Abstract

This article devoted to the semantics of color epithets in the text of the Yakut heroic epic olonkho analysis, as well as to the peculiarities of their functioning in the epic text. An epithet, as an artistic and visual mean, has been attracting the interest of linguists since ancient times. Theoretical and methodological basis of the research consists of the works of A.N. Veselovsky, A.A. Potebnya, V.M. Zhirmunsky, V.Ya. Propp, S.Y. Neklyudov, S.L. Neveleva, as well as of the works of the Yakut scientists I.V. Pukhov, G.U. Ergis, P.A. Sleptsov, N.I. Filippova, V.V. Illarionov and other epics of the Russian Federation peoples researchers. The study of color epithets semantics and their functioning in the text of the Yakut heroic epic olonkho has the purpose of expanding linguistic knowledge about national-cultural specifics of the Yakuts, saved in the epic of olonkho. The relevance of this work lies in the fact that the subject of research – color epithets – is a significant part of the epithet layer in the olonkho text, thus, study of them contributes to a systematic analysis of the vocabulary of the Yakut heroic epic olonkho as a whole. Color epithets are a set of color adjectives “үрүҥ/ маҥ(ҕ)ан” white, “хара” black, “кыhыл” red, “аалай” scarlet, “араҕас” yellow, “бороҥ” gray, “күөх” green/light blue/blue. The object of the research is based on the texts of academic editions of “Nyurgun Bootur the Swift” olonkho by K.G. Orosin, “Kyys Debiliye” olonkho by N.P. Burnashev, “Mighty Er Sogotokh” by V.O. Karataev and “Obstinate Kulun Kullustur” by I.G. Timofeev-Teploukhov. At the initial stage, in the paper used the methods of computer analysis for the selection of color epithets from the olonkho text array, further, to characterize the color epithets and the determined words – methods of dictionary definitions analysis, as well as methods of quantitative, descriptive, contextual and comparative analysis. As shown by the study, color epithets are used in the text of the Yakut olonkho in the description of literally all elements of the epic narrative: time, place, appearance, clothing of heroes, weapons of heroes, their emotions and magical properties. It is established that the informativeness of color epithets, inherent into the semantics of the word and revealed in the combinations of color epithets with determined words, is very large – they express the worldview of the Yakuts, their attitude to the world, their assessment of the environment.

Keywords: Color epithets, “үрүҥ/маҥ(ҕ)ан” white, “хара” black, “кыhыл” red, “аалай” scarlet, “араҕас” yellow, “бороҥ” gray, “күөх” green/light blue/blue, Determined word, Epic formula, Denotative meaning, Connotative meaning.

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Introduction

Color adjectives, along with the terms of kinship, are numerals, somatisms to the most ancient layers of vocabulary of any national language. In the modern world, when Yakut language speakers can meet with native epic on paper only, and have not been absorbing since childhood listening to olonkho performers, olonkho text is hard to understand for native language speakers, who is only at a conversational level. Therefore, the idea of “interpretation” of the folklore word and, in particular, color epithets in the text of the Yakut heroic epic olonkho in this work is both relevant and interesting equally. Color epithets represent a significant part of the epithets in the text of olonkho and, thus, its study contributes to the systematic analysis of the vocabulary of the Yakut heroic epic olonkho as a whole. Color epithets are a set of color adjectives “үрүҥ/ ман(ҕ)ан” white, “хара” black, “қыыл” red, “алай” scarlet, “араҕас” yellow, “борог” gray, “кәх” green/light blue/blue, standing in attributive position before a noun. The epithet, as an artistic and visual means, attracted the interest of linguists since ancient times. Russian scientists at the forefront of the study of the epithet were A.N. Veselovsky, A.A. Potebnya, V.M. Zhirmunsky, V.Ya. Propp, S.Y. Neklyudov, S.L. Neveleva, etc. V.Ya. Propp rightly argues: “We can say that epithet is one of the main figurative means of the epic. ... The epithet gives the noun an exact visual or certainty, forcing the listener or reader to see or perceive the subject as it wants the singer, as it is necessary for the narrative” (Propp, 1958, p.524). A.I. Galperin characterizes the epithet as an expressive means based on the allocation of qualities and characteristic of the described phenomenon that the epithet always has the emotional meaning or emotional coloring (Galperin, 1958, p.138). L.Ts. Sanzheeva emphasizes that in the text of the epic epithets “have great artistic expressiveness and contribute to the creation of vivid images. Adjectives, which have been used in a figurative sense, or, more precisely, epithets perform additional semantic, expressive-emotional function” (Sanzheeva, 2011, p.287). In recent years, there have been many works on the study of epics of the peoples of the Russian Federation, in which in one way or another attention is paid to color epithets. According to the testimony of ethnographic materials associated with the mythological worldview, the Abkhaz have a special semantics of color epithets “red” (color close to their spirit, a very respected and revered, able to cure ailments) and “white” (symbolizes goodness, welfare) (Kogonia, 2014, pp.56-57). V.V. Salykova, considering coloration vocabulary in the language of Xinjiang Oirat and Kalmyk versions of the epic “Dzhangar”, focuses on the definition of the nouns semantics, combined with color epithets and their thematic differentiation (Salykova, 2013, pp.33-35). S.E. Bachaeva, in addition to the basic color adjectives, which are one-piece in structure, considers other derivative color names that occur in the Kalmyk epic, the focus of the researcher – the distribution of the color epithets for types of education, not more (Bachaeva, 2015, pp.86-96).

