ABSTRACT
of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
«The concept of "Tugan zher" (Native land) in the folklore of Turkic peoples»,
performed by Olzhabayev Bekarys Koblanuly
in the educational program «8D02304 – Philology»

General description of the research work: Folklore, as a result of the people's cognitive activity, requires investigation at the intersection of several disciplines, which highlights the relevance of this dissertation from various perspectives. With the development of the anthropocentric paradigm, there has emerged a need to explore folklore studies from a new angle. The concept of the "concept" as an "indicator of cultural knowledge" has become the subject of research that has significantly influenced the development of cognitive theory.

The study of the concept of "tugan zher" in the folklore of Turkic peoples presupposes that it is impossible to cover all folklore works of all Turkic ethnic groups within the scope of this research. Therefore, the study focuses on the folklore of the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Bashkir, and Tatar peoples. These were analyzed within the framework of toponymic folklore and poetic onomastics. It is evident that the concept of "tugan zher", which also appears in the folklore of other Turkic peoples, can be studied through the lens of their historical worldview and shared mentalities.

The relevance of research. Studying folklore through the lens of modern scientific trends allows for a clearer understanding of the data and mental worldview accumulated over centuries. In this regard, the dissertation is highly relevant in the context of exploring the concept of the "tugan zher" as reflected in the folklore of Turkic peoples, from a new perspective – namely, within the framework of cognitive literary studies.

The dissertation considers the following key concepts: *folklore, toponymic folklore, the folklore of Turkic peoples, cognitive literary studies, and cognitive linguistics.* The integrated and holistic study of these concepts provides a deeper insight into the concept of the "tugan zher" as it has formed within the ethnocultural consciousness and cognition of our people. The concept of "tugan zher" is associated with such ideas as national identity, national consciousness, and national essence. Thus, folklore works portray the concept of "tugan zher" as both an artistic and folkloric concept within a system of archetypal images and motifs. In this context, the concept of "tugan zher" encompasses key views, principles, and perceptions of the world and space shared by all Turkic peoples.

Toponyms are not merely names of geographical objects, but rather a special system that, in folklore, performs locational, informational, symbolic, and cognitive functions. Ultimately, this system converges into the notion of the homeland. All thoughts and associations related to the concepts of "atameken", "tugan zher", "the place where life began", and "the place where ancestral blood was shed" inevitably lead to the idea of the homeland. At present, our core concept, identified as the homeland, was previously expressed through natural geographic names. The inscriptions of Kül Tegin stand as testimony to this. Hence, a clear connection can be observed between the concepts of "Zher-su" – "Otan" – "Tugan zher".

The aim of the research work is to explore the concept of the “tugan zher” in Turkic folklore.

In order to achieve this goal, the following objectives were set:

1. To study the interconnections between Turkic folklore and toponymic folklore, and to highlight the significance of toponymic folklore as a specific domain within the broader context of Turkic folklore.

2. To define the notion of the concept within the field of cognitive literary and folklore studies, and to identify the importance of the term “artistic concept” in folklore. This includes the investigation of the concept of the “tugan zher” in the context of Turkic folklore.

3. To identify the artistic and cognitive models of the concept of the “tugan zher” in Turkic folklore. This involves examining the genres of toponymic myth, toponymic legend, and toponymic narrative, as well as analyzing the notions of archetype and motif. Furthermore, the study demonstrates the significance of archetypes and motifs in constructing artistic and cognitive models of the concept of the “tugan zher”.

4. To define the informational and semantic field of the concept of the “tugan zher” in Turkic folklore. This includes analyzing semantic sequences formed within the linguistic matrix and defined in the semantic paradigm, as well as establishing the linguocultural field.

5. To determine the significance of the concept of the “tugan zher” within the literary and cognitive system through the method of conceptual analysis.

6. To explore and analyze the concept of the “tugan zher” within the framework of cognitive literary studies and to systematize current trends in the development of folklore studies.

The object of the dissertation research is the concept of the “tugan zher” in the folklore of the Turkic peoples.

The object of research: The concept of "tugan zher" in the folklore of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tatar, and Bashkir peoples (heroic and love poems, fairy tales, legends and epics, proverbs).

The subject of research: The features of the manifestation of the concept of "tugan zher" in the folklore of Turkic peoples, its artistic, ideological, and semantic structure, as well as its function in folklore genres.

