

## ARTICLE

# The Artistic Concept of Personality in Ä.Nurpeisov's Novel *The Final Duty*

Ulpan Samenkyzy <sup>1\*</sup> , Samen Kulbarak <sup>2</sup> , Rakhymzhan Turysbek <sup>1</sup> , Kalamkas Kalybekova <sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>L.N. Gumilev Eurasian National University, Astana 010000, Kazakhstan

<sup>2</sup>M. Kh. Dulaty Taraz University, Taraz 010008, Kazakhstan

<sup>3</sup>Abylbas Saginov Karaganda Technical University, Karaganda 100000, Kazakhstan

## ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the artistic concept of the character in Ä. Nürpeisov's novel-dilogy *The Last Duty*, a significant work in contemporary Kazakh literature. The study aims to explore how the novel portrays the country's socio-ecological problems through its characters. The novel is set against the backdrop of the Aral Sea disaster, depicting its environmental degradation from the 1960s to the 1980s. The author illustrates the consequences of this ecological catastrophe through the psychological conflicts among the three main characters. Alongside the ecological theme, the novel also addresses fundamental human and national values. The psychological tension reaches its peak when the three characters find themselves adrift on ice in the open sea, confronting the thin line between life and death. The character serves as the bearer of the author's ideas. Nürpeisov places a significant artistic burden on Jädiger's character, embodying themes of love for one's homeland, responsibility, self-sacrifice, and an unbreakable filial duty that lasts until one's final breath. The image of the sea in the novel performs chronotopic and symbolic functions, acting as both a setting and a unifying metaphor. The novel's structure, largely built on character monologues, emphasizes the uniqueness of artistic time. The moments of struggle for survival not only reveal the true nature of the characters but also lead to profound transformations in their worldviews. To analyze the artistic concept of the character in roman, the study employs a systematic approach, along with historical-literary and comparative-typological methods.

**Keywords:** Artistic Concept of Personality; Connection with Reality; Subjectivity and Generalization; Author; Literary Character

### \*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Ulpan Samenkyzy, L.N. Gumilev Eurasian National University, Astana 010000, Kazakhstan; Email: [ulpan.samenkyzy@mail.ru](mailto:ulpan.samenkyzy@mail.ru)

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# 1. Introduction

In Russian literary studies, the artistic concept of character has been increasingly examined since the 1950s and 1960s. Although L. I. Timofeev was the first to introduce the term “concept of character” in his work, this issue was initially addressed as early as the 1920s in the research of M. M. Bakhtin<sup>[1]</sup>. Previously, literary studies primarily used terms such as “hero,” “image,” “character,” and “person.” However, the notion of the “artistic concept of personality” gradually became an established academic term. This shift is evidenced by works such as T. A. Kranoščekova’s *The Concept of Man in the Works of Vsevolod Ivanov* (1963) and É. T. Osmanova’s *The Artistic Concept of Personality in the Literatures of the Soviet East: Traditions and Modernity* (1977), among others<sup>[2]</sup>. This trend continued in later years, with numerous research studies and dissertations dedicated to the subject<sup>[3–9]</sup>.

Although the term “artistic concept of personality” was not explicitly used, Kazakh literary studies also contributed significantly to this field. The interrelation between author, character, society, and human values has been a focal point of various studies. For instance, in literary scholar M. Orazbek’s research *Author and the Creative Process*, the author’s concept within the overall structure of a literary work is examined alongside compositional and narrative features<sup>[10]</sup>.

According to literary scholars, the artistic concept of personality serves as a fundamental basis for analyzing literary works. This category allows for a deeper understanding of all characters created by a writer, providing insights into the meaning and significance of human life as well as the national identity of a people. It reflects the author’s evaluation of life phenomena and their philosophical and artistic perception of the world’s integrity. Moreover, it helps reveal the unique artistic universe of the writer, highlighting their literary-aesthetic perspectives and the core essence of their artistic ideals.

Literary scholar L. A. Kolobaeva defines the concept as follows:

“The artistic concept of personality is a notion that reflects the totality of ideas, views, and principles of perceiving and depicting a person as an individual within a specific literary context. As the foundation of a writer’s creative consciousness, it serves as a central element that determines not only the character and aesthetic principles of a single work

but also the entirety of the author’s creative legacy or its distinct stages<sup>[11]</sup>.”

Overall, the artistic concept of personality provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing both individual works and an author’s broader creative output. A talented writer does not distinguish between major and minor characters; every image, regardless of its scale, serves to convey the author’s ideas and to develop the artistic concept of personality. As A. Baitursynuly noted:

A great novel is not necessarily built upon grand events alone; even minor incidents can be used to impart valuable lessons<sup>[12]</sup>. This assertion remains relevant in contemporary literary studies.

The aim of this study is to analyze the artistic concept of personality in Ä. Nurpeisov’s novel *The Final Duty*. The research focuses on how the protagonist’s personality is revealed through artistic techniques, narrative-compositional features, and the author’s perspective. Special attention is given to the interaction between characters, their internal conflicts, and the connection between individual fate and broader historical and social processes, such as the ecological catastrophe of the Aral Sea. Additionally, the study seeks to identify the values and philosophical perspectives that unify the novel’s characters and to examine how the author’s concept of personality aligns with the overall thematic framework of the work.

# 2. Methods

This study employs a multidisciplinary approach to analyze the artistic concept of personality in Ä. Nurpeisov’s novel *The Final Duty*. The research methodology integrates literary analysis, comparative literary studies, and hermeneutic interpretation, focusing on the interplay between narrative structure, character development, and socio-historical context.

## 1. Literary Analysis:

The study utilizes close reading techniques to examine the artistic and narrative features of the novel, including its stream-of-consciousness style, internal monologues, and symbolic imagery. Special attention is given to the psychological depth of the protagonist, Jädiger, and his role in embodying the author’s worldview.

## 2. Comparative Approach:

The research draws comparisons between *The Final Duty* and other works by Ä. Nurpeisov, such as the *Blood and Sweat* trilogy, to explore recurring themes, character archetypes, and the evolution of the artistic concept of personality in the author's literary oeuvre. Additionally, parallels with Russian and Soviet-era literary traditions are considered to highlight influences and unique contributions.

