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A BOOK AS A WITNESS OF INJURY

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Abstract

The object of interest in the proposed study is the phenomenon of the collection “queer poetry” «Under one cover» published in 2018 in Almaty (Kazakhstan) and uniting poets who consider themselves to be sexual or gender minorities. The significance of this phenomenon is justified by the fact that in the Central Asia this literary precedent is observed for the first time. The main of the research is to study a collection of poems with a marked title as the integrity of a higher poetic level. The author studies the texts of verses, their graphic accompaniment, interactive semantics of the title, compositional construction of the collection, its internal plot. Some authors do this in an intentionally crude form but most of them create the hyperassociative style characteristic of this collection which makes it possible to hide the pain and discomfort of an injured consciousness behind highly intellectual poetry. The author of the article proves the representation of the personal and gender individuality of each author in the subjective, associative, spatio-temporal, subject-motivational, genre organization of texts. And the effect of generalizing the particular into the general become more interesting: in the context of whole poem collection the uniqueness of the idiosyncrasies of each author begins to transform into the intonation of the Book. This is the way of turning the collection into a book: in gaining collective queer consciousness as a kind of coordinate system which doing possible realization one's own identity.

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1. Introduction

This is a book of decline ... (Under one cover, 2018, p. 87)

The kingdom inside and out is the same kingdom ...

(Under one cover, 2018, p.9)

The problem of sexual minorities remains one of the unresolved and controversial scandals in the modern conditions of socio-cultural polyphony, and situations of daily emerging new conflicts (Brian, 2019; Hubach et al., 2019; Mont, & Johnson, & Hill, 2019; Ranjit et al., 2019; Tate & Patterson, 2019). Especially in the post-Soviet countries. The issues of violence against members of sexual minorities periodically raise in the Russian media (Petinova & Gridina, 2018; Torocheshnikova, 2017). Research papers examine the perception of same-sex marriage, the mental health of LGBT youth, and the relationship of Homo-/bisexual adults with their parents (Petrova, 2016; Smyslova, 2018). The issues of promoting homosexuality in Russia are discussed (Kaj, 2018; Kondakov, 2017; Kondakov, 2018; Kortunov, Lapshin, Zorina, Krasnova, & Kireenkova, 2015; Lapshina & Kochetkova, 2016). This problem has not active discussion or research in the Central Asian republics. And this, unfortunately, does not change attitudes towards LGBT people and the phenomenon of deviation from gender traditionalism.

2. Problem Statement

This silencing of the issue was the reason for the birth of the collection of queer poetry “Under one cover” (“Under one cover”) and the multi-meaning introduction to it: “...while in other countries, scientists use their privileges to resist misogynous and homophobic rhetoric, in the post-Soviet academic environment authoritative figures can rarely support activists” (translated by author from the Preface to the collection of poems “Under one cover” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 4) .Since the author of this article does not consider himself to be an authoritative figure of modern science, he (she!) will allow itself an attempt to understand the traumatic nature of such a phenomenon as the collection of “queer poetry” “Under one cover”, published in 2018 in Almaty (Kazakhstan) and united poets who consider themselves to be sexual or gender minorities.

3. Research Questions

The significance of this phenomenon is justified by the fact that such a literary precedent is observed in Central Asia, when representatives of gender minorities have declared themselves in print form for the first time.

The collection is presented by the Russian language texts of 21th poets with a completely diverse geography: Russia (Oksana Vasyakina, Elena Georgievskaya, Dmitry Gerchikov, Lenny Lee Gerke, Nastya Denisovna, EganJabbarova, Daria Serenko, Galina Rymbu, Konstantin Shavlovsky), Kazakhstan (Rufiya Dzhemberbekova, Anuar Nuyubenuyubenuyubenuyen Nayuyben Ramil Niyazov, Zoya Falkova, Asel Shaldibaeva), Latvia (Elena Glazova), USA (Saltanat Kazybaeva), Canada (Lida Yusupova), Ukraine (Friedrich Chernyshev), Japan (Zhanar Sekerbaeva). Accordingly, the first task is to study the verses of each author as a confession and an attempt to express themselves.