A certain contribution to the study of folklore epithet was made by Yakut folklore researchers such as V.I. Pukhov, G.U. Ergis, P.A. Sleptsov, N.I. Filippova, E.S. Sidorov, V.V. Illarionov, N. A. Ahanyanova et al. G.U. Ergis acknowledged that in the descriptive parts of olonkho the epithet is the main visual means (Ergis, 1947, p.8). In the article “Poetic syntax of the olonkho and the nature of epic epithetation” (1991), N.A. Ahanyanova investigated the function of definitive combinations and their place in the artistic part of the oral compositions. Proper names of the Yakut olonkho characters were the subject of N.I. Philippova’s study (1974, 1978). However, it should be emphasized that they considered the epithet as if in passing, turning to the consideration of individual issues on the epic olonkho.

In this study, we take as a basis following definition of the epithet: “Epithet is a kind of trope, a definition that gives the expression imagery and emotionality, emphasizing one of the signs of the object. The epithet distinguishes and emphasizes some sign with an emotional purpose” (Theory of literature: Work of art analysis). Material of the study based on 702 example of color epithets usage (including “үрүҥ/ ман(ҕ)ан” white – 297 times, “хара” black – 281 times, “қыыл” red – 43 times, “алай” scarlet – 7 times, “араҕас” yellow – 28 times, “борог” gray – 7 times, “кәх” green/light blue/blue – 39 times)
extracted by computer processing from the texts of academic editions of “Nyurgun Bootur the Swift” olonkho by K.G. Orosin (hereinafter abbreviated as NB), “Kyys Debiliye” olonkho by N.P. Burnashev (abbreviated KD), “Mighty Er Sogotokh” by V.O. Karataev (abbreviated ES) and “Obstinate Kulun Kullustur” by I.G. Timofeev-Teploukhov (abbreviated KK). In the examples used translations on Russian language by G.U. Ergis, P.E. Efremov, N.V. Emelyanov, S.P. Oyunskaya taken from the appropriate editions of olonkho texts. In the interpretation of the words meanings used “Dictionary of the Yakut language” by E.K. Pekarsky in three volumes, dictionary definitions from the dictionary is given with an indication of columns (col.), not pages. This article discusses 702 color epithets. Examples with color epithets are given with the numbering of poetic lines (lin.), not pages. Color epithets denoting lear, and in combination “үрүҥ/кыһыл көмүс” silver/gold will not be considered. Dictionary definitions have been sufficiently analyzed in the dissertation works of Yakut researchers, color epithets – because they are included in the name of the precious metal and are epithets that express mostly the property of the object not by color, but by the material from which it is made. In the text of the Yakut epic color epithets are expressed by color adjectives standing in the attributive position before the noun. Being considered color epithets can be divided into simple, expressed by one of the color adjective (хара тыа dark forest, күөх далай blue abyss) and complex, expressed by several adjectives of color (араҕас маҕан лампаадалаах with light yellow lamp, үрүҥ маҕан ордуугун bright expensive settlement, күөх хара санаа dark angry thoughts).