### 3. Historical and Sociocultural Contextualization:

The study situates the novel within the broader historical and socio-political landscape of the 1960s–1980s, focusing on the ecological crisis of the Aral Sea and its reflection in the novel. This approach allows for an exploration of how Nurpeisov intertwines environmental issues with personal and societal struggles.

### 4. Hermeneutic Interpretation:

The research applies hermeneutic methods to analyze the philosophical and existential dimensions of the novel, particularly the protagonist's search for meaning and the moral dilemmas faced by key characters. This approach enables a deeper understanding of the ideological and ethical implications of the novel's artistic concept of personality.

### 5. Symbolic and Structural Analysis:

The study examines the novel's use of symbolism, particularly the role of the sea as a chronotopic and metaphorical element, shaping the novel's artistic space and contributing to its thematic depth. The narrative's temporal structure is analyzed to uncover how past and present are interwoven in Jädiger's consciousness.

By integrating these methods, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of *The Final Duty*, revealing the intricate ways in which Ä. Nurpeisov constructs the artistic concept of personality through narrative techniques, character psychology, and historical context.

## 3. Analysis and Results

Ä. Nurpeisov (1924–2022) is a prominent figure in modern Kazakh literature. His novel *The Final Duty* represents a unique artistic and ideological innovation in the literature of the Independence period, embodying a modernist style with multilayered narrative complexity. Numerous critical studies and scholarly articles have been dedicated to this work, recognizing its significance. For instance, in N. Khudaibergenov's dissertation *Universal Human Values*

in Contemporary Kazakh Prose (1991–2016), the novel is analyzed from the perspective of universal human values<sup>[13]</sup>.

### 3.1. Why Is the Sea Drawn?

The novel is structured around a stream-of-consciousness narrative. The psychological conflict among the three central characters—Jädiger, Bäkizat, and Äzim—extends beyond personal values, intertwining with pressing socio-political and ecological issues of the 1960s–1980s. The core issue that deeply concerned the author was the drying up of the Aral Sea due to the misguided policies of the Soviet government. The waters of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, which historically sustained the sea, were excessively diverted through canals for agricultural needs, particularly for cotton and rice cultivation. The Amu Darya was even rerouted into the Karakum Canal, leading to a catastrophic ecological disaster. Over time, the once-thriving Aral Sea, which naturally fluctuated in water levels, began to shrink drastically. This human-induced calamity profoundly impacted Nurpeisov, a native of the region. As literary scholar R. Nurgali states, “Social factors play a crucial role in a writer's creative destiny”<sup>[14]</sup>. Given that Nurpeisov had previously depicted the lives of Aral fishermen in his *Blood and Sweat* trilogy, he could not remain indifferent to the ongoing environmental catastrophe. *The Final Duty*, a novel written over many years, ultimately became an artistic chronicle of the psychological and social suffering endured by the people of the Aral Sea region during the 1960s–1980s.

### 3.2. Author and Hero

The novel's artistic and ideological power is closely linked to the author's creative vision, philosophical outlook, and literary mastery. Every character in the *dilogy* is a product of Nurpeisov's artistic endeavor, and a subtle yet undeniable connection exists between the author and his protagonist. This connection is not always explicitly stated but is deeply felt throughout the narrative. The author often embeds his philosophical reflections and emotional depth within the protagonist, making him the vessel for the writer's inner turmoil, existential struggles, and civic stance. At crucial moments in the narrative, the protagonist and the author seem to breathe as one—their emotions, struggles, and triumphs are

interwoven. Even though the protagonist may not be an exact representation of the author, he embodies the writer's moral and ideological essence.

In *The Final Duty*, Jädiger bears the weight of this complex artistic and philosophical mission. The deep connection between author and protagonist is crucial in understanding the novel's artistic concept of personality. Nurpeisov projects his creative aspirations and civic stance onto Jädiger, making him the emotional and ideological center of the novel. The novel opens with Jädiger walking across the frozen surface of the sea, moving further away from the shore, lost in contemplation and inner turmoil. This image suggests a possible autobiographical reflection—Nurpeisov himself might have stood on the shores of his devastated homeland, gazing at the receding sea and mourning its loss. The once-vast Aral, reduced to salt flats and barren desert, became a painful symbol of irreversible destruction. This personal grief and existential contemplation likely gave birth to the character of Jädiger.

The novel's plot gradually unfolds, revealing the moral and ideological dilemmas of its characters. Äzim, shaped by the ideology and political maneuvers of the Soviet era, emerges as a product of the system—a figure embodying the distortions of that time. In contrast, Bäkizat, whose life is marked by emptiness and missed opportunities, represents another facet of human tragedy. These character arcs highlight the stark opposition between hero and anti-hero, illustrating the novel's exploration of existential failure and moral decay.

The psychological depth of the novel suggests that Nurpeisov used his characters as vehicles to express the existential and moral concerns that preoccupied him. The profound struggles of Jädiger, the ideological entrapment of Äzim, and the tragic fate of Bäkizat all serve as reflections of the broader social and historical realities of their time. The narrative, driven by intense internal conflicts, vividly illustrates the consequences of political decisions, environmental destruction, and personal moral choices. Thus, the inseparable connection between the author and Jädiger cannot be ignored. Through this character, Nurpeisov conveys his artistic concept of personality, revealing the profound ethical and existential struggles of an individual caught in the relentless tide of history.

Self-sacrifice, responsibility, and an unwavering love for his homeland define Jädiger's character. He endures all the hardships brought by the ecological catastrophe along-

side the simple fishermen of the village. He does not shy away from suffering or danger, facing them head-on with his people. Yet, despite his efforts, there is no relief from the relentless struggle. The existential threat posed by the environmental disaster cannot be mitigated by the cries of a single individual or through sheer determination alone. Through the protagonist's sleepless nights, mental torment, and deep distress, *The Final Duty* captures the harsh reality of the Aral Sea crisis and the devastating consequences of misguided policies.

