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Болашақ-Баспа
2026

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Mapping Literary Space in Mukhtar Magauin's Prose

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the structure of literary space in Mukhtar Magauin's prose by integrating toponymic, quantitative, and geospatial approaches. The corpus comprises six prose works characterized by a rich system of spatial references: *The Death of a Greyhound*, *The Dead and the Living*, *Right and Left*, *The Marrow of the Vulture*, *Children of One Ancestor*, and *The Fifth Livestock*. Through close reading of the complete texts, geographical, historical, local, and mythological spatial units were manually identified, while their frequency, type, spatial layer, coordinates, and mapping status were recorded in a structured database. The study employed literary-spatial analysis, typological classification of toponyms, frequency analysis, geocoding, and digital visualization using Leaflet and ggplot2 in R. The analysis identified 60 distinct spatial units. Almaty, Naryn, Egypt, the Golden Horde, Semey, and the Nile emerged as the most frequent spatial nodes. Choronyms and oikonyms constituted the dominant typological categories, whereas natural and historical spaces formed the most prominent spatial layers. The findings demonstrate that toponyms not only locate narrative events but also represent historical memory, cultural identity, national worldview, and symbolic meaning. The geospatial map further revealed connections among local, national, historical, and civilizational scales. The study's novelty lies in applying an integrated model that combines literary interpretation, structured spatial data, and digital cartography to Magauin's prose. This approach offers a methodological basis for comparative research on spatial poetics in Kazakh literature and for the further development of Digital Humanities projects.

***Keywords*:** toponymy, literary space, spatial representation, digital humanities, geospatial database.

Мұхтар Мағауиннің прозасындағы әдеби кеңістікті картаға түсіру

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Аннотация

Зерттеудің мақсаты – Мұхтар Мағауин прозасындағы әдеби кеңістіктің құрылымын топонимдік, сандық және геокеңістіктік әдістерді ұштастыра отырып анықтау. Зерттеу материалы ретінде кеңістіктік атаулар жүйесі айқын көрінетін алты прозалық шығарма алынды: «Тазының өлімі», «Өлі мен тірі», «Оң мен сол», «Құзғынның қу жілігі», «Бір атаның балалары» және «Бесінші түлік». Мәтіндерді тұтас оқу барысында географиялық, тарихи, жергілікті және мифологиялық кеңістік бірліктері қолмен белгіленіп, олардың жиілігі, типі, кеңістіктік қабаты және географиялық координаттары дерекқорға енгізілді. Зерттеуде әдеби-кеңістіктік талдау, топонимдерді типологиялық жіктеу, жиілік талдауы, геокодтау және R

ортасындағы Leaflet пен ggplot2 құралдары арқылы цифрлық визуализация әдістері қолданылды. Нәтижесінде 60 дербес кеңістік бірлігі анықталды. Алматы, Нарын, Мысыр, Алтын Орда, Семей және Ніл ең жиі кездесетін кеңістік түйіндері болды. Типологиялық тұрғыдан хоронимдер мен ойконимдер басымдық танытты, ал табиғи және тарихи кеңістік негізгі қабаттар ретінде ерекшеленді. Талдау топонимдердің оқиға орнын көрсетумен шектелмей, тарихи жадты, мәдени бірегейлікті, ұлттық дүниетанымды және символдық мағыналарды қалыптастыратынын көрсетті. Геокеңістіктік карта жергілікті, ұлттық және өркениеттік кеңістіктердің өзара байланысын көрнекі түрде ашты. Тарихи аумақтар шартты координаттармен белгіленіп, нақты географиялық нысаны анықталмаған символдық бірліктер картаға енгізілмеді. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы – Мағауин прозасын әдеби талдау мен цифрлық картографияны біріктіретін біртұтас модель арқылы қарастыру. Ұсынылған тәсіл қазақ әдебиетіндегі кеңістік поэтикасын салыстырмалы зерттеуге және цифрлық гуманитаристика жобаларын дамытуға әдіснамалық негіз бола алады.

***Кілт сөздер*:** топонимия, әдеби кеңістік, кеңістіктік көрініс, цифрлық гуманистарлық ғылымдар, геокеңістіктік дерекқор.

Картирование литературного пространства в прозе Мухтара Магауина

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Аннотация

Цель исследования – выявить структуру литературного пространства в прозе Мухтара Магауина посредством сочетания топонимического, количественного и геопространственного подходов. Материалом послужили шесть прозаических произведений с выраженной системой пространственных обозначений: «Гибель борзой», «Мёртвые и живые», «Правое и левое», «Бедренная кость грифа», «Дети одного отца» и «Пятый скот». В ходе сплошного чтения текстов вручную фиксировались географические, исторические, локальные и мифологические пространственные единицы; сведения об их частотности, типе, пространственном слое и координатах вносились в структурированную базу данных. Использованы методы литературно-пространственного анализа, типологической классификации топонимов, частотного анализа, геокодирования и цифровой визуализации с применением Leaflet и ggplot2 в среде R. В результате выявлено 60 самостоятельных пространственных единиц. Наиболее частотными пространственными узлами оказались Алматы, Нарын, Египет, Золотая Орда, Семей и Нил. В типологическом отношении преобладают хоронимы и ойконимы, тогда как природное и историческое пространство образуют ведущие пространственные слои. Анализ показал, что топонимы не только локализуют события, но и участвуют в репрезентации исторической памяти, культурной идентичности, национального мировоззрения и символических смыслов. Геопространственная карта позволила наглядно представить взаимосвязи локального, национального, исторического и цивилизационного уровней. Научная новизна исследования состоит в применении к прозе Магауина единой модели, объединяющей литературоведческую интерпретацию, структурирование данных и цифровую картографию. Предложенный подход может служить методологической основой для сравнительного изучения поэтики пространства в казахской литературе и развития проектов цифровой гуманитаристики.

***Ключевые слова*:** топонимия, литературное пространство, пространственное представление, цифровые гуманитарные науки, геопространственная база данных.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of Digital Humanities has transformed literary studies by combining close reading with corpus analysis, natural language processing, geographic information systems (GIS), geocoding, and digital cartography. These methods make it possible to identify, classify, and visualize spatial references and to reveal patterns that may remain unnoticed in traditional textual analysis. Literary space is therefore examined not merely as the setting of events but as a structural and symbolic system that organizes narrative meaning, historical memory, cultural identity, and an author's worldview.

The theoretical foundations of this approach can be traced to Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope and Yuri Lotman's semiotics of space, both of which established space as a fundamental category of literary meaning. The subsequent spatial turn expanded this perspective. Conkan and Gârdan (2020) connect the study of literary space with geocriticism, literary geography, transnational studies, and digital humanities, emphasizing its historical, social, and cultural dimensions. Hones (2011) similarly defines literary geography through the relationship between textual and actual geographical space and demonstrates that spatial organization shapes narrative events, characters' worldviews, and cultural environments.

Literary mapping offers an important means of representing these relationships. Building on broader theories of socially and culturally produced space (Lefebvre, 1991) and the cartographic study of literary systems (Moretti, 1998), Perenič (2014) identifies literary maps as a major tool for investigating and visualizing interactions between real and imagined places. Boschetti (2012), in turn, argues that literary space should not be limited by national borders, since world literary space emerges through interaction among cultures, traditions, and historical contexts. These approaches are particularly relevant to works in which local geography intersects with broader historical and civilizational narratives.

Digital Humanities provides the methodological framework for extending such analysis. Berry (2012) notes that computational technologies have changed the processing and interpretation of large-scale textual data. Svensson (2010, 2013) describes Digital Humanities not simply as a set of tools but as an interdisciplinary research paradigm with significant epistemological implications. Dalbello (2011) likewise shows that digital practices transform both knowledge production and the objects of humanities research. At the same time, Fiormonte (2012) warns that digital methodologies must account for cultural and linguistic diversity rather than privilege dominant languages and traditions. This principle is especially important for the digital study of Kazakh literature. Sula (2013) further emphasizes the role of digital projects in organizing, preserving, and disseminating cultural information through connections with libraries, archives, and heritage institutions.

Geospatial databases strengthen this framework by enabling spatial units to be systematically structured, connected, analyzed, and visualized. Voisard and David (2002) demonstrate the importance of spatial data modeling for representing relationships among geographical entities, while Bereta and Koubarakis (2016) show how semantic technologies can improve access to and integration of geospatial information. Breunig et al. (2020) identify geospatial data management as a central link among data collection, modeling, visualization, and analysis and stress its contribution to reproducibility and long-term data availability. Recent research also points to the interpretive and educational potential of interactive mapping. Mitchell (2025) describes literary space as increasingly shaped by interaction between physical and digital environments, whereas Opach et al. (2025) demonstrate that digital literary maps offer new ways to explore place names and literary geographies.

From a linguistic perspective, toponyms are not limited to geographical identification; they preserve historical memory, cultural experience, and collective perceptions of space. In literary discourse, they may represent social environments, historical periods, cultural identities, and authorial positions. Their classification and spatial visualization therefore provide insight into both the linguistic structure of a text and the cultural meanings encoded within it.

This issue is especially significant in Kazakh literature, where landscape, territory, history, and national identity are closely interconnected. Mukhtar Magauin's prose is particularly suitable for

spatial analysis because geographical, historical, and mythological place names function as key elements of his literary world. The Golden Horde, Dashti-Qipchaq, Karakorum, Qazygurt, Egypt, and the Nile connect Kazakh historical memory with wider civilizational narratives, while Almaty, Semey, Naryn, and Bulghyrtau represent local and regional spatial layers. Thus, space in Magauin's prose is not simply a narrative background but a mechanism through which historical consciousness, national identity, and cultural memory are articulated.

Despite extensive scholarship on literary space, literary geography, mapping, Digital Humanities, and geospatial data management, Mukhtar Magauin's toponymic system has not been systematically studied through a combination of literary and geospatial methods. The present study addresses this gap by identifying spatial units in selected prose texts, classifying them according to type, frequency, spatial layer, and geographical coordinates, and integrating the results into a geospatial database and an interactive digital map. Bakhtin's chronotope and Lotman's semiotics guide the interpretation of narrative and symbolic spatial functions; literary geography and geocriticism inform the distinction between textual and geographical space; and Digital Humanities and geospatial data modeling provide the procedures for structuring, counting, and visualizing the identified units. The aim is to reveal the spatial organization of Magauin's literary world and demonstrate the value of digital visualization for the study of Kazakh prose. The novelty lies in applying a single, reproducible literary-geospatial model to Magauin's works and integrating literary studies, linguistics, geography, and Digital Humanities.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Materials

The bounded corpus comprises the complete texts of six prose works by Mukhtar Magauin: The Death of a Greyhound (Tazyńyń ólimi), The Dead and the Living (Óli men tiri), Right and Left (Oń men sol), The Marrow of the Vulture (Qújdyń qu jyligi), Children of One Ancestor (Bir atanyń balalary), and The Fifth Livestock (Besinshi túlik). These works were selected purposively because they contain sustained and varied spatial reference across local, national, historical, and civilizational scales. The six works, rather than isolated excerpts, formed the unit of corpus selection; every occurrence of an eligible spatial unit in these texts was examined. The corpus is therefore analytically focused rather than representative of Magauin's entire prose oeuvre, a boundary considered in the limitations below.

2.2. Data Collection and Identification of Spatial Units

The first stage involved close reading of all six texts and manual identification of spatial units. The coding unit was an explicit proper place name or a conventional historical-geographical designation. Generic landscape terms were included only when the narrative treated them as a discrete named or recurrent locus; otherwise, they were excluded. Eligible units comprised oikonyms (settlements), hydronyms (water bodies), oronyms (relief features), choronyms (territories or regions), historical place names, and local spatial references. Each occurrence was recorded and counted to establish frequency within the bounded corpus.

Each unit received one primary typological category based on the kind of referent and one spatial layer based on its dominant narrative function. Context guided potentially ambiguous cases. For example, the Golden Horde was coded as a historical place name and assigned to the historical-civilizational layer because it denotes a past political-territorial formation, whereas Qazygurt was coded primarily as an oronym but assigned to a mythological layer when the passage activated its sacred or legendary associations. Assigning one primary category prevented double counting, while the layer field retained the unit's literary function. The resulting dataset recorded the toponym, every observed occurrence, total frequency, primary type, spatial layer, coordinates where applicable, and mapping status.

2.3. Geospatial Database Construction

At the second stage, a geospatial database was created. Each identified spatial unit was assigned a unique identifier and entered into a database structure consisting of the following fields:

- ID;
- Toponym;
- Frequency;
- Type of spatial unit;
- Latitude;
- Longitude;
- Spatial layer;
- Mapping status.

Geographical coordinates were assigned through publicly available geographic reference sources and geocoding procedures. Contemporary settlements were represented by standard point coordinates; rivers and mountains by a representative point associated with the named feature; and extensive historical territories by an approximate representative centroid used only for visualization. Such historical coordinates were flagged as approximate rather than treated as exact boundaries. Symbolic or mythological references were mapped only when a recognized physical referent could be identified; otherwise, they remained in the database but were excluded from point-based visualization. The resulting database contained 60 distinct spatial units extracted from the six works.

For typological analysis, each unit was assigned to one of the mutually exclusive primary categories defined above. Spatial layers were analytical rather than purely physical: natural space covered landscape and environmental features; local, rural, regional, and urban space described narrative scale and settlement context; historical and historical-civilizational space captured references whose primary function was to activate the past or a broader civilization; and mythological space identified locations whose narrative force depended on sacred or legendary meaning. These operational criteria connected the theoretical distinction between geographical location and culturally produced literary space to the subsequent analysis.

2.4. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative stage focused on frequency analysis and typological classification. Frequency counts were calculated for all identified spatial units in order to determine the most prominent spatial markers in the corpus. Descriptive statistics were used to identify dominant spatial categories and patterns of distribution.

The analysis was conducted in the R statistical environment. The **readxl** package was used to import the geospatial database, while **dplyr** was applied for data manipulation, sorting, and frequency calculations. Typological distributions were visualized using the **ggplot2** package. Frequency rankings and category distributions were subsequently used to interpret the spatial organization of Mukhtar Magauin's literary world.

2.5. Digital Visualization

The final stage involved the development of a digital visualization prototype in R with the Leaflet package. Each mappable unit was represented by an interactive marker linked to its standardized name, frequency, primary type, spatial layer, and coordinate status. Units without defensible point coordinates were retained in the database but not forced onto the map. The visualization was used to examine geographic distribution and relationships among local, regional, historical, and civilizational spaces. The map is currently a research prototype without a permanent public URL; the geospatial dataset and Leaflet files are available from the author upon reasonable request and may be supplied as supplementary material.

The interactive map served as a tool for examining the geographical distribution of spatial units and identifying relationships among local, regional, historical, and civilizational spaces represented in the texts. In addition, typological distributions were visualized through statistical charts generated with **ggplot2**, providing a complementary representation of spatial structures.

2.6. Research Approach

Methodologically, the study combines qualitative literary analysis with quantitative and geospatial methods. The qualitative component focuses on the interpretation of toponyms and their linguistic and literary functions within the texts. The quantitative component examines frequency patterns and typological distributions. The geospatial component visualizes spatial representations through mapping techniques. The integration of these approaches enables a comprehensive investigation of literary space and demonstrates the potential of digital humanities methods for the study of Kazakh prose.

3. Results

3.1. Frequency Structure of Toponyms

Frequency analysis was used to identify the spatial references that organize the corpus most strongly. Repetition was interpreted as an indicator of narrative prominence, although frequency alone was not treated as proof of symbolic importance.

The analysis resulted in the identification of 60 spatial units. Among them, Almaty (27 occurrences), Naryn (18), Egypt (15), the Golden Horde (13), Semey (6), and the Nile (6) demonstrated the highest frequency values (Table 1). The repeated occurrence of these toponyms suggests that they function as major spatial reference points within the author's literary universe.

Table 1 – Most Frequent Toponyms in Mukhtar Magauin's Prose

No.	Toponym	Frequency
1	Almaty	27
2	Naryn	18
3	Egypt	15
4	Golden Horde	13
5	Semey	6
6	Nile	6
7	Uzyn-Agash	5
8	Bulghyrtau	5
9	Dashti-Qipchaq	4
10	Qazygurt	3

The distribution presented in Table 1 reveals the coexistence of several spatial dimensions within Magauin's prose. The most frequent toponyms include contemporary geographical locations, regional place names, and historical-civilizational references. This diversity indicates that literary space in the selected corpus is not limited to a single geographical scale but incorporates local, national, historical, and transregional spatial layers.

Almaty, which occupies the highest position in the frequency ranking, represents one of the principal spatial nodes in the corpus. As a major urban center of Kazakhstan, its frequent occurrence reflects the importance of contemporary national space within the author's literary geography. Likewise, Semey functions as another significant geographical reference associated with Kazakhstan's cultural and historical landscape.

Naryn, the second most frequent toponym, represents regional space and contributes to the localization of narratives within specific geographical settings. Its recurrence highlights the importance of regional environments in the construction of literary space and demonstrates the author's attention to geographically grounded representations of place.

The presence of Egypt and the Nile among the most frequent spatial units is particularly noteworthy. Unlike local and national place names, these references belong to a broader historical and civilizational sphere. Their frequency suggests that Magauin's literary space extends beyond the boundaries of Kazakhstan and incorporates wider cultural and historical horizons. Similarly, the

frequent occurrence of the Golden Horde and Dashti-Qipchaq points to the significance of historical memory in the author's spatial imagination.

The frequency analysis also indicates that historical and civilizational place names occupy a prominent position within the corpus. This finding suggests that space in Magauin's prose functions not only as a geographical framework but also as a medium through which historical knowledge and cultural memory are represented. The coexistence of contemporary geographical locations and historical spatial references contributes to the multidimensional structure of literary space.

Another important observation concerns the distribution of local place names such as Uzyn-Agash, Bulghyrtau, and Qazygurt. Although these toponyms occur less frequently than the dominant spatial markers, they contribute significantly to the localization of narrative events and enrich the spatial texture of the texts. Their presence demonstrates the interaction between local landscapes and broader historical and cultural spaces.

Taken together, the frequency pattern identifies a small group of recurrent spatial nodes while also showing movement among local, national, historical, and civilizational scales. These counts provide the quantitative basis for the typological and interpretive analyses that follow.

3.2.. Typological Structure of Toponyms

The 60 spatial units were next classified by their primary referent using the operational criteria described in the Methodology. The resulting distribution across choronyms, oikonyms, hydronyms, oronyms, local spatial units, and historical place names is presented in Figure 1.

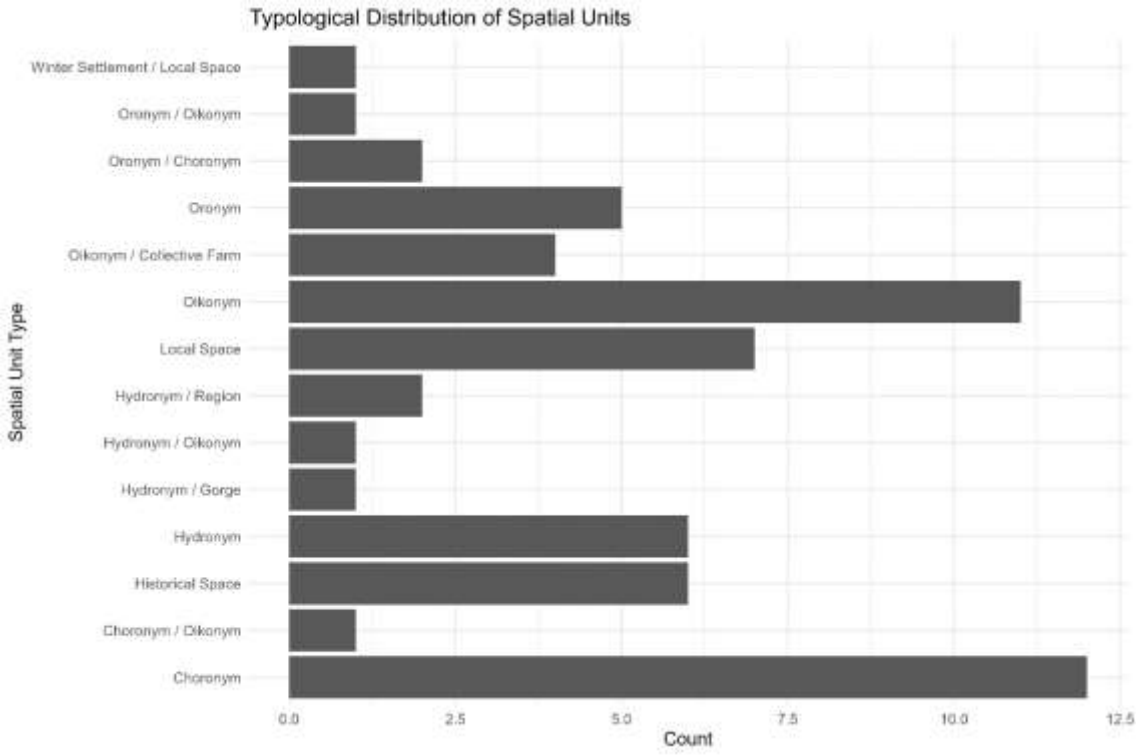


Figure 1 – Typological Distribution of Spatial Units in Mukhtar Magauin's Prose

The results demonstrate that choronyms constitute the largest category within the geospatial database, with 12 identified units. Choronyms refer to large geographical regions, territories, or political entities. Examples found in the corpus include Egypt, Europe, Russia, China, and Dashti-Qipchaq. The predominance of choronyms suggests that Magauin frequently constructs literary space through extensive historical and geographical regions rather than through isolated locations. This tendency reflects the broad spatial scope of his literary imagination and his interest in connecting local experiences with larger historical and civilizational contexts.

