

The Image Of Generational Memory And Human Responsibility For The Future In The Works Of Chingiz Aitmatov

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Abstract: The article examines the central problem of historical memory and moral responsibility to future generations in Chingiz Aitmatov's works. The key works of the writer ("The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years", "The Scaffold", "Buranniy Polustanok") are analyzed, in which the concept of memory is revealed through mythological images, national traditions, and philosophical understanding of the connection between times. Special attention is paid to Aitmatov's interpretation of the phenomenon of *mankurtism* as the loss of historical memory and national identity. The methodological basis of the study is the cultural-historical and philosophical-anthropological approach to the analysis of literary text.

Keywords: Ch. Aitmatov, historical memory, *mankurtism*, responsibility of generations, national identity, philosophical prose, mythopoetics

The work of Chingiz Aitmatov (1928-2008) represents a unique phenomenon in world literature of the 20th century, organically combining the national Kyrgyz tradition with universal human problems. One of the central themes of his works is the problem of historical memory and human responsibility for the future, which acquires special relevance in the context of globalization and cultural unification of the modern world.

As researchers rightly note, "generational memory in Aitmatov is not just the preservation of knowledge about the past, but a living connection of times that determines the spiritual essence of man and people" [Gachev G.D. National Images of the World. Cosmo-Psycho-Logos. Moscow, 1995]. The loss of this connection leads to spiritual degradation, the transformation of a person into a *mankurt* – a slave deprived of memory of his roots.

MYTHOPOETICS OF MEMORY IN THE NOVEL "THE DAY LASTS MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS"

The novel "The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years" (1980) became a landmark work in which Aitmatov most fully embodied his concept of historical memory. The central symbol of the novel is the legend of the *mankurt* – a person forcibly deprived of memory of the past, of his clan and people.

The image of the *mankurt* is multi-layered and functions in the novel on several levels. At the historical-ethnographic level, this is an ancient legend about a cruel method of turning captives into obedient slaves by putting a *shiri* on their heads – dried camel skin, which, shrinking in the sun, destroyed a person's memory. At the philosophical-anthropological level, *mankurtism* becomes a metaphor for any form of spiritual enslavement associated with the rupture of the connection of times.

The main character of the novel, Yedigei Zhangel'dyn, acts as a bearer of ancestral memory, a keeper of ancestral traditions. His desire to bury his friend Kazangap at the Ana-Beiit cemetery, the "maternal resting place," despite the prohibition of the authorities, symbolizes the struggle to preserve historical memory and national identity. It is noteworthy that the name of the cemetery itself refers to the story of the *mankurt's* mother Naiman-Ana, who tried to restore her son's memory and was killed by him.

Aitmatov builds a complex system of temporal layers: the present time of action (Kazangap's funeral), Yedigei's memories of the past, ancient legends and myths, a fantastic plot about cosmonauts. This polyphony of times emphasizes the idea of the unity of the historical process, where past, present and future are inextricably linked.

ECOLOGICAL CATASTROPHE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF LOSS OF HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE NOVEL "THE SCAFFOLD"

In the novel "The Scaffold" (1986), the theme of memory and responsibility acquires an ecological dimension. Aitmatov shows how the destruction of the connection between man and nature, the oblivion of the traditional attitude towards the land leads to a catastrophe not only ecological, but also moral.

The image of the she-wolf Akbara, defending her cubs, becomes a symbol of the natural law of preserving the clan, memory of ancestors. The tragic death of wolf cubs at the hands of people who arranged a senseless massacre in the savannah symbolizes the rupture of natural connections, man's loss of his place in the universe. Avdii Kallistratov, a former seminarian, tries to resist the spiritual degradation of society, reminding people of Christian commandments and moral responsibility. His sermon about memory and conscience remains unheard, which leads the hero to a martyr's death. It is significant that Avdii is crucified on a saxaul – an ancient desert tree, which enhances the symbolism of sacrifice and points to society's oblivion of basic spiritual values.

Boston, the second central character of the novel, embodies the traditional peasant worldview based on memory of ancestors and responsibility to descendants. His tragedy – the murder of his own son, possessed by drug madness – becomes a terrible symbol of the rupture of generations, the loss of continuity.

DIALECTICS OF TRADITION AND PROGRESS: RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE

Aitmatov is not an apologist for archaism or an opponent of progress. His concept of memory is dialectical: the writer advocates organic development in which the new does not cancel but incorporates the best of the past.