Russian writer N. Anastasyev aptly describes this portrayal:

*“Teñiz tartylyp jatyr. Kezinde balyq týlağan tordyn myñsan kózinde búginde qysyr jel oinaidy. Kezinde el syñsyğan jaǵalaý quba belder búginde qulazyp jatyr. Äbdijämil dıloǵıasy tırlıtken ómir sıqy osyndai. Qany sorǵalağan sormańdai taqyryp. Jaraly jan azaby. Osynaý alaqandai balyqshy aýyl taǵdyrynyń syrtynda bulańdap álem qasireti boı kórsetkenderı”* [Trans.: “The sea is receding. Where fish once thrashed in the nets, today the barren wind whistles through empty holes. The once-bustling shores are now desolate wastelands. This is the world resurrected by Äbdijämil's dilogy—a raw, bleeding wound. The agony of a wounded soul. Behind the fate of this small fishing village looms a much larger global catastrophe”]<sup>[15]</sup>.

Indeed, the realism of Nurpeisov's novel and the psychological depth of its protagonist reinforce this sense of profound despair. *The Final Duty* does not merely present a documentary account of how a once-flourishing sea disappeared or how the communities that depended on it suffered. Instead, it provides an artistic and deeply emotional exploration of these events. Nurpeisov skillfully avoids turning the novel into mere journalistic prose, opting instead to convey the tragedy through intricate narrative conflicts and vivid artistic details. His ability to transform real-life events into literary truth, combined with his distinctive, refined style, is the result of decades of rigorous artistic effort and unwavering self-discipline.

The novel paints a heart-wrenching picture of life in

the dying fishing village: a collapsing economy, an exodus of hopeless residents, an increase in birth defects, and the dire consequences of environmental degradation. Fishermen, stripped of their livelihoods, wander the shores in despair. Though these descriptions may seem straightforward, in the novel, they are brought to life with raw intensity, leaving the reader deeply unsettled.

Standing on the frozen sea, battered by the icy wind, Jädiger is tormented by two conflicting thoughts. One concerns his people - the fishermen who are losing everything as the sea disappears. The other is his own disintegrating family. Both are equally dear to him. Nurpeisov's ability to intertwine these deeply personal and societal crises intensifies the novel's thematic weight. The interwoven narrative strands amplify the emotional and ideological depth of the novel, ensuring that its moral questions arise naturally from the protagonist's own nature and circumstances rather than being imposed externally.

Jädiger's artistic concept of personality is built on honesty, resilience, and self-sacrifice. Outwardly reserved and often taciturn, he possesses an untainted heart, absorbing the suffering of his homeland with unfiltered sincerity. This unwavering integrity closely mirrors the character of Elaman from *Blood and Sweat*. Is this mere coincidence? Likely not. It is a reflection of the author himself. The rigorous self-discipline, tireless dedication, and unrelenting perseverance that defined Nurpeisov's approach to writing are echoed in his protagonists. The shared moral values between Jädiger and Elaman do not need to be sought elsewhere; they stem directly from the author's own ethos.

Both *Blood and Sweat* and *The Final Duty* are framed by the presence of the sea. Nurpeisov masterfully captures the sea's ever-changing nature, portraying it as a living entity. He skillfully incorporates the vocabulary unique to fishermen, using precise terminology that adds authenticity to the narrative. This deep connection between the author and his subject matter has earned Nurpeisov the rightful title of "Poet of the Sea."

The following excerpt vividly demonstrates his mastery of descriptive language:

*"Teñiz üstiniň daýyly tipti qatty edi. Qara daýyl qý qayıqy qaňbaqtai ushyryp ákeledi. Teñiz kúshi boýyna syımai qainap jatyr; ereýil tolqyn-dar qyr kórsetkendeı üdei-üdei bop teñiz be-*

*tine julqynyp oınap shygady; onan saıyn Jal-murattyň záresi ushty. Andrei esip keledi. Kónilinde qorqynysh bar. Qayıq-malygymen sýyq dúnie qushagyna kirip bara jatqanyn baiqady. Ústinde túnergen aspan; tabanynyň asty tıpsız qurdym; ary basqan saıyn aınala tónirekti sýyq munar basyp, túnerip, bar álemdi bir-aq ýys qyp sygyp barady, jağadan alystağan saıyn tolqyndar esire tústi; bularğa sät saıyn qaharyn tógip, gúrildep kep, qayıqy tósimen qağyp jiberedi. Qayıq tónkerile jazdap, qyryndap ketedi; sóitkenshe bol-mai, keingi jaqtan ekinshi tolqyn shap berip qý qayıqy lebimen tartyp, ilip áketedi; bas erkinen aırylyğan qayıq boıyn jınai almai, maltygyp, eki qaptalymen sý sabalai bastaidy"*

[Trans: "The storm over the sea was ferocious. The black wind tossed the frail boat like a feather. The sea boiled with an uncontrollable fury; rebellious waves, towering like houses, reared up as if to challenge the heavens. Jalmyrat was paralyzed with fear. Andrei rowed desperately, though terror gripped his heart. He sensed that the boat was slipping into the cold, merciless abyss. Above him, the sky was a menacing void; beneath his feet, an endless chasm. The further they drifted from shore, the more the waves roared with savage delight, battering the boat with brutal force. The next wave crashed over them, threatening to capsize the vessel. Before they could recover, another monstrous surge dragged the helpless craft into its depths, tossing it mercilessly in the churning waters]"<sup>[16]</sup>.

Äzim knew he was going to die. Unlike Jädiger, who desperately ran back and forth in a frantic attempt to survive, Äzim's knees trembled so much that he felt he might collapse with even the slightest movement. Leaning toward Bäkizät for support, he looked around; the blinding snowstorm that had raged moments ago had suddenly ceased. But in its place, the brutal wind over the open sea had only grown stronger, raging with an untamed ferocity. The sea, churned to its depths, was now boiling black. The surface was covered in drifting ice floes-massive, roaring waves rolled over

them like lion's manes. The sight struck Äzim with horror, as the flocks scuttling in the stormy waters reminded him of a flock of sheep fleeing from a relentless predator. When these fragments collided in their desperate scramble, they smashed into each other like battling rams, with the stronger crushing the weaker into shards. Under the pale, ghostly light seeping through the clouds, the dark sea frothed and foamed, dragging the broken ice away into its depths<sup>[17]</sup>.

