

[https://doi.org/10.53360/3080-3861-2025-2\(2\)-8](https://doi.org/10.53360/3080-3861-2025-2(2)-8)
IRSTI: 17.07.41

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THE INTERTEXTUAL NATURE OF FEMALE IMAGES IN THE WORKS OF SAFUAN SHAIMERDENOV

Abstract. The article analyzes the typology of female images in the works of writer Safuan Shaimerdenov from the perspectives of intertextuality and national identity. The primary goal of the research is to identify the typological characteristics of female characters in the author's works and to uncover their role in reflecting national identity.

The depiction of women in literature is one of the essential tools for conveying national identity. In Kazakh prose, portraying national values, spiritual heritage, and adaptation to contemporary challenges through female characters is a pressing issue in modern literary studies. Shaimerdenov's female characters represent significant aspects of national identity by integrating the traditional values of the Kazakh people with the innovations of modern times.

The study focuses on the characters Bibigul, Kargash, Aspet, and Inesh from prominent works such as *Mezgil*, *Kargash*, *Mazhnun Tal*, and *Inesh*. Content analysis, intertextual analysis, typological methods, and linguo-cognitive approaches were employed. The artistic techniques used by the author to convey national identity, as well as the characters' behaviors and spiritual worlds, were examined in detail. Additionally, the intertextual connections of Shaimerdenov's characters with similar images in other literary works were analyzed.

The results of the article highlight the unique typological role of female images in Kazakh literature and their significance in shaping national consciousness. The scientific analyses conducted in the study provide deeper insights into the artistic features of female characters in Kazakh literature and offer a fresh perspective on the issues of national identity.

Keywords: intertext, national identity, typology, S. Shaimerdenov, Kazakh literature, female images.

Introduction

In the scientific paradigm, the theory of intertextuality constitutes one of the significant methodological approaches that study the connections between texts. The foundation of this theory was laid in the second half of the 20th century by scholars such as G. Genette [1], R. Barthes [2], and J. Kristeva [3]. The concept of intertextuality enables the analysis of dialogue, mutual influence, and semantic connections between texts. A literary work, as a reflection of a specific national culture, establishes connections with other works, embodying the worldview, traditions, and values of people. From this perspective, the theory of intertextuality holds particular importance in studying the national identity in Kazakh literature.

In Kazakh literature, intertextual features are often shaped by the influence of folk oral traditions, folklore, and classical poetry. For instance, philosophical ideas and wise sayings from past centuries have been reinterpreted in the works of later poets and writers. These connections reflect the preservation and transmission of national identity through literature across generations.

The works of Safuan Shaymerdenov are no exception to this trend. The speech, thoughts, and actions of his characters are deeply intertwined with the cultural codes of the Kazakh people.

Intertextual analysis allows for the exploration of the unique aspects of national identity in Kazakh literature. National identity is a concept that embodies the historical experience, spiritual-cultural values, and worldview of a people. Literature enriches this concept with unique content and portrays it through various artistic techniques [4]. For example, in Safuan Shaymerdenov's works, the portrayal of women is not limited to individual personalities but serves as a mirror of national identity. Through his characters, the author delves into the typological features of national identity, revealing them at an intertextual level.

Another crucial aspect of intertextuality theory is its ability to deepen the understanding of cultural dialogue between literatures. In Shaymerdenov's works, the concept of national identity is examined broadly, with characters embodying national codes, traditional values, and cultural norms in harmony.

Thus, approaching the author's literary legacy with fresh perspectives, analyzing his works using contemporary research methods, and defining his place in the context of national identity and literature remain pressing issues today.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on the following works by Safuan Shaymerdenov: the novella *Mezgil* (the image of Bibigul), the novella *Qarghash* (the image of Qarghash), the novella *Mäjün Tal* (the image of Äspet), and the novel *Inesh* (the image of Inesh). The following research methods were employed:

- *Intertextual Analysis*: This method was used to identify connections between the portrayal of female characters in Shaymerdenov's works and other literary texts. The study focused on the unique features, artistic techniques, and cultural codes in the author's depiction of national identity.

