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Reader Perception of Dystopian Narrative in Kazakh Literature: A Survey-Based Study of the Discursive Space of *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"*

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***Abstract*—This research article examines the discursive space of dystopian elements in Tlegenov's novel "*Seksen Altınşı Jyl*" within Kazakh literature, as well as their reception by readers. The study is grounded in reader-response theory and explores not only the characteristics of the dystopian genre but also the levels of reader interpretation. The primary objective of the research is to assess readers' perceptions of society through dystopian literature, to analyze the features of their understanding and reception, and to empirically determine the cognitive and emotional impact of the work. A total of 147 respondents voluntarily participated in the study. Data were collected via Google Forms and processed using the R statistical software package. The survey was structured according to a four-factor model: the first factor addressed familiarity with the work; the second examined the perception of its dystopian nature; the third focused on historical consciousness and social interpretation; and the fourth considered emotional impact and social significance. The results indicated that readers' level of familiarity with dystopian prose is relatively low. This trend is characteristic of countries that have experienced totalitarian regimes and gained independence only toward the end of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the historical period depicted in the novel was highly rated in terms of comprehensibility, and the political system and its ideology were perceived as realistic. The findings suggest that while dystopian literature may be challenging for readers to engage with, it holds significant social importance.**

***Index Terms*—political system, totalitarianism, dystopia, reader perception, utopia**

I. Introduction

One of the widely studied issues in world literature is the theme of dystopia. Emerging as a counterpoint to utopian literature, the concept of "dystopia" has, to date, developed considerable depth in both genre and typological terms. Dystopian works artistically depict totalitarianism, the conflict between the individual and society, and the struggle between freedom and control. A literary work not only shapes the literary process but also reflects the political landscape

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of the era it portrays. In today's globalized world, it is evident that the political profiles of individual countries are becoming increasingly complex. Therefore, the dystopian genre has attracted timely and growing interest.

In contemporary Kazakh literary studies, the dystopian genre remains insufficiently systematized and deeply explored, which makes it a relevant scholarly issue. To achieve the stated objective, this study employs a survey method to determine readers' levels of reception of Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* (Tlegenov, 2024). In addition, a descriptive-analytical analysis of the novel is conducted to identify dystopian features and narrative structures directed against the totalitarian system within Kazakh literature.

Totalitarianism is a political system that exerts complete control over all spheres of social life (politics, economy, culture, and spirituality), restricting – and often entirely negating – individual freedom. In such a system, power is centralized, and citizens are deprived of freedom of thought and choice. In a totalitarian society, the state functions not only as a governing body but also as a force that intrudes into individuals' private lives and shapes their consciousness.

Its main characteristics include dictatorship – that is, unlimited and absolute power – the suppression of human rights, the establishment of strict control and censorship, the dominance of a single ideology, the formation of a personality cult, the erosion of national identity, and the subordination of law to political authority. Under such conditions, individual opinion and free thought are perceived as threats to the system, instilling fear and submission in public consciousness.

Historically, totalitarian systems have driven societies into isolation not only politically but also culturally and spiritually. By destroying trust and free thought among individuals and imposing a false sense of collective unity, they distort genuine human values.

The term "totalitarianism" emerged in 1923 (Roberts, 2020). Most scholars associate this concept with the state's control over society (Mikhaylenko & Nesterova, 2000). Initially, such systems may exploit democratic conditions for their own purposes, but later suppress these freedoms and transform them into mechanisms of control (Arendt, 1953).

The system of totalitarianism not only eradicates truth but also obscures public consciousness (Löfgren, 2021). It is characterized by comprehensive control over both individual lives and all sectors of society, reflecting an authoritarian stance (Baykent, 2023). The key features of this political system are vividly represented in world literature, particularly in the works of Orwell (2023), Zamyatin (2024), and Huxley (2025). These literary works can be considered foundational in the development of the dystopian genre (Babaee & Singh, 2015).

Considering the prefix "anti-," if dystopia is recognized as an independent genre, it should also be acknowledged that it develops by negating utopia while relying on its genre foundations (Shishkina, 2007).

