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Islamic perspective on the social cataclysms in the history of Kazakhstan (on the example of the heritage of the school “Zar zaman”)

Abstract. *The texts of traditional poetry «Zar zaman» («the era of sorrow») are a special reflection of the pessimistic, anti-colonial and religious sentiments of the Kazakhs in connection with the negative perception in the collective memory of the colonial system of the Russian Empire on the territory of Kazakhstan. These samples of poetry, which illustrate the Islamic self-consciousness of educated Kazakhs, such as the poets Shortanbai, Dulat, Murat, and others, remained insufficiently studied during the Soviet period. Although over the years of political Independence in Kazakhstan, an objective study of this topic has begun, but in the available studies, a philological approach prevails, and the connection with Islam is not considered. The spiritual heritage of the Kazakh school «Zar zaman» requires deep interdisciplinary research. It is not excluded that they can be used as alternative historical sources in the study of issues of religion, ethnic consciousness and culture of Kazakhs. In these works, created by the Kazakh poets of a religious and philosophical direction that are opposed to the political regime, a peculiar Kazakh historical self-consciousness is reflected, an interesting interpretation of the civilizational conflict between the empire and the nomads is given. At the same time, the general characteristic of the “Zar zaman” school is regret and lamentation over the fact of political defeat from tsarism and the moral degradation of the people in the spirit of the religious and eschatological ideas of Sharia and Sufism. The poetry texts “Zar zaman” are interesting in the context of the discourse on Kazakh Islamic identity related to the 19th century, since the assessment of social cataclysms in them is given in accordance with one of the main plots of the Muslim worldview - the expectation of the End of the World (“Akyr zaman”).*

Key words: *spiritual heritage of Kazakhs; poetry «Zar zaman»; colonialism; historical consciousness; social cataclysms; religion; muslim eschatology.*

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Introduction. Strengthening of the Moscow principality of the Russian Empire since 1721 played a central role in the fate of the Turkic Muslims of Eurasia. Having artillery and a modern army, tsarism embarked on successful conquests in the east. The process of joining Kazakhstan with Russia was a phased, lengthy and complex beginning in the 1730s. Tsarism used both diplomacy and more violent methods. Rebellions of figures such as Kenesary Kasymuly

(1837-1847) who fought for National liberation were unsuccessful and brutally suppressed. The colonial status of Kazakhstan was reified at the end of the 19th century, reflected in the establishment of the military-occupation regime, the construction of fortresses and railways, tight fiscal policy, the seizure of land and the transfer of them to the Russian settlers. The Russian colonial regime was also characterized by rejection of other cultural traditions, in particular, the Muslim

ones, and attempts to persuade the Kazakhs to adopt Orthodoxy, the Russian alphabet, etc.

Among the unexplored problems of post-Soviet Turkic studies in the newly independent Central Asian states, however, is the study of the ethnic image and representation of Russia in the eyes of the Muslim Turks. This is particularly true in regard to the image of Russian empire among Kazakhs. In the official historiography of Kazakhstan, the Europeanized Kazakh elite of the 19th and early 20th century, such as Valikhanov, Altynsarin and Kunanbaev, occupies a significant place as these elite were the primary source of representations of perceptions of the empire by the population. At the same time, alternative assessments and images of Russia that have risen in the popular consciousness among participants in protest movements and Islamic-oriented groups have been dismissed in the historic accounts.

In remedying this, we are going to focus on the bearers of the traditional mentality as represented in the group of poets of “*Zar zaman*” who were far superior in number to the stratum of Europeanized Kazakh, where examining the literary and philosophical trends of “*Zar zaman*” gives an important insight for the study of the historical memory of the Kazakh people and for understanding their self-awareness and self-reflection on the crucial events of their past.

The poets of “*Zar zaman*” held a high reputation among Kazakhs. The Tatars, Bashkirs, Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks and other Turkic peoples were also familiar with their works. In addition, the popularity of pessimistic poems with religious content speaks to the complex processes of change in the collective psychology of the colonial era, which also requires further study.

Banned in the Soviet era, the texts of “*Zar zaman*” (translated as «the era of sorrow») reflect a very negative and largely mythologized image of Russia's social and cultural policy in the East. These Islamic oriented Kazakh poets lived in the 19th and at the turn of the 20th century. Wielding the ancient art of verbal improvisation, they belonged at the same time to Muslim written culture; they were literate, inscribing their works in Arabic. Their texts were published in Tsarist Russia in the printing houses of Kazan. Prominent

members of “*Zar zaman*” were Dulat Babatauly (1802-1871) of East Kazakhstan, Shortanbai Kanai-uly (1818-1881) from Kazakhstan's southern regions, and Murat Monke-uly (1843-1906), as well as Abubakir Kerderi Borankul-uly (1858-1903), who came from the western regions of the country.