Another task is to study the principles of creating the integrity of the book. Color design of the collection (blue cover and red bookend on both sides of the book like a marker of corporeality), symbolism of graphic drawings, original and fractional structure of the book (“Summary”, preface “Four when”, “Short list of titles of this book”, information “ About the Authors ”, “Contents ”) in combination with multisense lyrics of verses, a high level of associativity and dialogicity of cultural codes – everything strives for the formation of the internal plot of the Book. The authors of the preface, Rufiy Dzhembekova and Maria Vilkoviskaya, write about this in their Four When: “Let us have a modest opportunity, at least somehow — even if not in our own language — to speak of our restlessness and curses, invisibility and hate, heterogeneity and confusion, about his persistent refusal to participate in the reproduction of patriarchal rituals and unwillingness to stubbornly stubbornly still alive himself under the inhuman chancellery of official dossiers ... ” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 9).

On a dark blue matte dust jacket in 21st horizontal rows (like a stitches) are embossed surnames and names of all the authors of this publication. On the centre of book cover is depicted the denomination Someone: either the "semirechenski lágýshkozýb" /it's hapax/ (may be translated like a “frog-toothed from Semirechensk”), or the "unicorn", or the "rhinoceros", or the "tyrannosaurus", or maybe some kind of "shellmarillion" /hapax too/. All these definitions for the graphic image are taken from the Short list of names of this book (Under one cover, 2018, p. 11).

The Malika Iksenova’s illustrations are the way of interpretation of this book. The painter has presented her understanding of poems and images. For example, the image of a unicorn from verses by Egan Jabbarova:

“Byt svobodnym – eto tak je neveroiatno, kak vstretit edmoroga,
Ne byt ýbitym – eto tak je neveroiatno, kak vstretit edmoroga...”

(Under one cover, 2018, p. 142).

In translation:

“Being free is as incredible as meeting a unicorn,
To not be killed is as incredible as to meet a unicorn ... “.

And the unicorn is presented to the reader of this collection on the first page dedicated to it as a strange symbol of freedom and self-sufficiency. And later in the book, he appears in the texts of various poems about the "probable" happiness of freedom and life.

4. Purpose of the Study

At the different levels of book is realized the confession (from the cover to the super-idea). Some authors do this in a deliberately crude form, but most of them create the hyper associative characteristic style, which allows to hide the pain and discomfort of an injured consciousness behind highly intellectual poetry. The purpose of the study is to prove the representation of the personal and gender individuality of each author’s subjective, associative, spatio-temporal, plot, motivational organization of the texts.

The presence of the author at each of the mentioned levels of texts allows you to see the interesting effect of generalizing the private into the general. In the context of the entire collection of poems, the uniqueness of the idiosyncrasies of each author begins to transform the intonation of the Book. This is how

the artistic over-task of transforming the collection into a book is manifested, collective queer consciousness is acquired as some constant, coordinate system, relative to which it is possible to realize one's own identity.

5. Research Methods

There are methods of contextual, comparative historical, typological analysis used by author of paper. Since the language of the book is Russian, we use the method of subscript translation and text conversion in the English alphabet (the latter is done for draw attention to the poetics of poems). Sometimes we can find words from English and Kazakh in the poems however they become clear in the context.

6. Findings

The specifics of the topic. So, you should not take this book only from the points of Queer demonstration. I would like to draw attention to the observance of ethics by the compilers of the collection. So, the output data contains a warning comment: "18+. Some texts contain obscene vocabulary" (Under one cover, 2018, p. 158).

If we reveal the meaning of these verses only through hints of compromising deviations in the field of gender and sexuality, then the idea of this publication will turn (to use a metaphor from the Preface) into "an absurd harmony of an empty ball, sparkling with a ring and a glow ..." (Under one cover, 2018, p. 10), because in a 150-page poetry collection, words with the meaning "strange" are extremely rare. There are words with the prefix "Cis-" (for example, "Cis-woman", "transgender", "intersex", "hermaphrodite", "transvestite", "bisexual", "gay", "heterosexual", "bugger". That's all the gender terms. The prevailing number of poems uses general poetic vocabulary.