Today, works within this genre also exist in Kazakh literature. For instance, one may cite Aktan Tökish's novel "Mänggürtstan" (Tökish, 2020) and Nurzhan Quantaiuly's dystopian short story "Three Days of Fear" (Quantaıuly, 2021). The novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* by Tlegenov, which serves as the object of this study, likewise contains dystopian elements.

II. Literature Review

Although resistance to utopian thinking in literature began to develop intensively in the second half of the twentieth century, it is evident that comprehensive scholarly research on the dystopian genre by researchers from countries that have experienced totalitarianism was relatively delayed. This is clearly influenced by the political system. Nevertheless, there is a substantial body of research examining the characteristics of the dystopian genre in contemporary literature.

For instance, the theory of the dystopian genre and its classification have been explored on the basis of American literature (Setyorini, 2016). Other studies have examined lexical units in the translation of dystopian works into different languages (Votinova, 2018), and, through the analysis of dystopian texts written in different countries and time periods, have demonstrated both the existence and the significance of dystopian literature in literary studies during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Alihodžić & Jeviković, 2016).

Scholars have also investigated the defining features of dystopia, its historical stages of development, and its function not merely as a literary genre but as a form of political and social critique expressing resistance to societal threats (Stoner, 2017; Palavalli, 2024). Other research focuses on the characteristics of dystopian literature for young adults (Ryan, 2014), while some studies propose feminist dystopia as a distinct genre (Pigmans, 2018). Additionally, research has explored how queer-feminist dystopian novels resist patriarchal and colonial power structures through the interconnection of gender themes and innovative narrative forms (Boller, 2025).

Further studies analyze utopian and dystopian novels from a content-based perspective, defining them as a meta-genre (Zhurkova & Khomutnikova, 2019), examine how complex global conditions have been anticipated in dystopian fiction (Lanin, 2024), and highlight the role of the dystopian genre in addressing contemporary social issues such as surveillance, authoritarian governance, gender oppression, ecological decline, and the alienating effects of technology (Saleem, 2025; Abdedaim, 2024). There are also studies that investigate political ideologies represented in dystopian-themed television series (Donstrup, 2025), as well as research focusing on technological surveillance in modern dystopian literature (Khadicha, 2025). Through these approaches, scholars provide comprehensive analyses of the aesthetic and thematic features of the genre.

In contrast, within Kazakh literature – which has experienced totalitarianism – works in this genre remain scarce and undoubtedly require fundamental scholarly investigation. In this regard, analyzing readers' reception of Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* as the object of this study serves as an important step toward assessing the place of the dystopian genre within Kazakh society.

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III. Methodology

This study aims to determine the specific features of the reception of the novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"*, including readers' levels of comprehension and their evaluation of its content. The research was conducted in an empirical framework, with a survey method employed as the primary source of data.

Research Materials

The empirical basis of the study consists of the results of an online survey conducted among Kazakh-speaking respondents. A total of 147 participants took part in the survey. Responses were collected via the Google Forms platform and subsequently prepared for quantitative analysis.

The questionnaire was structured into several thematic blocks:

1) Familiarity with the work
2) Perception of the dystopian nature of the work
3) Historical consciousness and social interpretation
4) Emotional impact and social significance

All questions were designed using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented the lowest rating and 5 the highest.

Data Processing

The collected data were initially stored in Microsoft Excel format and later imported into the R statistical software environment for analysis. During data processing, all responses were converted into numerical format and prepared for statistical examination.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each question, including: mean, standard deviation (SD), and median. These indicators made it possible to identify general response trends and the degree of variability among respondents.

Statistical Analysis

Considering the nature of the data (Likert scale, i.e., ordinal measurement), non-parametric statistical methods were applied. The Friedman test was used to compare respondents' answers across multiple related questions. This test allows for the comparison of ratings provided by the same group of respondents under several conditions and is designed to identify statistically significant differences between responses. It is particularly effective when the data do not follow a normal distribution.

The level of statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. Results with p-values below this threshold were considered statistically significant.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical requirements were strictly observed during the study. Participation was voluntary, no personal data were collected, and all responses were processed anonymously.