The second largest category consists of oikonyms, comprising 11 units. Oikonyms refer to

settlements, cities, towns, and villages. Among the most frequent examples are Almaty, Semey, Naryn, and Uzyn-Agash. The substantial presence of oikonyms indicates the importance of inhabited places in the construction of narrative space. These locations provide a concrete geographical framework for events and contribute to the realistic representation of social and cultural environments.

Local spatial units represent another significant category within the corpus. Seven units were classified as local spatial references. Unlike officially recognized geographical entities, these units describe specific localized environments and contribute to the detailed spatial organization of the narrative. Their presence reflects the author's attention to the immediate surroundings in which characters act and interact.

Hydronyms account for six spatial units identified in the corpus. Examples include the Nile, Ili, Sharyn, and Markakol. Hydronyms play an important role in shaping natural landscapes and frequently function as markers of environmental identity. In many cases, rivers and water bodies contribute to the historical and cultural significance of a particular region. Their inclusion in the literary space reinforces the connection between geography and cultural memory.

Historical place names also constitute an important category, comprising six units. This group includes references such as the Golden Horde and Dashti-Qipchaq. The presence of historical toponyms demonstrates the author's sustained engagement with the historical dimension of space. These spatial references extend the narrative beyond immediate geographical settings and connect individual stories with broader historical processes.

Oronyms represent five units within the database. Examples include Altai, Qazygurt, Ulytau, and Khan Tengri. Mountains and elevated landforms occupy a special position in Kazakh cultural geography and frequently carry symbolic significance. Their presence within the corpus contributes to the representation of both natural and cultural landscapes.

The typological distribution demonstrates that literary space in Mukhtar Magauin’s prose is not limited to a single category of spatial reference. Instead, it is constructed through the interaction of different spatial types, each contributing a distinct dimension to the overall spatial structure. Choronyms provide historical and civilizational breadth, oikonyms establish concrete geographical settings, hydronyms and oronyms shape natural landscapes, while historical and local spatial units connect narrative events to cultural memory and lived experience.

An important finding of the analysis is that large-scale spatial categories dominate the corpus. The predominance of choronyms and oikonyms indicates that Magauin’s literary space is organized simultaneously at regional, national, and transnational levels. This characteristic distinguishes his spatial representation from narratives focused exclusively on local settings and highlights the multidimensional nature of his literary geography.

The typological profile therefore establishes the heterogeneous material basis of Magauin’s literary space; the following section examines how those spatial references function within narrative discourse.

3.3. Linguistic and Literary Functions of Toponyms

Toponyms in the corpus perform functions beyond geographical localization. Close reading shows that they organize narrative space while activating historical consciousness, cultural memory, and national identity.

One of the primary functions of toponyms in the corpus is localization. Place names establish the geographical framework within which narrative events unfold and provide readers with a concrete spatial orientation. Toponyms such as Almaty, Semey, Naryn, Uzyn-Agash, and Bulghyrtau locate characters and events within recognizable geographical settings. However, even when performing a locational role, these place names often carry additional cultural and historical meanings. Consequently, localization in Magauin’s prose is rarely limited to geographical reference alone; it frequently serves as an entry point into broader cultural and historical contexts.

The analysis demonstrates that historical memory constitutes another major function of

toponyms in the corpus. Historical place names such as the Golden Horde, Dashti-Qipchaq, Karakorum, Egypt, and the Nile occur repeatedly throughout the texts. These spatial references are significant not because of their geographical position alone but because they evoke collective historical experience. In many cases, a single toponym activates an entire historical narrative. For example, references to the Golden Horde and Dashti-Qipchaq immediately connect the narrative with the political and cultural history of the Turkic and Kazakh peoples. Through such references, historical space becomes integrated into the literary present, creating continuity between past and present.

This tendency is particularly evident in *The Marrow of the Vulture* (*Qújdyń qu jyligi*), where historical and civilizational place names occupy a central position within the narrative structure. References to Egypt, the Nile, Karakorum, and Dashti-Qipchaq do not simply identify geographical locations; they function as carriers of historical knowledge and cultural memory. These toponyms expand the spatial horizon of the text beyond local geography and situate the narrative within a broader civilizational framework. As a result, literary space becomes a medium through which historical consciousness is preserved and transmitted.

The findings further indicate that toponyms contribute to the representation of cultural identity. In Magauin's prose, spatial references frequently function as markers of national culture and collective belonging. Place names such as Altai, Ulytau, and Qazygurt possess meanings that extend beyond their geographical significance. These locations occupy an important position in Kazakh historical and cultural memory and are often associated with foundational narratives, cultural traditions, and symbolic values. Their appearance within literary texts reinforces the connection between space and national identity.

The symbolic function of toponyms is particularly visible in the use of culturally significant locations. Qazygurt, for instance, is not represented merely as a mountain. Within Kazakh cultural tradition, it is associated with sacred narratives and collective memory. Consequently, the toponym acquires symbolic value that exceeds its geographical meaning. Similar processes can be observed in references to Altai and Ulytau, which frequently function as symbols of historical continuity, cultural origins, and national heritage.

The analysis also demonstrates that spatial references contribute to the construction of emotional and psychological landscapes. In *The Death of a Greyhound* (*Tazyńyń ólimi*), natural spatial units such as valleys, springs, winter settlements, and local place names are closely connected with the emotional experiences of characters. The landscape is not presented as a neutral background but as an active participant in the narrative. Spatial references contribute to the atmosphere of the text and influence readers' perceptions of events and characters. In this context, literary space functions as an emotional environment rather than a purely geographical setting.

Natural space occupies a particularly important role in the representation of traditional Kazakh spatial consciousness. References to rivers, mountains, valleys, pastures, and winter camps frequently appear throughout the corpus. These spatial units reflect the historical relationship between people and landscape within nomadic culture. Consequently, they function as linguistic representations of cultural experience and traditional ecological knowledge. Through these references, literary space becomes inseparable from cultural memory and collective identity.

The findings additionally reveal that toponyms serve a worldview-forming function. Spatial references contribute to the construction of a specific perception of history, culture, and identity. This function is especially evident in texts where local, national, and civilizational spaces coexist. The frequent juxtaposition of Almaty and Naryn with Egypt, the Nile, and the Golden Horde illustrates how Magauin's literary geography connects immediate experience with broader historical narratives. Through this interaction of spatial layers, readers are encouraged to perceive local history within a larger cultural and civilizational framework.

Another important observation concerns the interaction between real and imagined spatial meanings. While most place names in the corpus refer to actual geographical locations, their literary function often transcends geographical reality. Literary space emerges through the transformation of

real places into symbolic, historical, and cultural structures. This process corresponds to contemporary theories of literary geography, which emphasize that literary spaces are not direct reflections of geographical reality but culturally mediated representations shaped by narrative and interpretation.

The results also suggest that toponyms play a significant role in connecting different spatial scales. Local place names coexist with regional, national, historical, and transnational spaces. This interaction creates a multilayered spatial structure in which different geographical and cultural dimensions remain interconnected. Such a structure is particularly evident in the coexistence of Almaty, Naryn, Semey, Egypt, the Nile, and the Golden Horde within the same literary corpus. These spatial references collectively form a literary geography that moves continuously between local experience and broader historical imagination.

In sum, the identified toponyms localize events, preserve historical memory, mark cultural identity, shape emotional landscapes, and articulate a national worldview. Their function depends on narrative context, which explains why a physical referent such as Qazygurt may also operate symbolically or mythologically.

3.4. Spatial Layers and Digital Visualization

The final analytical stage examined spatial layers and visualized the mappable units. The classification shows that natural, historical, historical-civilizational, local, regional, urban, and mythological spaces coexist and interact within the corpus.

The quantitative analysis of spatial layers showed that natural space and historical space constitute the most prominent categories within the corpus. Natural space accounts for the largest number of spatial units, followed closely by historical space. Additional layers include rural space, urban space, historical-geographical space, historical-civilizational space, mythological space, and transboundary space. The distribution of these categories suggests that the author’s spatial imagination is rooted simultaneously in landscape, history, and culture.

Table 2 – Distribution of Spatial Layers in Mukhtar Magauin’s Prose

Spatial Layer	Number of Units
Natural Space	11
Historical Space	10
Rural Space	6
Urban Space	4
Historical-Geographical Space	3
Historical-Civilizational Space	3
Other Spatial Layers	23

The predominance of natural space reflects the important role of landscape in Magauin’s literary universe. References to rivers, mountains, valleys, springs, pastures, and winter settlements appear throughout the corpus and contribute significantly to the construction of literary space. These spatial elements are closely connected to traditional Kazakh culture and frequently function as markers of collective memory and cultural identity. Rather than serving as passive backgrounds, natural landscapes actively participate in the representation of characters, emotions, and cultural values.

Historical space represents the second most significant layer identified in the corpus. Historical spatial references such as the Golden Horde, Dashti-Qipchaq, and Karakorum connect literary narratives with broader historical processes and cultural traditions. These spatial units extend the temporal and geographical scope of the texts, allowing historical memory to become an integral component of literary space. The frequent occurrence of historical place names demonstrates the importance of history in the author's spatial imagination and highlights the close relationship between geography and historical consciousness.

Urban and rural spaces also contribute to the overall spatial structure of the corpus. Urban

locations such as Almaty and Semey represent contemporary social and cultural environments, while rural spaces reflect traditional forms of life and community organization. The interaction between urban and rural spatial layers illustrates the coexistence of modern and traditional perspectives within Magauin's literary world.

A particularly noteworthy finding is the presence of historical-civilizational and mythological spaces. References to Egypt, the Nile, and other culturally significant locations expand literary space beyond national borders and connect local narratives with broader civilizational frameworks. Similarly, mythological locations contribute symbolic and cultural meanings that enrich the spatial structure of the texts. These layers demonstrate that literary space in Magauin's prose operates simultaneously at geographical, historical, cultural, and symbolic levels.

To investigate geographic distribution, the database was integrated into an interactive Leaflet map. Markers display the location, frequency, primary type, spatial layer, and coordinate status of each mappable unit. Figure 2 presents the geospatial distribution; it is a static representation of the interactive prototype.

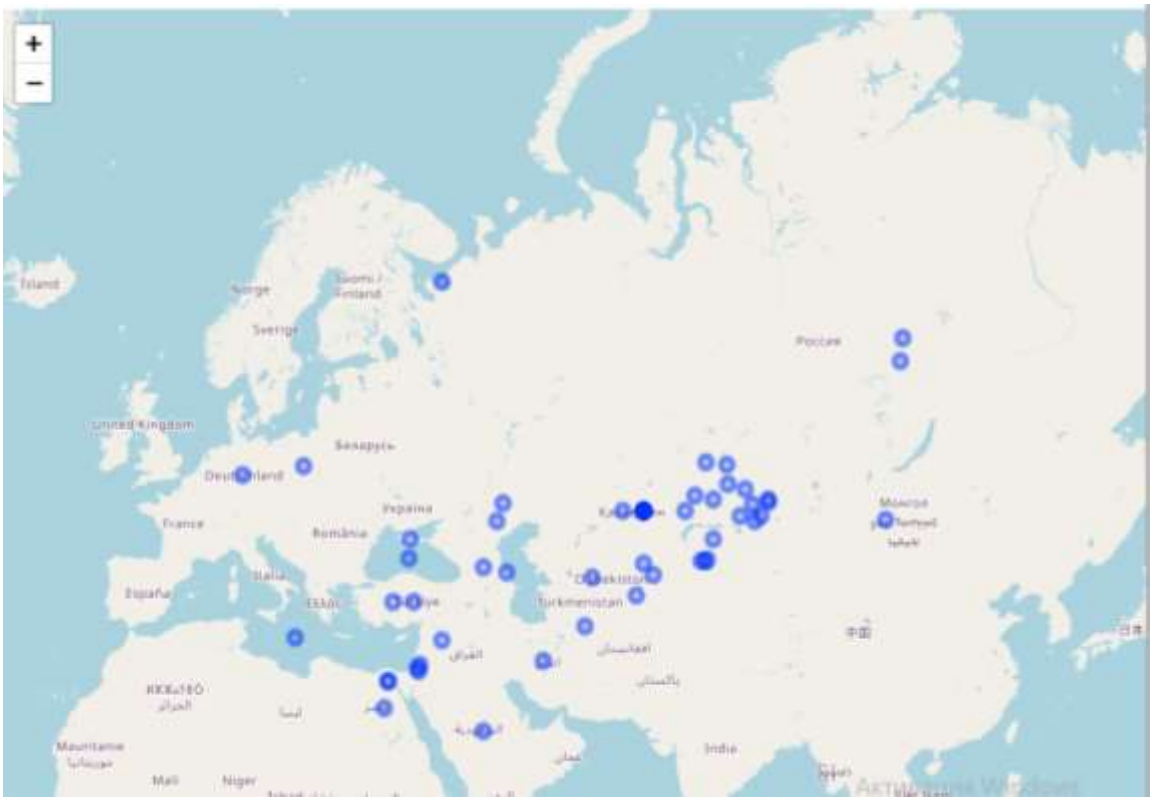


Figure 2 – Geospatial Distribution of Toponyms in Mukhtar Magauin's Prose

The digital map revealed several important patterns. First, the visualization confirmed that literary space in Magauin's prose extends well beyond the territory of Kazakhstan. Spatial units are distributed across Central Asia, Russia, Europe, and the Middle East. This geographical distribution reflects the broad historical and cultural horizons represented in the corpus and demonstrates the interaction between local and transregional spaces.

Second, the map highlighted the existence of several spatial clusters. The largest cluster is concentrated within Kazakhstan and includes locations such as Almaty, Semey, Naryn, Uzyn-Agash, and Bulghyrtau. A second cluster consists of historical and civilizational spaces associated with regions beyond Kazakhstan, including Egypt, the Nile, and territories connected with the Golden Horde and Dashti-Qipchaq. The coexistence of these clusters illustrates the multidimensional organization of literary space and supports the interpretation of Magauin's prose as a literary system that combines local experience with historical imagination.

The visualization also demonstrated the practical value of geospatial methods for literary studies.

By transforming textual references into spatially organized data, the digital map made it possible to identify relationships that are not immediately visible through conventional textual analysis. Spatial patterns, regional concentrations, and transnational connections became more apparent when represented visually. Consequently, the map serves not only as an illustrative tool but also as an analytical instrument that contributes to a deeper understanding of literary space.

The mapping results complement close reading by making regional concentrations and transregional connections visible. They should nevertheless be interpreted in conjunction with the texts and with the coordinate qualifications described in the Methodology.

4. Discussion

The combined analyses show that Magauin's literary space is organized through interacting geographical, historical, cultural, and symbolic dimensions. The value of the mixed approach lies in relating measurable patterns to textual functions rather than treating the map or frequency table as self-sufficient evidence.

One of the most significant findings concerns the dominance of historically and culturally marked toponyms. The frequency analysis showed that Almaty, Naryn, Egypt, the Golden Horde, Semey, and the Nile constitute the principal spatial nodes of the corpus. While Almaty and Semey represent contemporary and national space, Egypt, the Nile, and the Golden Horde belong to broader historical and civilizational spatial layers. This distribution suggests that literary space in Magauin's prose extends beyond immediate geographical surroundings and incorporates large-scale historical and cultural horizons. Such findings support Conkan and Gârdan's (2020) argument that literary space should be understood as a dynamic intersection of national, transnational, and cultural dimensions rather than as a fixed geographical framework.

The predominance of choronyms and oikonyms within the corpus further reinforces this interpretation. The results indicate that Magauin constructs literary space not only through specific locations but also through broader territorial and historical entities. This observation is consistent with Boschetti's (2012) conception of literary space as a field extending beyond local and national boundaries. In Magauin's works, spatial references frequently connect Kazakhstan to larger historical formations such as the Golden Horde and Dashti-Qipchaq, thereby situating national history within wider civilizational narratives.

The analysis also revealed the importance of natural space within the corpus. Natural spatial units constitute the largest spatial layer identified in the database. References to valleys, springs, rivers, mountains, winter settlements, and summer pastures occur throughout the texts and play a role that extends beyond simple environmental description. In *The Death of a Greyhound*, for example, spatial references such as Shilikti Sai, springs, and winter camps create an emotionally charged landscape that is inseparable from the experiences of the characters. These spatial elements contribute to the psychological atmosphere of the narrative and function as cultural markers of traditional Kazakh life. This finding supports Hones's (2011) view that literary space actively participates in narrative meaning-making rather than merely serving as a background for action.

Another important result concerns the role of historical toponyms in preserving and transmitting cultural memory. Place names such as the Golden Horde, Dashti-Qipchaq, Karakorum, Egypt, and the Nile are used not only to identify geographical locations but also to evoke historical knowledge and collective memory. In this respect, historical toponyms operate as cultural codes that connect individual narratives with broader historical experiences. The findings suggest that spatial representation in Magauin's prose functions as a mechanism through which national history is integrated into literary discourse.

The study further demonstrates that toponyms in Magauin's works perform multiple linguistic and literary functions. Beyond localization, they serve historical, symbolic, and ideological purposes. This multifunctionality challenges traditional approaches that treat toponyms primarily as geographical references. In Magauin's prose, place names become semantic units that contribute to the construction of identity, memory, and worldview. The symbolic significance of locations such as

Qazygurt, Altai, and Ulytau illustrates how spatial references may operate simultaneously on geographical, cultural, and mythological levels.

The geospatial database created in this study proved effective in organizing and analyzing literary spatial data. The systematic classification of spatial units according to frequency, type, spatial layer, and coordinates made it possible to identify patterns that are difficult to detect through conventional close reading alone. This result corresponds with the arguments of Voisard and David (2002), who emphasize the importance of structured spatial data models for understanding relationships among spatial entities. Similarly, the database developed in this research facilitated a more comprehensive examination of literary space.

The interactive digital map provided additional insights into the spatial organization of the corpus. The visualization revealed that Magauin's literary space extends far beyond the territory of Kazakhstan and includes regions associated with Central Asia, Russia, Europe, and the Middle East. This finding confirms Perenič's (2014) assertion that literary mapping can reveal relationships between real and imagined spaces that are not always apparent through textual analysis alone. The map demonstrated that local, historical, and civilizational spaces coexist within a single literary system and form interconnected layers of meaning.

The educational and analytical potential of literary mapping identified by Opach et al. (2025) is also evident here. Linking textual references to coordinates supports exploration of spatial patterns, while the accompanying type, layer, and coordinate-status fields prevent the visual interface from flattening historically or symbolically complex places into apparently equivalent points.

From a Digital Humanities perspective, these findings support Berry's (2012) and Svensson's (2010) view that computational methods can expand humanities inquiry. In this study, the database and map complement rather than replace close reading: quantitative and visual patterns direct attention back to the narrative contexts in which spatial meanings are produced.

Recent discussions of digital space further strengthen the relevance of this approach. Mitchell (2025) argues that contemporary understandings of space increasingly involve hybrid interactions between physical and digital environments. The interactive map created in this study can be interpreted as an example of such hybrid spatiality. Literary space, originally represented through narrative discourse, is transformed into a digital and visual form that allows new modes of interaction and interpretation. Consequently, the spatial structures embedded in literary texts become accessible through both textual and digital representations.

Finally, the findings support Jin and Ying's (2025) argument that literary space should be understood as a category closely connected to identity, existence, and cultural experience. In Magauin's prose, space is not merely a geographical framework but a means of articulating historical consciousness and national self-understanding. Through the interaction of local landscapes, historical territories, and civilizational spaces, the author constructs a literary world in which geography, memory, and culture are inseparable (Soja, 1996).

This study has several limitations. The purposively selected corpus contains six spatially rich works and therefore cannot represent the full range of Magauin's prose. Manual identification and functional classification involve interpretive judgment, even though the operational criteria were applied consistently. In addition, point-based mapping simplifies rivers, mountains, historical territories, and symbolic locations; approximate coordinates indicate visual reference points rather than historically exact boundaries. The present Leaflet map is a research prototype without a permanent public URL. Future research should expand the corpus, conduct independent coding checks, model extensive features as lines or polygons where evidence permits, and publish a versioned dataset and map in a stable repository.

5. Conclusion

This study identified and systematized 60 distinct spatial units in a bounded corpus of six prose works by Mukhtar Magauin. Combining close reading, toponymic classification, frequency analysis, a geospatial database, and digital mapping showed that Almaty, Naryn, Egypt, the Golden Horde,

Semey, and the Nile form the principal recurrent nodes, while choronyms and oikonyms constitute the largest typological categories.

The findings indicate that Magauin's literary geography moves among local, national, historical, and civilizational scales. Toponyms do more than locate events: depending on context, they preserve historical memory, mark cultural belonging, shape emotional landscapes, and acquire symbolic or mythological force. Natural and historical layers are especially prominent, linking landscape to cultural identity and the literary present to broader histories.

The geospatial model made regional clusters and transregional connections more visible, but its interpretive value depends on the methodological distinction between exact contemporary locations, approximate historical reference points, and unmappable symbolic spaces. Accordingly, the database and prototype map should be understood as complements to close reading rather than substitutes for it.

Within these limits, the study provides a transferable framework for literary-spatial research in Kazakh literature. Expanding the corpus, validating classifications through multiple coders, and publishing a stable version of the dataset and interactive map would strengthen future comparative work on Kazakh authors and literary geography more broadly.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Author Contributions

Kamil Adishirinov: Conceptualization, methodology, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, writing the original draft, reviewing, and editing the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request.

