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PRECEDENTIALITY AND NATIONAL CODE: A DISCOURSE-TEXTUAL ANALYSIS (BASED ON THE POETRY OF OLZHAS SULEIMENOV)

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the phenomenon of precedentiality in literary texts and the mechanisms through which the national code is manifested, based on the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov. The aim of the study is to identify the discursive functions of precedential phenomena in his poetry and to demonstrate the mechanisms by which they activate the national code - namely space, values, and cultural memory - in the reader's consciousness. The study determines the origins of precedential units, the specifics of their transformation within the poetic text, their pragmatic functions, and the cultural associations they evoke in the reader's consciousness. The findings demonstrate that precedentiality in the poet's works operates at several levels: historical anthroponyms and toponyms activating national memory; stable images and mythologemes reviving the folkloric and mythological code; literary and civilizational reminiscences establishing dialogue with the global cultural space; and cultural-linguistic implications emerging from multilingualism and etymological play. In the poetic discourse, precedential units function not only as informational references but also as evaluative, argumentative, emotional-expressive, and identificational devices. The poet integrates national experience with universal ideas, intensifying meaning at the intersection of "self" and "other" cultures. In the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov, the national code is systematically accumulated and transformed into artistic imagery and metaphor through such key concepts as space (the steppe, nomadism, the road), time (history, memory, continuity), and nature-cultural symbols (the horse, stone, word, voice, sign). Precedentiality serves as the principal mechanism for activating this code. The results of the study may serve as a practical foundation for linguocultural analysis of literary texts and may contribute to further research in literary studies, text linguistics, translation studies, and intercultural communication.

KEYWORDS: Precedentiality, Precedential Units, National Code, Intertextuality, Linguocultural Studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

The central aspect of interpreting a literary text lies in identifying the system of cultural markers it encodes, which collectively constitute the national code. Broadly defined, the national code encompasses a network of cultural-linguistic signs that reflect an ethnos's modes of self-identification, historical consciousness, and conceptualization of space, behavioral norms, and value systems. This concept extends beyond ethnographic data or lexicon overtly marked by national identity; within poetics, the national code frequently manifests through conceptual categories -such as space (e.g., steppe, road, settlement), values (e.g., freedom, honor), and historical memory (e.g., heroism, resistance, spiritual continuity) - as well as through symbolic systems (e.g., horse, wind, night, stone, voice, sign). Consequently, poetry functions not merely as a medium that conveys the national code, but as a dynamic site in which it is reconstructed, reinterpreted, and imbued with renewed significance in ways that resonate with contemporary cultural consciousness. One of the mechanisms by which the national code is activated in poetic discourse is the precedential phenomenon. In linguistic studies, precedentiality is conceptualized as a form of cultural referencing that relies on widely recognized texts, names, events, or utterances, which are collectively shared and acknowledged within a particular community - whether defined ethnically, culturally, or linguistically. The aim of the study is to identify the discursive functions of precedential phenomena in the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov and to demonstrate the mechanisms through which they activate the national code (space, values, and cultural memory) in the reader's consciousness. In accordance with this aim, the study focuses on:

- identifying the ways in which precedential phenomena (names, events, texts, utterances) are employed in poetic discourse;
- analyzing the discursive representation of national code markers (the steppe chronotope, values of freedom and honor, historical figures and ethnonyms);
- describing, from a linguistic-stylistic perspective, the effect of precedential triggers based on the addressee and pragmatic features (address, directive, imperative mood, pathos).