### 3.3. Sea and Character

In both novels, *Blood and Sweat* and *The Final Duty*, the sea and the drifting ice serve as the central stage of action. However, Nurpeisov does not depict the raging sea merely as a background element; instead, he intertwines it with the emotions of his characters, creating a parallel between their inner turmoil and the wrath of nature. Each character perceives and experiences the sea's fury differently. This approach not only enriches the artistic texture of the novel but also provides insight into each character's personality. From the outset, Äzim appears disillusioned with life, making him powerless in the face of adversity. His fatalistic surrender contrasts sharply with Jädiger's relentless struggle, highlighting the novel's overarching theme—the intricate relationship between human beings and nature.

There is no work of literature without a depiction of nature, time, or place. However, what sets Nurpeisov's portrayal of the sea apart is its role as the ultimate battlefield during the novel's climax. Trapped by the merciless forces of nature, the protagonist fights for his life, reflecting on his past in moments of stillness. Though this technique has been used in literature before, the uniqueness of Nurpeisov's execution lies in how each character's personal journey, moral struggles, and the author's philosophical vision shape the novel's essence. The broader the scope of the writer's creative vision, the deeper the psychological intricacies of his characters become.

A confrontation with death reveals the truth of one's soul. In such moments, there is no room for pretense or hidden motives. The characters, faced with their mortality, recall both their regrets and the kindness they have shown to others. Their inner turmoil, shaped by the extreme conditions of survival, exposes not only their humanity but also their weaknesses and arrogance. Each character stands as a distinct, often opposing force—one fights desperately for

life, while another succumbs to despair, reduced to a helpless wreck. In one episode, a companion is saved from drowning, yet his rescuer's own foot becomes trapped in a hole in the ice. This moment captures the relentless cruelty of nature and the stark realism of Nurpeisov's prose—there is no sentimentality, no unnecessary pity. In the bitter cold, Jädiger's feet begin to freeze. The stormy sea and drifting ice become a relentless trial ground, testing the limits of human endurance.

At first glance, Elaman from *Blood and Sweat* appears to be a reserved and quiet man. However, his inner strength and unyielding resolve shine through in moments of crisis—most notably when he strikes and kills Tentek Shodyr, a tyrant who had terrorized the fishermen. By this point, Elaman's patience has been utterly exhausted. The oppressor's first words to him are not a greeting, not an inquiry about his well-being, but a demand: "Where are your fishing tools?" This blind arrogance ignites a fury within Elaman, clouding his judgment with rage.

This same defiance and determination manifest in Jädiger's character. Normally composed and tolerant, Jädiger also has moments when his suppressed anger bursts forth. When his relative, Sar Shaya, arrives in a frenzy, attempting to stir up tribal pride and incite division, Jädiger—already burdened by deep exhaustion—reaches his breaking point. Like Elaman, he cannot tolerate cruelty and senseless discord among his kin. Both characters, when pushed to their limits, react with unrestrained force, driven by an inner fire that refuses to be extinguished. The history behind the writing of the *Blood and Sweat* trilogy and *The Last Duty* novel-dilogy reflects the author's determination and perseverance. This steadfastness is mirrored in the inner strength of his protagonists, Elaman and Jädiger, whose resilience originates from the author himself.

### 3.4. Bureaucratic Society and the Individual

Although Elaman and Jädiger belong to different generations of fishermen, they share common human qualities that unite them. Despite being from different generations, Elaman and Jädiger are united by shared values. Jädiger, living in the era of the Aral Sea's decline, remains deeply connected to the legacy of the older fishermen. He remembers their abandoned settlements, listens to the stories preserved in local folklore, and finds inspiration in the tales of Kaulen, the

hunter. He sees himself as a successor to their traditions, a custodian of their way of life. The places they once inhabited—hills, valleys, and hidden inlets—are all referred to by their original names in the novel. Jädiger is not simply a man of the present; he is a bridge between past and future, firmly rooted in history and tradition.

His relationship with his mother further highlights his deeply Kazakh identity. Their bond is one of quiet understanding—no words are needed between them. She recognizes his pure heart, his unwavering honesty, and his inability to commit even the smallest betrayal. Similarly, Jädiger sees his mother's calm, steadfast nature and her deep faith in fate. Their silent exchanges reflect the rich Kazakh cultural tradition of mutual respect and devotion between parent and child.

Yet, Jädiger is also a product of his time—the 1960s and 1970s. Educated in Soviet schools, he later returns to his fishing village as an administrator. His inner conflict stems primarily from the socio-political system in which he lives. The sea is retreating, its waters turning brackish. Fish stocks are dwindling. Fishermen wander the shores for weeks, sometimes months, without a significant catch. Frustration mounts among them, while local authorities remain preoccupied with fulfilling production quotas. The bureaucracy of the Soviet economic system, with its blind adherence to unrealistic targets, is depicted in all its absurdity. No one is concerned with understanding the root causes of the crisis. The only priority is meeting the planned figures—no matter the reality on the ground.

The chaos of daily life in the novel stems largely from this rigid, illogical system. The Final Duty is, in many ways, a critique of the inefficiency and hypocrisy of the socialist regime. While Jädiger does not openly rebel against the system, his quiet disillusionment deepens over time. He cannot tolerate the dishonesty, the sycophancy, or the empty rhetoric that defines local governance. No matter how much his wife, Bäkizat, encourages him to conform, he remains an outsider. He refuses to compromise his integrity.

One of the novel's most striking moments occurs when Jädiger, in an attempt to please his wife, brings her a potted plant. She scoffs at the gesture, dismissing it with the words: "You must have lost your mind." The scene ends with a passage rich in irony:

*"Qudai oñdağanda Aral stansasynyñ bet*

*aldyndağy alańda bala boyndaı bákene tuğyrğa qondyrğan uly kósemniñ bústy turatyn. Qýanyp kettiñ. Jurttyñ kózin ala bere júgirip bardyñ da, álde bir kezde Araldyñ qoly usynyqty bir balasy aq gipsten útip-bútip usqynyn keltirgen taqyr bas kósemniñ bústysynyñ dál túbine kók japyraqtary jalpyldağan kishkentai qumyra gorshokty qoıa saldy. Sosyn bylai uzai bere artyna burylyp qarap edi; kók japyraqtar jel astynda jalp-jalp... Al uly kósemniñ tula boynda qus sańğymağan say-tamtyq joq eken!* ["Luckily, in front of the Aral station square stood a bust of the great leader on a short pedestal. You were overjoyed. Making sure no one was watching, you ran over and placed the little green potted plant right at the base of the bald-headed leader's monument. Then, stepping away, you turned to look back; the green leaves fluttered helplessly in the wind... Meanwhile, the great leader's statue was entirely covered in bird droppings]<sup>[17]</sup>.