- *Cognitive Analysis*: The worldview and social roles of Shaymerdenov's characters were examined through cognitive elements that reflect national identity. The characters' actions, speech patterns, and roles in socio-cultural contexts were analyzed using cognitive approaches.

- *Linguistic-Stylistic Method*: This method was applied to study the linguistic tools, stylistic techniques, and narrative structures used to depict female characters in Shaymerdenov's works.

- *Psycholinguistic Method*: This approach focused on analyzing the behavior, inner world, and role of characters in conveying national identity from a psycholinguistic perspective.

These research methods enable a profound contemporary analysis of the author's works, revealing the representation of national values in Kazakh literature at an intertextual level.

Literature Review

The works of Shaymerdenov have been discussed by scholars and writers such as M. Auezov, S. Mukanov, G. Mustafin, Z. Kabdolov, S. Kirabayev, R. Berdibay, Kh. Yergaliyev, M. Bazarbayev, N. Orazalin, A. Tarazi, K. Zhumadilov, S. Ashimbayev, and K. Ergöbek. Additionally, G. Nurekeshova's dissertation, *The Artistic Features of S. Shaymerdenov's Novellas*, is dedicated to studying the author's creative works.

However, there is a lack of contemporary scholarly research on the author's language and stylistic features. Therefore, reevaluating Shaymerdenov's literary legacy through modern research methods and defining his place in the context of national identity and literature remains an urgent task.

For example, the renowned writer and scholar M. Auezov remarked: «S. Shaymerdenov is not limited to prose but has also actively contributed to drama. His lyrical, dramatic, and comedic plays, regularly performed in national and regional theaters, attest to the artistic power of his creativity and its ability to captivate audiences» [5].

Thus, the breadth of Shaymerdenov's genre mastery and the depth of his artistic exploration demonstrate his success in drama. The enduring vitality of his works stems from his skill in character portrayal and his ability to weave their thoughts and actions into a cohesive artistic narrative. The consistent inclusion of his plays in theater repertoires highlights their adaptability to the stage, showcasing their dramatic structure and universal appeal.

S. Shaymerdenov, who developed both prose and dramatic traditions, stands out as a prominent figure in expanding the genre boundaries of Kazakh literature in the 20th century. His unique stylistic features and linguistic richness have significantly contributed to the interconnected growth of Kazakh literature and theater.

S. Mukanov praised Shaymerdenov's writing prowess: «S. Shaymerdenov's novellas and stories are distinguished not only by their exceptional lyricism but also by their remarkable artistic quality and masterful language» (<https://qazaqadebieti.kz/18190/mytpa-dar-meni>).

Expressing confidence in the future realization of Shaymerdenov's creative aspirations, G. Mustafin noted: «S. Shaymerdenov entered Kazakh literature suddenly yet firmly, immediately securing his place. He was recognized not merely as an addition but as a writer with his own distinct ideas and aspirations» (<https://qazaqadebieti.kz/18190/mytpa-dar-meni>).

Indeed, the lyricism, artistic power, and established ideological directions of Shaymerdenov's works not only define his place in Kazakh literature but also introduce new models for it. Thus, Mustafin's observation of Shaymerdenov's «sudden yet confident arrival» and his «unique aspirations» guarantees the continued relevance of the author's works.

Critic S. Ashimbayev argued that exploring new methods and forms to reveal human psychology, including its dialectical contradictions, is a primary task for any writer. Direct evaluations such as «this is good, that is bad» no longer satisfy contemporary aesthetic standards. Therefore, dividing characters into «positive» and «negative» is considered outdated. Instead, writing with psychological depth, philosophical symbolism, or allegory is seen as the rightful approach of intellectually advanced writers [6].

Based on these perspectives, the following conclusions can be drawn about Shaymerdenov's creativity and authorial mastery:

1. The author strives to deeply portray characters, explore their inner growth, and analyze moral and spiritual values through new methods and forms. His works are marked by philosophical depth and psychological elements, presenting characters as multifaceted and contradictory rather than one-dimensional.

2. Shaymerdenov continually seeks innovative artistic solutions, employing diverse genre techniques to develop his unique style, reflecting his relentless creative pursuit.