The study material includes Olzhas Suleimenov's poems *Argymak*, *To Makhamet*, *Aksak Qulan*, among others, as well as the poem *Adamga Tabyñ Zher Endi* (Earth, Bow to Man!).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The phenomenon of precedent has been widely studied in linguistics within the frameworks of intertextuality, cultural memory, and linguocultural research. In Russian linguistics, the concept of the "precedent text" and the system of precedent phenomena were first formulated in the works of Yuri Karaulov and later developed by Viktor Krasnykh and Dmitry Gudkov, who examined the typology and discursive functions of precedent units. In Western scholarship, the theoretical foundations for the study of cultural references in literary texts are associated with the concept of intertextuality developed by Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Gérard Genette, as well as with the theory of cultural memory proposed by Jan Assmann. The semiotic approach of Yuri Lotman also contributes to understanding how literary signs function as carriers of cultural information and collective memory. Within Kazakh humanities, research on national cultural representation in language is carried out in ethnolinguistics, linguocultural studies, and cognitive linguistics. These approaches examine the linguistic expression of cultural concepts, historical memory, and national symbolism in literary discourse. In this context, the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov has attracted significant scholarly attention. Researchers analyze his works in connection with national worldview, mythological imagery, historical memory, and intercultural communication. Recent studies emphasize the role of the national and cultural code in interpreting Suleimenov's poetry. The national code is understood as a semantic structure that accumulates the cultural and historical experience of a people and is expressed through symbolic images, linguistic forms, and culturally recognizable references. Scholars have examined various aspects of this phenomenon, including the representation of nomadic worldview (Sarsembayeva & Zhubanova, 2020), the visual narrative structures in Suleimenov's poetry (Kakilbayeva, 2015), and the interaction of cultural codes and national consciousness.

At the same time, the role of precedent phenomena as a mechanism for constructing the national code in Suleimenov's poetry remains insufficiently systematized. While previous studies have explored the thematic and cultural dimensions of the poet's works, the typology and textual functioning of precedent units in shaping markers of national identity require further analysis. Addressing this gap allows for a more precise understanding of how cultural references operate in

poetic discourse and how they contribute to the artistic representation of national identity.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research materials include selected works from the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov, they are *Argymak*, *To Makhambet*, and *Earth, Bow to Man!* - In which precedentiality and the national code are most distinctly manifested. The following criteria were applied in the collection and systematization of the linguistic material analyzed in the study:

- Explicit representation of precedential units (name/situation/text/utterance) in the discourse;
- Consistent manifestation of core markers of the national code (space, values, historical memory);
- Presence of discursive markers (appeal, vocative forms, imperative mood, pathos-driven intonation, and an addressee-oriented model).

Discourse analysis conceptualizes the text as a communicative act. In this study, discourse analysis was employed to determine the position of the lyrical subject, the addressee model, and the pragmatic orientation of the text (persuasion, encouragement, evaluation, and slogan-like appeal). This method is particularly significant for the analysis of *To Makhambet* and *Earth, Bow to Man...*, as these texts are characterized by dominant appeal, pathos, and a pronounced civic intonation.

The core objective of the research was to identify precedential phenomena and describe their functions. In each text, precedential units were classified according to the following types:

- Precedential name - an anthroponym, ethnonym, or culturally symbolic designation;
- Precedential situation - a historical event or culturally established scenario;
- Precedential text - an allusion to epic, folklore, or classical literature; a reminiscence;
- Precedential utterance - a formulaic expression, slogan, proverb, or appeal-based structure.

The principal method applied in this research was linguocultural analysis, aimed at revealing the substantive foundations of the national code. The primary objective of this approach is to interpret lexical units and imagery within the framework of national cultural knowledge. In the course of the research, markers were systematized according to the following codes: the spatial code (the steppe chronotope, the road, the horizon, and spatial formulae of the "Zheti Kiyan" type); the value-based code (freedom, honor, responsibility, heroism); and the cultural memory code (historical figures, ethnonyms, and historical scenarios).

Semiotic analysis was conducted using three

levels of the sign system: the denotative level (literal meaning); the connotative level (evaluative, emotional meaning); and the cultural-invariant level (stable cultural content within the national worldview). This method was particularly applied in analyzing the horse symbol in *Argymak*. In the poem, the horse appears as a "horse" at the denotative level, as "freedom" at the connotative level, and as the "philosophy of nomadic movement" at the cultural-invariant level. The text-stylistic analysis method was aimed at revealing the role of specific linguistic means in the activation of the national code and precedentiality. During the analysis, lexical-semantic fields, syntactic dynamics, rhetorical devices, and tropes such as metaphor, symbol, and hyperbole were identified, and their connection with the pragmatic effect of the text was described. Through comparative analysis, the leading types of precedential units in each text, the dominance of national code layers, and the pragmatic orientation were compared, allowing for the identification of general patterns and differences. The text-communicative analysis method enabled the determination of the organizing function of precedential units within the text, the author-text-reader communication, and their pragmatic effect. This method treats the poetic text as a communicative act directed toward a specific addressee. The study consists of the following stages:

- a) Selection of precedential units from the texts and their classification into four types, indicating which layer of the national code each unit activates;
- b) Identification of linguistic and stylistic devices (lexicon, syntax, tropes, intonation);
- c) Description of the discursive function (addressee, position, influence);
- d) Comparison of the results across texts and presentation of an aggregated model.