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Ontologıcal vıew to Bekır Çobanzade's poem "Tuvğan Til"

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Abstract

This study presents an ontological analysis of Bekir Çobanzade's poem "Tuvğan Til" ("Mother Tongue"), focusing on the relationship between its poetic structure, semantic organization, and representation of national identity. Drawing on the theory of art ontology developed by Roman Ingarden and Nicolai Hartmann and adapted to literary analysis by İsmail Tunalı, the poem is examined through four interconnected layers: the sound layer, the semantic layer, the object and character layers, and the destiny layer. The analysis considers the poem's syllabic meter, rhyme, repetition, sound patterns, figurative language, and central semantic units. The findings show that the rhythmic and phonetic organization of the poem reinforces its emotional intensity, whereas such recurring concepts as mother tongue, homeland, foreign land, heart, and enemy construct a semantic opposition between belonging and alienation. At the object and character levels, the mother tongue is represented not merely as a means of communication but as a source of emotional consolation, cultural continuity, and national self-recognition. At the destiny level, the poet's personal attachment to language develops into a broader message concerning the preservation of collective identity under conditions of displacement and political pressure. The study concludes that the ontological approach reveals the structural unity between the poem's formal features and its cultural meaning. It also demonstrates how Çobanzade transforms the mother tongue into a poetic symbol of national memory, spiritual resistance, and communal continuity.

Keywords: art ontology, ontological analysis, Bekir Çobanzade, "Tuvğan Til," Crimean Tatar poetry.

Бекір Чобанзаденің «Туған тіл» өлеңіне онтологиялық көзқарас

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Аннотация

Бұл зерттеуде Бекир Чобанзаденің «Tuvğan Til» («Ана тілі») өлеңіне онтологиялық талдау

жасалып, шығарманың поэтикалық құрылымы, семантикалық ұйымдасуы және ұлттық бірегейліктің бейнеленуі арасындағы байланыс қарастырылады. Роман Ингарден мен Николай Гартман қалыптастырған және Исмаил Туналы әдеби талдауға бейімдеген өнер онтологиясы теориясына сүйене отырып, өлең өзара байланысты төрт деңгей бойынша зерттелді: дыбыстық қабат, семантикалық қабат, нысандық және характерлік қабаттар, сондай-ақ тағдыр қабаты. Талдау барысында өлеңнің буындық өлшемі, ұйқасы, қайталаулары, дыбыстық өрнектері, бейнелі тілі және негізгі семантикалық бірліктері қарастырылды. Зерттеу нәтижелері өлеңнің ырғақтық және фонетикалық ұйымдасуы оның эмоциялық әсерін күшейтетінін көрсетті. Ал ана тілі, отан, жат жер, жүрек және жау тәрізді қайталанатын ұғымдар тиесілілік пен жатсыну арасындағы семантикалық қарама-қарсылықты қалыптастырады. Нысандық және характерлік қабаттарда ана тілі қарым-қатынас құралы ретінде ғана емес, эмоциялық медет, мәдени сабақтастық және ұлттық өзін-өзі тану негізі ретінде бейнеленеді. Тағдыр қабатында ақынның тілге деген жеке сүйіспеншілігі қоныс аудару мен саяси қысым жағдайында ұжымдық бірегейлікті сақтау туралы кең ауқымды идеяға ұласады. Зерттеу онтологиялық тәсілдің өлеңнің формалық ерекшеліктері мен мәдени мағынасы арасындағы құрылымдық тұтастықты ашуға мүмкіндік беретінін көрсетті. Сонымен қатар Чобанзаденің ана тілін ұлттық жадтың, рухани қарсылықтың және қоғамдық сабақтастықтың поэтикалық символына айналдырғаны анықталды. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы – өлеңнің дыбыстық құрылымы, бейнелер жүйесі мен ұлттық идеясы алғаш рет өзара сабақтас онтологиялық қабаттар ретінде тұтас талдануында. Нәтижелер ана тілінің жеке сезімді ұжымдық жадымен байланыстыратын негізгі көркемдік өзек екенін дәлелдейді.

Кілт сөздер: өнер онтологиясы, онтологиялық талдау, Бекир Чобанзаде, «Tuvğan Til», Қырым татар поэзиясы.

Онтологический взгляд на стихотворение Бекира Чобанзаде «Тувган Тиль»

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Аннотация

В настоящем исследовании представлен онтологический анализ стихотворения Бекира Чобанзаде «Tuvğan Til» («Родной язык»), сосредоточенный на взаимосвязи его поэтической структуры, семантической организации и репрезентации национальной идентичности. На основе теории онтологии искусства, разработанной Романом Ингарденом и Николаем Гартманом и адаптированной Исмаилом Туналы к литературоведческому анализу, стихотворение рассматривается через четыре взаимосвязанных уровня: звуковой, семантический, предметный и характерологический, а также уровень судьбы. В ходе анализа исследуются силлабический размер, рифма, повторы, звуковая организация, образный язык и основные семантические единицы произведения. Результаты показывают, что ритмическая и фонетическая организация стихотворения усиливает его эмоциональную выразительность, тогда как повторяющиеся понятия родной язык, родина, чужбина, сердце и враг формируют семантическую оппозицию между принадлежностью и отчуждением. На предметном и характерологическом уровнях родной язык представлен не только как средство

коммуникации, но и как источник эмоциональной поддержки, культурной преемственности и национального самосознания. На уровне судьбы личная привязанность поэта к языку перерастает в более широкую идею сохранения коллективной идентичности в условиях перемещения и политического давления. Исследование позволяет заключить, что онтологический подход раскрывает структурное единство между формальными особенностями стихотворения и его культурным содержанием. Кроме того, анализ демонстрирует, как Чобанзаде превращает родной язык в поэтический символ национальной памяти, духовного сопротивления и общественной преемственности. Научная новизна исследования заключается в целостном рассмотрении звуковой структуры, системы образов и национальной идеи стихотворения как взаимосвязанных онтологических уровней. Полученные результаты подтверждают, что родной язык выступает центральным художественным образом, соединяющим личное переживание с коллективной памятью.

Ключевые слова: онтология искусства, онтологический анализ, Бекир Чобанзаде, «Tuvğan Til», крымскотатарская поэзия.

1. Introduction

Language is not merely a means of communication; it is also a repository of collective memory, cultural experience, and national identity. This function becomes particularly significant for communities that have experienced political repression, displacement, linguistic restriction, or cultural assimilation. In such contexts, literary representations of the mother tongue frequently extend beyond personal attachment to language and express broader concerns about belonging, cultural continuity, and collective survival. Crimean Tatar literature provides an important context for examining these relationships because language, homeland, exile, and national memory constitute some of its central themes.

Bekir Çobanzade (1893–1937), a prominent Crimean Tatar poet, linguist, educator, and Turkologist, placed language and national consciousness at the centre of both his scholarly and literary works. His poem “Tuvğan Til” (“Mother Tongue”), written in Budapest in 1918, reflects the emotional and intellectual experience of a speaker living away from his homeland. Throughout the poem, the mother tongue is associated with consolation, homeland, cultural belonging, spiritual strength, and resistance to alienation. The poem therefore offers valuable material for exploring how formal poetic elements and semantic images jointly construct the idea of national identity.

Previous studies have addressed Çobanzade’s biography, linguistic scholarship, poetry, educational activities, and contribution to Turkic studies (Altın, 2018; Sakallı, 2015; Türkoğlu, 2020). Other researchers have demonstrated the applicability of ontological analysis to poetry by examining the relationship between a literary work’s formal structure and its different levels of meaning (Azap, 2013; Hazer, 2014; Yılmaz, 2017). Nevertheless, “Tuvğan Til” has not been sufficiently examined as an integrated poetic structure in which sound, imagery, cultural symbols, the poet’s worldview, and the universal significance of the mother tongue interact. This gap requires an approach that can connect the poem’s formal features with its cultural and philosophical meanings.

The present study draws on the ontological conception of the artwork associated with Roman Ingarden and Nicolai Hartmann and its adaptation to literary analysis by İsmail Tunalı. From this perspective, a literary work consists of interconnected ontic layers rather than a single level of meaning. These layers include its material and phonetic organization, semantic units, represented objects, the worldview embodied in the text, and the broader human meaning that emerges from their interaction (Tunalı, 1971). Such an approach makes it possible to investigate not only what the poem communicates but also how its sound structure, lexical choices, figurative expressions, and symbolic oppositions produce its central meaning.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do meter, rhyme, repetition, and sound patterns contribute to the emotional organization of “Tuvğan Til”?

2. Which lexical and symbolic units construct the poem’s representations of mother tongue,

homeland, exile, and national identity?

3. How do the poem's ontological layers transform the poet's personal experience into a collective and potentially universal message?

The study aims to identify the ontological layers of "Tuvğan Til" and explain the relationships between its formal organization, semantic structure, cultural imagery, and representation of national identity. Its contribution lies in interpreting the mother tongue not simply as the subject of the poem but as its central organizing symbol. The analysis demonstrates that language connects the speaker's personal experience of exile with collective memory, cultural continuity, and spiritual resistance. In doing so, the article contributes to research on Crimean Tatar poetry and to the broader study of language and identity in Turkic literary traditions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Bekir Çobanzade's Scholarly and Literary Legacy

Bekir Çobanzade occupies an important position in the intellectual and literary history of the Crimean Tatars and the broader Turkic world. He was a poet, linguist, educator, and specialist in Turkic languages whose academic and literary activities were closely connected with questions of language, education, alphabet reform, and national consciousness (Volvach, 2024). After studying in Istanbul, he continued his education at Budapest University and completed his doctoral research in 1919. He subsequently taught and conducted research in Turkology, including at Azerbaijan University, where he contributed to the institutional development of Turkic linguistic studies (Türkoğlu, 2020).

Çobanzade's participation in the First Turkological Congress held in Baku in 1926 demonstrates the relationship between his scholarly activities and the major linguistic debates of his time. His work addressed the relationships among Turkic languages, language teaching, literary education, and alphabet reform. He regarded language as a fundamental condition for the preservation and development of a nation. This intellectual position is also reflected in his literary works, in which linguistic consciousness is frequently connected with homeland, historical experience, and national identity.

Studies of Çobanzade's poetry have identified homeland, exile, nature, collective memory, and national consciousness as recurring themes. Altın (2018) examines his poetic legacy and draws attention to the relationship between his personal experiences and the cultural concerns expressed in his poetry. Sakallı (2015), discussing the mother tongue as a symbol of national identity in Turkic-world poetry, situates Çobanzade's linguistic consciousness within a broader literary tradition. From this perspective, "Tuvğan Til" is not simply a lyrical declaration of affection for one's native language. It represents language as a source of belonging and as a means of maintaining the connection between the individual, the homeland, and the community.

Çobanzade's biography also provides an important historical context for interpreting his work. He lived during a period of political instability and increasing pressure on Turkic intellectuals. He was arrested and executed in 1937 during the Stalinist repressions (Türkoğlu, 2020). However, the poem "Tuvğan Til" was written much earlier, in Budapest in 1918. Consequently, its historical images should be interpreted primarily within the political and biographical context of that period rather than automatically associated with later Soviet policies. This chronological distinction is essential for avoiding anachronistic interpretations.

2.2. Ontological Analysis in Literary Studies

Ontology traditionally concerns the nature and modes of being. Within aesthetics, however, ontological inquiry focuses on the mode of existence and internal organization of the work of art. The ontological theories associated with Nicolai Hartmann and Roman Ingarden treat the artwork as a stratified structure whose different layers are interdependent. A literary work is therefore understood not as a collection of isolated formal and thematic elements but as an organized whole in which sounds, meanings, represented objects, perspectives, and broader ideas interact.

İsmail Tunalı adapted this philosophical framework to the analysis of literature and other forms of art. According to Tunalı (1971), a literary work contains both a material dimension, manifested through words and sounds, and an intentional or non-material dimension, constituted through meaning, represented objects, and human significance. The aesthetic identity of the work emerges from the relationship among these dimensions.

In poetry analysis, this approach commonly distinguishes several interconnected levels. The first encompasses the poem's phonetic and formal organization, including meter, rhythm, rhyme, repetition, and sound patterning. The second concerns lexical and syntactic meaning. The object layer includes the people, events, spaces, concepts, and symbolic images represented in the text. The character layer reveals the worldview and emotional orientation embodied by the poetic speaker. Finally, the destiny layer concerns the broader human significance produced by the interaction of the preceding layers.

Previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of this method for examining the unity of form and meaning in poetry. Azap (2013) applies ontological analysis to the structural and semantic organization of a poetic text. Hazer (2014) shows how phonetic, semantic, and representational layers contribute to the aesthetic interpretation of a poem. Yılmaz (2017) similarly uses the method to move from textual features towards the work's wider philosophical implications. These studies confirm that ontological analysis can provide a systematic framework for explaining how formal poetic devices participate in the production of meaning.

Nevertheless, the method also presents certain risks. If the layers are treated as a mechanical classification system, the analysis may become a simple inventory of rhyme, figures of speech, and selected words. To avoid this limitation, formal observations must be connected to the poem's central semantic oppositions and cultural context. Furthermore, symbolic interpretations should be supported by textual and historical evidence rather than inferred solely from the researcher's assumptions.

2.3. Research Gap

Existing scholarship has established Çobanzade's significance as a Turkologist, educator, poet, and defender of Turkic languages. Previous research has also shown that the mother tongue functions as an important symbol of national identity in his poetry and in the poetry of the wider Turkic world. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the internal relationship between the phonetic structure, semantic oppositions, symbolic images, poetic subject, and wider cultural message of "Tuvğan Til."

The present study addresses this gap by applying ontological analysis to the poem as an integrated poetic structure. Rather than discussing language consciousness only as a biographical or thematic feature, it investigates how this consciousness is constructed through meter, repetition, lexical selection, imagery, and the oppositions between homeland and exile, hope and anxiety, intimacy and hostility, and life and death. This approach makes it possible to explain how the poem transforms an individual attachment to the mother tongue into a representation of collective memory and cultural continuity.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Material

The primary material of the study is Bekir Çobanzade's Crimean Tatar poem "Tuvğan Til" ("Mother Tongue"), written in Budapest on 1 June 1918. The poem consists of 34 lines organized into 17 couplets. The analysis was conducted using the Crimean Tatar text of the poem. An English translation is provided to make the material accessible to international readers; however, observations concerning meter, rhyme, phonetic repetition, and lexical form are based exclusively on the original text.

The poem was selected because language constitutes both its principal subject and its central organizing image. It also brings together the themes of homeland, exile, cultural belonging, anxiety,

and collective identity. These characteristics make the text suitable for examining how formal poetic features interact with semantic and cultural meanings.

3.2. Research Design

The study employs a qualitative textual-analysis design based on the ontological approach to the literary work. Following the theoretical framework developed in art ontology and adapted to literary analysis by Tunalı (1971), the poem is treated as a stratified yet integrated aesthetic structure. Its formal features are therefore not examined separately from its semantic, cultural, and philosophical meanings.

The analysis proceeds through four interconnected analytical levels:

1. **Sound and formal layer:** meter, line and couplet organization, rhyme, repeated endings, alliteration, assonance, and lexical repetition.
2. **Semantic and object layer:** literal and contextual meanings of the principal lexical units, semantic oppositions, images, represented spaces, and symbolic objects.
3. **Character layer:** the emotional position, worldview, and linguistic consciousness expressed by the poetic speaker.
4. **Destiny layer:** the broader individual and collective meanings of language, homeland, identity, cultural continuity, and resistance to alienation.

This classification is used as an analytical framework rather than as a set of independent categories. Particular attention is therefore paid to the relationships among the layers.

3.3. Analytical Procedure

The analysis was conducted in five stages. First, the poem was segmented into lines and couplets, after which its syllabic and rhythmic organization was examined. Second, recurring sounds, words, grammatical constructions, and rhetorical devices were identified in the original text. Third, the principal lexical units—including *mother tongue*, *homeland*, *foreign land*, *heart*, *enemy*, *God*, and *Azrael*—were examined in their immediate poetic contexts.

Fourth, semantic oppositions such as homeland versus exile, hope versus anxiety, belonging versus alienation, and life versus death were identified. The functions of these oppositions in constructing the poem's central image of the mother tongue were then interpreted. Finally, the findings from the formal and semantic analyses were integrated to determine how the poetic speaker's personal experience develops into a collective message about language and identity.

Interpretations of historical or political images were accepted only when supported by the poem's wording, its date of composition, Çobanzade's biography, or relevant scholarly sources. Interpretations that could not be directly verified were presented as possible readings rather than established facts.

3.4. Translation and Transliteration

Because the poem was written in Crimean Tatar, the distinction between the primary text and its English translation was maintained throughout the analysis. The English version was used to communicate the general meaning of the poem, while phonetic and metrical conclusions were drawn from the original version. Culturally specific terms and images were transliterated consistently, and explanatory equivalents were supplied where a direct English translation could not convey the complete meaning.

The final version of the English translation should be checked by a specialist proficient in Crimean Tatar and academic English. This is particularly important because literal translation may obscure the poem's figurative expressions, grammatical relationships, and cultural connotations.

3.5. Reliability and Limitations

To improve analytical reliability, formal observations were connected to specific textual examples, while semantic interpretations were evaluated in relation to the poem as a whole. The

analysis also distinguishes between meanings explicitly expressed in the text and contextual interpretations proposed by the researchers.

The study is limited to a close reading of one poem. Its findings therefore cannot represent all of Çobanzade's poetry or Crimean Tatar literary discourse. In addition, an ontological interpretation inevitably involves a degree of researcher subjectivity. Nevertheless, the transparent use of analytical categories and textual evidence makes it possible to evaluate the validity of the proposed interpretations.

4. Results

4.1. Sound and Formal Organization

"Tuvğan Til" consists of 34 lines arranged into 17 couplets. Its formal organization is predominantly based on the syllabic tradition characteristic of Turkic poetry. Most lines follow an eleven-syllable pattern, generally divided into two rhythmic units. Several lines, however, appear to contain twelve syllables. These variations should not automatically be defined as metrical defects. They may result from pronunciation, dialectal phonology, historical orthography, or the performance-oriented character of the poem. Therefore, the syllabic structure must be evaluated according to the phonetic properties of the original Crimean Tatar text rather than its written form alone.

The poem's rhythm is also created through parallel syntactic constructions and repeated verbal forms. Conditional constructions are particularly prominent in the later couplets:

Qabirimde melekler sorğu sorasa,
Azrail tilimni biñ kere torasa…

The repetition of similar grammatical endings links successive actions and creates a cumulative movement. Each new condition intensifies the speaker's commitment to his mother tongue. Consequently, repetition performs more than a decorative function: it gradually transforms affection for language into an expression of determination that extends beyond death.

A comparable rhythmic effect is produced by recurring first-person verbal forms. Expressions corresponding to "I found," "I embraced," "I want," "I would say," and "I would die" organize the poem around the speaking subject. The repeated first-person perspective emphasizes that the poem begins as an individual lyrical experience. Nevertheless, as the references expand from the speaker's heart to homeland, different geographical spaces, the community, and future generations, the personal voice acquires a collective dimension.

Rhyme and repeated endings provide cohesion between the couplets. The poem contains correspondences such as *taptım*, *aytıp*, *olmasa*, *yaqlarda*, *adıñ*, *sözleriñ*, *örmek*, *seni*, *kirsen*, *yazsam*, *sorasa*, and *ölermen*. However, these forms should be classified carefully by distinguishing lexical rhyme from repeated grammatical suffixes. In Turkic versification, an identical inflectional or derivational element occurring after the rhyme may function as a *redif*. Therefore, the rhyme analysis should identify the common lexical sound sequence and the repeated grammatical ending separately rather than describing every shared final sound as a rich rhyme.

Sound repetition also contributes to the emotional character of the poem. Recurring sonorant consonants, particularly /m/, /n/, /l/, and /r/, support the lyrical and intimate tone of passages associated with the speaker's heart, language, and homeland. In contrast, plosive and voiceless consonants become more noticeable in expressions associated with anxiety, hostility, interrogation, and death. The aesthetic function of these repetitions lies not in the mere frequency of individual sounds but in their concentration within semantically significant passages.

The poem's formal organization is therefore closely connected with its meaning. Repeated suffixes and syntactic structures establish continuity, first-person verbs foreground personal experience, and conditional forms intensify the speaker's determination. The sound layer prepares the transition from an intimate address to the mother tongue towards a broader statement about cultural belonging and linguistic survival.

4.2. Semantic Oppositions and Key Images

The semantic structure of “Tuvğan Til” is organized around the image of the mother tongue. Other images—including homeland, foreign land, heart, enemy, God, grave, angels, and Azrael—acquire their significance through their relationship with language. The mother tongue therefore functions not as one image among many but as the semantic centre that connects the poem’s emotional, spatial, cultural, and spiritual dimensions.

The poem’s principal semantic relationships can be summarized as follows (Table 1):

Table 1 – Principal semantic

Semantic opposition	Meaning in the poem
Homeland–foreign land	Belonging versus alienation
Hope–anxiety	Emotional restoration versus fear of loss
Familiar–unfamiliar	Cultural recognition versus isolation
Mother tongue–silence	Cultural continuity versus disappearance
Speaker–enemy	Linguistic self-determination versus external pressure
Life–death	Temporal existence versus enduring linguistic loyalty
Individual–community	Personal emotion versus collective identity

4.2.1. Homeland and Foreign Land

The opposition between homeland and foreign land forms the poem’s principal spatial structure. The foreign land is represented as an unfamiliar environment in which the speaker experiences loneliness, uncertainty, and separation. The lines describing wandering through unknown streets indicate not only physical displacement but also a weakening of the speaker’s sense of cultural orientation.

In contrast, the word *homeland* evokes familiarity, emotional security, and collective belonging. The speaker does not encounter the homeland directly; instead, he recovers its emotional presence through his mother tongue. Language thus creates a symbolic homeland in a place of exile. Nevertheless, it does not completely remove alienation. It consoles the speaker while simultaneously reminding him of what has been lost or left behind.