Writer Akim Tarazi remarked: «A commendable quality of Safuan Shaymerdenov's creativity is his constant originality and uniqueness. His high standards and artistic taste remain exemplary for many of us. Guided by the principle that literature's primary purpose is to understand humanity, he focuses on exploring and deeply analyzing human life. His central concern is human destiny» [7].

These perspectives on Shaymerdenov's creativity hold significant value in contemporary scholarship and serve as a foundation for future research.

Results and Discussion

The portrayal of female characters in Safuan Shaymerdenov's works serves as a vivid reflection of the national identity of the Kazakh people. His characters women as mothers, spouses, daughters, and community leaders-embodiment various facets of the national worldview. Particularly, female characters highlight the spiritual values and social norms of Kazakh society.

In Shaymerdenov's novel *Inesh*, the protagonist Inesh represents the epitome of a Kazakh woman who embodies national values, preserves them, and passes them on. Her intellectual curiosity, passion for science, and outlook on life reflect the complex realities of women of her time.

From an intertextual perspective, Inesh's character maintains continuity with classical figures in Kazakh literature. For example, her inner quest and wisdom resonate with the humanistic ideals of Kazakh literature. Her nuanced and spiritually conflicted relationship with Mäulen revives the artistic traditions of love lyricism in national poetry.

Scholar Zh. Akpanbetov notes: «Inesh's character in this work typifies the new behavioral patterns of Kazakh youth in the 1950s. Her naturalness and spiritual purity leave a profound impression on readers» [8]. Thus, Inesh's role in society holds special significance as a manifestation of national identity. In the novel, she stands out not only intellectually but also morally, embodying the evolving role of women in national consciousness. Her pursuit of knowledge and willingness to sacrifice personal feelings reflect the changing perceptions of women's roles.

Inesh's dramatic fate illustrates the conflict between national identity and personal choice, a key aspect of intertextual analysis. Through her character, Shaymerdenov explores the evolution of female portrayals in national literature, balancing tradition and progress.

Similarly, in the novella *Mezgil*, the character Bibigul challenges stereotypes about stepmothers, portraying a genuinely loving and compassionate maternal figure. Her resilience and dedication to preserving her family highlight the strength and warmth of Kazakh women.

Moreover, Inesh's marginalization in the field of science and her being sent to a remote village reflect a betrayal of national science and culture. This episode illustrates the impact of political and ideological pressure on the fate of the national intelligentsia of that time. By the end of the novel,

Ineş's fate reveals not only her personal qualities but also the historical and cultural aspects of national identity. Since «Ineş's» is a novel, the image of Ineş's is deeply explored from the perspective of national identity. The author reveals all the characters in the story through Ineş's. Moreover, the characters are evaluated through one another's behavior. The writer received praise for the novel «Ineş's» from both his contemporaries and later researchers and literary critics. For instance, Q. Jumadilov noted that «Ineş's» along with the short stories and novellas written in later years, are works that go beyond temporary slogans and are worthy of being read in any era [9].

Another widely known work of S. Shaimerdenov is the novella «Mezgil». The central image in this work is that of the «Mother». The theme of the stepmother is presented in a non-stereotypical manner. Bibigul accepts the child as her own and opposes the traditional societal perception of stepmothers by portraying the image of a genuinely compassionate mother. This highlights the wisdom and warmth of heart characteristic of Kazakh women. A critical analysis can also be made regarding the role of women in society. Bibigul is portrayed not only as a caretaker of the family but also as a strong-willed figure capable of confronting hardships and fighting to preserve the family.

Shaymerdenov explained his motivation for writing Mezgil: «In 1962, my beloved mother, who lived with my younger brothers, passed away. This was a profound grief for me, as it was the first death I witnessed. An elder once consoled me, saying, 'If not for the label of stepmother, she was no less than your birth mother.' This made me reflect on my childhood hardships, but all I could recall was her radiant face and boundless kindness. I realized that stepmothers are often negatively portrayed in literature, despite countless examples of their love. I wanted to write about such a stepmother, merging the themes of a child's love for their mother and a stepmother's affection for her stepchild. This became the idea behind Mezgil» [10].