3.1 Theoretical Framework: Precedentiality and the National Code

3.1.1 The Concept of the Precedential Phenomenon

In linguocultural studies and anthropocentric linguistics, the concept of a "precedential text" has become one of the key categories for explaining the cultural and cognitive mechanisms of artistic communication. The relevance of this concept is linked to the fact that, in both literary and journalistic discourse, processes of "condensation" and "multilayering" of meaning occur simultaneously: a single reference in the text (a

name, phrase, plot fragment, or fixed formula) activates the reader's cultural memory and triggers a broad associative field. Thus, the precedential text serves as one of the most compact and effective tools of "shared knowledge" between the author and the addressee. In introducing the term "precedential text" into scholarly discourse, the definition provided by Yu. Karaulov in his work *Russian Language and the Linguistic Personality* traditionally serves as a reference point. Yu. Karaulov (1987) characterizes precedential texts as those widely known to a particular linguistic personality and their socio-cultural environment, carrying cognitive and emotional significance, possessing a "suprapersonal" character, and repeatedly reproduced in discourse. Three dimensions are highlighted here: significance (cognitive/emotional value), commonality (beyond the individual level established in collective awareness), and recurrence (regular reactivation in discourse). The value of Karaulov's concept lies in viewing precedentiality not merely at the level of a "quotation," but in connection with the cognitive world of the linguistic personality and social memory. The frequent citation of Karaulov's definition also stems from its systematic approach. A key scholarly conclusion derived from Karaulov's explanation is that a precedential text relies not only on intertextual links but also on collective knowledge. That is, "precedentiality" is measured by its intelligibility to a specific community: a reference must be understood by the addressee without additional explanation; otherwise, it does not attain the status of a precedential phenomenon. This principle later became established as a key criterion in subsequent classifications and methodological studies. The positions formulated by Karaulov were further refined in the works of scholars such as V.V. Krasnykh, D.B. Gudkov, I.V. Zakharenko, D.V. Bagaeva, and others, expanding the theoretical framework of precedentiality. First, Krasnykh classified the system of precedential phenomena and established the main types: precedential name, precedential text, precedential situation, and precedential utterance. This classification is often regarded in contemporary research as a "classical" typology and allows for precise differentiation of the forms in which precedential units manifest in a text. Second, Krasnykh's works deepen the understanding of the semiotic nature of precedential phenomena: he distinguishes between verbal phenomena (precedential name, precedential utterance) and phenomena conveyed through verbalization

(precedential text, precedential situation), showing that textual reference is sometimes "reconstructed" not directly through words but via situation, plot, or imagery. This approach is particularly productive in the analysis of poetry: a precedential unit in a poem is recognized not only because it is "named" but also through figurative and plot-related signals, such as an allusion to a historical event or a mythological motif. D.B. Gudkov analyzes precedentiality in connection with the concepts of "cultural space," "individual cognitive space," "collective cognitive space," and the cognitive base. According to D.B. Gudkov, the cognitive base is a set of structured knowledge and representations shared by "virtually all members" of a particular linguocultural community, in which cultural phenomena are preserved as "minimized/reduced" invariants. This concept provides a scientific basis for understanding how a precedential text is recognized: when a precedential signal is activated, the addressee relies on the abbreviated "invariant" stored in the cognitive base to reconstruct the full meaning. Moreover, in the study "Cognitive Base and Precedential Phenomena...", the authors consider precedential phenomena as fundamental units of communication (Zakharenko et al., 1997). Here, precedentiality is evaluated not only as a textual phenomenon but also as a tool of communicative influence. The development of precedential text theory was significantly influenced by the works of V.G. Kostomarov and N.D. Burvikova. These studies examine the regularities in the emergence of precedentiality in connection with processes such as the integration of text fragments into stable circulation, their acquisition of "quotable" status in social practice, and their consolidation in cultural memory. In other words, precedentiality is not presented in a "ready-made" form; it is formed through cultural usage and reinforced through repetition. This perspective is further confirmed in subsequent studies, where particular attention is paid to the role of the precedential text within the cultural-linguistic community. In later research, especially in the fields of mediallynguistics and intercultural communication, the functions of precedential texts continue to expand. Notable contributions in these areas include the works of G.G. Slyshkin, M.A. Efremova, and others.