Some verses have the blurred gender status, the subject of verses has grammatically mark. For example, the separated ending emphasizes the author's other gender: "I kept a secret" ("sohranil_a_tainu") (Under one cover, 2018, p. 90), "I was curtailed, sent to exile" ("ne mogu oschutit' sebya prejn_yuyu" (Under one cover, 2018, p. 108). We highlighted the verbs of middle type in the phrases "ya zemnoi shar chut' ne ves' oboshlo" ("I almost completely circumvented the globe"), "ya bylo svernuto, otpravleno v izgnan'e" (Under one cover, 2018, p. 31). Another way to indicate the author's gender identity is to use pronouns denoting female and male gender, using dashes: "... his-her hands in oil / he-she holds out her hands ..." (Under one cover, 2018, p. 41). In other cases poets use the style of "indirect" utterances which describes the phenomena tabooed by society, the reaction of society (in the most severe manifestations) to representatives of the sexual minority. However, the reader may feel that the poetics of the book "Under one cover" are desperately trying to protect their author and the one they are writing about from pain and humiliation.

The subjective and motivational organization of a book of poems. The injured consciousness of the poetic speech's subject is recognizable in a situation of obvious non-presence/exclusion of oneself from all spheres of human communication. Thus, the consciousness of the subject of S. Kazybayev's poems is

characterized by the duality of perception of the external and hidden world, a world with generally accepted moral principles and deep individuality:

... not there and not here ... (Under one cover, 2018, p. 13),

... In my September dream, I look right

(respectively, the letter “g”) (Under one cover, 2018, p. 14),

/from author - in Russian letter “g” looks like “Ж” /,

... at first I dreamed about it. And yet I wake up (Under one cover, 2018, p. 14),

by J.Sekerbaeva:

...Where am I and where are you?

For different countries, but for one reason.

... we most likely will forever definitely

not there and not here ... (Under one cover, 2018, p. 13).

The conflict divides the space of almost every poem into 2 unequal worlds, where one often belongs to “them” and the other to the hero of the poem. As in the text of S.Kazybaeva:

... They multiply, and I sit and drink sweet tea

today in the early morning I was kicked out of the global

heterosexual yurt

with a note: you were born for saukele and veils – correct

And I pour tea in kesse (Under one cover, 2018, p. 12).

The word “saukele” is meaning “the kazakh bride's headpiece”, “kesse” is a name of the dish which is used by the Kazakhs for tea.

The conflict between the author’s desire to confess and at the same time to hide from all forms of involvement in living life is demonstrated by the subject of verses by E. Georgievskaya:

I was covered from head to toe with sleep, like scales ... (Under one cover, 2018, p. 32).

Nastya Denisova represents the individual hidden life through the image of a pin:

...safety pin

from the inside of wearable things

each pin inside the shirt (Under one cover, 2018, p. 16),

and Zhanar Sekerbaeva through the image of the veil:

few people see the life of a woman behind a veil ... (Under one cover, 2018, p. 27).

The motives of pain and “crazy loneliness” are brought to truly tragic proportions:

... we learned to communicate by touch

almost without talking, not laughing or crying

... you shout inaudibly

my palm on your neck calms again

warming with heat residues ... (J.Sekerbaeva), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 21),

... nobody needs anyone and was never needed ... (A. Duysenbinov),

(Under one cover, 2018, p. 63),

... we walk like street children ... (O. Vasyakina), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 68).

The connotation of pain and loneliness is supported by images of emptiness:

human

dies empty, like a husked nut (E. Georgievskaya), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 31),

silence:

... silence weeds

overgrown with us the whole voice (E. Georgievskaya), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 32).

In the context of this collection the world “body” has a special meaning. He begins to take on the function of replacing the individual, actually human, and turns into a monstrous marker of emptiness, the gutting of the physical meaning of being:

... the body in the hands of the void

relying on yourself

per capita

has hopes ... (A. Shaldibaeva), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 35),

... is it generally my body or

an attempt to try someone else's (F. Chernyshev), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 107),

... there was no language to ask why

there was only this body

and his religion

and this biblical belt around the neck (A. Waid-Menon),

(Under one cover, 2018, p. 146),

... I was made to feel like an imposter

in my own body all my life (A. Waid-Menon), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 107).