As mentioned above, the author gives a fresh impetus to national consciousness and enriches it with new ideas. These ideas are effectively conveyed through the images of Kazakh women. For instance, Ineş in the novel «Ineş» represents the image of an educated, intelligent, and modern Kazakh woman. This image also carries historical and political significance, reflecting the hopes, dreams, and fears of Kazakh women during that period. Through this character, the author skillfully depicts the aspirations of Kazakh girls for independence, knowledge, and freedom.

In his novella, the writer reveals the nobility of a woman's soul through the image of a stepmother. The image of Bibigul in the novella is presented as a symbolic continuation of «mother» figures in literature. Her character and actions resonate with qualities frequently found in Kazakh literature: maternal affection, care, and resilience. Furthermore, the portrayal of the stepmother's compassion aims to present maternal love in a new light, compared to that of epic poems and traditional prose.

T. Bekniyazov expresses the following opinion on this subject: «The moral character and spiritual essence of a protagonist have always been central to literature and art. A person's image is revealed through its complex and multifaceted nature, with the character's personality being explored from different angles. Their actions, as well as their public and private life, are portrayed realistically, highlighting their true civic virtues.

This process not only defines the artistic role of a character in literature but also emphasizes their ethical and aesthetic value and moral nature. At the same time, this feature contributes to the creation of authentic and compelling characters, shaped by the writer's artistic mastery. The emergence of such characters is undoubtedly a significant phenomenon that reflects the harmony between artistic and spiritual content in literature» [11].

In her study of the artistic world of S. Shaimerdenov's prose, G. Nurekeshova states: «A literary work is not a direct replica of reality, but rather a conceptual representation that typifies life's truths. In other words, the familiar and unfamiliar characters in fiction are the writer's response to life's mysterious events and phenomena. Furthermore, a literary work should not merely be a collection of what the author has seen, heard, or read, but a conceptual reflection of their philosophical contemplation about life» [12].

Intertextual connections are prevalent in his works, offering readers fresh perspectives and deepening their engagement. Below is a table analyzing intertextual elements in *Mezgil* (Table 1):

Table 1 – Intertextual Connections in S. Shaymerdenov’s Works

№	Intertext Type	Examples	Analysis
1	Quotation	«Zhurt zheti agayyndy»	Quotations reinforce national consciousness, allowing readers to deeply experience the realities of folk life. The author skillfully uses this technique to enhance emotional impact.
2	Mythological	«Qara ört,» «Zhyndy boran»	Natural disasters like «Qara ört» and «Zhyndy boran» symbolize elements from Kazakh mythology. «Mezgildiñ dalasy» metaphorically represents the passage of time and change.
3	Historical	Famine, collectivization, repression	The novella depicts historical events in 20th-century Kazakhstan, reflecting national tragedies. These intertexts amplify the work’s social significance and prompt readers to revisit national history.
4	Philosophical	«What does a person think before death? Only when a person is close to death do they realize how dear life truly is. They do not want to let go»	These questions explore life’s meaning, morality, and compassion, adding philosophical depth to the narrative.

Thus, the female characters in S. Shaimerdenov’s works clearly embody national values. For example, Ines’s desire to build a family is shown as a value placed above all others. Meanwhile, in the novella «*Mezgil*», although Bibigul is a stepmother, the value she places on family and children is equally high. This chain of characterization reflects the author’s consistent position throughout S. Shaimerdenov’s works.

Therefore, the female characters portrayed in Shaimerdenov’s works are complex and multifaceted representations of the socio-cultural transformations in Kazakh society between the 1920s and 1960s. While preserving the distinctive features of national identity, they are notable for their adaptation to the demands of the time. Each female image in his novellas embodies intertextual similarities and characteristics, reaching a genuine artistic level within Kazakh literature.

S. Shaimerdenov’s literary work exemplifies the effective use of intertextuality and the artistic expression of national identity. In the previously analyzed novellas such as «*Mezgil*», «*Qarğash*», and «*Majnun Tal*», the national essence of the characters is deeply revealed through aesthetics and lyricism. The gentle lyricism in the writer’s works delicately portrays the behavior and spiritual world of Kazakh women, enabling the artistic conveyance of national values. Shaimerdenov’s aesthetic approach and lyrical tone not only present national identity in a modern context but also, through intertextual connections, turn it into part of a broader literary and cultural dialogue (Table 2).

