Our ancestors literally built their homeland with their own hands. That is the history" [16, p. 123].

The Karakalpak people endure the difficulties of serious ecological disasters. However, they continue to live and work in such a challenging environment. The highest manifestation of T. Kaipbergenov's writing and journalistic mastery lies in his convincing portrayal of the main point: even in such circumstances, his people preserve their dignity. In the work "To Be Responsible Means to Respond," he says: "A person must constantly, if you will, daily, test themselves for humanity. Remember, in my novel, the old Aylar says that in the world, there is only good, and evil is spoiled and degenerate good" [17, p. 129]. Here, the publicist presents a profound image and a powerful fact. Despite living in a difficult atmosphere, people do not seek evil; they say that there is only good. Such profound thoughts are characteristic of the writer himself. The moral dimension is always fundamental and decisive in Kaipbergenov's journalism, present in all of his works, giving them not only a national but also an international resonance.

4. Conclusion

It "The writer's word is the voice of the people's conscience. And it is addressed to the people as a call, awakening them from slumber and leading them forward. A writer should not be complacent or flattering, nor should they be fearful in the face of truth." This is Kaipbergenov's reasoning in a conversation with the critic V. Oskotsky. We believe that this expresses his creed as a writer and publicist. It is his guiding principle, on which he acts.

Another specificity of the writer's approach as a publicist is that he identifies himself with his people. Not every writer is allowed to do so. However, Kaipbergenov's name and his position in Karakalpak and Central Asian literature and journalism allow him to do this. The specific identification of the writer with the people is expressed in the words "The writer's word is the voice of the people's conscience."

In each of Kaipbergenov's works, in many of his thoughts, we constantly find the journalistic reflection of the people and their culture in forms that belong specifically to the pen of a popular writer. This is the specificity of most of his journalistic works. Culture and the image of the people are crucial directions in the writer's journalism. It is filled with deep specificity, encompassing scientific, artistic, and journalistic aspects.

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