The sharp irony in this scene reflects not only the protagonist's attitude toward the oppressive regime but also Nurpeisov's own critique of the system's hypocrisy.

The changing natural environment, social circumstances, and personal misunderstandings bring significant transformations to Jädiger's inner world. There is a striking contrast between Jädiger at the beginning of the novel and his state at the end. Initially, he is content with having married the woman he loved and does not contemplate the deeper reasons behind his choices. However, life gradually reshapes his perceptions. His marriage proves unsuccessful: his first son, raised under his mother's care, is born with a disability. His second daughter, under the influence of her grandmother, becomes increasingly estranged from him. She resembles a mere doll, fascinated by external glitter and luxury, growing up with a mindset that measures all the joys of life by superficial beauty.

Meanwhile, his wife, Bäkizat, grows weary of his exhausting fisherman's life, which keeps him occupied day and night along the shores of the sea. The monotonous hardship of life bores her and distances her from her husband. Bäkizat's mother, who mockingly calls Jädiger "a model

worker,” also influences her daughter’s perspective. Additionally, Bäkizät’s trip to the capital, where she reconnects with her former lover, Äzim, further destabilizes her relationship with Jädiger. Thus, the novel intertwines ecological disaster with family intrigue, highlighting fundamental human values.

Despite his reserved and stern demeanor, Jädiger is a man of integrity. His dedication to his work and moral character are well recognized among the fishermen. Although he promises Bäkizät that he will return home soon, the hardships faced by the fishermen, their struggles with empty nets, and their overall despondency make it impossible for him to leave them in such dire conditions. In a decisive moment, he takes an extraordinary risk by driving across the unstable ice—an act of self-sacrifice beyond the capacity of most.

Why does he risk his life? As he himself puts it, “this wretched life” has drained him completely. The fishermen’s prolonged, grueling work—weeks and months spent by the water without a proper home or a warm bed—has taken its toll on him. Losing the fish that were finally within their grasp felt like death itself. Meanwhile, the district authorities continue pressuring them about production quotas, indifferent to the reality on the ground. At home, the family is falling apart. There is no one—least of all Bäkizät—who truly understands him or empathizes with his inner struggles. In this desperate moment, he takes a bold leap of faith, which ultimately leads to a great victory for the fishermen, as they finally secure a substantial catch.

The author masterfully depicts this climactic moment in the novel. The chaotic emotional turmoil of the protagonist, the loud cries of the fishermen, the frantic driver grasping the steering wheel, the rival kolkhoz chairman’s angry outburst as he tries to stop the risky endeavor, and the sound of the thin ice cracking beneath the car’s wheels—all of these elements are interwoven into a dynamic and suspenseful scene. At this moment, Jädiger, typically seen as a reserved and calm leader, suddenly emerges as a figure of extraordinary determination and fearless heroism, reinforcing his humanistic character.

### 3.5. The Nature of the Monologue

The concept of personality in literature places particular emphasis on self-discovery. After all, literature itself is fundamentally a study of human nature. However, human

nature is a complex phenomenon. While human physiology remains constant, the individual’s emotional and ethical qualities evolve in response to societal and historical conditions. A transformed society demands new qualities from individuals. The modern era, too, imposes new responsibilities and expectations. As President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev stated in his address “New Kazakhstan: The Path of Renewal and Modernization”:

Change must begin within each of us. Every individual and society as a whole must undergo renewal. Our values must undergo a fundamental transformation<sup>[18]</sup>.

In *Blood and Sweat*, Elaman’s revolutionary spirit is depicted in alignment with the turbulent events of the revolution and civil war. No hero exists in isolation from their society and environment. Similarly, in *The Final Duty*, Jädiger is deeply preoccupied with the problems of his time and his community. However, despite being shaped by external circumstances, each character remains an individual. For the protagonist’s inner world to be fully revealed, the novel must create various situations and critical moments that expose their character. Both internal and external factors must exert a strong influence on their development.

As academician Z. Kabdollov writes:

“The essence of any era is revealed through conflict. A well-crafted conflict does not present the era in a superficial manner, but rather, it captures its depth and essence by embodying it in the complexity of human character”<sup>[19]</sup>.

Indeed, the ability to address broad societal issues through the lens of individual fate is one of the hallmarks of great literature. Without this, a novel would be reduced to mere journalism.

*The Final Duty* places a strong emphasis on self-discovery. The first book, *A Day Like That Once Was*, focuses on Jädiger’s journey of self-understanding, while the second book, *A Night Like That Once Was*, is structured around the inner monologues of Jädiger, Bäkizät, and Äzim. In this psychological and introspective epic, the plot takes a secondary role. As literary scholar Zh. Zharylgapov notes:

“The modernist concept of ‘stream of consciousness’ has brought significant structural changes to prose. The continuous flow of

thoughts from the author's subjective perspective, combined with the protagonist's complex monologues, has significantly diminished the role of traditional plot-driven narratives"<sup>[20]</sup>.

At the beginning of the novel, the reader encounters Jädiger standing alone on the frozen shore, having walked a significant distance away from the coastline. He is not in a comfortable situation-the icy wind is relentless, and his mind is filled with tormenting questions. Yet, there are no easy answers. The novel's use of time and space plays a crucial artistic role. The boundless possibilities of human consciousness allow past events from ten years ago to resurface in Jädiger's mind as if they had happened just yesterday. This fluid interplay between past and present shapes the novel's structure.

The protagonist's recollections and internal reflections follow no strict order. Whatever stirs his emotions at a given moment triggers memories, which emerge from the depths of his subconscious, are recalled, and then reevaluated. This complex method of storytelling-where external reality and the protagonist's internal thoughts merge seamlessly-demands exceptional skill from the writer. Nurpeisov executes this masterfully. His unique style is defined by his ability to integrate external reality with the emotional and intellectual world of his protagonist.

In this respect, the author's approach is meticulous. He avoids haste and superficiality, carefully selecting each word and ensuring that every psychological nuance is captured. He does not simply state that a character is deep in thought; instead, he always provides the specific detail that prompts their introspection.