This relationship shows that homeland and foreign land are not merely geographical locations. They represent two conditions of identity. Homeland signifies recognition and cultural continuity, whereas foreign land signifies uncertainty and estrangement. The mother tongue mediates between these two conditions by preserving the speaker’s connection to his community.

4.2.2. Heart, Hope, and Anxiety

The recurring image of the heart connects the poem’s spatial and national themes with personal emotion. It is the place where hope, longing, pain, and attachment to language are experienced. When the speaker embraces the mother tongue and tells it his troubles, language is personified as a trusted companion capable of understanding and restoring him.

The poem repeatedly moves between hope and anxiety. A word spoken in the mother tongue enables the speaker to return to himself, suggesting that language restores emotional and cultural coherence. At the same time, the possibility that the language may be suppressed, forgotten, or left without speakers produces fear. This emotional tension prevents the poem from becoming a simple celebration of linguistic beauty. Its praise of the mother tongue is accompanied by an awareness of linguistic vulnerability.

The mother tongue therefore performs two related functions: it relieves the pain of displacement and protects the speaker from losing his sense of self. The emotional meaning of language is inseparable from its role in cultural identification.

4.2.3. Turkish and Tatar Identity

The question of whether the language should be called Turkish or Tatar introduces an important identity problem:

Bilmiymen – türükmi, tatarmı adıñ,
Bek yaman tatlısıñ, Tañrıdan dadıñ.

The speaker does not resolve the relationship between the terms *Turkish* and *Tatar* by rejecting one of them. Instead, both are represented as expressions of a related linguistic and cultural world. The emotional value of the language is placed above rigid naming. This position reflects an identity that can simultaneously recognize a specific Crimean Tatar belonging and a broader Turkic cultural affiliation.

The passage should therefore not be interpreted merely as uncertainty about the name of the language. It expresses the layered character of linguistic identity. The mother tongue belongs to a particular community while also connecting that community with the wider Turkic world.

4.2.4. Sacredness and the Image of God

The association between the sweetness of the mother tongue and God raises language from an everyday communicative instrument to a sacred value. By presenting its beauty as divinely given, the speaker suggests that language belongs to an order that exceeds political authority and individual preference.

This sacred representation strengthens the ethical dimension of language preservation. If the mother tongue is understood as a divinely endowed value, protecting it becomes a responsibility rather than a matter of personal taste. However, the line should be interpreted as poetic sacralization, not as a literal theological statement.

4.2.5. Enemy and Linguistic Power

The enemy functions as an opposing force, but the poem does not identify this figure explicitly. It is therefore methodologically safer to understand the enemy as a generalized representation of forces that threaten the speaker, his community, or their linguistic freedom. A direct identification with the USSR would be historically problematic because the poem was written in 1918, before the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922.

Significantly, the speaker imagines that even an enemy could love the language if able to understand it. This idea presents linguistic beauty as a power capable of crossing political and cultural boundaries. The speaker also wishes to write decrees to the enemy in his own language, thereby transforming the mother tongue from an object requiring protection into an instrument of authority and agency.

The enemy image consequently performs two functions. It represents external pressure, but it also enables the speaker to demonstrate the persuasive and symbolic power attributed to his language.

4.2.6. Death, Azrael, and Linguistic Loyalty

The images of the grave, angels, and Azrael constitute the poem's most intense expressions of commitment. The speaker declares that even if his tongue were cut repeatedly, he would demand to be addressed in his mother tongue and would die singing in it. The hyperbolic nature of this passage extends linguistic loyalty beyond physical life.

Azrael should not be treated as a simple synonym for fear or death. Within the poem, the figure creates an ultimate test of the speaker's commitment. Neither bodily suffering nor death can separate him from his language. The mother tongue thus becomes an inseparable component of identity rather than an external possession.

Through these images, the poem establishes a hierarchy of values in which linguistic belonging is stronger than fear, violence, and mortality. The speaker's personal declaration simultaneously conveys a collective message: cultural identity can survive only when its speakers maintain an active and conscious relationship with their language.

4.3. The Character Layer: The Poetic Subject and Linguistic Consciousness

In ontological analysis, the character layer concerns the worldview manifested through the speaker's attitudes, choices, and emotional responses. In "Tuvğan Til," this layer does not describe a fictional character with a developed biography. Instead, it reveals a lyrical subject whose identity is constructed through his relationship with language.

The speaker's position develops through several stages. At the beginning, he appears as an isolated individual seeking emotional support while living away from home. His encounter with the mother tongue enables him to regain a sense of inner coherence. As the poem progresses, however, his position becomes increasingly active. He no longer presents language only as a source of consolation; he wishes to sing, create epics, communicate across distant territories, and use his language in religious, cultural, and political spaces.

This progression is significant because it shows a movement from emotional dependence to cultural agency. The speaker initially needs the language to overcome alienation, but he later assumes responsibility for expanding its sphere of use. His desire to hear it in the mosque, at the altar, in the palace, and across seas and deserts indicates that linguistic preservation requires public presence. A language cannot remain culturally productive if it is confined to private memory.

The poetic subject also refuses to separate linguistic identity from creative activity. Songs, epics, emotionally powerful words, and written decrees represent different functions of language. Through these images, the poem presents the mother tongue as a medium of oral tradition, literary creation, social communication, and symbolic authority. The speaker's linguistic consciousness is therefore both emotional and practical.

The biographical parallels with Çobanzade's work as a linguist and educator help contextualize this position. Nevertheless, the lyrical speaker should not be treated as entirely identical to the historical author. The poem transforms the author's linguistic concerns into an aesthetic voice that can represent a broader communal experience. This distinction makes it possible to relate the work to Çobanzade's intellectual activity without reducing the poem to biography.

The character layer ultimately reveals a speaker who understands language as an ethical responsibility. His loyalty is demonstrated not only through praise but through the intention to teach, write, create, and continue speaking. Linguistic consciousness is therefore represented as active participation in the survival of a cultural community.

4.4. The Destiny Layer: From Personal Experience to Collective Continuity

The destiny layer concerns the broader meaning that emerges when the poem's formal, semantic, and character dimensions are considered together. In "Tuvğan Til," the speaker's experience of separation develops into a reflection on the relationship between language and the continuity of a people.

The poem's wider message rests on the idea that cultural belonging cannot be preserved passively. Emotional attachment to the mother tongue is important, but affection alone is insufficient. Language must be spoken, taught, written, sung, and used to produce new cultural forms. The speaker's repeated wishes to extend the language into different spaces emphasize this need for continuous use.

The poem also expands the temporal boundaries of linguistic identity. References to the grave and death suggest that an individual life is limited, whereas language connects past, present, and future speakers. The speaker's declaration that he will die singing in his mother tongue converts personal mortality into an affirmation of cultural continuity. The survival of language does not depend on one individual but on the transmission of the commitment represented by that individual.

From this perspective, the poem's destiny layer is not simply a generalized statement that everyone should love their native language. Its more specific claim is that language enables a displaced or politically vulnerable community to maintain cultural coherence. The mother tongue preserves forms of memory and recognition that geographical distance cannot entirely erase.

At the same time, the poem's meaning extends beyond the Crimean Tatar historical context. Communities experiencing migration, linguistic marginalization, or pressure from dominant

languages may recognize a similar relationship between language and belonging. This broader relevance does not remove the poem from its historical setting; rather, it demonstrates how a culturally specific experience can acquire wider human significance.

The interaction of the ontological layers reveals a consistent development. The rhythmic repetitions express persistence; the central images organize the tension between belonging and alienation; the poetic subject turns emotional attachment into cultural action; and the destiny layer presents linguistic continuity as a collective responsibility. The poem's artistic unity emerges from this movement from sound to meaning and from individual feeling to communal significance.

5. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the meaning of "Tuvğan Til" is generated through the interaction of its formal organization, recurring images, and culturally situated poetic voice. This supports the central principle of ontological literary analysis: the aesthetic significance of a poem cannot be reduced either to its external form or to a summary of its subject. The poem's representation of the mother tongue emerges from the relationship between rhythmic persistence, semantic opposition, the speaker's changing position, and the wider question of cultural continuity (Konkal et al., 2025).

Previous research has primarily approached Çobanzade through his biography, linguistic scholarship, educational activity, and contribution to Turkic intellectual history (Altın, 2018; Türkoğlu, 2020). These studies provide the historical context necessary for understanding his sustained concern with language. The present analysis complements them by showing how that concern is aesthetically organized within an individual poem. Çobanzade's linguistic position is not communicated through a direct theoretical statement alone; it is embodied in rhythm, spatial imagery, emotional progression, and the expansion of the speaker's voice from private experience to collective responsibility.

The findings are also consistent with Sakallı's (2015) observation that the mother tongue functions as a symbol of national identity in the poetry of the Turkic world. However, the present study further differentiates the internal functions of this symbol. In "Tuvğan Til," language serves simultaneously as a form of emotional refuge, a symbolic homeland, a medium of cultural production, and a basis for collective continuity. Its symbolic value is therefore multidimensional rather than limited to patriotic praise.

The poem's treatment of exile is particularly important. The foreign land is not portrayed only as a negative geographical space. It creates the distance through which the speaker becomes more conscious of the relationship between language and belonging. Displacement thus produces both vulnerability and heightened linguistic awareness. This finding suggests that exile in the poem functions as a condition of self-recognition: the speaker understands the value of his mother tongue more clearly when its everyday social environment is absent.

The analysis also clarifies the relationship between linguistic identity and broader Turkic affiliation. The use of both *Turkish* and *Tatar* does not necessarily indicate terminological uncertainty. Instead, it reflects a layered identity in which attachment to the Crimean Tatar linguistic community coexists with consciousness of a wider Turkic cultural space. This interpretation avoids forcing the poem into a rigid opposition between local and supranational identity (Babutcu, 2025).

Ontological studies of poetry have shown that formal and semantic layers should be interpreted as interdependent components of the artwork (Azap, 2013; Hazer, 2014; Yılmaz, 2017). The present study confirms the usefulness of this method but also reveals a methodological limitation. Merely cataloguing meter, rhyme, sounds, and figures of speech does not constitute an ontological interpretation. Such features become analytically relevant only when their contribution to the work's central structure of meaning is demonstrated. For example, repeated conditional forms are important not simply because they produce rhythm but because they intensify the speaker's commitment and move the poem towards its culminating confrontation with mortality.

The findings further demonstrate the importance of historical caution. Some images may invite political readings, particularly references to enemies, collective suffering, and external pressure.

Nevertheless, the poem's date of composition does not support the automatic identification of every hostile image with the later Soviet state or Stalinist language policies. Since "Tuvğan Til" was written in 1918, interpretations must distinguish the historical circumstances surrounding the poem's composition from Çobanzade's subsequent persecution in the 1930s. Later biographical events may deepen the poem's reception, but they cannot be treated as its original historical cause.

The study has several limitations. It examines a single poem and therefore does not establish whether the identified ontological pattern characterizes Çobanzade's entire poetic corpus. The English translation may also reproduce the general meaning without preserving all phonetic, metrical, and culturally specific features of the Crimean Tatar original. Finally, the semantic and character layers necessarily involve interpretation, although the study has attempted to distinguish textual evidence from contextual inference.

Future research could compare "Tuvğan Til" with Çobanzade's other poems concerning homeland, exile, and collective identity. A comparative analysis involving mother-tongue poems by other Turkic authors could also determine which images are specific to Crimean Tatar historical experience and which belong to a shared Turkic literary tradition (Amineva, 2026)). Corpus-based analysis could supplement close reading by identifying the distribution of language, homeland, and identity-related vocabulary across Çobanzade's works.

6. Conclusion

This study examined Bekir Çobanzade's "Tuvğan Til" as a multilayered poetic structure in which formal organization, semantic imagery, the position of the lyrical subject, and cultural meaning are closely interconnected. The ontological approach demonstrated that the poem's treatment of the mother tongue cannot be reduced to a general expression of linguistic affection. Language functions as the central principle through which the speaker understands homeland, displacement, identity, cultural production, and continuity.

The analysis revealed a meaningful progression within the poem. The mother tongue first appears as a source of emotional consolation in an unfamiliar environment, then develops into a medium of creative and social agency, and ultimately becomes the foundation of collective continuity. In this progression, the lyrical subject moves from personal vulnerability towards an active responsibility to speak, teach, write, and preserve the language.

The principal contribution of the study lies in demonstrating how the poem transforms an individual experience of displacement into a culturally shared understanding of linguistic belonging. The relationship between Crimean Tatar identity and the wider Turkic world is represented as complementary rather than contradictory. At the same time, the poem's treatment of linguistic vulnerability gives it relevance for other communities experiencing migration, cultural marginalization, or pressure from dominant languages.

The findings confirm that ontological analysis is productive when formal and semantic features are interpreted through their functional relationships rather than listed as separate textual elements. Further comparative research involving Çobanzade's other works and mother-tongue poetry from different Turkic literary traditions would help determine the broader significance of the patterns identified in "Tuvğan Til."

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Conflict of Interest

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Author Contributions

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Soylemez: interpretation of results, writing the original draft, reviewing, and editing the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request.

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Folklore issues in the newspaper “Sheki fehlesi”

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Abstract

This article examines folklore materials published from the late 1930s to 1990 in the regional newspaper *Şəki fəhləsi* and under its former historical titles. The study aims to systematize newspaper sources and identify the distinctive features of the development of ashig art in Sheki, the reception of Ashig Molla Juma’s legacy, and the ways in which local folklore entered public cultural circulation. The research material comprises ashig poems, articles about performers, reports concerning manuscripts and biographical information, and publications devoted to folk ensembles, dances, children’s games, and humorous folklore. Historical-comparative, hermeneutic, and descriptive methods are employed. The newspaper materials are compared with later folklore scholarship and manuscript sources, allowing their documentary character, authorial interpretation, and ideological content to be distinguished. The findings show that *Şəki fəhləsi* preserved important historical information about the ashig milieu of Sheki. Materials concerning Molla Juma’s biography, manuscripts, the authentication of his photograph, and his influence on later performers establish his place in regional cultural memory. The analysis of poems by Ashig Mugum, Ashig Piri, and Ashig Musa reveals the coexistence of traditional poetic imagery and Soviet ideological vocabulary. Publications on folk ensembles, dances, children’s games, and anecdotes demonstrate the functions of folklore in everyday cultural life. The study’s originality lies in examining dispersed newspaper materials from different years for the first time within a unified historical and textual framework. The findings confirm the importance of regional periodicals as sources for reconstructing folklore history, preserving local traditions, and explaining the mechanisms of their intergenerational transmission.

Keywords: *Şəki fəhləsi* newspaper, ashig art, Molla Juma, regional folklore, cultural memory.

«Шеки фехлеси» газетіндегі фольклор мәселелері

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Аннотация

Бұл мақалада 1930-жылдардың соңы мен 1990 жыл аралығында өңірлік «Şəki fəhləsi» газетінде және оның бұрынғы тарихи атауларымен жарияланған фольклорлық материалдар зерттеледі. Зерттеудің мақсаты – газет беттеріндегі деректерді жүйелеу арқылы Шеки аймағындағы ашуг өнерінің даму ерекшеліктерін, Ашуг Молла Жұма мұрасының қабылдануын және жергілікті фольклордың қоғамдық мәдени айналымға ену жолдарын анықтау. Зерттеу материалына ашуг өлеңдері, орындаушылар туралы мақалалар, қолжазбалар мен өмірбаяндық деректер жөніндегі хабарлар, сондай-ақ халық ансамбльдеріне, билерге, балалар ойындарына және әзіл-сықақ үлгілеріне арналған жарияланымдар енгізілді. Жұмыста тарихи-салыстырмалы, герменевтикалық және сипаттамалық әдістер қолданылды. Газет материалдары кейінгі фольклортану зерттеулерімен және қолжазба деректерімен

салыстырылып, олардың құжаттық сипаты, авторлық интерпретациясы және идеологиялық мазмұны өзара ажыратылды. Нәтижелер «Şəki fəhləsi» газетінің Шекидегі ашуг ортасы туралы маңызды тарихи мәліметтерді сақтағанын көрсетті. Молла Жұманың өмірбаяны, қолжазбалары, фотосуретінің анықталуы және кейінгі орындаушыларға ықпалы туралы материалдар оның өңірлік мәдени жадтағы орнын айқындайды. Ашуг Мұғым, Ашуг Пири және Ашуг Мұса өлеңдерін талдау дәстүрлі поэтикалық бейнелер мен кеңестік идеологиялық лексиканың қатар қолданылғанын көрсетті. Халық ансамбльдері, билер, балалар ойындары және анекдоттар туралы жарияланымдар фольклордың күнделікті мәдени өмірдегі қызметін танытады. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы әр жылдары шашыраңқы жарияланған газет материалдарын алғаш рет біртұтас тарихи-мәтіндік жүйеде қарастыруымен анықталады. Алынған нәтижелер өңірлік мерзімді басылымдардың фольклор тарихын қалпына келтірудегі, жергілікті дәстүрлердің сақталуы мен ұрпақаралық берілу тетіктерін түсіндірудегі маңызды дереккөз екенін дәлелдейді.

Кілт сөздер: «Şəki fəhləsi» газеті, ашуг өнері, Молла Жұма, өңірлік фольклор, мәдени жад.

Фольклорные вопросы в газете «Шеки фехлеси»

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Аннотация

В статье исследуются фольклорные материалы, опубликованные с конца 1930-х годов по 1990 год в региональной газете «Şəki fəhləsi» и под её прежними историческими названиями. Цель исследования заключается в систематизации газетных источников и выявлении особенностей развития ашугского искусства в Шеки, восприятия наследия Ашыга Моллы Джумы и способов включения местного фольклора в общественный культурный оборот. Материал исследования включает ашугские стихотворения, статьи об исполнителях, сообщения о рукописях и биографических сведениях, а также публикации, посвящённые народным ансамблям, танцам, детским играм и образцам юмористического фольклора. В работе применены историко-сравнительный, герменевтический и описательный методы. Газетные материалы сопоставлены с последующими фольклористическими исследованиями и рукописными источниками, что позволило разграничить их документальный характер, авторскую интерпретацию и идеологическое содержание. Результаты показали, что газета «Şəki fəhləsi» сохранила важные исторические сведения об ашугской среде Шеки. Материалы о биографии Моллы Джумы, его рукописях, установлении подлинности фотографии и влиянии на последующих исполнителей определяют его место в региональной культурной памяти. Анализ стихотворений Ашыга Мюгюма, Ашыга Пири и Ашыга Мусы выявил сочетание традиционной поэтической образности с советской идеологической лексикой. Публикации о народных ансамблях, танцах, детских играх и анекдотах раскрывают функции фольклора в повседневной культурной жизни. Научная новизна исследования состоит в том, что разрозненные газетные материалы разных лет впервые рассматриваются в единой историко-текстуальной системе. Полученные результаты подтверждают значение региональной периодической печати как источника для реконструкции истории фольклора, сохранения местных традиций и объяснения механизмов их межпоколенческой передачи.

Keywords: газета «Şəki fəhləsi», ашугское искусство, Молла Джума, региональный фольклор, культурная память..

1. Introductıon

Regional newspapers are valuable sources for folklore research because they preserve materials that may not have entered academic editions, including local poetry, performance reports, biographical notes, oral narratives, and descriptions of customary practices. Sheki Fahlesi devoted sustained attention to such material alongside its political and economic reporting. Its pages included proverbs, sayings, anecdotes, ashig poetry, information on ashig performers and literary life, and discussions of folk creativity more broadly.

The study is informed by the view that regional periodicals can function as documentary repositories of local cultural history. Takmyanin notes that twentieth-century regional studies appeared not only in specialized academic journals but also in popular periodicals (Takmyanin, 2025:323). Azerbaijani folklore scholarship has also treated Sheki as a distinctive folklore environment: the regional folklore anthologies and later studies by Garayev and Vagifqizi document the strength of local ashig traditions and the cultural specificity of the Sheki area (Anthology of Azerbaijani folklore, 2002; Garayev, 2009; Vagifqizi, 2012). Within the literature cited in the present article, however, the folklore materials published in Sheki Fahlesi and its predecessor titles have not been brought together and examined systematically across such an extended period. The research gap, therefore, concerns not the existence of scholarship on Sheki folklore itself, but the underuse of the regional newspaper as a longitudinal primary source for reconstructing how folklore was documented, interpreted, and publicly circulated.

The article therefore asks three related questions: (1) What types of folklore material were published in Sheki Fahlesi and its predecessor titles? (2) What do these publications contribute to the reconstruction of the Sheki ashig environment and the reception of Ashig Molla Juma? and (3) How did the political and ideological context of the Soviet period shape the presentation of ashig poetry and folklore in the newspaper? The analysis treats the newspaper both as a primary historical source and as a mediated cultural text whose contents reflect editorial choices, contemporary scholarly debates, and the ideological conditions of publication.

For consistency, the general title Sheki Fahlesi is used when referring to the newspaper as a continuing publication. Historical titles such as Nukha Fahlesi and Nuxa Ishchisi are retained when a specific issue or cited source was published under that title.

2. Methods

The study applies historical-comparative, hermeneutic, and descriptive methods. The documented primary corpus comprises 18 identifiable newspaper items or issue clusters cited in the References, published between 1938 and 1990, together with supporting manuscript and secondary scholarly sources. Newspaper materials were included when they directly addressed folklore, ashig performers or poetry, Ashig Molla Juma, folk performance, dances, children's games, or anecdotes. The materials were grouped thematically and examined in relation to publication date, authorship, genre, subject matter, and historical context.