In Kazakh linguistics, issues of precedentiality are developed at the intersection of text linguistics, linguocultural studies, onomastics, and mediallynguistics. In Abdykhanova's (2018) dissertation, the methods of representing folkloric

precedential names and texts in literary works were identified, and intertextual connections were proposed as a fundamental condition for the study of precedentiality. Furthermore, studies analyzing precedential phenomena in Kazakh texts based on press discourse demonstrate the functions of the precedential text, precedential name, precedential situation, and precedential utterance. Such research shows that precedentiality is a stable phenomenon not only within literary texts but also in the socio-communicative space. These theoretical traditions, along with the issues of “primary text/precedent” in Kazakh linguistics, provide a direct methodological foundation for the analysis of Olzhas Suleimenov’s poetry.

3.1.2 National Code and Cultural Semiotics

The concept of the “national code” within the framework of cultural semiotics can be understood as a “system of cultural signs.” For a given nation, well-known symbols, concepts, scenarios, and spatiotemporal patterns form its own distinctive “reading mechanism.” Semiotic analyses of cultural codes highlight the connection of the code with history, cultural memory, and the mutual interpretation of texts (Lotman, 2000). Viewed within cultural semiotics, the national code can be defined as a system of cultural signs that regulates the ways a particular community perceives, describes, and interprets the world. This system is not limited to linguistic means alone; it includes symbols, mythologems, ritual scenarios, historical narratives, spatiotemporal patterns, value hierarchies, behavioral norms, and shared cultural “memory.” The national code accumulates cultural experience and establishes a community’s unique “reading mechanism” through continuous reproduction in texts (oral, written, artistic, media). Olzhas Suleimenov’s poetry vividly illustrates this mechanism: the poet transforms the archetypal signs of the national cultural space (steppe, horse/argymak, freedom, honor) into a stable semantic core while integrating them with a new historical-civilizational context (science, space, the rhetoric of a “new era”). As a result, the national code in poetry appears not merely as a pre-existing “reserve,” but as a semiotic system that is continuously reconstructed, generating new meaning.

4. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In accordance with the aim of the study, the precedential phenomena in Olzhas Suleimenov’s poetry can be categorized into four groups from the

perspective of their connection with the national code.

4. 1. Historical-Civilizational Precedents

This group includes events of global or Soviet significance, as well as civilizational “leaps.” Suleimenov integrates such precedents with the national worldview, presenting Kazakh existence not as a phenomenon “outside world history” but as part of it. For example: a precedential situation in the poem “Earth, Bow to Man!” - Humanity’s first space flight (a global historical event). In the poem, the image of the nomad and the spatial logic intersect with the theme of space, challenging the stereotype that “nomadism = backwardness.” The precedential situation in the poem performs the following functions:

a) Identification function. The poet situates the Kazakh “self” within the space of global progress.

b) Evaluative function. The work presents the moral and spiritual dimension of participation in progress.

c) Text-building function. The historical event serves as the central axis of the poem.

d) Concept-forming function. The concepts of SPACE, HUMANITY, and CIVILIZATION intersect with the national code. Foreign scholars’ assessments of this poem’s multilayered nature also highlight the cultural “hybrid” character of Suleimenov’s text (Kalizhanov, 2017).

4. 2. Ethnomythological Precedents

This represents one of the most powerful layers of national cultural memory. Here, archetypes such as the horse, the steppe, nomadism, and images of animals and birds serve not merely as descriptive elements but as semantic “keys.” For example, in the poem “Argymak”, the image of the argymak symbolizes freedom, movement, beauty, and nobility within nomadic culture.