Methods

The initial collection of material for the work was carried out using the method of computer processing, which allows to extract from the olonkho text specified color adjectives. The quantitative method helped to determine the frequency of each of the considered color epithets usage. In the interpretation of the words meanings used the three-volume “Dictionary of the Yakut language” by E. K. Pekarsky, the analysis of dictionary definitions is carried out. In the work also applied a descriptive method to show the denotative meaning of each color epithet and its determined words. For a complete understanding all the examples with color epithets are included to the study in the composition of epic formulas (hereinafter abbreviated e/f), which is a minimal context, taken from the text of the whole epic. In the Yakut epic “each epic formula consists of several verses related to each other in meaning and architectonics of the verse. The main idea of the verse is concentrated on the prop words combination” (Illarionov, 1988, p.75). The use of contextual analysis methods allowed us to trace the expansion of the color epithets values in different contexts. At the final stage of the research a comparative method helped to identify similarities and differences in the use of color epithets “үрүҥ/ маҥ(ҕ)ан” white, “хара” black, “кыһыл” red, “аалай” scarlet, “араҕас” yellow, “борон” gray, “күөх” green/light blue/blue and in conjunction with all the previous methods to reveal the peculiarities of their functioning in the olonkho text.

Epithets Expressed by Color Adjectives

“үрүҥ/ маҥ(ҕ)ан” white and “хара” black

The number of samples indicates on the most frequent use in the text of the Yakut epic of color epithets “үрүҥ/ маҥ(ҕ)ан”, which are synonymous and denote the white color (297), and the color epithet “хара” black (281). The interpretation of the lexemes values we are interested in, are given in the dictionary by Pekarsky as: үрүҥ: 1. White (opposite хара); 2. White. Light, clean (Pekarsky, 1959, Vol. 3, col.200). – The lexeme “үрүҥ” has two meanings and these two meanings can act as an epithet. Маҕан = маҥан: 1. White. 2. Whiteness (of face), white suit of horse cattle (Pekarsky, 1959, T. 2, col.1499-1500). – given three values, of which in two lexeme “маҥ(ҕ)ан” can act as an epithet. Хара: 1. Black, dark, dusky; 4. black, simple, ordinary; 5. black, bad, angry, unhappy; (Pekarsky, 1959, Vol. 3, col.3329-3332). – Given seven interpretations of the meaning of the lexeme “хара”, of which in three it can act as an epithet.
First of all, attention need to be paid to the determined words: it is revealed that with the epithet “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” white, as determined words most often are used the lexemes: күн sun, халлаан sky, доийду country, уорук/ордуу/гөшөн place/dwelling, дыңа house, аартык pass, бүлэг cloud, толоон field, хонуу meadow, field, хөңө valley, хөмүрөа snowdrift, тойон sir/master, хотун madam, ырүҥхомурах, буор runner, сирий face, тарбахтар fingers, хары hand, сүүрүк vertebral column (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 2, col.2413), булайах mallet, дүүр tambourine, отүү cord, остыл table, кынай wing, тыын breath, илгэ abundance, буруо smoke. With the epithet “хара” as determined words are used following lexemes: буор cloud, бүор earth, тыя forest, ааратык pass, таас stone, түүн night, сүүрүк runner, тойон master, кын ман, уолаттар sons, тарбахтар fingers, ас hair, халлаан blood, буор liver, тыын breath, күлүк shadow, дай эвил, тойон flame, буор cord, санаа thought, meditation.

As you can see, with the color epithets “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” white, bright and “хара” black, dark endowed in the first place the lexemes denoting objects of nature, which occupies in the mythological worldview and everyday life of the Yakuts a significant place (күн sun, халлаан sky, аартык pass, бүлэг cloud, толоон field, хонуу meadow, field, бүор earth, тыя forest, таас stone), also animate beings (characters – the inhabitants of the three worlds, animals, and birds) and their body parts (тойон master, кын ман, уолаттар sons, тарбахтар fingers, ас hair, халлаан blood, буор liver, тыын breath, хары hand), the processes of characters life (санаа thought, meditation, дай эвил, тыын breath, күлүк shadow), household items of shamans (булуайах mallet, дүүр tambourine, отүү cord).

Depending on which of the color adjectives values “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” and “хара” are implemented in combination with the identified determined words, they (these words) can be divided into three groups:
1) nouns with which the adjectives “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” white, bright and “хара” black, dark implement denotative meaning and appear only in the color function: буор earth, ас hair, таас stone, тыя forest etc.
2) nouns with which these epithets form a new concept: тыын breath, сүүрүк runner (with the epithets “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” and “хара”), халлаан blood, буор liver (with “хара”), илгэ abundance (with “үрүҥ”);
3) nouns, which in combination with the epithet “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” white, bright and “хара” black, dark acquire a positive or negative connotative meaning: кын ман, буор cord, санаа thought, meditation, буор cloud, дай эвил, толоон flame, ааратык pass, уолаттар sons etc.