"A tall, dark figure stood staring at the tracks left behind in the snow. He had turned around to glance back in the direction he came from, and his gaze had become fixated on those footprints. He could not look away, as if they had cast a spell upon him. Why was he doing this? He did not know himself. All he understood was that something about those dragging footprints seemed oddly out of place"<sup>[17]</sup>.

In Nurpeisov's prose, footprints acquire a symbolic meaning. The marks left on the snow carry multiple impli-

cations. At times, they appear confident and determined; at other times, they are erratic and hesitant, reflecting the mind of someone lost in thought, unable to find clarity. The meandering footprints serve as a metaphor for Jädiger's turbulent life path, seamlessly transitioning into his inner monologue.

Monologue in the novel often begins with a search for answers to various questions arising from inner dissatisfaction. Structurally, the predominance of interrogative sentences at the beginning of monologues is a natural feature: *"Nege küldi? Izge me? Ózine me? Sonyń qaisysy bolsa da, Qudai bileđi, betine shapqan taǵy bir renish júregin de órtep ketti. Ishi de it talaǵandaı alaı-dalaı bolar-aı? Kim bilsin, Bákızattyń júkesin qurtyp bitken myna sylbyr iz búgin bunyń da shamyna tuıp, óshin kimnen alary bilmei tur ma? Kimnen? Adam shirkin-niń kináli ózi bolsa da, kináni basqadan izdei-tini ne? Mine, bu da basyndaǵy bar páleni ózi-nen, óziniń bolyp bolǵan bolmysynan kórmei, áldebir izden kóretini ne? Aıtsa da, búgin jerge symai, jany shıyqqanda buny aldy artyna qaratpai, ańyraǵan ashyq teńizge qıyp ákel-gen iz emes edi ǵoi? Qaita osy izdi osy araǵa súretip ákelgen bunyń ózi emes pe edi? Iá, ózi edi. Esi durys kisi, sirá, izdi ózinen, ózin izden aıyra ma? ["Why did she laugh? At the footprints? At him? Whatever the reason, God knows, another wave of resentment burned his heart. Did it torment him as if he were being torn apart by wild dogs? Who knows, perhaps Bákizat's patience had been exhausted by these sluggish footprints, just as they now irritated him, leaving him unsure of whom to blame? Whom? Why does a person, even when guilty themselves, always seek fault in others? Why does he, instead of blaming himself and his own nature, find fault in some footprints? After all, was it not he who had brought these footprints here in the first place? Yes, it was him. Would a sane person ever separate footprints from themselves, or themselves from footprints?"]<sup>[17]</sup>.*

The abundance of interrogative sentences is a characteristic stylistic feature of the monologue. Since introspection fundamentally stems from a search for answers to troubling questions, its formal expression naturally takes the form of interrogative sentences. In the monologue, questions are often brief and fluctuate according to the emotional tone. A question may be followed by an answer, a counter-question, or another question stemming from the previous one. This may lead to internal debate, opposition, recollection of past events, re-evaluation of past incidents, and self-assessment—all of which define the nature of the monologue in the novel.

In the second book of the novel, the scene where Jädiger, Bäkizat, and Äzim drift on an ice floe in the open sea at night is masterfully depicted. The raging sea, the howling storm, and the contrasting actions and psychological states of the characters create an intense atmosphere. In this critical moment, Bäkizat's idealized image of Äzim shatters, revealing his true nature. When the drifting ice floe reaches a peninsula in the depths of the sea, Äzim, overcome by fear, abandons his so-called love, Bäkizat, and flees to the shore. As the storm intensifies, Jädiger and Bäkizat are once again left face to face. At this moment of struggle, Jädiger's leg gets trapped in the icy water and freezes solid. Despite Bäkizat's desperate attempts to save him, it is too late. The novel vividly portrays her despair and emotional turmoil as she realizes the harsh truth. In the critical moment, Bäkizat sees Äzim's betrayal and Jädiger's loyalty, strength of will, and true masculinity. She prays for Jädiger's survival, but everything has already lost meaning. Kazakh writer Ä. Kekilbaev commented on this episode, saying: "It can be called the literature of a wasted life" ([21], p. 463). Indeed, this concept carries profound meaning. Jädiger's death at the end of the novel symbolizes the shattered hopes of the Aral fishermen. His fate was not merely the result of natural forces but was caused by human actions and misguided governmental policies. The question lingers: Will God forgive the crime committed against Mother Nature?

In his research, Y. Seleznev introduces the terms "sacrificial character" and "European character" (European type of consciousness) ([22], p. 30). Similarly, A. Bocharov defines egocentric personality—which prioritizes personal comfort and well-being—as follows:

"Your moral existence should be beneficial and

pleasant for yourself while causing no harm to others. However, gaining profit at the expense of others is always a sign of moral corruption. At first glance, this view appears noble, but in reality, it reflects a purely self-centered concern for one's own benefit and personal pleasure." ([23], p. 234).

In the classical tradition of world literature, which also influenced Kazakh literature, moral obligations are placed above self-affirmation. The concept of self-sacrifice and giving (rather than taking) is deeply ingrained. In this context, Jädiger is a "sacrificial character" in a typological sense. He rejects his society and experiences deep solitude—but his loneliness is, in essence, his protest against the society he opposes.

When recalling the past, the protagonist is invariably haunted by a deep sense of regret. Raising a hand against a woman, even if one considers themselves justified, is ultimately an excess. No matter how honest one is, attempting to win over a woman's heart by force is foolishness. In the monologue, Jädiger is dissatisfied with himself. Adapting or "re-educating" himself to fit into circumstances was never within his nature, and he has suffered the consequences of this in life. The protagonist is self-critical. His severe self-judgment and unwillingness to spare himself intensify the internal conflict of the monologue, allowing for a deeper revelation of his character.

Each person is a complex phenomenon, and their inner world is unique, sometimes even contradictory. A. Nusupova states: "Every person contemplates life and its meaning in their own way, forming their own conclusions. Each person evaluates their past life from the perspective of the present" ([24]). The monologue, therefore, becomes one of the primary artistic techniques for revealing character in psychological literature.