Spatio-temporal series as organizing the beginning of the book. It should be noted that the spatial and temporal specificity of texts is always represented by fictitious different geographical names: “my family ... from a coal city in the north of the country “Karaganda city” - author's note /” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 14) , “From the Astana River to the Chicago Sea” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 12), “we live in a small town in Texas” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 145), “here in Kuzminki I am ashamed of my childhood ...” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 73), “I live in Russia ...” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 94), “Birds scream like crazy in Izmailovsky Park” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 120). Queer reality swept the whole earth. And in this regard, the book demonstrates the “parade of skeletons” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 11), previously closed by “square” norms of generally accepted morality.

And if for a while we'll forget about the presence of the scandalous "queer", we can see much larger problems in the frank figurativeness of the verses of the analyzed poetry collection, compared with which the gender issue is a small reflection of the failure in the harmony of the universe:

... men and women without signs
out of class and ethnic groups

empty landscapes

lacking recognition
possessing short-term memory ... (G. Rymbu), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 87).

The historical specifics of the destinies addressed by the authors of the collection are terrible. So, the poem "Amadi" by E. Jabbarova tells the stories of the tragic fate of young people of non-traditional sexual orientation who died at the hands of their own close relatives.

Mythological characters, actors, historically famous personalities and unknown to anyone (except the authors of the verses) contemporaries who lived at a particular time and went through a conflict with themselves and/or society: Merlin Monroe, Jeanne d'Ark, Alain Delon, Patricia Highsmith, Antigone, Monet, Gillian Anderson, Chuang Tzu, J. Lacan, Gerard, Janelle, Elin, Agnes, Xan, etc. .. And in this list, the gender status of a person is really not important. The other truth is more important. It's about the depending of human on the epoch, about impossibility to live according to own values, its own internal laws of honor. Because in this life:

we are all blue
well drawn
zombies of the art world ... (E. Glazova), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 43).

The poetics of devastated quotes. In the spirit of postmodernism allusion or contaminated reminiscence in the collection "Under One Cover" parodies the volume and scale of the accepted and visible world by everyone, which means it brings it to a grotesque-farcical, meaningless sign:

"Slightly touching the sleeves" look away
There is nothing between us ... (J.Sekerbaeva), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 22),
... out there - the wind groans,
The mast bends and creaks
A storm covers the sky in darkness
A heart hurts without you (D. Gerchikov), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 55).

The phrases "Slightly touching the sleeves", "the wind groans", "The mast bends and creaks", "A storm covers the sky in darkness" are known to every modern person because they encode the mass cultural consciousness.

But the literary code is perceived as insufficient, flat, and one-dimensional in the verses of the authors of the collection “Under One Cover”. Reminiscences pass into the category of markers of everyday life that do not overlap the complexity of new relationships or situations, and no longer help with “everyday actions / overcoming the absurdity / living nearby ...” (Under one cover, 2018, p. 22).

It's not hurt because of the accident,
but because of the norm
understandably? (A. Waid-Menon), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 148).

The poetics of quotations in E. Georgievskaya's poems turn down the logic of thinking as a coordinate system:

... we were taught
to see only the forest behind the trees.
our now invisible eyes
listen to your eyes ... (E. Georgievskaya), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 29).

The nihilistic perception of generation and era (the allusion on the Ivan Turgenev novel “Fathers and children”) is devalued by the destruction of the perceiving consciousness itself. The same kind of shifter appears in the verses of F. Chernyshev:

When I sneak out for a walk
Bandaged and twenty-two years old (Under one cover, 2018, p. 110).

The completely opposite state “stealthily” appears in the text instead of optimism and enthusiasm of the hero “Clouds in Pants” by V. Mayakovsky. And the key recognizable image of the “beautiful twenty-two year old” (by V. Mayakovsky) is replaced by “bandaged” young man.