In considering color epithets primarily attracts attention that, despite on that the epithets “үрүҥ/ман(с)ан” white, bright and “хара” black, dark are antonyms in meanings in the olonkho text they are often used in pairs:
“үрүҥ хомурах” дигизитэ
To him it looked, that the bright snow drifts (lie),
үрүҥк үрүҥ суурүктээ дойду буолла;
it turned out to be herds of white-furred horses;
“хара халлаан” дигизитэ
he thought the mass of ice sludge (is coming),
ханыл хара суурүктээ дойду буолла.
it turned out the herd of black-furred cows

НБ, 1947, 159

- in this e/f domain-logical information, expressed by determined words “хомурах” snow drifts (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, col.3475) and “халлаан” mass of ice sludge (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, col.3265), supplemented by the presence of opposite in meanings color epithets, “second type” information – emotionally-evaluative, expressive, meaning “very, very much”. Here there is an appeal to the cultural thesaurus of the listener – the thesaurus refers to the content of memory, i.e. all stored information about objects, phenomena surrounding the life – abundance of snow in winter, and boundless mass of ice slush during spring floods on the rivers was well known to every Yakut (Arnoldt, 1974, p.7). As a result, in front of the mental eye of the audience there was a bright image, the whole picture. Thus, the combinations “үрүҥ
"сүүрүк" white lear runners = herds of white-furred horses and “хара сүүрүк” black lear runners = herds of black-furred cows – the color epithets “үрүҥ” and “хара”, initially acted as a constant epithet of the lexeme “сүүрүк” runner, over time “grow together” with determined word and form a new concept: a metonymy-euphemism for “үрүҥ сүүрүк” it is a white livestock (of horses), “хара сүүрүк” is a black cattle (of cows) (Gabysheva, 2009, p.9), and are no longer seen as color epithets.

- in this example, usage of the opposite meanings of the color epithets with the same determined word “дьээ” house, home is used to create values of multitude in the superlative degree, i.e. the denotative meaning of color epithets overlaps by the acquired connotative value of quantitative multitude superlatives “of all existing dwellings”.

- in six examples from the KD olonkho text lexemes “үрүҥ” and “хара” are the permanent epithets to the word “тыын” breath, breeze; breath, soul, spirit (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, lin.2948); and the combination of “хара тыын” black breath and “үрүҥ тыын” white breath are used in context only when it comes to saving lives, i.e. these combinations act as euphemisms, figuratively denoting the concept “soul/life” and, therefore, the lexemes “үрүҥ” and “хара” in these combinations are not epithets. For comparison: “тээнчыны тыыны биэр” give your soul to God, give up the Ghost (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, lin.2949). The same happens with the lexeme “үрүҥ” in the common combination “үрүҥ ил гэ” white abundance, which is a euphemism, figuratively denoting all the dairy products of the Yakuts (milk, soured milk, sour cream, national drink kumiss – fermenting mare’s milk) combined.

Thus, these examples of use the opposite values of the color epithets “үрүҥ/маҥ(ҕ)ан” white and “хара” black demonstrate that in pair usage of these epithets it is losing actual-color values (with determined words “сүүрүк” runner, “тыын” breath, life) or extending the meaning of these color epithets to denote a quantitative set (with determined words “хомурах” snow and “халҕаха” mass of ice sludge; “дьээ” house). In addition, in paired usage of the opposite meanings of the color epithets in constructions “үрүҥ+дeterm. word “ / “хара+determ. word” we observe the phenomenon of artistic variation. Artistic variation, according to M.I. Steblin-Kamensky, is a repetition of what has already been said in other words. It is a kind of semantic alliteration, repetition of meaning in different expressions. ... variation, in its most frequent form ... links individual poems between themselves, being a kind of compositional technique (Steblin-Kamensky, 2003). Thus, it can be argued that the opposite meanings of the color epithets “үрүҥ/ маҥ(ҕ)ан” white and “хара” black, dark, traditionally being the elements of artistic variations are used as a compositional connection to certain verses in the text of olonkho, as well as to generate imagery in the epic story.
The phenomenon of artistic variation is observed in the paired usage of synonymous in the meaning color epithets “үрүҥ/маҥан” white with the same determined word “күн” sun:

Маҕан күнэ
Балаадййан көстөр буолла,
Үрүҥ күнэ
Күөх торҕо курдук
Көҕөрөн көстөр күнэ буолла
(КК, 1985, ст.4509)

- this variation is used to create imagery, as well as to create an elevated narrative in the text of olonkho. It should also be noted that the choice of one of the two epithets “үрүҥ/маҥ(ҕ)ан” with a value of white in each of the epic formulas due to the operation of the law of vocalic harmony in the alliterative system of the Yakut poetry.

