

## The Symbolic Meaning of the Number "Forty" in the Phraseologisms of the Karakalpak Language

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### ABSTRACT

*In the article the linguocultural study of the use of numbers within phraseological units and their symbolic meanings is discussed. The symbolic meaning of numbers was analyzed based on the symbolic meaning of phraseologisms containing the number forty in the Karakalpak language. The mythological significance of the number forty, indicating a person's age, the limit of counting, and the symbols of quantity and time were analyzed.*

**Keywords:** Phraseologism, numeral, linguoculturology, symbol, forty numeral.

### INTRODUCTION

Number is a cultural category with symbolic features. Since ancient times, people have been very interested in numbers as a symbol from a cultural perspective. Number is perceived as a magical and mysterious concept that embodies harmony with the universe. Thus, numbers, in addition to expressing quantity, are also a sign of some quality. Pythagoras viewed numbers as symbols given by God and the key to the laws of cosmic harmony.

When studying sacred number concepts, it is essential to study them from a linguocultural perspective. Because the cultural specificity of a particular concept can be seen in its use in language. Numerals are reflected in language as a cultural expression. Currently, in linguistics, research is being conducted

on how concepts and thoughts in human consciousness find their reflection in language from the perspective of each nation's nationality and uniqueness. The interaction of language and culture is one of the research areas of linguistics today. The language, as the primary means of conveying culture, preserves and transmits the cultural values of the people. As for phraseological units, they are considered the main linguistic "storage" of culture. Here, the internal form of phraseologisms plays a leading role – through its figurative basis, it, in connection with the cultural and linguistic environment, reflects the heritage of advanced layers of culture and connects the phraseological unit with a specific system of culture, thereby forms the cultural connotation of the phraseologism. The "language" of culture is the creation of cultural objects - symbols - defined by language. Symbols are one of the units of linguoculturology. Symbols have been studied in philosophy, cultural studies, semiotics, psychology, mythopoetics, folklore studies, literary studies, linguistics, and other disciplines. Numerals within phraseological units express symbolic meaning, indicating the national identity of each language and people.

#### LITERARY ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

The symbols are oriented towards the distant past and are formed in human consciousness, their worldview is modeled through mythological thinking, which is the oldest form of understanding the world. Phraseologisms, in their essence, preserve knowledge about human primitive consciousness and transmit it from generation to generation. "Through symbols, the sacred qualities of culture are revealed to our consciousness: meanings that are inconceivable, live in the unconscious depths of the heart, and unite people into a single ethnocultural community are comprehended" [1: 238].

The numerals "three," "seven," "nine," and "forty" used within phraseological units in Turkic languages are expressed through scientific concepts such as *tirek sózler*, *uytqi sózler*, *kiyeli sanlar*, *sokralliq mánige iye sanlar* (supporting words, key words, holy numbers, numbers with sacred meaning). These numbers serve as symbols reflecting people's beliefs, lifestyles,

mythological and religious concepts. The number "forty" in ancient times, during the development of the numbering system, initially represented the largest number. Therefore, it is frequently used in folk traditions and rituals, proverbs and sayings, and phraseologisms.

A. Bekbergenov, a scholar who has specifically researched numerals in the Karakalpak language, cites several scholarly opinions regarding the origin of the number forty: "Forty. This number appears similarly in many Turkic languages and monuments. Only in the Uyghur-Oghuz group of languages are the words *do'rten* (Tuva), *túórt uon* (Yakut), *tórtón* (Yellow Uyghur), *dorten* (Thopha) used instead. W. Scott derives the number *Qırq* (forty) from the word *qır*, S. Koelle from the words *qırqındı* (broken piece, woodwool). I. Galevi sometimes describes it as derived from the word "four," and in another hypothesis, he indicates *qırq* – (i)+*kir* (*eki*)(*two*)+(y) *ik* (*irmi*)(*twenty*)-*kir*+*ik*, i.e., two twenty. V. A. Gordlevskiy indicates that "40" was once a religious word and meant "many" [2: 19].