The historical-comparative method is used to compare claims made in different newspaper publications and to relate them to later folklore scholarship. Hermeneutic reading is used to interpret the cultural and ideological meanings of the texts, particularly where Soviet political vocabulary enters ashig poetry. Descriptive analysis identifies recurring genres, performers, cultural practices, and editorial themes across the corpus. The analytical procedure therefore proceeds from identification and thematic classification of relevant items to contextual reading and comparison with later scholarship.

The corpus is a documented selection rather than a complete census of every folklore-related item ever published by the newspaper. It is limited to the issues and publications available to the author and cited in the References. The figure of 18 refers to identifiable newspaper items or issue clusters analyzed directly in the present article; it does not imply that the surviving newspaper archive contains only 18 folklore-related publications. This limitation is stated explicitly so that the conclusions are understood as findings from the documented corpus rather than from an assumed complete archive.

3. Results

3.1. The Sheki Ashig Environment and Early Newspaper Evidence

One recurring issue in the literature is whether Sheki possessed a distinct and active ashig environment. The newspaper evidence examined here supports the existence of such a milieu by documenting performers, meetings, poems, and biographical materials connected with Nukha/Sheki. A useful early example is Sadnik Pashayev's article "Ashig Doni," published on July 18, 1968, which presents Doni as an Armenian-born performer who mastered Azerbaijani ashig poetry and composed in Azerbaijani. Pashayev describes Doni's use of established ashig genres and records local testimony about his life and work.

Regarding the content and artistic qualities of Ashig Doni's literary heritage, the researcher writes: "I visited the Dashbulag village of Sheki, where Doni was born, lived, and created, and met and talked with the village elders. It benefited me greatly. Ashig Doni skillfully used the genres of Azerbaijani Ashig poetry, such as Bayatı, Garayli, Chigali Garayli, Koshma, Diwani, and other genres in his work. The language of his poems is fluent, and their musicality is very strong. Allusions and similes are natural and original".

According to the author's notes, "Doni is an artist who knows the place of words in poetry, is able to use them effectively, and looks for meaning, content, and beauty in words. Doni created each of his poems with exquisite taste:

Unless otherwise indicated, English renderings of Azerbaijani poetic excerpts are sense-based translations prepared for readability while preserving the meaning and imagery of the source text; the Azerbaijani originals are retained alongside them for verification.

Nazlı dilbər, nə yaraşır qəddinə,
Tirmə məndəm, kəmər məndən, bel səndən.
Bayram olsun xına yaxın dəstinə,
Əlvan məndən, gülgəz məndən, əl səndən (Pashayev, 1968:4).

Charming beauty, how graceful your figure,
The shawl is from me, the belt from me; the waist is yours.
May the henna on your hand mark a festive day,
The colors are from me, the rosy glow from me; the hand is yours.

Ashig Doni, who captured the beauty of the Azerbaijani language in his poems, also had a significant influence on subsequent Ashig poetry, as noted by the young folklorist.

The article presents Ashig Doni as both a poet and musician and links his name to the melody "Godekdoni." This attribution is important as a piece of local cultural memory recorded in the newspaper, although it should be treated as a historical claim preserved by the source rather than as independently verified fact.

3.2. Ashig Molla Juma: Biography, Manuscripts, and Reception

A major part of the newspaper's folklore coverage concerns Ashig Molla Juma and the wider Sheki ashig tradition. The cited issues include Nasreddin Garayev's "Molla Juma's New Manuscript," Jahangir Gaziyev's "Some Notes about Molla Juma," Mahyeddin Pashazade (Abbasov)'s "Precious Find," Movlud Yarekhmadov's "Molla Juma," as well as later articles and features devoted to Juma's legacy and influence.

Nasreddin Garayev's article "Molla Juma's New Manuscript," published in Nukha Fahlesi, remains valuable because it records manuscript evidence and earlier scholarly views, even though some of its biographical attributions differ from those advanced in later sources. Garayev summarizes the limited information then available about Molla Juma and notes that some earlier publications associated him with Gakh or Ilisu. The present study compares those claims with newspaper materials

that identify Ashagi Layisqi in the Sheki/Nukha area as his birthplace and principal environment of activity.

Garayev notes that about 80 poems by Molla Juma appeared in a 1930 Azernashr collection compiled by Salman Mumtaz, while biographical information remained limited. He further observes that editions published by the House of Folk Creativity in 1957 and 1960 associated Juma with the Gakh district (Garayev, 1961:3).

Garayev's article is therefore important for the history of Molla Juma studies, but its geographical attribution should be treated cautiously. The later newspaper materials cited below provide evidence supporting the Sheki/Nukha attribution; however, this article presents that evidence as part of an ongoing historiographical discussion rather than as grounds for dismissing all alternative accounts categorically.

The manuscripts, which were first revealed by Nasreddin Garayev, were later extensively researched by folklorist Pasha Efendiyev in the mid-1960s. Nasreddin Garayev writes about Juma's new manuscript: "In recent years (the early 1960s, specifically) several manuscripts of Molla Juma have been included in the Republican Manuscripts Fund of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences. In one of these documents, it is written: 'This notebook was written in 1333. Molla Juma ibn Saleh of Kitabat. It is known from this note, dated 1914, that this manuscript is Molla Juma's autograph. While reviewing Molla Juma's poems stored in the fund, we come across such a passage in his "Admonition to My Son":

Min üz yüz otuz iki tarixdədir indi sənə,
Altmışa çatdı yaşım sevda sərə düşdü yenə.
Pozulub bürc bədən, üstdən gedir gündən - günə,
Tapşırır Molla Cümə, oğul, sənə dönə-dönə,
Sidq ilə yaxşı tutub, göz yetir dəftərə Həsən,
Yazdığım bu dəftəri saxla yadigaranə Həsən (Garayev, 1961:3).

It is now the year one thousand three hundred and thirty-two,
I have reached sixty, yet love has entered my heart again.
The fortress of the body weakens day by day,
Molla Juma entrusts this to you, my son, again and again,
Hasan, keep careful watch over this notebook in good faith,
Preserve this notebook I wrote as a keepsake, Hasan.

On the basis of the manuscript note and the poem quoted by Garayev, the source associates the year 1332 AH with Molla Juma at the age of sixty and uses this information to support an estimated birth year of 1854 (Garayev, 1961:3). This calculation is suggestive rather than conclusive and should be considered together with the other biographical evidence discussed below.

At the end of the article, the couplets "Adam's Grandson" ("Adəmin nəvəsi") and "You're angry" ("Küsübsən") of the famous poet-lover are presented to the readers for the first time.

Jahangir Gaziyev's article "Some Notes About Molla Juma" provides a more detailed biographical account. Published in the same year as Garayev's piece, it identifies Molla Juma as the son of Saleh and states that he was born in 1854 in Ashagi Layisqi, Nukha district (Abbasov, 1967:4). It also discusses his family background, early education, knowledge of Arabic and Persian, and the beginning of his poetic activity. Read comparatively, the two articles illustrate how the newspaper participated in an evolving discussion about Molla Juma's biography.

Gaziyev's article also contributes information about Molla Juma's performance practice, relations with other ashigs, and circulation of his poetry in oral settings. Such details are valuable because they connect the biographical record with the social environment in which ashig poetry was performed and transmitted.

The newspaper materials also preserve poetic examples that the cited authors regarded as little known or unpublished at the time. These items are significant for documenting the transmission

history of Molla Juma's repertoire, although any claim that a poem was "not recorded anywhere" should be understood as limited to the evidence available to the newspaper author and not as an absolute bibliographical conclusion.

Bu iş tanrıdandır, deyil insandan.
Bir gözələ mehribandır ürəyim.
Dilimin əzbəri İsmi Pünhandan.
Eylər möhnət, qəm hicrandır ürəyim.

Bir dərd əhli heç tapmadım burada,
Nahaq yerə rüsvay oldum arada,
Nə ölmədim, nə yetmədim murada.
Ah çəkməkdən qızıl qandır ürəyim (Gaziyev, 1961:4).
This is God's doing, not man's.
My heart is devoted to a beauty.
Her secret name is ever on my tongue.
My heart bears longing, grief, and separation.
I found no fellow sufferer here;
I was disgraced without cause.
Neither did I die nor attain my desire;
From sighing, my heart bleeds red.

Another important contribution of the newspaper is its documentation of efforts to identify an authentic image of Molla Juma. Mahyeddin Abbasov's 1967 article "Precious Find" describes the search for a photograph in connection with a proposed bust and memorial plaque. According to the article, investigators traced a 1912 group photograph through acquaintances in Balakan and Zagatala and then sought corroboration from Molla Juma's daughter, Reyhan, and elderly residents of Ashagi Goynuk and Bash Layisqi (Abbasov, 1967:3). The evidential value of the article lies less in the dramatic narrative of the search than in its record of how the image was identified and locally authenticated.

Abbasov reports that Reyhan produced another photograph of her father and that elderly residents recognized Molla Juma in the group image. The newspaper therefore presented the identification as confirmed by both family testimony and community recognition (Abbasov, 1967:3). This remains a newspaper account of the verification process and should be treated as documentary evidence of contemporary identification rather than as a substitute for independent archival authentication.

A further contribution is Movlud Yarekhmadov's article "Molla Juma," published on May 5, 1969. It repeats the 1854 birth date and Ashagi Layisqi attribution and provides additional material concerning "Ismi Punhan," Molla Juma's concealed beloved, as well as references to family members and poetic texts (Yarahmadov, 1969:3). These details expand the newspaper record, although they should be distinguished from independently verified biographical facts.

The reference to Molla Juma's brother Hamid and the additional poetic texts are noteworthy because they preserve information that, according to the article, was not widely incorporated into later educational treatments of Azerbaijani oral literature. Their value lies primarily in documenting what the newspaper circulated to regional readers at the time.

Literary critic Kamil Adishirinov likewise draws attention to uncertainty surrounding the identity of "Ismi Punhan." He notes that folklorists have not reached a unanimous conclusion and interprets the concealment of the beloved's name in relation to nineteenth-century social conventions governing references to women in Nukha (Adishirinov, 2023:16). This later interpretation illustrates why the newspaper evidence should be read together with subsequent scholarship rather than treated as self-sufficient proof.

A 1970 Sheki Fahlesi article titled "Molla Juma" likewise emphasized the need for a comprehensive study of the poet-ashig's life and creative legacy. The newspaper noted that 162 poems

had been published in booklet form but argued that further collection, research, and dissemination of his heritage remained necessary (Mulla Juma, 1970:4).

Read in context, this appeal is significant because it shows the newspaper acting not only as a vehicle for publication but also as an advocate for the preservation and scholarly study of Molla Juma's legacy. Later collection and publication initiatives mentioned in the article further illustrate the interaction between regional cultural memory, community support, and formal folklore scholarship.

3.3. The Sheki Ashig Milieu and Soviet Ideological Influence

The newspaper record also contains broader evidence of ashig activity in Nukha/Sheki. Issues from January 1938 mention a number of local performers, including Ashig Pasha, Ashig Kerim, Ashig Mugum, Ashig Ahmed, Ashig Shamil, Ashig Musa, and others (Nukha Fahlesi, 1938:2). The participation of Nukha ashigs in the Second Congress of Ashigs in Baku in March 1938 and the report on a local ashig conference provide additional documentary support for the existence of an active performance environment.

Later scholarship is broadly consistent with this newspaper evidence. Yashar Garayev describes the twentieth-century ashig tradition in Sheki and its villages as strong, while Laman Vagifqizi likewise identifies Sheki as a region in which ashig art developed widely (Garayev, 2009:33; Vagifqizi, 2012:116). These later assessments do not eliminate historiographical disagreement, but they reinforce the value of the newspaper materials as evidence of regional ashig activity.

The existence of an ashig milieu in Nukha is further confirmed by the article “Conference of Nukha Ashigs,” published by writer-journalist Mammadiya Suleymanli in the March 10, 1938 issue of the newspaper “Nuxa Fahlesi.” The author notes that the conference held on March 4, 1938 provided a comprehensive overview of this field, and emphasizes that the speech delivered by writer Ali Faruq was of great importance in addressing existing gaps (Suleymanli, 1938:2)

The newspaper materials also show how Soviet ideological expectations entered published ashig poetry. Poems such as Ashig Mugum’s “Yashasin” and Ashig Piri’s “Kolkhoz” praise socialism, collective farming, workers’ and peasants’ unity, and Leninist political language (Aşıq Müğüm, 1938; Ashig Piri, 1938). Rather than reading these poems only as spontaneous expressions of political conviction, they should also be situated within the publication environment and ideological conventions of the period.

Ölkəmizdə sosializm qurulmuş,
Azad hüquq, yeni həyat görmüşük.
Fəhlə-kəndli, biz əl-ələ vermişik,
Lenin qoyan doğru yollar yaşasın (Aşıq Müğüm, 1938:3)

Socialism has been built in our country,
We have seen equal rights and a new life.
Workers and peasants, we have joined hands;
Long live the true path laid down by Lenin.

In the poem “Kolkhoz” by Ashig Piri, the collective farm system was applauded and the leading power of Lenin’s party was glorified:

Partiyamız bizə rəhbərlik edir,
Sovet xalqı Lenin yolu ilə gedir.
Bir-birilə yaxın qardaşlıq edir,
Kəndimizdən səsi gəlir kolxozun (Ashig Piri, 1938:3).

Our Party guides us,
The Soviet people follow Lenin's path.
They live together in close brotherhood;

The voice of the collective farm rises from our village.

Ashig Musa, one of the representatives of the ashig milieu in Sheki during the 1920s–1950s, learned the secrets of the ashig art from Molla Juma in his adolescence. Like many of his contemporaries, his poetry was also shaped by the demands of Soviet ideology. Although the theme of nature, one of the central motifs of ashig poetry, occupied an important place in his work, ideological influences are evident even in poems devoted to this subject. In this regard, Ashig Musa's poem "Spring" is particularly noteworthy.

Bahar çağı, xoş zamandır, yoldaşlar,
Bülbüllər oxuyur, güllər açılmış.
Gözəllər geyinib qırmızı donu,
Xoş danışır, şirin dillər açılmış (Aşıq Musa, 1938:3).
Spring has come; what a pleasant season, friends.
Nightingales are singing and flowers are blooming.
Young women have put on their red dresses;
Sweet words flow from smiling lips.

In Ashig Musa's "Spring," conventional images of nature and seasonal renewal are followed by explicitly political references. This shift illustrates the coexistence of traditional lyrical motifs and Soviet ideological vocabulary within published ashig poetry.

Çox gözəl zamana, gözəl dövrandır,
Düşmənlərin ürəkləri xallandı,
Azadlıq verilib, çadra tullandı,
Hər tərəfdə ipək tellər asılmış (Aşıq Musa, 1938:3).

What a beautiful time, what a beautiful age;
Our enemies' hearts are troubled.
Freedom has come; the veil has been cast aside,
Silken tresses are visible on every side.

3.4. Continuity of Ashig Performance and Local Cultural Institutions

The historical record extends beyond individual newspaper articles. Salman Mumtaz's notes on prominent ashigs include Ashig Pasha of the Dodu settlement of Sheki among recognized performers of the period (Salman, F-24, storage unit 88). When read alongside the newspaper materials, these records help situate the local performers in a wider history of Azerbaijani ashig culture.

Taken together, the materials indicate that the newspaper repeatedly served as a platform for reporting on ashig art and publishing poetry by local performers. Later issues continued this function through contributions by figures such as Ashig Hajibala, Ashig Ismayil, and Ashig Sakit.

The article "He Inspires Me," published on August 20, 1970, records Ashig Hajibala Ibrahimov's recollection of seeing Molla Juma perform and describes Molla Juma as an important source of artistic inspiration (Ibrahimov, 1970:4). The value of this text lies in its first-person memory of performance practice and in the way it links intergenerational transmission with the cultural life of Sheki.

Bülbül mövsümündə gülünü səslər,
Bostançı tağında şamama bəslər,
Hər kim ki, Cüməni sınamaq istər,
Axırda əlinə əl verib gedər (Ibrahimov, 1970:4).

The nightingale calls to its rose in season,
The gardener tends the fruit upon the vine.
Whoever wishes to put Juma to the test,
In the end will offer him a hand in respect.

The same article records Hajibala Ibrahimov's recollection that seeing Molla Juma perform awakened his interest in music and ashig art. Although Ibrahimov worked for decades as a tractor driver, he states that he continued to carry his instrument and perform at collective-farm clubs and weddings (Ibrahimov, 1970:4). This testimony is useful because it shows how ashig practice continued alongside ordinary working life and how Molla Juma functioned as an intergenerational model for later performers.

Azadlıq bəxş olub Azərbaycana,
İyirmi səkkiz aprel, bir may günündə.
İnsanlar çatıb şöhrətə-şana,
İyirmi səkkiz aprel, bir may günündə (Ibrahimov, 1970:4).

Freedom has been bestowed on Azerbaijan,
On the twenty-eighth of April and the first of May.
People have attained honor and renown,
On the twenty-eighth of April and the first of May.

The continuation of Molla Juma's legacy was not limited to male performers. A 1984 article on the "Juma" ensemble describes women performers, including Pari Asgarova, Guljan Taghiyeva, and Kifayat Ismayilova, participating in saz performance and concert programs ("Friday" ensemble of ashigs, 1984:4). This material broadens the newspaper's representation of the ashig tradition and shows its institutional presence in local cultural houses and ensembles.

3.5. Folk Dance, Performance, and Cultural Memory

The newspaper also documented organized folk performance beyond the ashig tradition. Sevinj Hasanova's 1985 article "Regarding Folk Creativity" discusses the "Zorkhana" folklore dance ensemble and its role in presenting folk music, games, and dances associated with regional customs (Hasanova, 1985:4). The account emphasizes the staging of local traditions for public audiences and the ensemble's place within Sheki's organized cultural life.

Hasanova's account traces the ensemble's public activity to the mid-1950s and reports recognition at republican festivals in 1956 and 1957 (Hasanova, 1985:4). These details are important not simply as performance history but as evidence of how local traditions were institutionalized and presented to mass audiences during the Soviet period.

In 1990, Ashig Sakit Kocheri introduced the column "Folk Creativity - Juma Fountain," which aimed to present local folk poets and ashigs and to connect contemporary performers with the legacy of Molla Juma (People's creativity - Friday spring, 1990:4). The column's programmatic statement frames folk creativity as a living regional tradition that should be identified, preserved, and transmitted. Its short life, ending with the newspaper's closure in 1991, also reflects the economic disruption of the period.

3.6. Children's Games and Anecdotes

In its final years, Sheki Fahlesi also addressed children's folk games and concerns about the loss of local traditions. Bahram Nutvali oglu's article "Let's Play Diredoyme," published under the rubric "Let's Keep Our National Games Alive," lists games remembered as popular among children and adolescents and calls for their preservation (Folk creativity - Friday spring, 1990:4). Some broader historical claims made in that newspaper article about the origins or international diffusion of particular games require independent verification; in the present study they are treated as examples of contemporary heritage discourse rather than established historical fact.

The educational framing of these game-related articles is also significant. The newspaper presents traditional games as vehicles for physical skill, endurance, courage, attention, and social memory, thereby linking recreation with cultural education.

Anecdotes formed another part of the newspaper's folklore repertoire. Items published in a "Molla Nasreddin" style used humor and satire to comment on everyday social behavior. Telman

Hamidli's "Fatma Is Coming, Run," for example, is discussed in relation to a folk-tale variant, while "I'll Go Out Myself" uses comic irony in a story about a dismissed salesman (Nutvali oglu, 1990; Hamidli, 1990). These examples show the newspaper functioning not only as an archive of inherited folklore but also as a medium through which folkloric forms were adapted to contemporary social commentary.

4. Conclusion

The materials examined in this study show that Sheki Fahlesi and its predecessor titles were important regional sources for the documentation and circulation of folklore. Across the cited issues, the newspaper published material on ashig performers and poetry, Molla Juma's biography and reception, folk ensembles and dances, children's games, anecdotes, and related aspects of local cultural life.

The strongest contribution of the newspaper record is its cumulative evidence concerning the Sheki ashig environment and the regional reception of Molla Juma. At the same time, the sources demonstrate that newspaper evidence must be read critically: some items preserve first-person testimony or contemporary documentation, whereas others reproduce interpretations, ideological language, or claims that require comparison with independent scholarship. The historical value of the corpus therefore lies both in the information it contains and in what it reveals about the cultural and political contexts in which folklore was represented.

By bringing these dispersed materials together, the study contributes to the history of Azerbaijani regional folklore research and demonstrates the usefulness of periodicals as sources for cultural history. Further research could expand the corpus through a systematic issue-by-issue survey and compare the Sheki materials with folklore coverage in other regional newspapers.

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Conflict of Interest

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Author Contributions

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Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request.

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Strategic autonomy in a fragmenting world order: Kazakhstan and Mexico in comparative perspective, with lessons from Türkiye and Brazil

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Abstract

This article compares how Kazakhstan and Mexico preserve political agency under structurally asymmetric interdependence, using Türkiye and Brazil as secondary reference cases. It develops negotiated autonomy as a middle-range concept for secondary and Global South powers that cannot eliminate dependence but can sometimes reorganize it. The study integrates constructivist, poststructuralist, decolonial, and Latin American autonomy traditions while assigning each a distinct analytical function. Methodologically, it uses a structured qualitative comparison of official foreign-policy documents, leadership statements, trade and integration data, and recent peer-reviewed research from 2020-2026. Evidence is coded across five dimensions: concentration of dependence, partner diversification, multilateral strategy, narrative sovereignty, and demonstrated capacity for selective resistance. The comparison shows that Kazakhstan institutionalizes autonomy through multivectorism and visible post-2022 resistance on questions of territorial recognition; Mexico retains diplomatic room for maneuver despite extreme North American economic integration, including issue-specific disagreement with Washington-centered policy responses. Türkiye illustrates the possibilities and political-economic limits of assertive autonomy, while Brazil represents autonomy through diversification and active non-alignment traditions. The article further distinguishes diplomatic from infrastructural autonomy and identifies scope conditions under which diversification ceases to generate meaningful agency. Negotiated autonomy therefore explains not independence from interdependence, but the variable capacity to prevent asymmetry from becoming automatic political obedience.