As shows many examples, color epithets “үрүҥ/маҥан/маҕан” very often in the olonkho text act as a constant epithet of lexemes: күн sun, халлаан sky, дойду/үорүк/ордуу place/dwelling, артык pass, былыт cloud, хонуу meadow, field, түлпүк bullfinch, кыргыттар girls, остыөл table, кынат wing, although these words would be better suited with other color epithets. In this case, as writes A.N. Veselovsky “...real, physiological impression of light and color is an expression caused by mental sensations, and in this meaning, is transferred to the objects which is not subjected to sensory evaluation” (Veselovsky, 1940, p.83) and the epithets “үрүҥ/маҥан/маҕан” reflect a reverent, worshipful attitude to the native nature, native dwelling, and everything that is connected with Middle and Upper worlds inhabited by light deities.

Thus, color epithets “үрүҥ/маҥан/маҕан” acquire connotative meaning “very dear, darling, divine light, Holy” and are used to express the highest veneration: “Кыыда маннык халлааҥҥа үөскээбит Кыыс Дэбилийэ Бухатыыр” Born on clean, without dust, snow-white sky Kyys Debiliye (KD, 1993, lin.896);
“Күннэтэ күөрэйэр Күндү маҕан күңнээх” (КК, 198); Here rises every day revered white sun; “Маннык кэҥкэбэлээх киэҥ маҥан уорукка” (KK, 1985, 328) This man grew up (in very) spacious, vast and bright home. The epithets “үрүҥ/маҥан/маҕан” and in the description of the attributes of white shamans, helpers of Aiyy heroes, acquire connotative meaning “is intended for making light, good exposure”:
“Көлүйэ күөл саҕа Дүөрбэ манных дүҥүрдээх, Кырыылаах сылбараҥ маҥан булаайахтаах” (KK, 1985, lin.570) With oval white tambourine the size of a small lake...With a glossy white, sharp-edged mallet.

In the description of the mythical great bird, into which turns hero Aiyy, white wings is as much a sign of colors as of divine origin of this bird: “Аллас сэээны бынааҕыны саҕа Аар манныг кынатын Тэнитэ баттаан баран, Көтөн күүгүнээтэ” (КК, 1985, lin.7060) straightening their the white half of Yelan sized wings, humming on the fly. Where required, reinforcement of white color, as a sign of the superlative degree of the lightness, color epithets “үрүҥ/маҕан/маҕан” preceded by adjectives formed from nouns names of various white objects and phenomena of reality: “үүт” milk, “туман” fog, “түүс” salt: “Тоҕус күн холбоспутун курдук Түус маннын туналжаннаах ньуура” (KK, lin.890) Dazzling white, clear face of her, Like the nine suns combined in one; “...үүт маҕан көлүйэҕэ киирэн суунашалаан кэбистэ” (KK, 1985, p.6471) Entering the small milky-white lake, she washed. In the texts of olonkho is also found simultaneous use of two color epithets “үрүҥ” and “маҥ(ҕ)ан”: “…комус уйаларын, үүт маҕан ньээкэлэрин...” (NB, 1947, lin.109) their silver nests, bright dwellings...; “Үргүнъын саҕа Үүт манныг
ордууғун урэйимэ!” (KK, 1985, lin.3800) Do not pillage bright, Dear, as pericardial fat, Outpost mine; - seems that the use of such a sophisticated color epithets is intended to show the veneration highest degree of the dwelling, the area of native wildlife.

No less interesting examples with the epithet “хара”. Thus, in olonkho texts, the epithet “хара” in combination with the noun “күлүк” shadow is found only in the composition of the small э/ф “ус бараа хара күлүк” three identical black (dark) shadows, which through the centuries carried information about the traditional beliefs of the Yakuts, according to which the human soul (кут) consists of three parts: бүор-кут (earth), салын-кут (air) and ийэ-кут (mother).

Further, in the Yakut olonkho epithet “хара” dark, brooding is a regular epithet to the noun “тыа” forest, pine wood, taiga (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, col.2929), although the color value more suitable to it is epithet “күөх” green. Of the 74 examples with the lexeme “тыа” 71 – with the epithet хара, with the epithet күөх “green” – 3 (only in one of the four olonkho, KD): “Баай хара тыаттан... ” (NB, 1947, lin. 97) In a rich dark forest;

“Ардай хара тыалаах” Black forest-field woodland

Сөргүү... South side of the neighborhood have looked around, saw:

Сүңүл хара тыалаах splitting dark forests

Илин... East side of the neighborhood have looked around, saw:

Эрис хара тыалаах thick black forests

Хохудал хара тыалаах” smoothbore black forests....