The use of the number forty in the Kyrgyz language is also explained by the Kyrgyz ethnogenesis. In the great Kyrgyz epic "Manas," the number forty is included among the numbers used in a sacred sense. The story of the epic begins with the deportation of forty Kyrgyz to Altai. In the Kyrgyz language, the number "qırq" is used in the following contexts: *qıńır is qırq jilda bilinedi, qırǵızdiki qırq jilda bilinedi* (*a dishonest deed will be known in forty years, the Kyrgyz one will be known in forty years*), etc [3: 71-75].

There are a number of concepts, beliefs, and information related to the number forty in our people's history, literature, and culture. The number forty was used as a counting limit in ancient times. In some sources, it is mentioned that it represents mythological symbols.

Scholar O. Dospanov, a researcher of the Karakalpak language, suggests that "The number 'qırq' (forty) etymologically expressed plurality, abundance, and countless infinity in ancient times, narrowed its meaning over time and should have been limited with expressing its current semantics" [4: 101-102].

## RESULTS

In our culture, there is a tradition of *balanı qırqınan shıǵarıw* (tradition when a child is forty days after birth). After forty days, the baby's body comes into shape, and their movements begin to form. This characteristic is measured over time and bathed in salt water for forty days. The tradition of pouring forty spoonfuls of water and making wishes at the fortieth day celebration is still preserved among the Karakalpak people today. In early times, forty qumalaq, various coins, items, and asyk bones were placed in the water. After forty days, the baby's "abdominal hair" and "milk nails" are removed. Without discarding the hair, they tie it to a cloth and tie it as an amulet to their clothes or cradle. With the belief that the girl's dowry should be plentiful, the girl would be showered in forty days, and with the wish that the boy would quickly grow up the tradition will be held before 40 days. Based on this tradition, we see that traditions like *qırqınan shıǵarıw*, *qırq qasıq suw*, *qırq qumalaq* have been preserved in our language as linguocultural units – *Qullası erte báhárde Ótemurat qızlı bolıp, sonı qırqınan shıǵaraman degenshe Húrlıxa úy jumısına qarap qaldı* (M. Nızanov). (So, in early spring, Utemurat had a daughter, and until she'll be forty days, Hurlıkha was left to do household chores) – *Endi kishkentay qasıq ákel tóbesinen qırq qasıq suw quyayın* (M. Nızanov). ("Now, bring a small spoon. I'll pour forty spoons of water over her)."

In our nation, there are concepts like «*qırq kúnde jan beriw*», «*qırq kúnde jan ketiw*», «*qırqın beriw*» ("to die in forty days," "to die in forty days," and "to give ceremony in forty days). There are traditions of giving charity after forty days. *Qırqın beriw* is a tradition performed forty days after a person's death. They keep the lamp burning in the house for forty days. This means the deceased has descendants. In our language, the phrase «*basıña shıraq jaǵama*» (will they light a lamp on your head) is used in connection with this concept. *Bunnan soń bay kempirdiń qırqı menen júzine soy dep, bir-birden eshki jiberdi de julına kelgende lebizden tayıp* (K. Sultanov). (After this, the rich man sent one goat each to slaughter the old woman's fortieth and hundredth charity, and when the year came, he broke his promise). *Soń*

*hámmesi qırq adım sheginip kelip quran oqıdı* (M. Nızanov). (Then everyone stepped back forty steps and recited the Quran).

*Qırq* is one of the sacred and revered numerals in the mythical consciousness of the people. The word *qırq* (forty) not only has a numerical meaning but also serves as a root word within phraseological units, being used in relation to quantity, time, measure, and various human situations. Phraseologisms in our language serve as a means of reflecting the cultural worldview of the people. Because they are the thoughts, consciousness, testament, traditions, and history of the people, passed down from generation to generation since ancient times.

In proverbs and sayings, we see that the number forty is used depending on a person's age. "Proverbs, sayings, and other words demonstrate that forty is not a simple number, but a sacred measure" [5: 346]. Forty years is the age when a person's strength matures, the age when collecting mind, the age when they reach maturity. In proverbs like «*Qırqqa kelgenshe nırqqa kelmegen*», «*otızda orda buzbağan, qırqında qamal almaydı*», «*bir kún urısqannıñ qırq kún nesiybesi ketedi*», «*qırq jil baylıq joq, qırq jil jarlıshılıq joq*» ("One who doesn't reach a price until forty," "One who doesn't break the horde in thirty doesn't get a siege in forty," "One who fights for one day loses their fortune for forty days," and "there's no wealth for forty years, no poverty for forty years"), forty is considered a full-fledged age. *Sheshe bir kún urısqannıñ qırq kún nesiybesi ketedi degen* (M. Nızanov). (Sister-in-law, it's said that A one-day quarrel loses its fortune for forty days). *Qırq jil baylıq, qırq jil jarlıshılıq joq degen zaman jaqın arada bir shaypalmas pa eken* (K.Sultanov). (Will the times of forty years of wealth and forty years of poverty disappear not sway in the near future?)