Methodology. The methodological basis of the article is the principles and methods of contemporary scientific theory of historical knowledge, particularly in the analysis of processes and paradigms in the spiritual and cultural spheres. The application of the civilizational (systemic) approach in revealing the value-meaning content of the spiritual culture of the Kazakhs allows to identify peculiarities and significance of cultural phenomena on the example of representatives of “*Zar-zaman*”. Scientific methods such as historical, comparative, actualization and retrospection will be used to establish genesis and continuity.

Historiography of the problem. Biographical information about the “*Zar zaman*” poets is incomplete. They were educated as Muslims and some of them gave private lessons to children in the villages. But in general, it is important to note that these representatives of the Kazakh cultural elite did not occupy any official positions in traditional Islam, let alone in the colonial system of governance and education. They remained free as poets, philosophers, preachers, and as ordinary residents of nomadic villages, which gave them the opportunity to openly express their attitude toward authority. However it also must be noted that most of these poets were belonging to the middle class stratum of the society.

Knowledge of their work in contemporary Kazakhstan and abroad remains insufficient to the same extent. In particular, the historical, cultural and mental foundations of such poetry, and the influence of Islam, are poorly researched. Among the first people who began to collect and publish samples of their works at the turn of the 20th century was a Russian researcher and founder of Turkology Vasily Radlov who had highly regarded the artistic heritage of “*Zar zaman*” poet Shortanbai Kanai-uly in his work *Образцы народной литературы тюркских племен* [Examples of national literature of Turkic tribes]

[1, 19 p.]. Other researchers of the “Zar zaman” poetry include Russian born Y. Liutsh, N. Konshin and the Kazakh ethnographers I. Altynsarin, M. Kopeev, A. Baitursynov, among others.

Establishment of Soviet power in the region was a pivotal point in the course of the research of “Zar zaman” poetry. The attitude to the legacy of these poets began to change under the pressure of communist ideology. This did not happen all at once. In the first 20-30 years of the twentieth century there was still no outright ban on the works of “Zar zaman”. The reason was that at that time Soviet historiography was dominated by the concept of «the greatest danger», the essence of which was embodied in the critique of Tsarist colonial policy. Therefore, the dissatisfaction with the Tsarist Empire expressed in the works of “Zar zaman” was acceptable, though their theological and anti-Russian tendencies were difficult to reconcile with “official” ideology. Even at that time, researchers were able to publish only the most suitable pieces of the “Zar zaman” heritage, often omitting or replacing the words «Russian» or «Kafir» with milder expressions, such as «dushpan” (enemy), «tsarism,» etc., in publications, which has been shown by modern textual research [2, 17 p.].

The philologists like M. Auezov, K. Dosmukhamedov, A. Baitursynov, S. Seifullin, S. Mukanov, I. Dzhangugurov, E. Ismailov, K. Jumaliev and others were the ones who studied the works of the “Zar zaman” poets at that time. At first, researchers spoke only of «literature of religious content» as did H. Dosmukhamedov, for example, or of «literature of the period of subordination to the Russian Tsar» (S. Seifullin). However it was Mukhtar Auezov that coined “Zar zaman”, describing the movement according to its pessimistic temper (in the Kazakh language «zar» means crying, weeping lament, and «zaman» - era, time or period), in his work *History of Literature* [3, 192-222 pp.].

However, in the late 1930s and early 1940s study of this problem was banned by Stalinist ideology, and many of the above authors were repressed. The theory of the Russian Empire as a “lesser evil” appeared in Soviet historiography at this time, “proving” the progressive nature of the Russian presence in the Caucasus, Turkestan,

and other regions. Beginning with the 1950s, ideas about the reactionary nature and «Pan-Islamism» of “Zar zaman” poetry dominated in Soviet Kazakhstan. In line with this, for instance, were critiques by Silchenko who had juxtaposed these pessimistic poets to Abai Kunanbaev and other enlightener type of poets [4, 125 p.]. Soviet Kazakh philosophers examined the issue of “Zar zaman”, but only for the purpose of criticism in the spirit of Marxism and atheism (e.g. K. Beisembiev).