A significant element in the depiction of Jädiger's inner world is the role of dreams. Fatigue and anxiety are frequently intertwined with dreams. In one instance, a mythical Kök Ögiz (Blue Bull) is said to have drunk all the water from an enclosure, causing great fear among the fishermen. The Kök Ögiz is a legendary figure in mythology—an enormous bull that holds the earth on its horns and is capable of swallowing entire bodies of water. Jädiger awakens in terror. The symbolic meaning of the dream is unmistakable:

it reflects the vanishing sea, the loss of meaning, and the emotional exhaustion of the fishermen chasing the retreating waters.

In the monologue, various literary devices are employed, including self-characterization, description of one's own or an opposing character's portrait, depiction of the setting, reflections on past events, and dialogue. When describing his external appearance, the phrase "the tall dark man" is frequently used, while for self-characterization, the phrase "dog-like nature" often appears. In the monologue, both self-description and portraiture are colored by the protagonist's own perspective:

"Bäkizat did not see this. Had she seen it, she would have cast her sharp, mocking eyes upon him without turning her face, staring until the smirk from her lips transferred to her gaze before finally saying, 'Ah, your dog-like nature!' and walking away without another word. Yes, dog-like nature! It was good he left the house in time. Otherwise, who knows what that reckless fool might have done in a fit of anger?"<sup>[17]</sup>.

In the monologue, portraiture and characterization are closely interwoven, with the protagonist's thoughts playing a leading role. The subsequent narrative seamlessly continues in alignment with the protagonist's inner world:

*Qansha kúnnen beri janyň jegen yza men kúikti bul syrtyňa shyğarmaı, ishinen tynyp óz qasiretine ózi ýlanyp júrgende... Qap, ne qylasyň, Sary Shaianyň... Sol páleniň jer astynan shyqqandaı sap ete qalğanyn qattersiň. Bylaıgy ýaqytta da qara aspandy qapyltyp júretin neme, ásirese osy joly úi órtenip bara jatqandaı ústine empeńdep kirsin. Basynan bórkin julyp almağanda álde qater edi?* [For days, he had kept his frustration and resentment bottled up inside, poisoning himself with his own sorrow... But then, of all things, that scoundrel Sar Shaya had to appear, as if rising from the depths of the earth. Even on ordinary days, he darkened the skies with his presence, but this

time, he stormed into the house as if it were on fire. If he hadn't snatched his hat from his head, who knows what might have happened?"<sup>[10]</sup>.

The stylistic structure of the monologue is complex. First-person narration subtly transitions into third-person perspective without disruption. The monologue accommodates everything: subjective perceptions, character descriptions, and evaluations of external reality through the protagonist's eyes. Ultimately, all of this serves to deepen the portrayal of the protagonist's nature and personality.

Jädiger is a character who embodies societal issues. If the Aral Sea had remained vast and full, such turmoil in his life might never have occurred. The novel does not merely depict the environmental catastrophe in isolation but rather intertwines it with social and domestic struggles. Bäkizat's marriage to Jädiger was not built on love but rather a calculated decision. Her reunion with her former lover, the renowned academic Äzim, in the city further complicates the protagonist's turmoil.

In the second volume of the novel, Jädiger, Bäkizat, and Äzim find themselves adrift on ice floes in the open sea at night. The raging sea, the howling storm, and the contrasting psychological states of the characters are masterfully portrayed. In this critical moment, the truth about Äzim—who had seemed so elevated in Bäkizat's mind—is revealed. When the drifting ice momentarily stops at a peninsula, he seizes the opportunity and, without looking back at Bäkizat, flees toward the shore. As the storm intensifies and the ice drifts further into the open sea, Jädiger and Bäkizat once again find themselves face to face with the forces of nature. In the midst of the struggle, the ice gives way, and "the tall dark man" finds himself trapped waist-deep in a crevasse. He begins to freeze in place. Bäkizat, despite her desperation and efforts, is unable to save him. The novel vividly captures her helplessness and anguish.

While Äzim's selfishness and cowardice are laid bare in this episode, Jädiger's unwavering loyalty, strength, and nobility shine through. In a moment of desperation, Bäkizat prays for his survival, but it is too late. As the writer Ä. Kekilbaev notes:

"A new trend seems to have emerged in our prose and drama. It might be fitting to call it the 'literature of wasted lives'<sup>[25]</sup>.

Indeed, this concept carries profound significance. Jädiger's death at the end of the novel symbolizes the shattered hopes of the Aral fishermen. The once-majestic Aral Sea, a marvel of nature that had existed for millennia, is now gone—destroyed by human hands and reckless policies. Will the Creator forgive this assault on nature? Can the disruption of natural harmony ever bring good?

At the very end, a small bird that had once sought refuge in Jädiger's coat flutters away, taking flight. This fragile creature, escaping the body of the fallen protagonist, may symbolize a faint, lingering hope for the survival of life in the face of destruction.

What is the philosophical meaning of Jädiger's death? Above all, he preserved his moral integrity despite the hardships he endured. His devotion to his homeland and the sea never wavered. The pain and suffering of the Aral fishermen were embodied in his character.

Äzim, in contrast, is a symbolic figure—a mouthpiece for the ideology of that era. His entire life is built on empty ambition and opportunism. By the end of the novel, he loses his position and his sense of purpose. After all, false ideologies and hollow rhetoric were never sustainable. He had never truly loved Bäkizät, and she, in turn, realizes too late that the golden dreams she had pursued were mere illusions.

Bäkizät's fate recalls that of Aqbala from *Blood and Sweat*, who had once abandoned a stable life to chase an illusionary love, only to face disillusionment. The novel, structured around these complex conflicts, ultimately serves as a profound reflection on social and human truths.

"Where there is no creative individuality, there is no writer"<sup>[25]</sup> states renowned literary critic K. Ergobek. The distinctiveness of Ä. Nurpeisov's novel lies in the striking clarity and distinctiveness of its characters. The reader can never confuse the images of Jädiger, Bäkizät, and Äzim, as each character is sculpted with immense psychological depth. These figures, vividly portrayed in their emotional complexity, resemble towering cliffs—connected yet separate. Even the episodic characters are depicted with remarkable individuality.