(ES, 1996, col.142)

In these examples, to constant epithet хара necessarily precedes any simple structure of the epithet with emotional-evaluative semantics: баай “rich”, ардай “with intervals”, сүңүл “growing on the slopes”, эрис “thick”, хохудал “smoothbore”, босхо “detached”. Thanks to them, the meaning of the epithet хара each time updated and expanded – and, despite the repetition, the image of “хара тыа” “black/dense forest” appears each time in a new form. If we compare the combination of “күөх тыа” and “хара тыа”, it turns out that the value of the latter is much more voluminous, deeper – it is a small epic formula. It is the epithet “хара” in combination with other artistic means (epithets, figurative comparisons, artistic variation), is used to create an image of impassable and vast forests, which are an integral part of the space in which the epic characters live (Koryakina, 2012, p.154).

There is an interesting use of the epithets “үрүҥ” white and “хара” black in Proper names (PN) of olonkho characters. Written out 5 PN with epithet “үрүҥ” white (Үрүҥ Аар тойон, Үрүмэтчи мааﺬан аттаах Үрүҥ Уолаан (NB), etc.), 5 – with the epithet “хара” black (Тимир Бйыстыта Хара бухатыры, Алып Хара бухатыры и др.): this is a reflection of the dual world of olonkho – the epithet “үрүҥ” white is a component of the PN of the inhabitants of Middle and Upper worlds, emphasizing the affiliation of their media to the tribe or to the top Ayy deities and pointing to their ability only to good deeds. The word “хара” black, by contrast, is primarily a PN component of the Lower world (Filippova, 1978, p.169). Thus, color epithets “үрүҥ” white and “хара” black in the composition of the PN characters of olonkho, in addition to the denotative values of color are becoming the predominant connotation of “belonging to the world Aiy
Epithets Expressed by Color Adjectives “кыныл” red, “аалай” Scarlet

The epithet “кыныл” red is found in the olonkho texts 43 times. As the examples above show, it is a constant epithet for the noun “кумах” sand, “эбир” (4) diversity, ripples (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 1, lin.220), “эт” (11) flesh, body (Pekarsky, 1959, Vol. 1, lin.311), “хаан” blood, “илии/сутурук” hand/fist “ьот” fire, “чааскы” сip, “сольк” silk, сукўна cloth, “талах” willow branch, “үөн” worm. With such nouns as “кумах” sand “эт” flesh, body “хаан” blood, “илии/сутурук” hand/fist “ьот” fire, “чааскы” сip, “сольк” silk, сукўна cloth epithet “кыныл” appears in denotative meaning, by the structure refers to simple and is used to create imagery and beauty, epic storytelling.

Attention is drawn to the combination of “кыныл эбир” red ripples, where the color meaning of the epithet “кыныл” red expands to connotative “unusual”, “dangerous”, “awe-inspiring, and even horror”. This combination appears exclusively in the composition of е/ф:

which tells the story of the culmination moment of the epic text, when the sky is split and painted in unusual for the sky red and therefore awe-inspiring color, and then come down from the Upper world messengers in the form of Siberian cranes or crows, speaking human language. And, apparently, the combination of “кыныл эбир” red ripples in this е/ф is used to emphasize the singularity of what is happening. Thus, it can be argued that the color epithet “кыныл” red in combination “кыныл эбир” red ripples uses to emphasize the originality of the moment and it is an integral part of the composite technique of the narrator. Also attracts the interest appearance of the epithet “кыныл” red in the е/ф, which describes the ritual of purification of kidnapped Aiyu hero’s wife Kyys Nyurgun a shaman from evil spirits, in the combinations “кыныл үөн” red worms “кыныл талах” red willow branch (KK, 1985, lin.10790-10800). When Kyys Nyurgun has being tortured with iron rods, hanging upside down over a fire in a deep pit, so many red worms fall out of her flesh that almost extinguishes the fire. In this case, the unusual red color of worms symbolizes disgusting repulsive color of evil, struck the unfortunate woman on the inside under the influence of the alien who kidnapped her – the shaman Ardzhaman-Dzhardzhaman. That is, the denotative meaning of the epithet “кыныл” red expands significantly and acquires a negative connotative meaning “repulsive”, “disgusting”.