IV. Discussion and Results

Dystopian Features in "Seksen Altınşı Jyl": A Literary Analysis

In Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl",* the totalitarian nature of Soviet power is revealed at an artistic level. The author's statement, "There must be the vigilant eye of the Party in every sphere and a hand that probes and inspects" (Tlegenov, 2024), reflects the proximity of the Soviet system to a panoptic model of control. According to the philosopher Michel Foucault, the primary function of the panopticon is to ensure that the subject is constantly and consciously visible, thereby guaranteeing the automatic functioning of power. Even if surveillance is not continuous, its effects must be permanent (Foucault, 2023). Thus, not only the actions but also the consciousness of members of society were subjected to strict ideological supervision.

Decisions made by Party leadership were perceived as absolute law for society, while those who opposed them were subjected to repression. The portrayal of officials – particularly regional secretaries – becomes a symbol of the Soviet party nomenklatura, which distanced itself from the people and functioned as a bureaucratic apparatus serving only the interests of the central authority. This depiction clearly illustrates the unlimited dictatorship of power.

When compared with analogues in world literature, in Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell, the figure of Big Brother serves as a symbol of absolute authority. In a totalitarian society, control is exercised not only through political institutions but also through the semiotic space of everyday life. Every object, every element of daily existence, becomes an ideological code that reminds individuals of the presence of power. Orwell's satirical definition of authority alludes to the sadism and cruelty manifested in the mass killings carried out by Hitler and Stalin (Banks, 2017).

Similarly, in We by Zamyatin, the figure of the Benefactor represents a comparable form of centralized authority. In all circumstances, individual subjective will is constrained, and resistance to the system is equated with crime. The fundamental principle of totalitarian power here lies in the complete eradication of individuality and the absorption of the individual "I" into the collective "We." In this way, the system legitimizes the process of deindividualization through the numbering of citizens.

Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* not only presents an artistic representation of totalitarianism in Kazakh literature but also connects it with a national historical event, thereby forming an ethno-model of dystopia.

During the Soviet era, official ideology dominated all spheres of society. In *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl",* Tlegenov portrays the peaceful resistance of youth as being labeled "nationalism," with their actions interpreted through the lens of a

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distorted ideological framework. Here, power imposes its principles upon public consciousness through manipulative slogans, placing them above individual will. The concept of "collective consciousness," systematized in sociology by Durkheim, is described as follows: "Collective consciousness transforms everything within its domain, blending different spheres of reality, reconciling contradictions, and overturning the natural hierarchy of being" (Durkheim, 1991, pp. 106-107). This definition aligns closely with the content of the novel, where the promotion of artificial values is evident.

Totalitarian power systematically shapes public consciousness, transforming the ordinary individual into a participant in a political theater. In this context, it is not genuine belief but artificially constructed emotion that prevails. Ceremonial parades and collective rituals serve not only to induce temporary euphoria among the population but also to neutralize their potential for resistance.

Such a phenomenon can also be observed in Tlegenov's novel. Although Soviet authority presented official celebrations and slogans as a unifying force for the people, in reality these practices were aimed at suppressing national consciousness. The December events clearly demonstrated the collapse of this artificial collective illusion. A distinctive feature of the work lies in the way false ideology is directed against national identity and positioned in opposition to the Kazakh youth's aspiration for freedom.

In dystopian literature, the protagonist is typically distinguished by individuality, worldview, and independent thinking (Mustoyapova, 2024). In *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl",* the central characters Aydın and Nəzik symbolize individuals who resist the system. Their relationship is not merely a psychological or emotional bond, but also serves as a metaphor for the pursuit of freedom and longing.

However, this resistance ultimately proves unsuccessful, and the characters' fate ends tragically. Such an outcome represents one of the fundamental principles of dystopian poetics: the tragedy of the individual who opposes the system functions as an artistic device that highlights the repressive power of totalitarian structures. Thus, the love story between Aydın and Nəzik appears in Kazakh prose as a metaphor for freedom and affection, yet within a totalitarian context, their individuality is destroyed, and their personal lives become victims of political oppression.