In Naurzbayeva’s (2021) article, by exploring the conceptsphere of “Argymak”, it is shown that an entire worldview can be constructed around a single symbol. In the poem, the argymak functions as a “condensed sign” of national space and character. Similarly, in the poem “Aksak Qulan”, the precedential unit - “the qulan” - is perceived as an image that evokes legendary and cultural motifs within steppe memory. Its “aksak” (lame) characteristic conveys meanings of fate, warning, natural law, and tragedy. The poet conveys the relationship between humans and nature through symbolic representation. Precedents in this group establish the national code as a system of symbolic

thought.

Table 1: Functions of precedential units in the works of O. Suleimenov.

Function	Specific manifestation	Example text
Identificational	comprehension of the national "Self" through space/symbol	«Argmak», «Aksak Qulan»
Evaluative	differentiation of the values of progress/tradition and word/responsibility	«Earth, Bow to Man!», linguo-cultural context
Text-forming	repetition of a single symbol to maintain the cohesion of the text	«Argmak», poems with a visual narrative
Concept-forming	Aggregation of major concepts such as ROAD, NOMAD, WORD, SPACE	texts from all groups

In Olzhas Suleimenov's poetry, the cultural significance of the text is particularly evident. The poet does not always explain his ideas fully or in detail; instead, he uses brief cultural signs. Through these signs, the reader's pre-existing historical and cultural knowledge (thesaurus) is activated. Therefore, part of the meaning in the text is explicitly conveyed through words, while another part is implicitly completed by the reader's cultural memory. This is where the main function of precedential phenomena becomes clear: they immediately expand the meaning of the text, evoking additional thoughts and associations. For example, in the poem "Argymak", the image of the argymak, the steed, serves as an important cultural symbol in Kazakh culture, representing a distinct model of nomadic life tied to space and time - a nomadic chronotope. The meaning of this image unfolds on three levels:

1. Denotative level: the argymak is a horse, gallop, movement.
2. Connotative level: it evokes values such as freedom, vastness, energy, and honor.
3. Deep cultural level: it embodies the "philosophy of movement" characteristic of nomadic life, reflecting the dynamic nature of the steppe worldview based on constant motion and freedom. The impact of the argymak image is reinforced through surrounding semantic fields: action verbs denoting movement (gallop, strive, dash), terms referring to open spaces (steppe, road, horizon), and evaluative vocabulary emphasizing strength and vitality - all of which complement and reinforce one another.

The second important factor that conveys the image of the argymak as "movement" is syntactic dynamics. Short structures and intonational intensification (an increased rhythmic pace) create a "galloping effect" in the text. Thus, meaning is generated not only through the lexical content of the words but also through the rhythm of the sentences.

The argymak symbol functions as an organizing element in the poem. It unites into a single

framework the spatial model "steppe-road-horizon," the temporal model based on continuous movement and sequence, and the value model comprising freedom, honor, and energy. Therefore, the poem "Argymak" can be read as a text that poetically models the connection between the national code and space and values.

*Oh, the tawny ridges of the Kipchak steppes!
Tell of their horse - their swift steed.
With a saddle fastened upon his mirror-like croup,
The argamak moves forward,
Across the blue grass - like a blue carpet,
Lightly touching the ground with his hooves.*

In Olzhas Suleimenov's poem "Argymak", the main idea is the pursuit of freedom. Through the metaphor "a heart galloping like an argymak," the poet depicts the nature of the heart, which does not submit to calm and is drawn toward freedom. That is, the gallop here becomes not merely an action, but a symbol expressing important concepts of the national worldview, such as freedom, risk, and impulse. In the excerpt, the national code is manifested through three main layers: space, values, and historical memory. The spatial code is conveyed through expressions such as kok shalghyn (blue meadow), kok kilem (blue carpet), and momyn qyr (gentle slope). These depict the steppe as a vast, open, and limitless space. The expression Zheti qyan zher tubi (the bottom of the land of seven peaks) represents space as a distant boundary toward which the free spirit aspires, i.e., an image close to a mythical limit. This shows that the concept of "land" in the Kazakh worldview has become a stable measure of remoteness and boundless expanse. The value code is revealed through action verbs and imperative forms in the poem. Verbs like asaiyn ("let it gallop") and shabayykshy ("let's gallop") transform movement into a sign of freedom. The phrase atylain argymaktyn jalyna ("let us ride along the argymak's mane") conveys risk and courage, indicating that the hero is ready to set out toward a goal together with the argymak. For a Kazakh reader, the name Makhambet is most often