In *Blood and Sweat*, figures such as Qaraqatyn, who stirs up gossip between households; the irresponsible and comical Sudyr Ahmet; the rigid and snorting old man Süyeu; and the massive, nomadic hunter Kälen remain etched in the

reader's memory due to their unique character traits. Similarly, in *The Final Duty*, Kötkenshek Köshen and Sar Shaya continue this lineage, serving as symbols of stagnation and backwardness still lingering in Kazakh village life. Their absurd backwardness is portrayed so vividly that one feels the urge to both laugh and cry. The portrait of Juwan Jaqayım, who, while conversing with Jädiger, becomes distracted chasing a fly, is another unforgettable image:

"The fat, black man threw his broad shoulders against the squeaky chair's backrest, laughing heartily. His massive belly, bulging like a cushion in front of him, rippled with each chuckle. His thick, double chin trembled, his sagging cheeks quivered, and his narrow eyes disappeared in the folds of his face. Ha-ha-ha... His roaring laughter, which seemed to shake the suffocatingly hot little office, suddenly stopped as he fixated on a tiny black fly that had just entered. He froze, gripping his newspaper like a club, tracking the fly's movements as it buzzed around the room"<sup>[16]</sup>.

Later, this same Juwan Jaqayım earns a doctorate and becomes one of Äzim's loyal subordinates, engaging in all sorts of corrupt schemes. No longer just a researcher, he becomes a staunch defender of a scientific environment filled with deceit and sycophancy. Once hailed for drafting ground-water maps, his work eventually proves hollow, illustrating the bureaucracy that plagued the academic world.

## 4. Conclusions

Modern literary studies emphasize the importance of analyzing the author and the artistic concept of personality in literary works. In essence, a novel is the embodiment of the writer's artistic vision. The worldview and creative stance of the author—what concerned them most about the society they lived in, which human values they cherished, and which they despised—are reflected in the fates of their characters. Behind each character lies a structured, condensed artistic world shaped by the author. This is particularly evident in Ä. Nurpeisov's novel-dilogy *The Final Duty*.

Focusing on the artistic concept of a novel allows not only for a deeper understanding of the work itself but also

for an insight into the broader themes and artistic principles guiding the author's entire literary career. The creative trajectory that began with *The Expected Day* was expanded in the *Blood and Sweat* trilogy and reached its peak in *The Final Duty*. The central theme throughout these works is the fate of the Aral Sea fishermen.

Each era presents distinct characters. At the beginning of the 20th century, they fought against oppression and tyranny. During wartime, they took up arms and marched into battle. From the 1960s onward, they were weighed down by the ecological catastrophe unfolding before them. The realities depicted in the novels reflect both the turbulent history of the author's ancestors and the bitter lessons of his own life. Nurpeisov does not invent fiction from nothing—he reshapes reality into artistic form, pouring his heart into portraying the truth of time and society. His creative process is shaped by a deep internal reflection, passing through what he calls the “thousand-degree furnace” of the soul.

For this reason, the protagonists of his novels—Elaman and Jädiger—mirror aspects of the author's personality and moral principles. In particular, Jädiger in *The Final Duty* embodies the writer's profound discontent with the corrupt, bureaucratic leaders of his time. The core of Jädiger's character is integrity—loyalty to people, homeland, and nature. Even as he freezes to death on the drifting ice, he remains faithful to the sea until his final breath. Likewise, Nurpeisov dedicated his life to advocating for the Aral Sea, becoming its poet and mournful witness. This convergence of the author's identity with his character is a defining feature of his literary vision.

Nurpeisov also explores the psychological depths of the human soul through Bäkizät's character. In portraying the complex emotional reality of a woman, *The Final Duty* continues the tradition of Kazakh literature, enriching it with new dimensions. Bäkizät, as a figure of “a wasted life,” follows in the footsteps of characters such as Sholpan in M. Jumabayev's *Sin*, Aqbilek in J. Aimauytov's *Aqbilek*, and the heroines of M. Äuezov's early short stories, as well as Ülpan in G. Müsirepov's *Ülpan* and Nüzira in T. Ahtanov's *Let Your Light Not Fade*. Through her, the novel reveals the contradictions of human nature and the moral complexities of life.

Just as in Sholpan's *Sin*, where the reader cannot fully condemn the protagonist, in *The Final Duty*, Bäkizät's charac-

ter defies conventional judgment. Her longing for happiness, her heartbreak when her golden dreams turn to dust, and her tragic realization of true love only when it is too late—all are depicted with psychological depth and unrelenting realism. The dynamism of the narrative becomes a crucial principle in the artistic representation of her character.

The pursuit of happiness is a recurring theme in Nurpeisov's work. In *Blood and Sweat*, despite society condemning Aqbala for her choices, emotions cannot be controlled by logic. Similarly, Bäkizät remains impervious to reason—because she is not just a generic female figure, but a distinct individual, a personality. The writer deliberately avoids creating idealized characters, favoring psychological authenticity over moral perfection.

The interconnectedness of characters in the novel is striking. Jädiger, Bäkizät, and Äzim illuminate one another, forming a unified thematic structure. If any one of them were removed, the novel's artistic integrity would be compromised.

The sea in Nurpeisov's novels serves as a representation of time and place, a battleground of struggles, and a stage where characters reveal their true selves. The masterful depiction of the connection between ecological disaster and human fate enhances the novel's artistic impact and strengthens the author's central message.

Nurpeisov's literary mission was to warn humanity about the dangers of environmental destruction. His concept of the author's responsibility is rooted in the belief that humans are not masters of nature, but rather its dependents. If people harm nature today, they will inevitably suffer the consequences in the future. Environmental issues are now a global concern, and within this context, *The Final Duty* holds a significant place in world literature.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, U.S. and S.K.; methodology, U.S.; software, K.K.; validation, U.S., S.K. and R.T.; formal analysis, S.K.; investigation, U.S.; resources, R.T.; data curation, K.K.; writing—original draft preparation, U.S.; writing—review and editing, S.K.; visualization, R.T.; supervision, U.S.; funding acquisition, K.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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This study employs a multidisciplinary approach to analyze the artistic concept of personality in Ä. Nurpeisov's novel *The Final Duty*. The research methodology integrates literary analysis, comparative literary studies, and hermeneutic interpretation, focusing on the interplay between narrative structure, character development, and socio-historical context.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors stated that there are no conflicts of interest.

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