One of the central concepts in Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* is national nihilism. Soviet authority sought to impose an internationalist ideology by disregarding the language, culture, traditions, and historical memory of the Kazakh people. From the perspective of postcolonial theory, this phenomenon can be interpreted as a manifestation of cultural assimilation.

The actions of the youth who participated in the December uprising reflect a resurgence of national consciousness in opposition to this policy. Their resistance to authority was not merely a political protest, but also a movement aimed at preserving historical memory and safeguarding national identity.

Tlegenov's novel reveals the problem of national nihilism not only as a flaw of the Soviet system but as an ideological consequence of totalitarian power. By portraying the systematic marginalization of national values, the author establishes a new typological model for representing national issues in Kazakh literature through a dystopian form. The policies pursued by Soviet authority – aimed at achieving cultural standardization by displacing the Kazakh language, culture, historical memory, and traditional values – distinguish this novel from global models and highlight the ethnospecific nature of dystopian elements in Kazakh prose.

Results

The conducted survey enabled a comprehensive analysis of respondents' reception of the novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl",* including their levels of comprehension and evaluative judgments of the work. A 5-point Likert scale was employed in the study, with each response converted into a numerical value. Based on the collected data, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and median) were calculated, and Friedman's rank-based analysis of variance was conducted to identify differences between groups.

The results of the Friedman test indicated statistically significant differences $(\chi^2 = 257.98, df = 41, p < 0.001)$. This finding suggests that respondents' answers were not uniform across the questions and that their reception of the work varied depending on different aspects. In other words, while participants rated certain thematic or conceptual elements of the novel highly, their evaluations of other aspects were comparatively lower.

Factor 1: Level of Familiarity With the Work

The analysis of respondents' level of familiarity with the work showed that the majority were only partially acquainted with the content of the novel. The response option "I am only familiar with the content" demonstrated the highest mean value (M = 2.52) compared to the other responses. Meanwhile, the indicators for "I have read it in full" (M = 2.29) and "I have not read it" (M = 2.26) were relatively close in value.

This suggests that a significant proportion of participants had not read the work in its entirety, although they possessed a general understanding of its main content. The results of responses to the question "Have you read the novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"*?" are presented in Table 1.

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TABLE 1
LEVEL OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE WORK (QUESTION 1)

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Yes, I have read it in full	2,28571429	1,49428134	2	2,9815E-33
Partially, I have read it.	2,32653061	1,34043167	2	2,9815E-33
I am only familiar with its content	2,5170068	1,3259979	2	2,9815E-33
No, I have not read it	2,2585034	1,50837132	1	2,9815E-33

At the next stage, the results related to the level of comprehension of the work also demonstrated moderate average values. Although the responses "I understood it very well" (M = 2.50) and "I understood it at an average level" (M = 2.39) were predominant, the options "It was somewhat difficult to understand" (M = 2.24) and "I did not understand it at all" (M = 2.08) also accounted for a certain proportion.

These findings indicate the complexity of the novel's content and suggest that it is not equally accessible to all readers. Furthermore, the relatively high standard deviation values (SD ≈ 1.2-1.4) confirm the variability in respondents' answers. Table 2 presents the responses to the question "How well did you understand the work?"

TABLE 2
LEVEL OF COMPREHENSION OF THE WORK (QUESTION 2)

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
I understood it very well	2,50340136	1,48681027	2	2,9815E-33
Moderately	2,39455782	1,28509806	2	2,9815E-33
It was somewhat difficult	2,24489796	1,236388	2	2,9815E-33
I did not understand it at all	2,08163265	1,37746145	1	2,9815E-33

The level of familiarity of survey participants with the dystopian genre was also found to be moderate. The majority of respondents indicated "I know a little about it" (M = 2.32) and "I am familiar with it to some extent" (M = 2.31). Although the proportion of those who selected "I am not familiar with it at all" (M = 2.14) was somewhat lower, overall, it can be observed that participants do not possess comprehensive and systematic knowledge of the genre.