Thus, the original heritage of “Zar zaman” has not been studied and was not reprinted in the Soviet period until 1991, just prior to Kazakhstan achieving state independence. Prior to that, questions concerning the artistic characteristics of “Zar zaman” poetry were sometimes raised in special philological studies. With the efforts of Magauin, for example, separate poems of “Zar zaman” poets were published in 1984 anthology of Kazakh poetry *Bes Gasyr Zhyrlaidy* [Five centuries relay] [5]. Earlier in 1978 parts of this poetry were included in the work *Poety Kazakhstana* [Poets of Kazakhstan] in Russian translation [6].

In modern Kazakhstan, after the removal of ideological restrictions, previously forbidden examples of its intangible heritage were published. A clear trend to collect, study and publish the poetry of “Zar zaman” begins in the 1990s. However, analytical work has been carried out primarily by philologists. Although the topic has been taken up in different publications of historians [7] and philosophers [8], literature specialists K. Madibaeva [9] and B. Omarov [2, 191-192 pp.] specifically studied this subject. In his monograph, Omarov also researches Kyrgyz poets of “Zar zaman” represented by Kalygul, Arstanbek and Molda Kylych [2, 147-195 pp.]. Myrzakhmetov in his study proposes distinguishing in the study and periodization of Kazakh literature “a literature of the colonial epoch” [10, 181-192 pp.]. Among international researchers of “Zar zaman” works of Thomas G. Winner can be underlined as highly insightful [11]. Among other authors S. Dautov, M. Myrzakhmetov, W. Kalizhanuly, R. Syzdykova, M. Pertaeva, Sh. Zhumataeva, N. Mansurov, A. Mukhambet, A. Zhaksylykov should be noted.

There are numerous aspects of the literature movement "Zar zaman" that remain still undiscovered, particularly those of reflection of pessimistic eschatological worldviews of the nation, image of Russia in historical consciousness and reflections of Muslim mentality in the poetry. In this study, hence, we are examining the heritage of "Zar zaman" in its relation to the formation of the negative association of the colonial past in the collective consciousness while also looking into its connection with Islam. Heritage of "Zar zaman" requires a deep understanding of the civilizational conflict between East and West, and of the religious and eschatological ideas, and Islamic identity of the Kazakh nomads. And although, it must be noted, that first initiative of relating "Zar zaman" poetry with Muslim philosophy and eschatology by Zhaksylykov [12], this line of analysis was not carried out to its fullest extent, a task which we will be attempting to undertake in this study.

As noted earlier, the works of the poets of "Zar zaman" were, indeed, published in the imperial period in the printing houses of Kazan in Arabic script, among which one can find works of the Shortanbai *akyn* (poet) which were reprinted several times, in 1888, 1890, 1901, 1906 under the title *Qissa-i Chortanbai*. A collection of the poems of Dulat Babataiuly, *Wasiet-Nama*, was published in 1880. Abubakir's book, *Adebiat Qazaqia* [13], or *The words of the mullah Abubakir*, was published in 1902 and 1905, respectively. Copies of such rare publication are stored in the manuscript department of the Institute of Literature and Art, Central Scientific Library in Kazakhstan, while the majority of works of the Kazakh poets of "Zar zaman" were published as separate books during the years of state independence. In this article we will be analyzing among these works poems of Dulat in Arabic script and reissued publication of the same work in Cyrillic alphabet from 2001, also publications of Shortanbai *akyn* [14] and Abubakir [15]. Also we will be using collection of poems of Murat *akyn* [16].

Origins of the worldview of the Kazakh "Zar zaman" poets: historical foundations. Russian policy and the role of islam

The emergence of the literary movement "Zar zaman" was an ideological reaction to the colonial

conquest of the country by the Tsars and the subsequent socio-economic and spiritual decline of Kazakh nomadic culture. In their works the lamentation of antiquity, the former glory of the nation and its traditions, and the decline of national statehood are explicitly expressed motifs. They protested against the policies of the local Russian administration (especially over land seizures) and rejected the social and economic innovations of the era. The texts of "Zar zaman" also criticized the changing habits and customs of Kazakhs and the moral degradation of the local elite. This critique was made from the standpoint of Islamic Sharia law and the traditional customs of the nomads. Common and typical to this school was pessimism, an understanding of what was happening in the context of the fatal inevitability of the End of time (*Akyr zaman*), the call to strengthen spiritual and moral principles, and the effort to find the soul's salvation in God.