( godships) /абáhy (demons)

She cut the branch of the red willow
Has made on it patterns in three spots
And returned to the woman,
From which already spilled (all) out worms and reptiles,
Thrice whipped up her, so that streams scored of Clean, fresh blood.
This e/f describes the final stage of the purification ceremony and here the appearance of a red willow branch is characteristic, since the Yakuts knew and used the healing properties of this type of willow tree from ancient times. But in addition to the healing properties, this context contains information about the sacred property of the red willow branch: before use had been made three incisions on the branch, and the woman was hit by this branch three times – only then from the flesh of Kyys Nyurgun scored light purified blood. That is, it can be argued that in this case the color epithet “кыыл” serves both for the transmission of traditional cultural and sacred information of the ancient Yakuts.

The synonym of the color epithet “кыыл” - “алай” scarlet is found in the texts of olonkho only 7 times, in olonkho KD and ES. It is a regular epithet for the lexeme “мохсоҕол” falcon and serves to indicate the magical power of heroes Aiyy to turn into a falcon of fancy feathers. Also it can be found in the e/f once, which is a description-portrait of the main character of olonkho Kyys Debiliye (KD, 1993, lin.2402) and used to express the special beauty of her silky hair.

Epithets Expressed by Color Adjectives:
“араш(ҕ)ас” yellow, “борон” gray, “күөх” green/blue

Color adjective “араш(ҕ)ас” means in Yakut language yellow, yellowish, fawn, golden, ginger, red, reddish (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 1, col.127). In the considered olonkho text this epithet occurs 28 times, and unlike the previous epithets, it acts as a constant epithet only to a small number of lexemes: далбар center, womb; чэчир birch, халлаан sky, лампаада lamp, тараах comb. The combination of “арашас дэлбар” is a part of the e/f-description “Анн ийэ дойду” – of Mother earth: “Аясыс иилээх-саҕалаах Алыгыр-нальыыр Аан ийэ дойду Араҕас дэлбарын...” (“KD, 1993, 230, lin.4212) on eight-sided and eight-edged, tranquil and calm of the primordial mother earth, in a Golden (=dear) bosom of her. In this case the epithet “араш(ҕ)ас” in addition to the color values of the “golden” has a connotative meaning “dearest to heart”, as by the colors of precious metals “golden”, “silver” storytellers have given to lexemes denoting events, objects and concepts, which occupies the top in the scale of values of the Yakuts.

In the e/f “Алтан сэргэ анъыллыбыт, Аар түптэ аҥаарыйбыт, Араҕас чэчир саҕаллыбыт ...” (“KD, 1993, lin.1111) copper hitching post set, thick smoky fire is made, yellow birches are stuck around the epithet “арашас” appears in the actual color value, and “арашас чэчир” carries information about the traditional culture of Yakuts of the ceremonies to throw a celebration in honor of the upper Aiyy deities, during which on the location where the Ysyakh was thrown to stick young birches (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 3, lin.3613).

In several e/f epithet “араш(ҕ)ас” combined with other color epithet “маҥан” white, light is constant:
- to the lexeme “халлаан” sky in the combination “арашас маҥан халлаан”. In the small e/f: “Аясыс хаттыгастаах Араҕас маҕан халлаан” (ES, 1996, p.4624) eight-tier, pure white sky, which is a description of the sky that points to the natural color of the sky illuminated by sun light and is used to create imagery.
- to the lexeme “лампаада” in combination “Араҕас маҕан лампаадалаах” (KK, 1985, p.1692) with a pale yellow lamp – the epithet “араш(ҕ)ас” used in the same meaning and function as in the previous example.
- to the lexeme “тараах” comb in combination “арашас маҕан тарааҕынан” (KK, 1985, p.6811) by yellow-white comb the epithet “араш(ҕ)ас” also conveys the natural color of the comb made of bone.

Color epithet “борон” gray found 6 times, including 5 times in the composition of the small e/f “орто борон туруу дыаҕыл дойду” Middle grayish world (NB, 1947, p.13) and small e/f “Босхо бастаах Борон
ураанхай“ with revolving head grey uraanhai (KD, 1993, lin.976). As rightly noted by academician P.A. Sleptsov in the interpretation of the epithet “бороҥ”: “folk custom believed that posture of self-abasement in front of threatening forces and vital troubles, that surrounded the helpless person, is the most appropriate” (Sleptsov, 1990, pp.16-17) and in these examples, the use of color epithet “бороҥ” gray expresses this derogatory attitude of uraanhai-Yakut to themselves and to their own Land, which is in a strong dependence from both the grace of the Upper deities and evils of Lower world. Hence, the epithet “бороҥ” in addition to the color values becomes predominant connotative meaning “helpless, wasted”.