This factor may, to some extent, influence the reception of the work. The results regarding participants' familiarity with the dystopian genre are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
READERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE DYSTOPIAN GENRE

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
I am familiar with it to some extent	2,30612245	1,35794085	2	2,9815E-33
I have a basic understanding of it	2,31972789	1,17033185	2	2,9815E-33
I am not familiar with it at all	2,13605442	1,32230318	2	2,9815E-33

Factor 2: Perception of the Novel's Dystopian Nature

Among the evaluations of the novel's content, the highest scores were attributed to statements reflecting its socio-philosophical dimension. In particular, the statement "the novel prompts reflection on freedom and power" received the highest mean value (M = 2.82). Additionally, the responses "the author's main idea is clear" (M = 2.76), "the work realistically portrays society" (M = 2.75), and "the novel helps to understand historical events" (M = 2.71) were also rated highly.

These results indicate that the content of the novel is perceived by respondents as thought-provoking, socially significant, and historically meaningful.

Furthermore, the statements "the work is relevant to contemporary times" (M = 2.66), "it leaves an emotional impact" (M = 2.65), and "the characters' fates are portrayed convincingly" (M = 2.67) were rated above average. This suggests that the novel demonstrates a considerable level of artistic and emotional effectiveness.

At the same time, the statements "dystopian features are clearly evident" (M = 2.50) and "it encourages critical thinking" (M = 2.57) highlight the importance of both genre-related and cognitive aspects.

The responses to the questions concerning the perception of the novel's dystopian nature, based on its content, are presented in Table 4.

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TABLE 4
EVALUATION OF THE NOVEL'S DYSTOPIAN NATURE

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Dystopian features are clearly evident in the novel	2,50340136	1,3617784	2	2,9815E-33
The society depicted in the work is portrayed realistically	2,74829932	1,28661996	3	2,9815E-33
The novel encourages critical thinking about society	2,57142857	1,37492216	2	2,9815E-33
The events depicted in the work are relevant to contemporary times	2,65986395	1,28477171	3	2,9815E-33
The novel helps to understand historical events	2,71428571	1,38484953	3	2,9815E-33
The work leaves an emotional impact	2,6462585	1,33346146	3	2,9815E-33
The characters' fates are portrayed convincingly	2,67346939	1,27764373	3	2,9815E-33
The novel prompts reflection on freedom and power	2,81632653	1,34988791	3	2,9815E-33
The author's main idea is clear	2,75510204	1,3168655	3	2,9815E-33
The work is relevant for contemporary readers	2,65986395	1,34722749	3	2,9815E-33

Factor 3: Historical Consciousness and Social Interpretation

The role of the work in shaping historical consciousness was also highly evaluated. The majority of respondents agreed with the statement in Table 5, "Does the work prompt reflection on a particular historical period?" selecting "Yes" (M = 2.86).

In addition, responses to the question "Do you think the novel contributes to the formation of historical memory and historical consciousness?" also showed a high mean value for the option "Yes, it contributes" (M = 2.80).

These results indicate that the novel is perceived not only as a literary work but also as a means of historical understanding.

TABLE 5
THE NOVEL DEPICTS A HISTORICAL PERIOD AND INFLUENCES HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Yes	2,85714286	1,51702665	3	2,9815E-33
No	2,21768707	1,23597339	2	2,9815E-33
I cannot say for certain	2,28571429	1,35484923	2	2,9815E-33
Yes, it has an impact	2,80272109	1,47879744	3	2,9815E-33
It has a limited impact	2,33333333	1,25694418	2	2,9815E-33
It has no impact at all	2,06122449	1,2726011	2	2,9815E-33

In the survey assessing the significance of the issues addressed in the work, "national consciousness" (M = 2.93) received the highest rating. This was followed by the "political aspect" (M = 2.83) and the "historical aspect" (M = 2.71).

Although "social issues" (M = 2.65) and "individual freedom" (M = 2.71) were also considered important, it is evident that the issue of national consciousness holds particular prominence.

These findings confirm that the novel is a significant work addressing issues related to national values and collective consciousness.