Theoretical and Methodological framework of research work is based on both national folklore studies and international scholarly literature, including theoretical and methodological developments as well as scientific positions in the field of folklore. As the core scientific basis of the research, the ideas and views of prominent Kazakh folklorists such as S. Kaskabasov, A. Seidimbek, Sh. Ybyraev, R. Berdibai, M. Myrzakhmetov, K. Matyzhanov, A. Pangereyev, A. Absadykov, and Zh. Askerbek were taken into account. In addition, the contributions of scholars studying Turkic folklore, including Sh. Ualikhanov, Y. Altynsarin, A. Dıvaev, M.Zh. Kopeev, V.V. Radlov, G.N. Potanin, P.A. Falev, and V. M. Zhirmunsky, were of significant importance.

Moreover, the works of Kyrgyz scholars such as S. Zakirov, B. Kebekova, S. Kaiypov, M.Zh. Zhumagulov, S. Musaev, G. Orozova, Zh.O. Sultanova, and

O.M. Toktonazarova; Tatar scholars including M.Kh. Bakirov, F.Akhmetova, L. Mukhametzyanova, A. Garrapova, A.R. Biktimirova, G. Arslanova, F.F. Nurullina, L.M. Khusainova, F.A. Nadrishina, and S.M. Gilyazutdinova; and Bashkir researchers such as A.S. Mirbadalayev, S.A. Galin, K. Margen, M.M. Sagitov, and F.A. Nadrishina were given considerable attention. The research also draws on the works of foreign folklorists such as E.A. Kostyukhin, B.N. Putilov, V.Ye. Gusev, I.A. Golovanov, V.Ya. Propp, Ye.M. Meletinsky, A.P. Lipatov, S.N. Azbeleva, M. Zhuraev, S. Bakhadyrov, and K. Maksetov. In the field of cognitive literary studies, significant contributions were made by E. Lozinskaya, M. Turner, R. Tsur, P.K. Hogan, A. Richardson, S.J. Bronner, A. Akhmetova, and A. Kali. In the context of cognitive linguistics, the ideas of scholars such as W. von Humboldt, A. Baitursynov, K. Zhubanov, S.A. Askoldov-Alekseev, N. Telia, A.N. Prikhodko, V. Maslova, Ye. Kubryakova, V.V. Kolesov, Yu. S. Stepanov, S.G. Vorkachev, L.V. Miller, V.G. Zusman, A.P. Babushkin, Q. Zhamanbayeva, A. Salkynbai and others were incorporated into the study.

Sources of research. This dissertation examines the folklore of Turkic peoples, including folk tales common to the Turkic tradition, epic narratives, toponymic legends, proverbs and sayings, toponymic legends and oral stories.

Research methods. In the course of the study, the following core scientific methods were employed: comparison, analysis, description, differentiation, and systematization. To analyze the concept of the "tugan zher", several specific methods were applied: definitional analysis – to determine the informational and semantic field of the concept; semantic analysis – to identify its semantic paradigm; conceptual analysis – for the systematization of concept models; and linguocultural analysis – to determine its linguocultural field.

Scientific Novelty of the research. The topic of the concept of the "tugan zher" in the folklore of Turkic peoples is being explored for the first time. While previous research in literary studies has addressed concepts such as "Steppe", "Happiness", and "Eternal land", there are no dissertation-level studies dedicated to this topic within folklore studies, particularly in the context of Turkic folklore.

The concept is examined at the intersection of several academic disciplines. Whereas earlier it was primarily viewed from the perspective of cognitive linguistics, at the current stage of scientific development it is being studied through the lens of cognitive literary studies – thus forming a new direction in research. In this dissertation, along with the term "concept", the definitions of "artistic concept" and "folkloric concept" are also clarified, and their distinctions are analyzed.

In identifying the cognitive-artistic models of the concept of the "tugan zher" in Turkic folklore, various types of mythological prose – such as the toponymic myth, toponymic tale, and toponymic narrative – are considered. These terms have previously received little attention in the context of Turkic folklore. In the course of the dissertation, these prose forms of toponymic folklore are thoroughly defined, and the meaning and content of the "tugan zher" concept are explored within the framework of archetype and motif.

To identify the informational and semantic field of the "tugan zher" concept, extensive work with dictionaries and comprehensive analysis of proverbs and

sayings has been conducted. The study of proverbs and sayings in relation to the concept offers significant practical value as a linguistic matrix. With their help, the linguocultural field of the "tugan zher" concept can be accurately determined. Using the method of conceptual analysis, the significance of the "tugan zher" concept in the literary-cognitive context has been established.