Keywords: strategic autonomy, Kazakhstan, Mexico, multipolarity, Global South.

Бөлшектеніп бара жатқан әлемдік тәртіптегі стратегиялық автономия: Қазақстан мен Мексиканы салыстырмалы талдау және Түркия мен Бразилия тәжірибесі

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Аңдатпа

Бұл мақала құрылымдық асимметрия жағдайында Қазақстан мен Мексиканың саяси агенттікті қалай сақтайтынын салыстырады; Түркия мен Бразилия қосымша салыстырмалы мысалдар ретінде қолданылады. Зерттеу тәуелділікті толық жоя алмайтын, бірақ оны белгілі бір дәрежеде қайта ұйымдастыра алатын Жаһандық Оңтүстік пен екінші дәрежелі державалар үшін «келісілген автономия» ұғымын орта деңгейлі аналитикалық концепт ретінде ұсынады. Теориялық бөлім конструктивизмді, постструктурализмді, деколониалдық көзқарасты және

Латын Америкасындағы автономия дәстүрін біріктіреді, бірақ олардың әрқайсысына нақты аналитикалық міндет жүктейді. Әдістемелік тұрғыдан 2020-2026 жылдардағы ресми сыртқы саясат құжаттары, мемлекет басшыларының мәлімдемелері, сауда және интеграциялық деректер, сондай-ақ рецензияланған ғылыми әдебиет негізінде құрылымдалған сапалық салыстыру жүргізіледі. Материал бес өлшем бойынша талданады: тәуелділіктің шоғырлануы, серіктестерді әртараптандыру, көпжақты стратегия, егемендік нарративі және үстем серіктестің қысымына таңдамалы түрде қарсы тұру қабілеті. Нәтижелер Қазақстанның көпвекторлы саясат арқылы автономияны институционалдандырғанын және 2022 жылдан кейін аумақтық мойындау мәселесінде дербес ұстаным көрсеткенін анықтайды. Мексика АҚШ-пен өте терең экономикалық интеграцияға қарамастан, дипломатиялық маневр кеңістігін және кейбір мәселелер бойынша дербес позициясын сақтайды. Түркия белсенді автономияның мүмкіндіктері мен экономикалық шектеулерін, ал Бразилия әртараптандыру және белсенді қосылмау дәстүрін көрсетеді. Мақала дипломатиялық және инфрақұрылымдық автономияны ажыратып, әртараптандырудың саяси агенттік өндіру қабілеті жоғалатын шектерді де талдайды. Ұсынылған «келісілген автономия» ұғымы тәуелділіктен толық шығуды емес, асимметрияның автоматты саяси бағынуға айналуына жол бермейтін әртараптандырылған қатынастарды, көпжақты институттарды, егемендік нарративтерін және материалдық баламаларды үйлестіру қабілетін түсіндіреді. Осы тұрғыдан зерттеу шағын және орта державалардың агенттігін ұлы державалар бәсекесінің жай ғана нәтижесі емес, белсенді саяси практика ретінде қарастырады.

Кілт сөздер: стратегиялық автономия, Қазақстан, Мексика, көпполярлылық, жаһандық Оңтүстік.

Стратегическая автономия в фрагментирующемся мировом порядке: сравнительный анализ Казахстана и Мексики с учетом опыта Турции и Бразилии

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Аннотация

Статья сравнивает, каким образом Казахстан и Мексика сохраняют политическую субъектность в условиях структурно асимметричной взаимозависимости; Турция и Бразилия используются как дополнительные сравнительные случаи. Предлагается концепт «согласованной автономии» как аналитическая категория среднего уровня для второстепенных держав и стран Глобального Юга, которые не способны устранить зависимость, но могут частично перестраивать ее структуру. Теоретическая рамка объединяет конструктивизм, постструктурализм, деколониальный подход и латиноамериканскую традицию автономии, при этом каждой традиции отводится отдельная аналитическая функция. Метод основан на структурированном качественном сравнении официальных внешнеполитических документов, заявлений руководителей, данных о торговле и интеграции, а также современной рецензируемой литературы за 2020-2026 годы. Материал анализируется по пяти измерениям: концентрация зависимости, диверсификация партнеров, многосторонняя стратегия, нарратив суверенитета и продемонстрированная способность к избирательному сопротивлению давлению доминирующего партнера. Результаты показывают, что Казахстан институционализирует автономию посредством многовекторности и после 2022 года демонстрирует самостоятельность по вопросам территориального признания. Мексика, несмотря на исключительно глубокую экономическую интеграцию с США, сохраняет

дипломатическое пространство для маневра и способность к несогласию по отдельным вопросам. Турция демонстрирует возможности и политико-экономические пределы более активной автономии, а Бразилия — традицию автономии через диверсификацию и активное неприсоединение. Статья также различает дипломатическую и инфраструктурную автономию и определяет условия, при которых диверсификация перестает обеспечивать значимую политическую субъектность. Предлагаемая «согласованная автономия» объясняет не освобождение от взаимозависимости, а способность сочетать диверсифицированные связи, многосторонние институты, нарративы суверенитета и материальные альтернативы так, чтобы структурная асимметрия не превращалась автоматически в политическое подчинение. Тем самым агентность второстепенных держав рассматривается как активная политическая практика, а не как простой результат конкуренции великих держав.

Ключевые слова: стратегическая автономия, Казахстан, Мексика, многополярность, глобальный Юг.

1. Introduction

Strategic autonomy has returned to the vocabulary of international politics because the post-Cold War expectation of an increasingly integrated liberal order has given way to great-power rivalry, economic coercion, sanctions, supply-chain securitization, and competing regional projects. Yet the concept is still frequently discussed as though autonomy were mainly a privilege of the European Union or of states with major military capabilities. This article starts from a different premise: autonomy is analytically most revealing where dependence cannot simply be removed. Secondary powers and Global South states often remain deeply embedded in unequal relationships while simultaneously seeking room for independent diplomatic action (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2026; Fortin et al., 2023).

Kazakhstan and Mexico provide a deliberately demanding comparison. Kazakhstan is geographically embedded between Russia and China, relies on regional security and transport structures shaped by its post-Soviet environment, and simultaneously cultivates relations with the European Union, the United States, Türkiye, and Asian partners. Mexico is economically integrated with the United States to a degree that makes simple diversification much more difficult: in 2024, more than 80% of Mexican goods exports went to the United States, while more than 40% of Mexican goods imports came from that market (Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.). These cases are therefore not equivalent; their value lies precisely in structured contrast between two different forms of structural asymmetry.

The article asks: how do Kazakhstan and Mexico preserve political agency without abandoning relationships on which their prosperity and security partly depend? The argument is that autonomy should be understood as negotiated rather than absolute. Negotiated autonomy is the capacity to manage asymmetric interdependence through diversified relationships, multilateral institutions, sovereignty-producing narratives, infrastructural alternatives, and demonstrated selective resistance. Türkiye and Brazil are used as secondary reference cases. Türkiye illustrates a more assertive strategy whose sustainability depends on political-economic foundations (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2026), while Brazil represents the Latin American tradition of autonomy through diversification and contemporary active non-alignment (Fortin et al., 2023; Vigevani & Cepaluni, 2007).

The contribution is threefold. First, the article places strategic autonomy in a Global South and secondary-power setting rather than treating it as a great-power attribute. Second, it distinguishes negotiated autonomy from hedging, multivectorism, non-alignment, and autonomy through diversification. Third, it separates diplomatic autonomy from infrastructural autonomy, thereby explaining why a state may sustain independent positions in multilateral or symbolic domains while remaining materially constrained in trade, finance, energy, transport, or technology. This distinction is particularly useful for Mexico and Kazakhstan, where autonomy is real but uneven across issue areas.

The argument also extends the author's previous research on connectivity governance and regional agency. Work on Kazakhstan and Türkiye shows that transport corridors become politically useful only when institutions, regulatory practices, and reputational credibility make alternatives usable rather than merely symbolic (İşcan, 2026a). Related studies on Uzbekistan-Latin America relations and Georgia-Türkiye connectivity similarly emphasize diversification and institutional visibility as mechanisms through which non-hegemonic states widen external options (İşcan, 2026b, 2026c). The present article moves from those sectoral mechanisms to a broader conceptual question: under what conditions do multiple external relationships produce political autonomy rather than simply multiple dependencies?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Integrating the theoretical traditions

The first theoretical tradition is constructivist. Autonomy is not only a distribution of material capabilities; it is also an identity claim. Wendt (1992) demonstrates that interests and identities are produced through social interaction rather than given independently of it. In the present analysis, constructivism is operationalized through the dimension of narrative sovereignty: recurring official languages of sovereignty, non-intervention, multivectorism, or plural belonging are treated as evidence that independent action has become part of the state's legitimate foreign-policy identity.

The second tradition is poststructuralist. Foreign policy does not simply defend a pre-existing political identity; it also helps constitute the boundaries of that identity by distinguishing acceptable cooperation from unacceptable dependence (Campbell, 1998; Hansen, 2006). Here, poststructuralism is used to interpret how official discourse frames hierarchy, pressure, alignment, and sovereign choice. It is therefore not coded as a separate numerical variable. Its analytical function is interpretive: it explains why the same material relationship can be narrated as partnership, necessity, vulnerability, or subordination.

The third tradition comes from Latin American autonomy theory. Vigevani and Cepaluni (2007) distinguish autonomy through distance, participation, and diversification, showing that room for maneuver can be expanded not only by withdrawing from dominant institutions but also by multiplying partnerships and coalition options. Russell and Tokatlian's (2013) idea of non-acquiescence similarly emphasizes agency without requiring isolation. In this article, the Latin American autonomy tradition is directly operationalized through partner diversification, multilateral strategy, and selective resistance.

Decolonial and dependency-oriented perspectives provide a fourth layer. Quijano (2000) and Mignolo (2011) draw attention to the fact that formal sovereignty can coexist with deeply unequal material and epistemic structures. Their role in the article is primarily contextual rather than a standalone coded dimension: they inform the interpretation of dependence concentration and explain why Global South autonomy must be evaluated against historically produced hierarchies rather than against an unrealistic benchmark of complete independence. This differentiation responds to a common problem in eclectic frameworks: theories are not treated as interchangeable, but as performing distinct tasks within the same analytical architecture.

Table 1 – Theoretical traditions and analytical functions

Theoretical tradition	Analytical function in this article	Directly operationalized through
Constructivism	Explains how autonomy becomes part of state identity and legitimate foreign-policy behavior.	Narrative sovereignty; repeated official language of sovereignty, multivectorism, non-intervention, or plural belonging.

Poststructuralism	Interprets how discourse constructs boundaries between legitimate cooperation and unacceptable subordination.	Interpretive reading of official statements; not a separate ordinal score.
Latin American autonomy theory	Identifies mechanisms that widen room for maneuver without requiring isolation.	Partner diversification; multilateral strategy; selective resistance.
Decolonial/dependency approaches	Provides structural context for historically produced hierarchy and asymmetric interdependence.	Interpretive context for dependence concentration and scope conditions; not a standalone score.

Note. The framework is deliberately asymmetric: some traditions are directly operationalized, while others provide interpretive context. This avoids treating theoretical eclecticism as conceptual equivalence.

2.2. Conceptual boundaries: what negotiated autonomy adds

Negotiated autonomy is closest to, but not identical with, several established concepts. Hedging is generally a risk-management strategy under uncertainty in which states avoid exclusive alignment by combining engagement and insurance (Kuik, 2021). Multivectorism is a more institutionalized practice of maintaining relations with several external centers and is especially associated with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states (Vanderhill et al., 2020; Yuneman, 2023). Non-alignment and its contemporary active variant emphasize refusal to accept the positions of competing great-power camps a priori (Fortin et al., 2023). Autonomy through diversification focuses on widening partners and coalitions to reduce dependence (Vigevani & Cepaluni, 2007). Strategic autonomy is the broader umbrella concept: the capacity to preserve decision-making space despite external constraints (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2026).

Negotiated autonomy differs by making persistent asymmetry, rather than uncertainty alone, the starting condition. It asks not simply whether a state avoids alignment or diversifies partners, but whether those practices measurably prevent a stronger partner from converting structural advantage into automatic political obedience. Multivectorism is one possible mechanism of negotiated autonomy, but Mexico demonstrates that negotiated autonomy can also exist where genuine multivectorism is materially impossible. Likewise, non-alignment is not required: a state may be embedded in an alliance, a trade regime, or a dense regional production system and still negotiate specific zones of autonomy. The concept therefore integrates diversification with multilateral leverage, identity narratives, infrastructural redundancy, and observable resistance.

The concept has clear scope conditions. Negotiated autonomy is more likely to succeed where at least some credible external alternatives exist; where state institutions can coordinate foreign economic and diplomatic policy; where disagreement with a dominant partner does not impose prohibitive costs across all issue areas; and where political narratives of autonomy are supported by material options. When a single partner dominates trade, security, finance, infrastructure, and technology simultaneously, diversification may remain symbolic. Conversely, diversification without a stable political rationale may produce opportunistic switching rather than durable autonomy. Negotiated autonomy is thus issue-specific and graduated, not a binary condition.

Table 2 – Negotiated autonomy in relation to adjacent concepts

Concept	**Core emphasis**	**Difference from negotiated autonomy**
Hedging	Risk management under uncertainty through simultaneous engagement and insurance.	Negotiated autonomy begins from persistent asymmetry, not uncertainty alone, and

		requires evidence of preserved political agency.
Multivectorism	Institutionalized relations with several external centers.	A possible mechanism of negotiated autonomy; not applicable in the same form when one relationship is structurally dominant, as in Mexico.
Non-alignment / active non-alignment	Avoiding automatic adherence to competing great-power camps.	Negotiated autonomy can exist inside alliances or dense integration regimes and therefore does not require non-alignment.
Autonomy through diversification	Broadening partners, coalitions, and South-South relations to increase bargaining room.	Closest precursor; negotiated autonomy adds dependence concentration, infrastructural capacity, and demonstrated selective resistance.
Strategic autonomy	Broad capacity to preserve decision-making space.	Negotiated autonomy is a middle-range specification for structurally asymmetric secondary and Global South powers.

Note. Negotiated autonomy is proposed as a middle-range concept for persistent structural asymmetry; it can incorporate multivectorism, diversification, or non-alignment as mechanisms without being reducible to any one of them.

3. Method

The article uses a structured qualitative comparison. Kazakhstan and Mexico are the primary cases; Türkiye and Brazil are secondary reference cases used as plausibility probes. The temporal focus is 2020-2026, a period encompassing the COVID-19 shock, Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, intensified United States-China competition, renewed industrial policy, and a wider turn toward supply-chain resilience. The design follows a most-different logic: Kazakhstan and Mexico differ in geography, regime structure, security environment, and economic model, yet both confront durable structural asymmetries. Similar mechanisms observed across such different settings provide stronger grounds for treating negotiated autonomy as portable beyond a single region.

The evidence base combines four types of material. First, official foreign-policy concepts and sectoral policy documents were included when they directly defined external priorities, sovereignty, multilateralism, or diversification. Core examples include Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy Concept for 2020-2030 and Mexico's Sectoral Foreign Relations Programs for 2020-2024 and 2025-2030 (Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020; Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 2020, 2025). Second, presidential and ministerial statements were used when they documented a concrete position involving alignment, resistance, or relations with dominant partners. Third, trade and integration data were used descriptively to establish the material concentration of dependence, including United States-Mexico trade data. Fourth, peer-reviewed scholarship was selected for direct relevance to the four cases, with priority given to 2020-2026 research while retaining older foundational works where conceptually necessary.

Document selection was purposive rather than exhaustive. Materials entered the evidence matrix when they met three criteria: direct relevance to one of the five analytical dimensions, identifiable institutional or scholarly provenance, and temporal or conceptual comparability across cases. Official documents were cross-checked against recent scholarship to avoid treating state narratives as self-validating evidence. Likewise, qualitative judgments were not inferred from a single quotation. A

classification was assigned only when at least two types of evidence converged—for example, trade concentration plus policy dependence, or official sovereignty language plus documented disagreement with a dominant partner.

The coding proceeded in two stages. In the first stage, each piece of evidence was assigned to one or more of five dimensions: (1) concentration of dependence; (2) partner diversification; (3) multilateral strategy; (4) narrative sovereignty; and (5) selective resistance capacity. In the second stage, case-level judgments were synthesized using the explicit rubric in Table 3. Because this is a single-author interpretive study, the procedure does not claim intercoder reliability. Instead, it prioritizes transparency, triangulation, and an auditable connection between qualitative labels and the evidence presented in the text.

Table 3 – Coding rubric for qualitative classifications

Dimension	Classification rule used in the comparison
Dependence concentration	Very high: one partner dominates several structural channels and substitution costs are high. Medium-high: dependence is substantial but divided across two or more major partners or external markets. Moderate: no single partner dominates across multiple domains.
Partner diversification	High: alternative partners are institutionalized across several policy/economic channels. Moderate: alternatives exist diplomatically but remain materially limited. Low: alternatives are episodic or weak.
Multilateral strategy	High: recurring institutions/coalitions are actively used to widen room for maneuver. Moderate: participation is regular but creates limited leverage. Low: multilateral participation is marginal to autonomy strategy.
Narrative sovereignty	Yes when official doctrine and leadership discourse consistently frame sovereign choice, non-intervention, multivectorism, or plural belonging as legitimate policy principles.
Selective resistance capacity	Issue-dependent when documented disagreements exist but the ability to absorb costs varies by domain. High only where repeated disagreement can be sustained across multiple high-cost issues.

Note. Labels summarize convergent evidence rather than numerical scores. No category is assigned from a single quotation or data point.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Kazakhstan: multivectorism as institutionalized autonomy

Kazakhstan provides the clearest primary case of autonomy through multivectorism. Multivector foreign policy has developed from a strategy of necessity into a durable doctrine for managing relationships with Russia, China, Western actors, and regional partners (Vanderhill et al., 2020).

Kazakhstan's 2020 Foreign Policy Concept explicitly emphasizes a pragmatic, balanced, and multivector course, while recent research continues to describe the approach as adaptive rather than abandoned under intensified geopolitical pressure (Ivanov & Petrenko, 2025; Mamedov, 2024; Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020; Tukumov, 2024).

The post-2022 environment provides an important test of selective resistance. Kazakhstan did not follow Russia in recognizing the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk entities. Research on Central Asian responses to the war documents that Kazakhstan explicitly refused recognition while simultaneously avoiding full strategic rupture with Moscow (Eom, 2022; Yuneman, 2023). This combination matters analytically. Refusal did not amount to anti-Russian alignment: Kazakhstan remained economically and institutionally connected to Russia and adopted cautious positions in multilateral voting. Yet the territorial-recognition issue shows that partnership did not translate into automatic obedience on a core sovereignty question.

This is precisely where multivectorism becomes more than rhetorical balance. Kazakhstan has strengthened engagement with China, the European Union, Türkiye, the Organization of Turkic States, and alternative transport routes while preserving working relations with Russia. Kucherov et al. (2023) interpret post-2022 foreign-policy preferences as adjustment under pressure rather than a wholesale geopolitical turn. The pattern supports the negotiated-autonomy argument: Kazakhstan does not eliminate dependence; it tries to partition dependence across partners and issue areas so that no single relationship defines the entirety of its external policy.

Türkiye adds an identity-compatible and infrastructural vector. Connectivity cooperation, the Middle Corridor, and Turkic institutions do not replace Russia or China, but they create additional channels of trade, recognition, and regional action (İşcan, 2026a). This illustrates the difference between diversification as symbolism and diversification as usable capacity. Routes and partnerships contribute to autonomy only when they are institutionally credible enough to lower the cost of disagreement with existing partners.

4.2. Mexico: autonomy under extreme asymmetric interdependence

Mexico is a harder test because asymmetry is much more concentrated. The United States is not simply one external vector among several; it is the organizing structure of Mexican manufacturing, trade, migration, and supply chains. In 2024, over 80% of Mexican goods exports went to the United States and more than 40% of Mexican goods imports came from there (Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.). This degree of concentration creates what can be termed asymmetric embeddedness: Mexico may diversify diplomacy more readily than it can diversify the material foundations of production.

Recent scholarship reinforces this interpretation. Velázquez Flores (2022) identifies a combination of traditional principles and pragmatic adaptation under the López Obrador administration. Macdonald (2026) argues that Mexico's foreign policy continues to be constrained by the relationship with the United States even as recent governments revive sovereignty, non-intervention, and a more skeptical stance toward hegemonic expectations. Jima-González et al. (2024), analyzing Latin American responses to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, likewise show that Mexico's foreign-policy discourse and practices can generate differentiated positions rather than simple bloc alignment.

Official policy documents demonstrate continuity in the normative infrastructure of autonomy. The 2020-2024 Sectoral Foreign Relations Program committed Mexico to constitutional principles, multilateral diplomacy, and active participation in regional mechanisms, while the 2025-2030 program emphasizes expanding global diplomatic relations, reinforcing multilateral presence, and protecting national interests in a changing geopolitical context (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 2020, 2025). In her 2024 inauguration, President Claudia Sheinbaum explicitly reaffirmed self-determination, non-intervention, and peaceful settlement of disputes as guiding principles of foreign policy (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 2024). These are not merely historical references to the

Estrada Doctrine; they remain part of the state's contemporary vocabulary of legitimate external behavior.