TABLE 6
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE NOVEL

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Historical	2,71428571	1,46184346	3	2,9815E-33
Political	2,82993197	1,34660481	3	2,9815E-33
Social	2,6462585	1,28640266	3	2,9815E-33
National consciousness	2,93197279	1,34296678	3	2,9815E-33
Individual freedom	2,70748299	1,36598043	3	2,9815E-33

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Responses to the question regarding the author's main idea also showed relatively close values. The options "historical warning" (M = 2.79), "social critique" (M = 2.69), and "the relationship between power and society" (M = 2.69) were rated at a high level.

These results indicate that the author seeks to convey issues of social criticism and historical continuity through the work.

TABLE 7
INTERPRETATION OF THE AUTHOR'S IDEA

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Social critique	2,69387755	1,40747634	3	2,9815E-33
Historical warning	2,78911565	1,27800836	3	2,9815E-33
The relationship between power and society	2,69387755	1,42680909	3	2,9815E-33

Factor 4: Emotional Impact and Social Significance

Responses to the question "In your opinion, is this work an important dystopian piece in Kazakh literature?" (see Table 8) were generally positive. The statement "Yes, this work is an important dystopian piece" received a relatively high mean score (M = 2.79), while the responses "No" (M = 2.12) and "I cannot say for certain" (M = 2.17) remained at lower levels. This indicates that the majority of respondents recognize the literary significance of the novel.

A similarly positive trend was observed in responses to the question "Do you think this work should be taught in higher education institutions or schools?" The options "It should be mandatory for university students" (M = 2.65) and "It should be taught to high school students" (M = 2.44) received comparatively higher scores. In contrast, the option "It is not necessary" (M = 1.94) had the lowest rating, indicating that most respondents support including the work in educational curricula.

TABLE 8
THE PLACE OF THE DYSTOPIAN NOVEL IN KAZAKH LITERATURE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS TEACHING

Answer	mean	sd	median	p_value
Yes	2,78911565	1,49075366	3	2,9815E-33
No	2,11564626	1,19655331	2	2,9815E-33
I cannot say for certain	2,17006803	1,30002186	2	2,9815E-33
Yes, definitely	2,4829932	1,47747351	2	2,9815E-33
It should be mandatory for university students	2,65306122	1,3979097	3	2,9815E-33
It should be taught to high school students	2,44217687	1,23936159	2	2,9815E-33
No, it is not necessary	1,93877551	1,15997455	2	2,9815E-33

Overall, the findings indicate that although Tlegenov's novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* was received at a moderate level by respondents, its content-related, historical, and social significance was highly evaluated. The work is characterized as an important literary piece that encourages reflection, contributes to the formation of historical consciousness, and enhances the understanding of social issues.

Discussion

The results of the conducted study demonstrate that readers' reception of the novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* is multidimensional and heterogeneous in nature. The statistically significant results of the Friedman test *($\chi^2 = 257.98$, $p < 0.001$)* confirm that respondents' evaluations vary depending on different factors. This, in turn, indicates that the process of literary reception is carried out through complex cognitive and social mechanisms.

First, the findings related to the level of familiarity with the work reveal that the reader audience is not homogeneous. Although the majority of respondents had not read the text in full, they were familiar with its content to a certain extent. This reflects the distinction in contemporary reading culture between "complete reading" and "content awareness." Furthermore, the moderate level of comprehension suggests the complexity of the text and its varying interpretation by different readers. The limited knowledge of the dystopian genre also appears to be a significant factor influencing the quality of interpretation.

The second important aspect concerns the reception of the novel's content and ideas. The results indicate that respondents highly value the socio-philosophical dimension of the work. In particular, themes such as freedom and power, the clarity of the author's main idea, and the realistic portrayal of society received high evaluations. This suggests that the novel is perceived not only as a literary work but also as an intellectual text that provokes social reflection. Moreover, its ability to facilitate the understanding of historical events and its relevance to contemporary realities highlight its enduring significance.