Thus, the main scientific novelty of this study lies in the comparative analysis of the "tugan zher" concept as reflected in the folklore of Turkic peoples. The meaning and content of the concepts "Otan" and "Atameken", their sacred characteristics, as well as the concept of "tugan zher" studied within the context of tales, myths, legends, and narratives of Turkic peoples, form the core of the dissertation's scientific novelty.

The findings for the final research defense:

1. Considering folklore within a specific anthropocentric paradigm provides extensive insight into national identity and mentality. This dissertation is the first to examine the concept of the "tugan zher" within the folklore of Turkic peoples. The precise expression of the concept "tugan zher" is defined through toponyms. In folklore, toponyms serve not only as geographical names but also fulfill four distinct functions: toponymic, informational, symbolic, and cognitive. Additionally, toponyms carry an ideological function, expressing the idea of defending one's homeland and protecting it from external threats.

2. In this study, the concept of the "tugan zher" is analyzed within the framework of both artistic and folkloric concepts. In literary studies, research is conducted on the level of the "artistic concept", while in folklore, the focus is placed on the "folkloric concept". Taking this into account, it can be asserted that the concept of the "tugan zher" in the folklore of Turkic peoples represents a deeply rooted understanding.

3. The study clearly defines key terms of toponymic folklore: toponymic legend, toponymic tradition, and toponymic narrative. Based on these three categories, the concept of the "tugan zher" is analyzed through the lenses of archetype and motif. The study finds that the motif kie tutu ("sacredness") reflects a sacred attitude toward the homeland, while the concept of the "youngest child" highlights the idea of the youngest child defending the homeland – linked to mythological worldviews and mythical plots. In studying the concept of the "tugan zher" archetype and motif play a vital role in forming the artistic-cognitive model. Through these notions, the results of the social and spiritual experience of Turkic peoples – shaped within cognitive literary studies – are revealed as interconnected with mythology.

4. As a result of analyzing the informational and semantic field of the concept of the "tugan zher" in folklore, it was established that this concept reflects long-standing perceptions in the consciousness of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tatar, and Bashkir peoples. Accordingly, proverbs and sayings of Turkic peoples related to the "tugan zher" were collected and grouped thematically. In analyzing these proverbs and sayings – incorporated into the linguistic matrix – it was taken into account that the linguocultural field of the "tugan zher" concept is closely linked to national consciousness and worldview.

5. The research identified the key notions of the national conceptual system in Turkic folklore: national perception, mental essence, and issues of mentality. The dissertation provides an analysis and clarification of the concept of the "tugan zher" in the worldview and folklore of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Bashkir, and Tatar peoples within the framework of toponymic folklore. The results of the conceptual analysis highlight important aspects such as national identity, national values, and issues of worldview.

6. Turkic folklore represents a significant branch within the emerging anthropocentric paradigm of cognitive literary studies. The study of shared cultural practices, manifestations of spiritual culture, and mythological worldviews common to all Turkic peoples is carried out as a unified whole within the framework of cognitive literary studies. The connection between folklore and mythology is defined not only through the mythological space centered around the toponym *Ötüken*— regarded as the golden cradle of the Turkic people – but also as a symbolic name in verbal consciousness. Thus, as both a toponym and within the conceptual framework of the homeland, the notion of a blessed place in mythological consciousness transforms into a utopian space.

Theoretical Significance of the Research. The results of this study contribute to the development of global literary studies, folklore studies, and cognitive literary studies. The concept of the "tugan zher" defined at the intersection of multiple disciplines, expands the boundaries of toponymic folklore and is analyzed in the context of shared archetypes and motifs in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tatar, and Bashkir folklore. Through the concept of the "tugan zher" the research explores national cultural codes, ethnonational worldviews, and the characteristics of collective consciousness, offering the academic community new perspectives. The outcomes of this research pave the way for the introduction of new concepts and methodological approaches in the field.

Practical Significance of the Research. The findings of the dissertation can be applied in academic courses related to folklore, Turkic folklore, toponymic folklore, and general folklore studies.

Approbation and publication of research results. Eight articles have been published based on the key sections of the dissertation. Of these, five were published in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Three articles were published in international conference proceedings. Three presentations were delivered at international scientific conferences.

Structure and Volume of the Research Work. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three main chapters, a conclusion, and a list of references. The total volume of the research work is 137 pages.