Table 2 – National Identity and Intertextual Traits of Characters in S. Shaymerdenov’s Works

№	Character	Chronology	National Identity	Intertextual Traits
1	Bibigul (Mezgil)	1920s	Embodies the political and social upheavals of the era. Her compassion and support for others reflect traditional Kazakh values of solidarity and care.	The socio-historical foundation and alignment with traditional narratives lend authenticity and artistic depth to her character.
2	Qarghash (Qarghash)	1940s	Represents the struggles and resilience of Kazakh women during and after WWII. Her independence and moral fortitude highlight the national spirit.	The psychological depth and introspective style evoke comparisons to Russian and global literary traditions, showcasing the author’s innovative portrayal of rural life.
3	Äspet (Mäjnün Tal)	1960s	A bright, intellectually curious village girl who bridges rural and urban worlds. Her broad-mindedness and social activism reflect the evolving role of Kazakh women.	Her intellectual traits may draw parallels to European or Russian literary heroines, demonstrating the author’s ability to blend national and universal elements.

Thus, aesthetics and lyricism are among the key tools for expressing intertextuality and national identity in literary works. In this regard, S. Shaimerdenov’s work deserves special attention. When discussing the aesthetic level and artistic quality of his works, academician Z. Qabdolov points out several distinctive features of Shaimerdenov’s artistic identity. For example, he emphasizes the writer’s cultural depth, stating that the value of a literary work and its ability to captivate readers lies in its aesthetic nature. Aesthetics is the science of beauty, and the primary quality of literature should be the glorification of beauty. A work should be based on artistry, not crudeness. Therefore, unlike those who turn art into vulgarity under the pretext of attracting young readers, Safuan consistently strives to depict the nobility of the human spirit and inner beauty. This, in itself, proves that he is a cultured writer.

The warm lyricism present in the writer’s works is highlighted as one of their key features. In each novella and short story, a gentle and delicate lyricism flows like sunlight. This reveals Shaimerdenov as an artist with a deep sensitivity to emotional nuance. His intellect is also evident in his works.

If intellect is an essential element for literature, then wisdom and inner depth occupy a special place in Shaimerdenov’s creations [13].

Shaymerdenov’s creativity demonstrates the advanced artistic portrayal of intertextuality and national identity. The lyrical and aesthetic qualities of his works enhance the depiction of national values, situating them within broader literary and cultural dialogues.

Academic Z. Kabdolov highlighted the aesthetic and intellectual dimensions of Shaymerdenov’s works: «Literature’s primary quality lies in its ability to celebrate beauty. Shaymerdenov’s warm lyricism and profound intellectuality distinguish his works, offering readers both emotional and intellectual richness» [13].

Conclusion

In summary, the female characters in Safuan Shaymerdenov’s works-Bibigul, Qarghash, Inesh, and Äspet – comprehensively depict the socio-cultural transformations in Kazakh society from the 1920s to the 1960s. These multifaceted characters embody the intersection of national identity and modernity, reflecting the adaptability and continuity of Kazakh spiritual roots.

Intertextual similarities and artistic connections reveal how these characters transcend Kazakh literature, resonating with global literary classics. This reflects both the creative influences in literary development and the ability of Kazakh writers to present national narratives in a universal context.

The typological evolution of these four female characters showcases the creative, resilient, and intellectually refined image of Kazakh women over half a century. Their shared trait-rooted in national spirituality while adapting to societal changes-highlights the artistic power of Shaymerdenov's prose, elevating the portrayal of women in literature to new heights.

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**САФУАН ШАЙМЕРДЕНОВ ШЫҒАРМАЛАРЫНДАҒЫ ӘЙЕЛДЕР
БЕЙНЕСІНІҢ ИНТЕРМӘТІНДІК ТАБИҒАТЫ**

Аңдатпа. Мақалада қаламгер Сафуан Шаймерденов шығармаларындағы әйелдер бейнесінің типологиясы интермәтін және ұлттық болмыс тұрғысынан талданады. Зерттеудің негізгі мақсаты – жазушы туындыларындағы әйел кейіпкерлерінің типологиялық ерекшеліктерін анықтап, олардың ұлттық болмысты бейнелеудегі рөлін ашу.