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The third factor – historical consciousness and social interpretation – constitutes one of the most important findings of the study. The majority of respondents noted that the work prompts reflection on a historical period and contributes to the formation of historical memory. This underscores the cognitive and cultural functions of literature beyond its aesthetic value. In particular, the highest rating attributed to "national consciousness" demonstrates the novel's role in shaping national values, historical memory, and collective identity. Additionally, the high evaluation of political and social aspects confirms the presence of elements of social critique within the work.

The interpretation of the author's main idea also shows a clear pattern: respondents perceive the work as a historical warning, a form of social critique, and a representation of the relationship between power and society. This further emphasizes the dystopian nature of the novel, as the dystopian genre is often oriented toward social criticism and the exploration of historical continuity.

The fourth factor – emotional impact and social significance – reveals an overall positive perception of the novel among readers. The majority of respondents consider it an important dystopian work within Kazakh literature and support its inclusion in educational curricula. This finding indicates that the work holds significance not only at the individual reader level but also at the institutional level.

Overall, although the reception of the novel can be described as "moderate," its content-related, historical, and social value is highly appreciated. This apparent paradox – limited full reading combined with high evaluation – reflects a characteristic feature of contemporary reading culture: the impact of a text is determined not only by its complete reading but also by the intuitive reception of its ideological and cultural significance.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings confirm the principles of reader-response theory. As demonstrated in the works of Miall (2018), Chan (2015), and Kulkarni (2024), the meaning of a text is constructed through the reader's experience and knowledge. The interpretive variability observed in this study empirically supports this theoretical position.

In conclusion, the novel *"Seksen Altınşı Jyl"* is perceived not merely as a literary text but as a cultural instrument that shapes historical consciousness and social thinking. Despite the diversity in levels of reception, its ideological and cognitive impact remains significant. These findings highlight the importance of considering the reader factor in contemporary literary studies and demonstrate the complexity of the process of interpreting literary texts.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the number of survey participants was limited; therefore, the findings cannot be fully generalized to the broader reading audience. Second, a considerable proportion of respondents had not read the novel in its entirety, which may have influenced the depth and accuracy of their interpretations. Third, the research focused exclusively on Bekezhan Tlegenov's Seksen Altınşı Jyl, limiting the applicability of the findings to Kazakh dystopian prose as a whole.

In addition, reader reception is inherently subjective, and the survey results were influenced by the respondents' personal experiences and socio-cultural perspectives. Future research could benefit from comparative analyses involving multiple dystopian works, as well as investigations into differences in reception across various age and social groups.

V. Conclusion

Bekezhan Tlegenov's novel Seksen Altınşı Jyl represents a significant manifestation of dystopian elements in Kazakh literature. The work artistically depicts the repressive nature of the totalitarian system, the dominance of false ideology and collective consciousness, the collapse of the individual's aspiration for freedom, the phenomenon of national nihilism, and bleak dystopian imagery.

The novel's main distinctive feature lies in its integration of dystopian poetics with national content. The author exposes the ideological pressure exerted by Soviet authority on the language and culture of the Kazakh people and portrays the resistance of national spirit through the December events. By combining the universal model of dystopia with national literary traditions, the novel opens new artistic directions in Kazakh prose. Therefore, Seksen Altınşı Jyl can be regarded as one of the major examples of a national dystopian model in Kazakh literature.

The empirical findings of the study, however, demonstrate that the reception of dystopian prose is a complex, multilayered, and reader-dependent process. Survey data indicate that readers perceive the novel not merely as a literary text, but also as a cultural phenomenon with historical, social, and cognitive significance. Themes related to freedom and power, historical memory, national consciousness, and social values received particularly high evaluations from respondents.

The study also revealed a fragmented mode of reception characteristic of contemporary reading culture. Although many respondents had not read the novel in full, they were still able to engage with and understand its central ideas. In addition, readers highly evaluated the novel's emotional impact, social significance, and its potential inclusion in educational curricula.

In conclusion, Seksen Altınşı Jyl is, on the one hand, an important literary work that established a national model of dystopian writing in Kazakh literature, and, on the other hand, a socio-cultural phenomenon that contributes to the formation of historical consciousness and cultural memory among contemporary readers. The findings of this study emphasize the scholarly importance of examining dystopian prose from the perspective of reader reception.

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