K. Ayimbetov, a researcher of Karakalpak oral literature, states, "In the ancient traditions of the Karakalpaks, imitating the forty young men beside the heroes in the epics, this game has evolved into a form. This forty-man game is an ancient tradition of the Karakalpaks, dating back to the time of the heroes," mentioning the Karakalpak folk game «*Qırq jigit*» (forty man) [6]. In folk oral literature and epics, the characters "forty girls" and "forty young men" are depicted. *Qasına qırq qız aldırıp qarısı*

*jawdan qaytpadı («Qırq qız dástanı»).* (She brought “forty girls” and did not turn back from the enemy). *Márt Shoranıń xızmetine qırq jigiti beredi, Qırq jigitti qosshı qıldı, Márt Shoranı basshı qıldı («Er shora» dástanı).* (They gave forty men to brave Shura's service, Made “the forty men” his assistants, The brave Shura was leader).

In religious understanding, the concepts of *qırq parızın biliw, qırq shilter gáyıp erenler* (knowing the forty duties, the forty shilters of the absent spirits) have been formed. *Jortqanda joluń bolsın, Joldasıń Qızır bolsın, Qırq shilten gáyıp erenler, Jilawıńda júrsin («Er shora» dástanı).* (May your path be blessed when you journey, May Khizir be your companion, Forty missing heroes, May they walk on your reins). *Írza bolsa atası, Qırq shilterler qollaydı, Jolğa sal dep pendesin, Tórt perishte jollaydı («Qırqqız»).* (If his father is pleased, Forty laces support him, Saying "put him on the road," the four angels send him). *Qırq shilten – Many Angels. Keltirmegil, ata, namis-arımdı, Qırq shilten qolladı, kásip kárimdi, Xalqım ushın bir gáyratım salaman, Ózime ber ata, ıqtıyarımdı («Qaraqalpaq folklorı»).* (Don't make me be ashamed, father, Forty pillars supported my profession, I dedicate my strength to my people, Give me my freedom, father). In this context, *Qırq shilten* is used in the sense of an invisible, brave, and courageous forty men, serving as the spiritual guide of warriors.

The number "forty" is frequently met in phraseological units. The number “forty” is used to denote a large quantity, a certain limit, or an intensifying meaning. We see the use of the number forty as a symbol of war in phraseological units. *«Qırq kún súrgin, mıń kún qırgın», «qırq jil qırgın bolsada, ájeli kelmey ólmeydi», «qırq jilik bolgır».* ("Forty days of exile, a thousand days of slaughter," "Even if there are forty years of slaughter, they will not die until their time comes," "May you be forty marrow"). *Qazan jurtı qırq márte ólip, qırq tirilse de janında emek tastay epeleklep Qırımńıń qalatuǵın túri joq.* (K. Mámбетov). (Even if the land of Kazan died forty times and was forty times reborn, Crimea, fluttering like a boulder beside it, showed no sign of staying). *Qırq pıshaq bolıw - Fighting, shouting, fighting. Qashan kórseń qońsısı menen qırq pıshaq*

*boladı da otradı.* (x.a). (Whenever you see them, they're argue with their neighbor).

The number forty is a symbol of abundance. *Otiz kún oyın, qırq kún toyın beriw* – is sign of abundance, signifying the long duration of the game. *Aqılóyleri patshağa aqıl berip, sol qızdı tabıw ushın otız kún oyın, qırq kún toy, beriw talabın qoyadı.* («Qaraqalpaq xalıq ertekleri»). (His advisors advised the king, demanding thirty days of games and forty days of weddings to find the girl). Phraseologisms like «*Qırq jamaw*», «*qırq tesik*», «*qırq quraq*» ("forty patches," "forty holes," "forty quilts") refer to worn-out, old things. For example: *Jerdi qırq párshe, eldi toz-toz etip, jaralap tınıq suwğa bilgaysañ!...* (K. Sultanov). (you make the earth forty pieces, the land scattered, wounded, and mixe with clear water!...). In this example, the phraseologism means dividing, destroying.