The mentality evinced in the texts of Shortanbai, Dulat, Murat and Abubakir is important for the researcher in view of the anti-Russian orientation, in the form of Russia as an "image of the enemy", and in terms of profound cultural conflict that marked the mass consciousness of Kazakhs in the 19th century, something on which Soviet historical science was silent. The formation of a negative image of Russia in Kazakh spiritual culture coincided with the evident tightening of tsarist policy in Central Asia at the end of the 19th century. Efforts to join the territory of modern Kazakhstan to the Russian Empire has been controversial: in the initial stage there were recorded cases of the voluntary adoption of citizenship by the Kazakh tribes because of a difficult international situation, followed by the violent military occupation of lands bordering Russia (*Istoria Kazakhstana (s drevneishih vremen do nashih dnei)* [17, 159-169 pp.].

Massive military action against Tsarist colonization did not abate in the steppes of Kazakhstan at any time in the whole of the 19th century. The main reason was the seizure of fertile lands and the expulsion of Kazakhs to geographically unfavorable zones, as well as the limiting of nomadic territories, all of which led to the decline of traditional livestock breeding. Tens of thousands of Kazakhs from all regions

of the country were drawn into armed actions. However, due to the lack of a single voice, and most importantly, to the military-technical backwardness of the nomads, all the rebellions were suppressed and the participants persecuted or exiled to hard labor.

An important date was 1867-1868, at which time a colonial system of government (General Government) was introduced into the territory of Kazakhstan. As noted by Koigeldiev, this system did not regard the specifics of Kazakh steppes and nomadic culture [18, 82 p.]. According to this new law, all land was declared legally owned by the Russian state. The new system of control was military in nature. The Kazakhs were officially assigned to the social category of "inorotsi" (foreign born, of foreign descent), they were subject to discrimination and could only occupy the lowest levels of governance. Russia's armed forces, in the form of regular and irregular (Cossack) troops, were stationed on the territory of Kazakhstan. The Kazakhs were made subject to imperial laws, according to which armed uprisings against the regime were brutally punished, and the nomadic population was burdened with state taxes and fees. Central Asia expert Vamberi, after his travels, stated that the indigenous peoples under Russian domination experienced material and spiritual decline. Representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia, like A. Bukeikhanov, A. Baitursynov, M. Dulatov, M. Chokai, also wrote about Kazakh subjugation at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Another important factor was the attack on the rights of Islam and also Tsarist missionary policy, which involved the placement of the local population in Russian government schools. Tsarism tried to stop the natural course of Kazakh cultural genesis, and to alter Kazakh identity through cultural assimilation and conversion in accordance with the strategic plans of the empire. Indicative of this struggle were the activities against the Tatar mullahs in Kazakhstan, removal of Kazakhs from the jurisdiction of the Ufa Muftiate in 1868, and attempts to reform the Kazakh-Arabic script, replacing it with Cyrillic. At the beginning of the twentieth century Islam was recognized as a threat to the national security of the empire [19, 124 p.]. Further, Crews writes

about «means for closing mosques and Islamic schools and for taking clerics under surveillance and arrest» [20, 234 p.]. However, the colonial administration was not able to completely control the spiritual life of the Muslims, their printed materials, etc. at this time.

In this historical atmosphere there was pessimism and despair among the peoples of Central Asia, and this is reflected in their literature, as the authors of the book, "*Central Asia: a century of Russian rule*" [21], have shown. The dominant trends in the mindset of the Kazakhs were grief, mourning for a lost independence, an idealized Nomadism, and belief in traditional institutions and customs. People lost faith in the possibility of returning to their former rights and freedom, fearing the seizure of fertile lands, rivers and lakes.

As for Islam, its growing political role marked Kazakh society at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the twentieth century. This was associated with increasing dissatisfaction with Russian religious policy. In addition, religion had become an outlet or escape for many in harsh conditions defined by loss of land, migration, poverty and ruin, and outbreaks of infectious diseases. Loss of hope in the political liberation of the country and catastrophic deterioration in material well-being resulted in a turn to God and Muslim eschatology. Finally, it is necessary to note, that the idea of Turkic Jadidism spread throughout the Empire during this period, with some of the prominent trends arising in Kazakhstan [22]. As we shall see below, in spite of their strong traditionalist bias, there was a noticeable influence of the religious and reformist tendencies inherent in Jadidism on the poetry of "*Zar zaman*".

The relationship of the "Zar zaman" poets to the imperial government and Russian-orthodox civilization

The motifs of pessimism and anxiety due to Russian and Chinese expansion had already appeared in Kazakh poetry in the 18th century and were amplified in the 19th century. The main idea that unites the "*Zar zaman*" poets is an acute dissatisfaction with and protest against Tsarist colonial policy. From this mood arises sorrow and ritual lamentation ("joktau" in Kazakh) for

the lost nomadic Golden Age (era of the Golden Orda and Kazakh Sultanate), and the moral judgment of contemporaries and eschatological reflections.