Әдебиеттегі әйелдер бейнесі – ұлттық болмысты жеткізудің маңызды құралдарының бірі. Қазақ прозасында әйел кейіпкерлері арқылы ұлттық құндылықтарды, рухани мұраларды және заман талабына сай бейімделуді бейнелеу бүгінгі әдеби зерттеулер үшін өзекті мәселелердің бірі. Шаймерденовтың әйел кейіпкерлері қазақ халқының дәстүрлі құндылықтары мен заман ағымындағы жаңашылдықты ұштастыра отырып, ұлттық болмыстың маңызды аспектілерін бейнелейді.

Суреткердің «Мезгіл», «Қарғаш», «Мәжнүн тал», «Инеш» сияқты көрнекті шығармаларындағы Бибігүл, Қарғаш, Әспет, Инеш бейнелері зерттеу нысаны ретінде қарастырылды. Зерттеуде контент-талдау, интермәтіндік талдау, типологиялық және лингвокогнитивтік әдістер қолданылды. Жазушының ұлттық болмысты жеткізуде қолданған көркемдік тәсілдері, кейіпкерлердің мінез-құлқы мен рухани әлемі кеңінен зерделенеді. Сонымен қатар жазушы С. Шаймерденов кейіпкерлерінің басқа әдеби туындылардағы ұқсас образдармен үндестігі (интермәтіндік байланысы) сараланды.

Мақала нәтижесінде әйелдер бейнесінің қазақ әдебиетіндегі ерекше типологиялық рөлі мен олардың ұлттық танымды қалыптастырудағы маңызы айқындалды. Зерттеу барысындағы ғылыми талдаулар қазақ әдебиетіндегі әйелдер бейнесінің көркемдік ерекшеліктерін тереңірек түсінуге және ұлттық болмыс мәселелерін жаңа қырынан қарастыруға мүмкіндік береді.

Тірек сөздер: интермәтін, ұлттық болмыс, типология, С. Шаймерденов, қазақ әдебиеті, әйелдер бейнесі.

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ИНТЕРТЕКСТУАЛЬНОСТЬ ОБРАЗА ЖЕНЩИН В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ САФУАНА ШАЙМЕРДЕНОВА

Аннотация. В статье проводится анализ типологии женских образов в произведениях писателя Сафуана Шаймерденова с точки зрения интертекстуальности и национальной самобытности. Основная цель исследования – выявить типологические особенности женских персонажей в произведениях автора и раскрыть их роль в отражении национального самосознания.

Образ женщины в литературе – одно из важнейших средств передачи национальной идентичности. В казахской прозе изображение национальных ценностей, духовного наследия и адаптации к требованиям времени через женских персонажей является актуальной проблемой современных литературоведческих исследований. Женские образы у Шаймерденова соединяют традиционные ценности казахского народа с современными инновациями, отображая значимые аспекты национальной самобытности.

Исследование рассматривает образы Бибигуль, Каргаш, Аспет и Инеш из таких знаковых произведений, как «Мезгіл», «Қарғаш», «Мәжнүн тал» и «Инеш». Были применены контент-анализ, интертекстуальный анализ, типологический и лингвокогнитивный методы. Подробно изучены художественные приемы, используемые писателем для передачи национальной самобытности, а также поведение и духовный мир персонажей. Кроме того, исследована интертекстуальная связь персонажей Шаймерденова с аналогичными образами в других литературных произведениях.

Результаты статьи подчеркивают уникальную типологическую роль женских образов в казахской литературе и их значимость в формировании национального сознания. Проведенные научные анализы позволяют глубже понять художественные особенности женских образов в казахской литературе и рассмотреть вопросы национальной самобытности с новой стороны.

Ключевые слова: интертекст, национальная идентичность, типология, С. Шаймерденов, казахская литература, женские образы.

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Received 12.05.2025

Accepted 21.06.2025