In the novel "The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years," the fantastic plot about cosmonauts who discovered an extraterrestrial civilization parallels Yedigei's earthly story. The decision of world powers to establish a "mutual demiurge" – a shield isolating Earth from contacts with other worlds – metaphorically echoes mankurtism: humanity voluntarily dooms itself to isolation, refuses development, refuses responsibility for the future.

This parallel reveals Aitmatov's understanding of historical responsibility: it consists not only in preserving the memory of the past, but also in readiness for dialogue, development, openness to the future while preserving one's identity.

NATIONAL AND UNIVERSAL IN AITMATOV'S CONCEPT OF MEMORY

Aitmatov's appeal to Kyrgyz folklore, national legends and myths (Manas, the legend of the Horned Mother-Deer, the tale of Naiman-Ana) does not limit the problems of his works to ethnographic frameworks. The writer uses national material to raise questions of universal significance.

Mankurtism as a phenomenon of memory loss acquires universal significance: this is both the oblivion of national roots in the era of globalization, and spiritual enslavement by totalitarian regimes, and the destruction of the connection of generations as a result of urbanization and technical progress, and man's loss of moral guidelines.

Aitmatov emphasizes that memory is the basis of humanity. A person without memory, without understanding his place in the chain of generations, loses the ability to empathize, to make moral choices, turns into a function, into a means of achieving others' goals.

ARTISTIC FEATURES OF EMBODYING THE THEME OF MEMORY

Aitmatov develops original poetics to embody the philosophical problems of memory and responsibility:

Mythologization of narrative. The writer introduces legends and myths into realistic narrative, which are not insert episodes, but are organically included in the structure of the work, revealing the deep meaning of modern events.

Symbolization of space. The Ana-Beiit cemetery, the Burannyi railway junction, the Moyunkum savannah – these are not just geographical points, but symbolic spaces where the fate of memory and the future is decided.

Parallelism of plot lines. The comparison of ancient legends and modernity, earthly and cosmic plots creates an effect of timelessness, universality of the problems posed.

Symbol-images. Shiri (the mankurt's cap), the white bird Donenbai, the she-wolf Akbara, saxaul – all these images acquire symbolic meaning related to the theme of memory and responsibility.

ETHICAL DIMENSION OF AITMATOV'S CONCEPT OF MEMORY

For Aitmatov, the problem of memory is inextricably linked with ethical issues. Memory for him is not only knowledge about the past, but above all a moral feeling that determines human behavior. Yedigei takes responsibility for his friend's funeral, despite prohibitions and threats, because this is what the memory of ancestors, tradition, commands. This is not blind adherence to custom, but a conscious moral choice.

The writer shows that the loss of memory leads to the moral degradation of society. Mankurts in Aitmatov are terrible not by physical strength, but precisely by the absence of moral prohibitions, inability to empathize. They can kill their own mother without experiencing remorse, because they are deprived of memory of kinship, of their human essence.

Responsibility for the future in Aitmatov's concept flows from memory of the past. Only those who remember where they came from are able to care about where they are going. This idea is especially relevant in the context of the ecological theme of "The Scaffold": the destruction of nature is a consequence of man's loss of memory of his connection with the earth, of the traditional attitude toward the world as a home that must be preserved for descendants.

CONCLUSION

Chingiz Aitmatov's work represents an artistic-philosophical study of the phenomenon of historical memory and human responsibility for the future. The writer creates a multidimensional concept of memory, including several levels:

1. Ancestral memory – knowledge of one's ancestors, of the traditions of one's people, constituting the basis of national identity.
2. Historical memory – understanding of one's place in history, the connection of past, present and future.
3. Moral memory – conscience, an inner sense of responsibility to ancestors and descendants, determining a person's ethical choice.
4. Existential memory – awareness of one's human essence, distinguishing man from animal and from mankurt.

Aitmatov warns of the danger of mankurtism – spiritual enslavement associated with the loss of historical memory. Mankurtism can take different forms: from direct violence against consciousness to more subtle forms of manipulation, from oblivion of national roots to rupture of the connection of generations. But the essence remains unchanged: a person without memory ceases to be human, turns into a means of achieving others' goals.

Responsibility for the future in Aitmatov's concept flows from memory of the past and is realized in the present through the moral choice of each person. The writer does not give simple recipes for solving humanity's global problems, but points to the need to preserve the connection of times, the organic combination of tradition and progress, national and universal.

Aitmatov's work retains its relevance in the 21st century, when the processes of globalization, informatization, cultural unification threaten national cultures and the historical memory of peoples. His warning about the danger of mankurtism sounds especially acute in an era when manipulation of consciousness reaches unprecedented scales, and the generational gap becomes ever deeper.

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