Color adjective “күөх” has two color meanings in the Yakut language: light blue, blue; green, greenish (Pekarsky, 1959, vol. 2, lin.1323).

In total identified 39 examples of the epithet “күөх” from the texts and its color value in olonkho clarified by determined word. In the meaning of light blue, blue it is used with the words “муора” sea (8), “халлаан” sky (5), “былыт” cloud, “иннэ” needle, “ут” fire, “тыв” tongue, “көлөүн” sweat; in the meaning of green – with determined words “от” grass (9), “кырыс” turf (3), “тыа” forest, “харыйа” spruce, “дьай” evil (6). From the first row of defined words fall out lexemes “тыв” tongue, “көлөүн” sweat, from the second row – “дьай” evil spirits – we will allocate them in a separate group. In other cases, denotative values of the epithet “күөх” coincide with the natural colors of the objects designated by the words (sea – blue, grass – green, etc.). Thus, the combination of “күөх от” is found in combination of figurative small e/f “Тоҕус салаалаш локуора күөх от” green grass with nine stems (KK, 1985, lin.2341, 2479, 5264, 6834), which is a complex epithet, creating a vivid visual image of an epic nature.

Lexemes from a separate group are united by one thing – the epithet “күөх” acquires a negative connotation “associated with the Lower world = bad”:

- “күөх тыв” blue unusually repulsive colored tongue of hero abáhy Buor Kudustai, here the epithet “күөх” is used for expression, to create the ugly, monstrous image of the hero of the Lower world;

- “күөх көлөүн” blue with an unpleasant smell of sweat (NB, 1947, lin.113), which washes away off him hero Aйyy with dead water after a deadly battle with the hero abáhy (demons);

- “күөх дьай” green life-threatening evil spirits, from which being purified Aiyy hero Kun Erili, who was kidnapped at birth and suckled by a wench abáhy Sarahana Kyukenik.

These examples show that the epithet “күөх” in denotative meaning used to create an expressive picture of the epic nature, and in connotative meaning, reflecting the duality of the world of olonkho, used for the expression and dynamics of the narrative.

Conclusion

As the study showed, color epithets are used in the text of the Yakut olonkho in description of literally all elements of the epic narrative: time, place, appearance, clothing of heroes, weapons of heroes, their emotions and magical properties. Examples from the olonkho texts clearly demonstrate that the informativeness of color epithets, inherent in the word semantics and revealed in combinations of color epithets with determined words, is very large – color epithets express the worldview of the Yakuts, their attitude to the world, their assessment of the environment. The following conclusions about the peculiarities of the color epithets functioning in the Yakut olonkho text has been made:

1. Although the color epithets “үргүҥ/маҕан/маҥан” white, bright and “хара” black, dark in meaning are antonyms in the text of olonkho they are traditionally used in pairs:
- in some cases of paired usage, merged with determined word, color epithets lose actual color value ("сүүрүк" runner, "тыын" breath) or the values of this color epithets can extend to denote a quantitative set ("хомур" snow and "халга" mass of ice sludge; "дья" house);

- traditionally, as elements of artistic variation, color epithets are used as a compositional method to connect separate verses in the olonkho text, as well as for creation of imagery in the epic narrative;

2. Epithets “үрүҥ” white (Үрүмэтчи маҕан аттаах Үрүҥ Уолан, etc.) “хара” black (Тимир Ыйыста Хара бухатыыр, etc.) in Proper names of the olonkho characters are used to complete the images of the characters and a reflection of the dual world of Olonkho.

3. Although the number of examples show the predominant frequency usage of color epithets “үрүҥ/маҥ(ҕ)ан” white (297) and “хара” black (281) in the Yakut epic text, nonetheless other color epithets, giving them that (prevalence), have a niche where they cannot be replaced by another epithet, because in combination with its determined word they contain certain information about the national-cultural specificity of the Yakuts (“кыъыл эбир” red ripples, “аалай мохсоҕол” scarlet Falcon, “күөх тыл” blue tongue, etc.).

4. Color epithets in the olonkho text often are used in connotative meaning, expressing a superlative degree of positive or negative sign (“Күндү маҥан күн” revered white sun - “хара дьай” black evil), and at the same time: 1) are used to enhance the expression of both the images of olonkho and the events depicted in them; 2) reflect the dual world of olonkho.

Thus, the color epithets in the text of the Yakut olonkho are used for emotional perception of the events, focusing on the exceptional qualities inherent in epic heroes, for additional detail of any characteristic features. Color epithets help to fully express the ideological content of the work, to enhance the expressiveness of the characters' images, the events depicted in them.

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References