Of course, only a trained reader will understand the coding of a devastated system of signs. For example, the image of the “svidrigalochka” in the verses of E. Georgievskaya marks the norm of crime (not the horror and not the fact of the hidden, unreasonable crime Svidrigailov’s morality - as it once was with hero of novel F. Dostoevsky “Crime and punishment”):

Keep a secret - put in front of your surname
Svidrigalochka. Such here
secrets - they will not give others to you (Under one cover, 2018, p. 30).

In the collection of queer poetry markers of devastated world appear. Man becomes no a measure of things and positive knowledge but a measure of shame:
Opportunity honestly about how ashamed to be a man...

(J. Sekerbayeva), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 26),

... here in Kuzminki ... hungry in evil shame
for myself for my beggarly many-eyed obesity ...

(O. Vasyakina), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 75).

7. Conclusion

As you can see, the theme of "queer" from the scandalous-piquant grows into the problem of the destruction of mankind. The problem of gender identity as through a magnifying glass show increased signs of decay of the entire world community. The compilers of the book already in the "Short List of Titles of this Book" stated that they consider the Queer phenomenon in the context of the general process of demoralization of civilization: reminiscences in the titles of the collection fill the gender theme with mythological, political, philosophical and cultural content. "Circle curvature" (the author compares unsolvability of the problem of squaring a circle), "Sunset of Europe and pony" (compare with "Sunset of Europe" by Spengler), "Queer – World – Marx" (compare with the slogan "Peace! Labour! May!" or with another famous chanting the names of revolutionary leaders in Soviet epoch "Marx – Engels – Lenin – Stalin"), "March of Flowers" (compare with "Waltz of Flowers" by P. Chaikovsky), "Parade of Sceletons" (compare with English proverb "Each closet has its own skeleton"), "Letters from the closet and from behind the fence" ("Letters from afar" by A. Herzen), "Augean dovecote" (compare with "Augean stables"), "Not with bread to eat" ("Not only with bread alone"; the game of meanings is formed as a result of the phonetic convergence of the words "edimy" and "ediny"), "Every hunter is a pheasant" (compare with proverb "Every hunter knows where the pheasant sits").

And it is not surprising that one of the most controversial topics is the theme of faith:

... it's easy to be holy
when you are more god
than a man ... (R. Niyazov), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 52),

... In God we rest in silence
We rest in silence as if in God ... (A. Duysenbinov), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 61),
World religion is

Hormone therapy ... (K. Shavlovsky), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 101).

The scale of the disaster happening to humanity is inscribed in a completely gender thematic circle. And in this sounds some special, piercing truth about our universal world:

... what happens between relatives? No kinship ...
the world became homeless ... why wake up ...,
why are we silent, pouring tears over crumpled money (G. Rymbu),
(Under one cover, 2018, p. 90),

... sisterhood for me is an abstraction full of tears (D. Serenko),
(Under one cover, 2018, p. 93),

... our child is an indelible fruit of violence
at him
eyes of violence hands of violence are shorter in the body

he will be born in the correct traditional text
with a high citation index ... (D. Serenko), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 94).

In the context of the entire collection the traumatized consciousness of the non-traditional gender orientation subject's begins to diagnose itself and society, and in the flows of the verbal unconscious it also reveals the reasons for its appearance. If the origins of strange creativity can be understood as a desire for sublimation:

... I sublimate
the fear of everything
sacred
in poetry (R. Niyazov), (Under one cover, 2018, p. 48),
then the final task is obvious:
Give up sex,
become a man (Under one cover, 2018, p. 99).

These lines do not call for gender emasculation, but rather as a solution to this situation because it is not gender that makes a person a self-sufficient member of society, but something more important.

The rejection by different authors of the socially approved Canon (gender, family, social, religious, legal, and aesthetic) unites all participants in this dialogue. And the book sets itself the task of protecting the living lives of people gathered-sheltered "Under one cover". This is how the artistic super-task of the book of collective confession manifests itself: to annihilate the trauma of "queer" for a moment with the creative power of poetic emotion.

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