The Russia-Ukraine war provides a concrete example of selective resistance. Mexico rejected the invasion as a principle while also declining to send weapons and refusing to adopt the sanctions policy favored by the United States and several European governments. President López Obrador stated in March 2022 that Mexico would not send arms abroad and in May 2022 reiterated that Mexico was not proposing sanctions, instead emphasizing negotiation and diplomacy (Presidencia de la República, 2022a, 2022b). This was not neutrality in the sense of indifference, nor a pro-Russian alignment. It was an issue-specific attempt to separate Mexico's diplomatic judgment from the policy instruments preferred by its dominant economic partner and its allies.

Mexico's autonomy is therefore selective and uneven. It is comparatively stronger in diplomatic recognition, multilateral initiatives, voting, and normative positioning, and weaker where market access, migration enforcement, investment, or integrated production create immediate bilateral leverage. This finding explains why strategic autonomy should not be measured simply by political distance from the United States. A deeply integrated state can preserve decision-making space in some domains while remaining structurally constrained in others.

4.3. Türkiye: assertive autonomy and its contradictions

Türkiye represents a more assertive reference model. It remains a NATO member and is deeply economically connected to Europe, yet it has cultivated relations with Russia, China, the Gulf, Africa, Central Asia, and other non-Western partners. The most relevant recent scholarship conceptualizes Turkish strategic autonomy through structural orientation, political motive, and economic infrastructure, while emphasizing contradictions between geopolitical ambition and political-economic capacity (Aydın-Düzgit et al., 2026). This framework is especially useful for negotiated autonomy because it shows that diplomatic activism alone does not guarantee sustainable independence of action.

Türkiye's value for the comparison lies in both its possibilities and its limits. Diversified partnerships can increase bargaining capacity, but multiple relationships can also create incompatible expectations. Macroeconomic vulnerability, technology dependence, and dense European commercial ties can narrow room for maneuver even when diplomatic positioning is highly active. Türkiye therefore demonstrates that autonomy is not produced by rhetorical distance from the West; it depends on the capacity to absorb the costs of disagreement.

At the same time, Türkiye's expanding engagement in Central Asia shows how identity, public diplomacy, and connectivity can supplement material strategy. Turkic institutions and corridor initiatives create arenas in which influence is exercised through networks and practical cooperation rather than through exclusive alignment. This logic is consistent with research on connectivity governance, which treats transport and institutional coordination as sources of agency only when they produce credible alternatives (İşcan, 2026a).

4.4. Brazil: autonomy through diversification as a Global South tradition

Brazil provides the strongest conceptual bridge to the Latin American tradition of autonomy. Vigevani and Cepaluni's (2007) formulation of autonomy through diversification describes a strategy of broadening South-South relations, coalitions, and multilateral ties in order to increase bargaining space. Contemporary active non-alignment similarly argues that Latin American states should avoid accepting the positions of great-power camps automatically and instead evaluate cooperation according to their own interests (Fortin et al., 2023).

Brazil demonstrates that anti-hegemonic agency need not mean anti-Western alignment. The objective is not to sever relations with the United States or Europe, but to preserve alternative coalitions and policy options, including BRICS and South-South mechanisms. This distinction is important for both Kazakhstan and Mexico. Each depends on powerful partners; the relevant question

is whether those relationships leave credible room for alternative partnerships and autonomous judgment.

Brazil also clarifies the importance of institutionalized diversification. Diversification is more durable when it is supported by recurring coalitions, regional identities, and economic scale rather than by episodic diplomatic gestures. The Brazilian case therefore serves as a plausibility probe for the negotiated-autonomy concept: it shows how diversified institutional relations can reduce monopoly leverage without requiring a posture of geopolitical equidistance.

4.5. Comparative mechanisms of negotiated autonomy

The comparison suggests that autonomy is neither the absence of dependence nor a binary status. What varies is whether dependence is politically manageable. Kazakhstan manages asymmetry by multiplying vectors and preserving an explicit sovereignty doctrine. Mexico manages it through issue-specific diplomatic autonomy inside a highly concentrated North American economic structure. Türkiye seeks leverage through assertive diversification but encounters economic sustainability constraints. Brazil institutionalizes diversification through South-South coalitions and multilateral identity. These are different pathways to the same broader problem: preventing a structurally stronger partner from turning advantage into automatic compliance.

Selective resistance is the most demanding indicator because it moves the analysis beyond rhetoric. Kazakhstan's refusal to recognize Donetsk and Luhansk despite close ties with Russia demonstrates that multivectorism can produce a concrete boundary of acceptable alignment (Eom, 2022; Yuneman, 2023). Mexico's refusal to join arms transfers or sanctions against Russia, while maintaining a public rejection of invasion and commitment to diplomacy, demonstrates a different form of bounded disagreement under much deeper economic dependence on the United States (Jima-González et al., 2024; Presidencia de la República, 2022a, 2022b). These examples do not prove comprehensive autonomy; they show issue-specific capacity to resist expected policy convergence.

This evidence also clarifies why qualitative classifications must be interpreted conservatively. A label such as 'high diversification' does not mean independence; it means that alternative relationships are institutionally developed enough to create non-trivial options. 'Very high dependence concentration' does not mean that no autonomous action is possible; it means that the material cost of disagreement is likely to be especially high. The classifications in Table 4 therefore summarize mechanisms documented in the text rather than substituting for evidence.

Table 4 – Analytical indicators of strategic autonomy in the primary cases

Dimension	Kazakhstan	Mexico	Evidence summarized in the text
Dependence concentration	Medium-high; split among Russia/China plus external markets and routes.	Very high; centered on the United States across trade and production.	Kazakhstan: Republic of Kazakhstan (2020), Eom (2022), Kucherov et al. (2023). Mexico: USTR (n.d.), Macdonald (2026).
Partner diversification	High and explicit.	Moderate; stronger diplomatically than materially.	Kazakhstan: Vanderhill et al. (2020), Ivanov & Petrenko (2025), İşcan (2026a). Mexico: SRE (2020,

			2025), Velázquez Flores (2022).
Multilateral strategy	High: UN, SCO, OTS and other regional formats.	High diplomatically: UN, CELAC and broader regional/multilateral engagement.	Republic of Kazakhstan (2020); SRE (2020, 2025).
Narrative sovereignty	Yes: multivectorism and sovereign statehood.	Yes: sovereignty, non-intervention and peaceful settlement.	Republic of Kazakhstan (2020); SRE (2024, 2025).
Selective resistance capacity	Issue-dependent; visible on territorial recognition after 2022.	Issue-dependent; visible in refusal to send arms or adopt sanctions in 2022.	Eom (2022), Yuneman (2023); Jima-González et al. (2024), Presidencia de la República (2022a, 2022b).

Note. Classifications follow the rubric in Table 3 and are supported by the evidence and sources discussed in the corresponding case sections. USTR = Office of the United States Trade Representative; SRE = Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores.

4.6. Diplomatic autonomy and infrastructural autonomy

The distinction between diplomatic and infrastructural autonomy makes the concept more systematic. Diplomatic autonomy refers to the freedom to articulate positions, vote, recognize governments or territorial claims, join coalitions, and maintain relations with competing powers. It is visible primarily in decisions and official positions. Infrastructural autonomy refers to the material capacity to sustain those choices through diversified trade, finance, transport, energy, technology, and supply-chain access. It is visible in the existence of credible alternatives that reduce the cost of political disagreement.

The two dimensions can diverge. Mexico can exercise diplomatic autonomy on selected political questions while its industrial geography remains closely tied to North American policy. Kazakhstan can articulate sovereignty and diversify partnerships while still depending on inherited transport and security infrastructures. Türkiye can maintain a wide diplomatic portfolio but face financial and technological constraints. Brazil's scale provides comparatively greater material room, but does not eliminate exposure to global finance, commodities, or technology. Strategic autonomy is therefore most resilient when diplomatic and infrastructural autonomy reinforce each other.

Connectivity is central to infrastructural autonomy because routes redistribute dependence. The Trans-Caspian and Middle Corridor projects matter for Kazakhstan not because they terminate relations with Russia or China, but because they create additional pathways. The same logic applies to Mexico: diplomatic diversification has limited structural effect if alternative trade, finance, and technology relationships remain too small to change bargaining conditions. Connectivity governance is therefore not a separate synonym for autonomy; it is one mechanism through which infrastructural alternatives can become politically usable (İşcan, 2026a, 2026c).

Table 5 – Two dimensions of negotiated autonomy

Dimension	Observable indicators	Main failure mode
Diplomatic autonomy	Independent voting or recognition; coalition choice; maintenance of relations with rival powers; issue-specific disagreement.	Rhetorical autonomy without ability to sustain costs.

Infrastructural autonomy	Alternative markets, routes, finance, energy, technology, suppliers, and transport/logistics capacity.	Material concentration that makes political disagreement prohibitively costly.
Resilient negotiated autonomy	Diplomatic choice supported by credible material alternatives and institutions.	Erosion when external alternatives are symbolic, domestic coordination is weak, or dependence becomes cross-domain and monopolistic.

Note. The distinction is analytical rather than a claim that either dimension is fully independent of the other. Resilient autonomy requires interaction between political choice and material alternatives.

4.7. Scope conditions and limits

Negotiated autonomy has limits. First, diversification becomes politically weak when alternative partners are only symbolic or economically marginal. Second, a dominant partner can retain decisive leverage when dependence is concentrated across several domains at once, especially trade, finance, security, migration, and technology. Third, domestic institutional fragmentation can prevent states from converting external options into coherent policy. Fourth, autonomy can be episodic: a state may resist on recognition or voting while aligning on security or economic regulation. The concept should therefore be applied to issue areas and mechanisms rather than used as a permanent label for entire states.

These scope conditions identify the point at which diversification ceases to generate meaningful agency. Where exit or substitution costs are prohibitively high and where no credible multilateral or material alternative exists, sovereignty discourse may remain primarily symbolic. Mexico approaches this limit in some North American production and migration domains. Kazakhstan approaches it where transport or security dependence remains concentrated. In contrast, issue areas with multiple institutional venues and lower substitution costs create more room for negotiated autonomy. This graduated interpretation avoids romanticizing Global South agency while also refusing to reduce secondary states to passive objects of great-power competition.

5. Conclusion

Kazakhstan and Mexico demonstrate that strategic autonomy is most analytically meaningful where dependence cannot be wished away. Kazakhstan's multivectorism and Mexico's selective sovereignty are different responses to the same structural problem: how to preserve political agency when prosperity, security, or production are deeply entangled with stronger powers. Türkiye and Brazil broaden the comparison by showing, respectively, the ambitions and political-economic vulnerabilities of assertive autonomy and the longer Latin American tradition of autonomy through diversification.

The article's principal theoretical contribution is negotiated autonomy. The concept does not compete with multivectorism, hedging, non-alignment, or autonomy through diversification by simply renaming them. Instead, it specifies the condition they only partially capture: persistent asymmetric interdependence. Negotiated autonomy asks whether diversification, multilateralism, sovereignty narratives, infrastructural alternatives, and selective resistance together prevent structural advantage from becoming automatic political obedience. It is therefore a middle-range concept designed for issue-specific comparison across secondary and Global South powers.

The empirical comparison also shows why diplomatic and infrastructural autonomy must be separated. Kazakhstan and Mexico can both preserve meaningful diplomatic agency while remaining materially constrained in different ways. Türkiye demonstrates that assertive diplomacy can outrun economic resilience, whereas Brazil shows that long-term diversification benefits from institutionalized coalitions and economic scale. The most sustainable autonomy is consequently not

the loudest foreign-policy rhetoric but the creation of redundant routes, partners, institutions, and capabilities that make disagreement politically affordable.

A Global South perspective changes the normative question. The issue is not whether Kazakhstan, Mexico, Türkiye, or Brazil should choose one geopolitical camp. It is whether an increasingly fragmented order can accommodate states that insist on belonging to several networks at once. Their autonomy lies not in escaping interdependence, but in preserving the capacity to negotiate its terms.

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Author contributions

Sole author: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, analysis, writing, revision, source verification, and final approval.

Data availability

The study uses publicly available official documents, public trade information, and published academic sources cited in the reference list. No restricted dataset was created.

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Конституционная реформа в Казахстане: обсуждение и внедрение новых положений

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Аннотация

В статье исследуются разработка, общественное обсуждение и начальный этап реализации новой Конституции Республики Казахстан, принятой на республиканском референдуме 15 марта 2026 года. Цель исследования состоит в оценке процедурной легитимности конституционного обновления, содержания ключевых институциональных новелл и механизма их внедрения в законодательство и государственную практику. Эмпирическую основу составили материалы Конституционной комиссии, текст новой Конституции, официальные итоги референдума, Закон «О Курултае Республики Казахстан и статусе его депутатов», иные акты переходного периода, а также современные исследования по сравнительному конституционному праву. Использованы формально-юридический, системно-структурный, сравнительно-правовой и институциональный методы. Установлено, что реформа сочетает замену конституционного текста, перестройку архитектуры власти и нормативное закрепление обновленного ценностного порядка. Центральными изменениями являются переход от двухпалатного Парламента к однопалатному Курултаю, учреждение должности Вице-Президента, модификация законодательной и контрольной процедур, уточнение прав и обязанностей, а также создание особого переходного механизма. Сбор предложений через цифровые платформы и трансляция заседаний комиссии повысили открытость, однако качество участия требует мотивированной обратной связи о судьбе общественных инициатив. Обосновывается, что результативность реформы следует измерять не числом принятых актов, а независимостью институтов, судебной защищенностью прав и подотчетностью власти. Предлагаются поэтапная карта имплементации, публичный конституционный мониторинг и регулярная оценка правоприменения, позволяющие снизить риск декларативности новых норм. Результаты исследования предлагают прикладные ориентиры для законодателя, органов конституционного контроля и экспертов, оценивающих эффективность новой институциональной модели на переходном этапе.

Ключевые слова: конституционная реформа, новая Конституция, Курултай, референдум, конституционная имплементация.

Қазақстандағы конституциялық реформа: жаңа ережелерді талқылау және енгізу

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Аннотация

Мақалада 2026 жылғы 15 наурыздағы республикалық референдумда қабылданған Қазақстан Республикасының жаңа Конституциясын әзірлеу, қоғамдық талқылау және іске асыру үдерісі зерттеледі. Зерттеудің мақсаты – конституциялық жаңғыртудың рәсімдік заңдылығын, негізгі институционалдық жаңалықтардың мазмұнын және оларды заңнама мен мемлекеттік практикаға енгізудің бастапқы нәтижелерін бағалау. Дереккөздер ретінде Конституциялық комиссия отырыстарының материалдары, жаңа Конституцияның мәтіні, референдумның ресми қорытындылары, Құрылтай және оның депутаттарының мәртебесі туралы заң, сондай-ақ салыстырмалы конституциялық құқық жөніндегі заманауи зерттеулер пайдаланылды. Формальды-заңдық, жүйелік-құрылымдық, салыстырмалы-құқықтық және институционалдық әдістер қолданылды. Реформа бір мезгілде конституциялық мәтінді жаңарту, билік архитектурасын қайта құру және қоғамдық құндылықтарды нормативтік бекіту сипатында екені анықталды. Негізгі өзгерістерге екі палаталы Парламенттің орнына бір палаталы Құрылтайдың құрылуы, Вице-Президент лауазымының енгізілуі, заң шығару және бақылау рәсімдерінің өзгеруі, адам құқықтары мен конституциялық міндеттердің нақтылануы, сондай-ақ жаңа өтпелі тетіктің қалыптасуы жатады. Қоғамдық ұсыныстарды цифрлық платформалар арқылы жинау және комиссия отырыстарын тікелей көрсету ашықтықты арттырғанымен, қатысудың сапасын бағалау үшін ұсыныстардың қабылдануы немесе қабылданбауы туралы уәжді кері байланыс қажет. Автор конституциялық реформаның нәтижелілігін тек қабылданған заңдардың санымен емес, институттардың дербестігімен, құқықтардың сот арқылы қорғалуымен және биліктің есептілігімен өлшеуді ұсынады. Іске асырудың кезеңдік картасы, конституциялық мониторинг және ашық есептілік жаңа нормалардың декларативті сипатта қалу тәуекелін азайтады. Зерттеу нәтижелері заң шығарушы органдарға, конституциялық бақылау субъектілеріне және құқықтық саясатты әзірлейтін сарапшыларға жаңа конституциялық модельдің тиімділігін бағалау үшін қолданбалы өлшемдер ұсынады.

Кілт сөздер: конституциялық реформа, жаңа Конституция, Құрылтай, референдум, конституциялық имплементация.

Constitutional reform in kazakhstan: deliberation and implementation of new provisions

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Abstract

This article examines the drafting, public deliberation, and initial implementation of the new Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted by referendum on 15 March 2026. The study aims to assess the procedural legitimacy of constitutional renewal, the substance of its principal institutional innovations, and the mechanism through which they are incorporated into legislation and governmental practice. The empirical material includes records of the Constitutional Commission, the new constitutional text, the official referendum results, the Law on the Kurultai and the Status of

Its Deputies, other transitional legislation, and recent comparative constitutional scholarship. Formal legal, systemic, comparative, and institutional methods are employed. The reform is shown to combine constitutional replacement, reconstruction of the architecture of public power, and codification of a renewed normative order. Its central innovations include replacing the bicameral Parliament with a unicameral Kurultai, creating the office of Vice-President, revising legislative and oversight procedures, clarifying rights and constitutional duties, and establishing a special transitional mechanism. Digital submission of proposals and live broadcasts of Commission meetings enhanced openness; nevertheless, meaningful participation requires reasoned feedback explaining which public proposals were accepted or rejected. The article argues that implementation should be evaluated not by the number of enacted statutes but by institutional autonomy, judicial protection of rights, and governmental accountability. It proposes a phased implementation roadmap, public constitutional monitoring, and periodic assessment of legal practice. These mechanisms can reduce the risk that the new provisions remain declaratory and can connect formal constitutional change with measurable improvements in the rule of law.

Keywords: constitutional reform, new Constitution, Kurultai, referendum, constitutional implementation.

1. Введение

Конституционные реформы осуществляются на основе общепризнанных конституционных принципов – народовластия, признания прав человека как высшей ценности, разделения властей, верховенства права и других. Тем самым обеспечивается высокий авторитет конституций, эффективность их действия как незыблемой базы правовых систем соответствующих государств. Подобные реформы занимают особое место в развитии любого государства, поскольку затрагивают не отдельный сектор регулирования, а исходную модель публичной власти, пределы государственного вмешательства и гарантии личности (Bulmer, 2017). Их юридическое значение определяется содержанием новых норм, тогда как общественно-политическая устойчивость зависит также от способа подготовки текста, качества обсуждения и последовательности последующей реализации. Конституция приобретает реальную силу лишь тогда, когда ее предписания воспроизводятся в законодательстве, административных процедурах, судебной практике и повседневных отношениях граждан с государством (Loughlin, 2022). Поэтому исследование реформы не может завершаться констатацией принятия нового основного закона.

Характеризуя значение нового Основного закона, Президент Республики Казахстан К.-Ж. Токаев отметил: «Конституция – это новый фундамент сильного, энергичного и конкурентоспособного Казахстана» (Токаев, 2026). Данная формула отражает программную цель конституционной реформы: создание устойчивых государственных институтов, способных обеспечивать суверенитет, верховенство права и защиту прав человека; развитие активного общества, науки и инноваций; формирование предсказуемой правовой среды и эффективного управления. Вместе с тем достижение этих целей зависит не только от содержания Конституции, но и от последовательного внедрения ее положений в законодательство и правоприменительную практику.

Казахстанский конституционный процесс 2025 – 2026 годов стал продолжением преобразований, начатых после общенационального референдума 2022 года. Реформа 2022 года обозначила переход от суперпрезидентской модели к президентской республике, восстановила Конституционный Суд, изменила порядок формирования Парламента и расширила возможности участия граждан (Администрация Президента Республики Казахстан, 2022; Республика Казахстан, 2022a, 2022b). Однако новый цикл реформы вышел за рамки точечных поправок. По итогам двенадцати заседаний Конституционная комиссия подготовила проект новой Конституции, опираясь на предложения граждан и экспертов, поступавшие через eGov и e-Otinish, а также на наработки Рабочей группы по парламентской реформе (Администрация Президента Республики Казахстан, 2026a; Конституционный Суд

Республики Казахстан, 2026).

15 марта 2026 года проект был вынесен на республиканский референдум. В голосовании приняли участие 9 127 192 гражданина, или 73,12% лиц, обладавших правом участия; за принятие высказались 7 954 667 участников, или 87,15% проголосовавших (Центральная комиссия референдума Республики Казахстан, 2026). Эти показатели подтверждают формальное выполнение конституционных требований и демонстрируют высокий уровень электоральной поддержки. Вместе с тем процедура народного голосования представляет лишь один элемент легитимности: необходимы доступность альтернативных позиций, содержательная понятность проекта, возможность влиять на его разработку и последующая подотчетность власти.

Сравнительная наука показывает, что широкое участие само по себе не гарантирует качества или устойчивости конституции. Значение имеют момент вовлечения общества, репрезентативность участников, прозрачность преобразования предложений в нормы и наличие обратной связи (Ginsburg et al., 2009; Saunders, 2022). Опыт Чили дополнительно показывает, что высокая первоначальная поддержка конституционного обновления может смениться отторжением проекта при недостатке политического согласования и общей идентификации общества с результатом (Verdugo & García-Huidobro, 2024). Для Казахстана поэтому принципиально важно оценивать не только результат референдума, но и связь между обсуждением, окончательным текстом и практической имплементацией.