The number forty also has a symbolic meaning, expressing various human characteristics. *Sóytip sondaylardıń kesirinen erkek biysharalardıń nesiybesi qırq jerinen qırqılıp atır* (S. Jumagulov). (Thus, because of such people, the fortune of the poor men is being cut off in forty places). The phraseologism in this example means to be deprived of the opportunity. *Ókshesi qırq jariq* – a hard worker with a cracked heel after hard labor. *Qudaynazar ókshesi qırq jariq bolıp kisi esiginde islegen miynet haqısınan bir eshki aladı (Qaraqalpaq ańızları, ápsanaları hám sheshenlik sózleri).* (Qudaynazar has forty holes in his heels gets one goat from the salary he earns working at someone's house). *Qol qanatım bolar dep, qol bergen Qırım bolsa qırq túrli qılıq shıǵarıp, qayta-qayta qırǵın sawashlarǵa sebep bolıp, eldi qırampısh etip urıstırıp ol júr* (K. Mámбетov). (The Crimea, claiming to be my support, has committed forty different acts, repeatedly causing devastating battles and causing conflict among the people). *Qabırǵası qırq jerinen sótiliw* – torture, suffering. *Jawlarǵa jeligip jaslıq etpesin, Qabırǵańdı qırq jerinen sótpesin, Bas jibin ul-qızın túrip ketpesin, Perzentińe bek bol áy dana xalqım* (G. Dáwletova). (Don't let your youth be overwhelmed by enemies, Don't let your ribs break in forty places, Don't let your sons and daughters lose their heads, Be careful with your children, my wise people). *Qırqına shıdaǵan*

*qırq birine (besine) de shıdaydı* – is to endure, to be patient. «*Qırqına shıdadıñ qırq birine de shıda*» (M. Nızanov). ("you endure forty, now endure forty-one). Zıyada: *Awa dá,asıǵıp turǵan men joq. Qırqına shıdaǵan qırq besine de shıdaydı deydi ǵoy.* (K. Raxmanov). (Ziyada: Yes, I'm not in a hurry. They say someone who can endure forty can endure forty-five). Qudiyar: *Qırq besine emes qırq birine shıdasañ da jetip atır, qudaǵay.* (K. Raxmanov). (Qudiyar: Even if you endure forty-one, not forty-five, it's enough, my dear).

The number forty is used symbolically to indicate a person's age. *Qırqınan soñ saz shertiw* (learning a craft at forty), *qırqtan keyin saz shertip*, *qartayǵanda shalasańba* (starting a business after you've passed your age), and *qırqqa kelgenshe nırqqa kelmew* (doing things that don't match your age). *Qırqqa kelgenshe nırqqa kelmew* – is not mature, not suitable for their age. «*Qırqqa kelgenshe nırqqa kelmediñ-aw*». *Bala shaǵandı zar eñiretkeniñ bilay tursın, awıl-eldi páteńge keltirip búdiridiñ ǵoy!* (G. Esemuratova). ("You didn't become mature." You've not only made your children cry in despair, but you've also ruined the entire village!).

## RESULT

The use of numbers within phraseological units to express the national characteristics of a people is being identified in linguistic research. In the article, we analyzed the symbolic meanings of the number forty in the Karakalpak language based on examples taken from Karakalpak folk oral traditions and the works of Karakalpak writers and poets and the symbolic meanings of the number forty in phraseological units can be expressed as follows:

- the time after the baby is born;
- the time after a person's death;
- quantity;
- symbol of abundance;
- symbol of a person's age characteristic;
- a sign of a person's good and bad qualities.

In conclusion, the number "forty," used in various contexts, vividly reflects the Karakalpak people's way of life and worldview since ancient times. Numbers constitute the elements of a unique numerical code describing the universe and humanity. In every culture, the digital code transmits national digital symbolism from generation to generation. It has been determined that the number forty is used in Karakalpak phraseologisms as a number denoting the mythological concepts of the people, religious beliefs, counting limits, quantity, and various characteristics of a person.

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