associated with a specific historical period: resistance to injustice, speaking out against authority and violence, and the spirit of struggle. What is important is that the poem does not recount historical events in chronological order. Its artistic method is different: through a single name, it reconstructs an entire "historical scenario." In other words, when the reader encounters the name "Makhambet," key concepts such as "struggle for justice," "confrontation with oppression," "the honor of the people," and "a courageous word" are automatically activated in the mind. This reflects the cultural nature of poetry: its task is not to narrate historical reality as a sequence of events, but to convey the meaning of that history - what the struggle was for- and bring that meaning into

contemporary consciousness. In the poem, the poet appears to address a historical figure, yet in reality his words are directed at the contemporary reader. This is a common poetic device: formally, the addressee is one figure, but the true listener is modern society. This phenomenon can be explained as "dual addressivity": the external addressee is Makhambet, while the internal addressee is today's reader. Such a structure strengthens the impact of the poem, because the text ceases to be merely a "story about the past" and becomes a "message addressed to the present-day individual." The historical figure functions here like a mirror: by looking at him, the poet poses questions to the modern reader and measures contemporary values against that historical example.

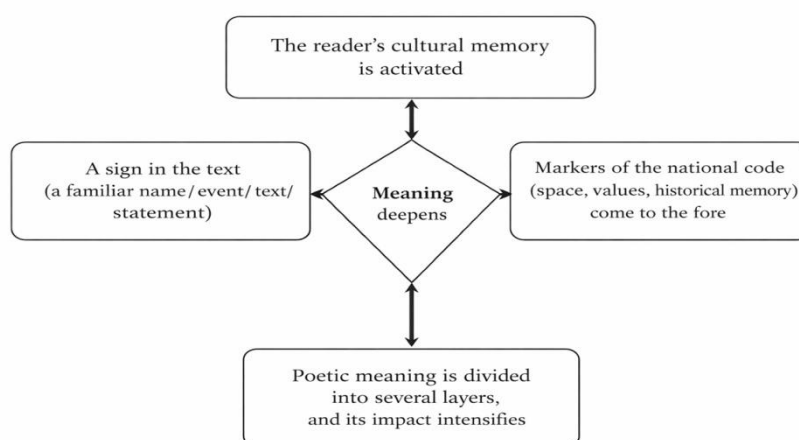


Figure 1: The scheme of poetic meaning formation in the poetry of O. Suleimenov.

This scheme illustrates how meaning in Suleimenov's poetry is "layered" step by step. First, a specific sign appears in the text (a familiar name, event, reference to another text, or a set expression). This sign activates pre-existing associations in the reader's mind, awakening cultural memory. Once cultural memory is engaged, the reception of the poem is no longer limited to personal experience but connects with shared historical and cultural knowledge, making the markers of the national code (such as the concept of space, value systems, and historical memory) more prominent. As a result, the poetic meaning unfolds on multiple levels, intensifying its impact.

6. CONCLUSION

Precedent phenomena function as a "trigger mechanism" that awakens national meaning in the poetry of Olzhas Suleimenov: they rapidly activate cultural memory, making the national content of the

text deeper and more multilayered. In the poem "Argymak", the image of the argymak/tulpar becomes the central symbol reflecting the connection between national spatial and temporal values. In the poem "To Makhambet", the name Makhambet does not merely serve as a reminder of a historical fact, but also reinforces the core value component of the text and grounds the poem in an ethical principle. The poem "Earth, Bow to Man!" demonstrates that the national code is not a closed system; it can intersect with civilizational themes (the universal human experience) and generate complex meaning based on several "codes." Thus, the power of the poetic effect lies in the use of linguistic and artistic devices such as ambiguity, rhetorical structure, dynamic syntax, and the central role of the symbol in combination with precedent signs.

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