Научная проблема заключается в том, что новая Конституция одновременно сохраняет президентскую форму правления и существенно перестраивает механизмы представительства, преемственности власти и парламентского контроля. Переход к однопалатному Курултаю, учреждение должности Вице-Президента, обновление ценностной части и перераспределение полномочий требуют согласованной системы конституционных законов. Несогласованность сроков, терминологии или компетенций способна породить правовые пробелы, конкуренцию органов и снижение предсказуемости правоприменения.

Цель статьи – определить содержание и значение ключевых положений конституционной реформы 2026 года, оценить процедуру их общественного обсуждения и предложить критерии результативной имплементации. Для достижения цели решаются следующие задачи: выявить характер реформы как конституционной замены; систематизировать институциональные и правозащитные новеллы; сопоставить общественное участие с международными подходами к инклюзивному конституционному процессу; раскрыть риски переходного периода; сформулировать предложения по мониторингу реализации. Гипотеза состоит в том, что устойчивость новой модели зависит от преобразования процедурной поддержки референдума в институциональную подотчетность и реально применимые гарантии прав.

2. Материалы и методы

Исследование имеет доктринальный и институциональный характер. Первичную нормативную базу составили новая Конституция Республики Казахстан, проект которой был официально опубликован 12 февраля 2026 года, постановление Центральной комиссии референдума об итогах голосования, законодательство о Курултае и статусе его депутатов, материалы Конституционной комиссии и официальные документы, относящиеся к реформе 2022 года. Использовались тексты в редакциях, доступных по состоянию на 28 августа 2026 года. Эмпирические утверждения ограничены официально опубликованными данными; исследование не включает опросов и экспериментов с участием человека.

Формально-юридический метод применялся для установления нормативного содержания положений, их взаимосвязи и переходных последствий. Системно-структурный метод позволил рассматривать Президента, Вице-Президента, Курултай, Правительство, Конституционный Суд и местное управление как элементы единой архитектуры сдержек и противовесов. Сравнительно-правовой метод использован не для механического заимствования зарубежных решений, а для проверки общих закономерностей: связи участия с

легитимностью, рисков конституционной замены и значения независимого конституционного контроля. Институциональный анализ направлен на различение текста нормы и стимулов, возникающих при ее применении.

Также определены: критерии отбора официальных материалов общественного обсуждения, указана единица анализа и раскрыта процедура тематического кодирования, отмечено, что полный массив инициатив eGov и e-Otinish не опубликован, поэтому исследование не претендует на статистическую репрезентативность всех предложений граждан.

Сравнительно-правовой метод дополнен конкретным микросравнением однопалатного Курултая с парламентскими моделями Коста-Рики и Республики Корея.

Показаны компенсаторные механизмы однопалатности: преодоление президентского вето, парламентский контроль и конституционная юрисдикция.

Материалы кодировались по четырем аналитическим категориям: 1) ценностные и учредительные положения; 2) организация высших органов государственной власти; 3) права, свободы и обязанности; 4) переходные и имплементационные механизмы. Для каждого блока оценивались нормативная новизна, требуемые законодательные действия, потенциальный субъект ответственности и проверяемый результат. Такой подход позволяет перейти от описания реформы к ее операционализации. Ограничение исследования связано с ранней стадией действия нового Основного закона: сложившаяся судебная и административная практика еще отсутствует, поэтому часть выводов носит прогностический характер.

3. Результаты и их обсуждение

3.1. Конституционная замена и новая ценностная рамка

По масштабу изменений реформа 2026 года представляет не очередное изменение отдельных статей, а конституционную замену (Ackerman, 1991; Roznai, 2017). Это следует из формы решения референдума, структуры нового текста и переучреждения ряда институтов. Конституционная замена обладает двойственной природой: она создает возможность устранить накопленные противоречия, но одновременно повышает требования к правовой преемственности. Стабильность государства предполагает, что действующие органы, законы и обязательства не утрачивают силу одномоментно, если они не противоречат новой Конституции, а приводятся в соответствие в установленной последовательности.

Преамбула и первые статьи усиливают программно-ценностную функцию Конституции. В них соединены идея Справедливого Казахстана, принцип «Закон и Порядок», уважение прав и свобод, общенациональное единство, образование, наука, инновации и экологическая ответственность (Правительство Республики Казахстан, 2026). Подобные положения нельзя считать исключительно политическими декларациями. Они могут использоваться Конституционным Судом при толковании неоднозначных норм и оценке пропорциональности ограничений. Вместе с тем расширение ценностного языка требует юридической осторожности: открытые категории не должны превращаться в самостоятельное основание для произвольного ограничения прав.

Новым является прямое признание развития человеческого капитала, образования, науки и инноваций стратегическим направлением государства. Конституционализация приоритета создает позитивную обязанность законодателя обеспечивать устойчивое финансирование, равный доступ и институциональные условия. Однако суд не должен подменять собой бюджетный процесс. Оптимальной моделью является контроль очевидной необоснованности, дискриминации и регресса при сохранении пространства усмотрения у демократически ответственных органов.

В сфере действия права существенна формулировка о международных договорных обязательствах и определении порядка действия международных договоров законами. Ее практическое толкование должно сохранять добросовестное исполнение международных обязательств и правовую определенность. Необходимо в конституционном законе либо

нормативном постановлении Конституционного Суда разъяснить соотношение ратифицированных договоров, законов и актов специальных правовых режимов. Это особенно важно для защиты инвестиций и прав человека.

3.2. Общественное обсуждение как источник процедурной легитимности

Конституционная комиссия сообщила, что проект формировался на основе инициатив граждан и экспертного сообщества, поступавших с октября 2025 года через цифровые государственные платформы. Заседания комиссии проходили с публичным освещением, а обсуждение транслировалось в прямом эфире (Администрация Президента Республики Казахстан, 2026a). По сравнению с закрытой экспертной подготовкой такой формат расширяет доступ к информации и позволяет обществу наблюдать аргументацию участников.

Однако открытость и участие не являются тождественными понятиями. Публикация заседаний дает информационную прозрачность, тогда как участие предполагает доказуемое влияние на результат. Международная практика выделяет несколько критериев: заблаговременность вовлечения; инклюзивность; доступность текста; разумный срок для обсуждения; опубликование сводки предложений; мотивированное объяснение решений; возможность обсуждать не только формулировки, но и основные альтернативы (Hart, 2010; Saunders, 2022). В цифровом процессе дополнительно важны защита персональных данных и устранение неравенства между гражданами с разным доступом к интернету.

Сильной стороной казахстанской модели выступает сочетание экспертной комиссии, цифрового сбора инициатив и обязательного референдума. Слабым звеном остается недостаточная прослеживаемость движения предложения от подачи до окончательной нормы. Публикация обезличенного реестра предложений с категориями «принято», «частично принято», «не принято» и кратким обоснованием повысила бы доверие и создала материал для научной оценки. Такая обратная связь важна не только до голосования: она формирует культуру аргументированного государственного решения.

Официальные результаты референдума подтверждают количественную легитимацию нового текста. Но высокая поддержка не снимает потребности в анализе информированности выбора (Venice Commission, 2020). Референдум по целостному тексту неизбежно объединяет множество вопросов в одном ответе. Избиратель мог поддерживать однопалатный парламент, но иначе оценивать отдельные положения о правах либо специальных правовых режимах. Поэтому после принятия требуется не прекращение диалога, а его переход в форму публичного мониторинга имплементации.

3.3. Перестройка системы высших органов власти

Наиболее заметная институциональная новелла – переход от двухпалатного Парламента к однопалатному Курултаю. Однопалатная модель способна ускорить законодательный процесс, устранить дублирование процедур и сделать политическую ответственность более понятной избирателю. Вместе с тем исчезновение второй палаты уменьшает число стадий внутренней проверки закона (Sartori, 1997). Следовательно, упрощение структуры должно компенсироваться качеством комитетской экспертизы, реальным участием оппозиции, обязательностью публичных консультаций и эффективным предварительным и последующим конституционным контролем.

Курултай наделен правом выступать от имени народа и государства в пределах конституционных полномочий. Это усиливает его учредительно-представительную роль. Закон о Курултае и статусе депутатов конкретизирует организацию палаты, основания несовместимости, гарантии депутатской деятельности и законодательную процедуру (Республика Казахстан, 2026b). Практическая ценность новеллы будет зависеть от самостоятельности депутатов, доступа к аналитическим ресурсам, открытости комитетов и способности использовать контрольные полномочия в отношении Правительства (Администрация Президента Республики Казахстан, 2026b).

Введение должности Вице-Президента формирует новый механизм преемственности и

координации исполнительной власти. Президент назначает Вице-Президента с согласия Курултая, выраженного большинством от общего числа депутатов. Парламентское согласие придает назначению смешанную легитимацию и создает точку взаимодействия ветвей власти. Одновременно Конституция позволяет Президенту распустить Курултай при повторном отказе дать согласие, что существенно повышает цену несогласия. Для сохранения баланса закон должен детально определить сроки консультаций, требования к представлению кандидатуры и последствия повторного рассмотрения.

Конституционная конструкция сохраняет сильное президентство: глава государства определяет основные направления политики, участвует в формировании Правительства и обладает правом роспуска Курултая в предусмотренных случаях. При этом одноразовый семилетний срок закреплен как неизменный. Такая модель снижает стимул к переизбранию, но не устраняет проблему концентрации влияния в течение срока. Ее уравновешивание требует независимого суда, профессиональной государственной службы, прозрачных назначений и содержательного парламентского контроля.

Правительство получает демократическую связь с Курултаем через согласие на кандидатуру Премьер-Министра и консультации по составу. Однако формальные консультации способны стать ритуальными. Необходимо закрепить минимальный информационный стандарт: кандидат должен представлять программу, отвечать на вопросы депутатов, раскрывать потенциальные конфликты интересов. Трансляция слушаний и поименное голосование позволят гражданам оценивать не только итог, но и аргументы представителей.

3.4. Права человека, обязанности и конституционный контроль

Новая Конституция сохраняет человекоцентричную формулу: высшими ценностями государства являются человек, его жизнь, права и свободы. Каталог прав структурно уточнен, закреплены правосубъектность, судебная защита и квалифицированная юридическая помощь. Дополнительно закреплена обязанность государства создавать условия для охраны окружающей среды, благоприятной для жизни и здоровья человека. Эти положения формируют основу для позитивных обязательств государства, но их реализация требует процедурных прав: доступа к экологической информации, участия в принятии решений и эффективного средства судебной защиты.

Особого внимания требует положение о допустимых целях ограничения прав, включающее защиту нравственности общества. В сравнительном конституционном праве открытые цели ограничения несут риск расширительного толкования. Законодатель и суд должны применять трехступенчатую проверку: ограничение установлено законом; преследует конституционно допустимую цель; является необходимым и соразмерным. Бремя обоснования должно лежать на государственном органе. Без такой методологии формула пропорциональности остается декларацией.

Конституционный Суд занимает центральное место в обеспечении перехода от текста к практике. Опыт прежнего Конституционного Совета в научной литературе оценивался критически в контексте институциональной зависимости (Williams & Hanson, 2022). Восстановление индивидуального обращения в 2023 году стало важным шагом, но эффективность органа зависит от прозрачного отбора судей, мотивированности решений, доступа граждан и исполнения постановлений. Новая Конституция дает возможность закрепить стандарты институциональной независимости в последующем законодательстве.

Нормативные постановления Конституционного Суда включены в действующее право. Это предполагает, что решения должны быть понятными не только специалистам, но и адресатам нормы. Целесообразно публиковать краткие резюме, информацию о последующих изменениях законодательства и статус исполнения каждого постановления. Курултай и Правительство могли бы ежегодно представлять совместный отчет о мерах, принятых во исполнение решений Конституционного Суда.

3.5. Модель имплементации и измеримые критерии

Результаты анализа позволяют представить основные направления внедрения в виде матрицы. Таблица 1 показывает, что каждому конституционному изменению должны соответствовать не только закон и ответственный орган, но и проверяемый показатель результата.

Таблица 1 – Матрица имплементации ключевых положений новой Конституции

Конституционная новелла	**Необходимое действие**	**Ответственный субъект**	**Критерий результата**
Однопалатный Курултай	Принятие регламента, формирование комитетов, настройка законодательной экспертизы	Курултай	Открытые слушания, сроки рассмотрения, доля учтенных заключений
Вице-Президент	Определение компетенции, несовместимости, подотчетности и замещения	Президент и Курултай	Отсутствие конкуренции компетенций; публичность согласования
Гарантии прав	Обновление отраслевых законов и тест пропорциональности ограничений	Курултай, суды, Правительство	Судебная защищенность, исполнение решений, снижение повторных нарушений
Конституционный контроль	Процедуры доступа, исполнения и мониторинга постановлений	Конституционный Суд, Курултай	Срок рассмотрения, доступность решений, полнота исполнения
Общественный диалог	Реестр предложений и регулярные отчеты об имплементации	Государственные органы	Мотивированная обратная связь и участие регионов

Предлагаемая модель основана на различении формальной, институциональной и социальной имплементации. Формальная стадия включает принятие конституционных и обычных законов. Институциональная стадия означает создание органов, распределение ресурсов, кадровые процедуры и внутренние регламенты. Социальная стадия проявляется в изменении поведения власти и реальной возможности граждан пользоваться правами. Завершение первой стадии не свидетельствует автоматически о завершении реформы.

Для переходного периода необходим единый публичный план с перечнем актов, сроками, ответственными органами и взаимозависимостями. Проекты имплементационных законов должны сопровождаться таблицей соответствия конкретным статьям Конституции и оценкой воздействия на права человека. Срочность перехода не должна становиться основанием для отказа от обсуждения. Напротив, системная перестройка повышает риск технических ошибок и требует усиленной экспертизы.

Конституционный мониторинг целесообразно организовать как смешанный механизм. Государственный компонент обеспечивает доступ к данным и ответственность органов; независимый компонент включает ученых, адвокатуру, правозащитные организации и

региональных представителей. Ежегодный доклад должен содержать не общий перечень мероприятий, а показатели: какие нормы введены, какие обращения поступили, какие правовые пробелы выявлены, как исполнены судебные акты и какие корректирующие меры приняты.

Отдельный показатель – качество законотворчества. Массовое и поспешное принятие актов способно породить законодательную инфляцию, при которой рост числа норм не сопровождается улучшением регулирования. В период имплементации следует применять пакетный принцип только к взаимосвязанным вопросам, избегать скрытого изменения несвязанных сфер и предоставлять разумный vacatio legis. Все акты должны проходить антикоррупционную, правозащитную и лингвистическую экспертизу.

Наконец, реформа должна оцениваться через опыт гражданина. Если обращение в суд становится доступнее, публичная власть мотивирует решения, депутат реагирует на избирателя, а ограничение права проходит реальную проверку соразмерности, конституционные изменения приобретают практический смысл. Если же обновляется только наименование органов, конституционная замена рискует остаться символической.

3.6. Сравнительная оценка рисков

Сравнительная литература предупреждает о двух противоположных рисках. Первый – чрезмерная жесткость, когда конституционный текст препятствует необходимой адаптации. Второй – чрезмерная гибкость, позволяющая текущему большинству менять правила в собственных интересах (Albert, 2019; Elkins et al., 2009). Новая модель содержит неизменяемые положения о суверенитете, независимости, унитарности, территориальной целостности, форме правления и одноразовом президентском сроке. Такая защита усиливает устойчивость основ, однако любые попытки расширительного толкования неизменяемости должны быть ограничены текстом (Roznai, 2017).

Второй риск связан с концентрацией полномочий под видом рационализации. Однопалатность и сильное президентство могут обеспечить оперативность, но сокращают количество институциональных точек вето (Dixon & Landau, 2021; Landau, 2013; Tushnet, 2015). Поэтому особое значение имеют политический плюрализм, независимый Конституционный Суд, контроль бюджета и прозрачность назначений. Формальная передача полномочий Курултаю должна сопровождаться ресурсами и возможностью получать информацию от исполнительной власти.

Третий риск – разрыв между центром и регионами. Упразднение Сената устраняет палату, традиционно связанную с территориальным представительством. Компенсацией могут стать избирательная система, гарантированное представительство регионов в комитетах, регулярные выездные слушания и обязательная оценка территориального воздействия проектов законов (International IDEA, 2017). Курултай должен институционализировать региональный голос, иначе централизация законодательного процесса будет усиливаться.

Четвертый риск – перегрузка переходного законодательства. Одновременное обновление актов о Президенте, Курултае, Правительстве, судах, выборах и местном управлении создает взаимозависимости. Несогласованность хотя бы одного элемента способна блокировать другие. Для управления риском требуется центральная таблица правовых связей и предварительный контроль конституционности ключевых актов.

Пятый риск – символическое участие. Цифровой прием предложений может измеряться количеством обращений, хотя содержательная репрезентативность остается неизвестной. Следует публиковать методологию учета предложений, распределение по регионам и темам, не раскрывая персональных данных. В дальнейшем общественное участие должно распространяться на имплементационные законы, поскольку именно в них абстрактные конституционные нормы получают конкретное содержание.

4. Заключение

Конституционная реформа 2026 года завершилась принятием нового Основного закона и открыла этап глубокой институциональной перестройки. Ее отличительная особенность состоит в сочетании трех процессов: обновления ценностных оснований государства, изменения архитектуры высших органов власти и пересмотра механизмов реализации прав. Переход к однопалатному Курултаю и введение должности Вице-Президента являются не техническими новациями, а изменениями логики представительства, преемственности и взаимодействия ветвей власти.

Общественное обсуждение через цифровые платформы, работу Конституционной комиссии и прямые трансляции повысило процедурную открытость. Референдум обеспечил прямую народную легитимацию: участие составило 73,12%, а поддержку проекту выразили 87,15% проголосовавших. Вместе с тем научная оценка участия не может ограничиваться явкой и итогом. Для подтверждения содержательного влияния общества необходимы реестр инициатив, мотивированная обратная связь и продолжение консультаций при разработке имплементационных актов.

Научная новизна исследования состоит в предложении трехуровневой модели реализации новой Конституции: формальной, институциональной и социальной. Эта модель показывает, что принятие законов является лишь первым уровнем. Второй требует создания независимых и ресурсно обеспеченных институтов; третий определяется фактическим изменением отношений гражданина и государства. Практическая значимость заключается в матрице имплементации и предложении измеримых критериев.

Рекомендуется утвердить публичную дорожную карту перехода; сопровождать каждый проект таблицей конституционного соответствия; ввести ежегодный доклад о реализации Конституции; создать открытый мониторинг исполнения постановлений Конституционного Суда; обеспечить территориальное представительство в работе Курултая; применять тест законности, необходимости и соразмерности ко всем ограничениям прав. Такие меры свяжут учредительный акт народа с повседневной правовой практикой.

Главный критерий успеха реформы – не скорость замены вывесок и не количество новых законов. Им является способность новой конституционной модели сделать государственную власть более подотчетной, право – более предсказуемым, а защиту человека – реально доступной. Последующие исследования должны анализировать практику Курултая, решения Конституционного Суда, динамику обращений граждан и региональные последствия реформы на основе данных первых двух-трех лет.

Информация о финансировании

Исследование выполнено без внешнего финансирования.

Конфликт интересов

Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Авторский вклад

Акылбек Кабжанов: интерпретация результатов, написание оригинального проекта, рецензирование и редактирование рукописи; Асель Ахметова: Концептуализация, методология, сбор данных.

Доступность источников

Нормативные и официальные материалы находятся в открытом доступе по адресам, указанным в списке литературы. Дополнительный массив данных не создавался.

Открытый доступ

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Авторские права на данную статью сохраняются за авторами, при этом журналу предоставляется право первой публикации.

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Ретракция туралы мәлімет

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Мақаланы қайтаруды (ректракциялауды) жүзеге асыру: Сагалиев, Н., & Картбаева, Г. (2025). «Бұйратау» МҰТП жағдайында жыртқыш құстардың ұясы: биотикалық және антропогендік факторлардың әсері. «Қазіргі заманғы маңызды мәселелер» халықаралық ғылыми журналы, 50(4), 119–131. https://doi.org/10.64863/2312-4784/2025-3-50/119-131

«Қазіргі заманғы маңызды мәселелер» халықаралық журналының бас редакторы бұл мақаладан бас тартуға шешім қабылдады, себебі авторлар шынайылығы расталмаған және жалған әдебиеттер көрсеткен. Сондықтан, редакция алқасы мақаланы қайтару туралы шешімге келді.

Шынайылығы расталмаған және жалған әдебиеттер:

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Информация о ретракции

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Осуществить отзыв (ретракцию) статьи: Сагалиев, Н., & Картбаева, Г. (2025). «Гнездование хищных птиц в условиях ГНПП „Буйратау“: влияние биотических и антропогенных факторов». Международный научный журнал «Актуальные проблемы современности», 50(4), 119–131. https://doi.org/10.64863/2312-4784/2025-3-50/119-131

Главный редактор международного научного журнала «Актуальные проблемы современности» принял решение об отзыве данной статьи в связи с тем, что авторами были указаны источники литературы, достоверность которых не подтверждена, а также фальсифицированные источники. В связи с этим редакционная коллегия приняла решение о ретракции статьи.

Литература без подтверждения подлинности и подделка:

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Information about retraction

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The Editor-in-Chief of the Actual Problems of the Present International Scientific Journal has decided to retract this article because the authors cited sources whose authenticity could not be verified, as well as falsified references. Therefore, the Editorial Board has decided to retract the article.

Non-authenticated literature and forgery:

1. Belovalov, O. V. (2016). Novye dannye o khishchnykh ptitsakh yugo-vostochnogo Kazakhstana [New data on birds of prey in southeastern Kazakhstan]. Selevinia, 23, 55–63.

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