Russians in the texts of “*Zar zaman*” are called *orys* (rus) that is, the ethnonym «Russian.» But the most common epithet of the Russians is the Islamic term «kafir» – untrue, lacking faith (in Kazakh *kapir* or «kawyr»). The expression «kalimatsiz kapir» (infidels who do not know «kalimat»), that is, the sacred formulation of Islam «la illaha illa Allah») as well as “hairy mouthed infidels” («auzi tukti kapir»). The last expression should be understood as follows: over the centuries Kazakh Muslims followed Islamic rules of wearing beards and mustaches, according to which mustaches were not supposed to cover the lip and were clipped short. Hence their surprise at the thick mustaches of visiting Russian officers, soldiers and peasants that descended below the lip.

The expressions «insapsyz kapir» (“insatiable infidel”) and “uialmasthan bul kapir” (“infidels of no shame”) were also used – owing to the fact that the tsarist government was not satisfied with captured lands and cattle, but continually seized control of more and more natural resources. We find in verse the phrase «it kapir» (“dog infidel”) [14, 7 p.] as well as «sotkar orys» (“impertinent, pugnacious Russian”). To the Kazakh people of the 19th century a Russian person was still «maior» (Major), «jandaral» (General), «oiaz» (district chief). At the head of all stood the Russian Tsar, «patsha” or “ak patsha” (“white king”) –as the Russian monarch was called by his Muslim subjects. At the same time the Russian Tsar is represented as an unjust ruler, violating oaths («patshadan ketti gadelet” as described by Shortanbai, “ak patsha tauyp sertinen» – by Dulat) in the traditional mentality of the Kazakhs.

In the perception of poets Russia is the enemy (*dushpan, dushman*), and a strong, invincible enemy who has concretely seized power in this earthly world:

“Auzyna kapir karatty Bu dunianyn tutkasyn
Musulmandy bul kunde orys kapir jenip tur”
[Infidels have the entire earthly world in the
palm of their hands

Today, the Russian invaders are defeating the Muslims] [1, 72 p.].

Dulat Babatai-uly first intoned the bygone era, during which the ideal Kazakhs, the khans Abulmansur and Abulfeiz (18th century), as well as the Kene-khan (Kenesary Kasymuly) appear, in his *Osiet-name*, written in the form of *tolgau* – a traditional poetic genre (1880). He further cursed the slaughter of the Kazakhs and the arrival of the Russians:

«Ortana orys kelgen son, El korgar erler olgen son

Khan Kene ketip aradan Oryska kazak karagan»

[After the Russian came, after the death of the defenders of the homeland, after Khan Kene passed away, the Kazakhs submitted to the Russians] [23].

Poets of “*Zar zaman*” metaphorically compared Russia’s policy toward Kazakhs to the traditional hunting of wild animals, e.g. the Russians were arranging traps (“*orystyn jaigan toryna*” - «a trap laid by Russians»- Shortanbai), ensnaring them with a distant lasso, pursuing them with hunting birds: “*orystyn tusti kurygy*” (“we were bound by a thrown Russian lasso”), “*orys – burkit, biz – tulki*” («the Russian is the golden eagle and we the fox») [24, 110 p.].

The poet Murat Monke-uly, a native of the western regions of Kazakhstan, was particularly sensitive to the seizing of border lands by the Tsars. Before 1906 he personally experienced the burden of colonial oppression. The phased, deliberate advance of Russia into the East is described in Murat’s *tolgau* «*Ush kian*» and «*Sary Arka*»:

“Aueli jenip orys Edildi aldy
Sary tau, Ashtarhannyn jerin aldy
Artynan Edilden son Naryndy aldy
Togaidyn agash, kamys talyn da aldy”
which can be translated as :

«First the Russians conquer and take the Volga
then seize the lands of Saratov and Astrakhan
After the Edil (the Volga) they take Naryn,
even its forests and reeds – everything falls
into their hands» [1, 137-169 pp.].

Murat also fears Kazakh involvement in military service in which young Kazakhs are allegedly converted to Christianity - “*soldatka*

berip balasyn Moinyna kres saldyrgan" [25, 129 p.]. Sorrow and regret imbue the poem in the sense of a fear that the defeat is total, and that there is no hope of taking revenge on the Tsar and his executioners. The ideal, valiant hero, «the last of the Mohicans,» appears in his poetry as Isatai Taimanuly, the leader of the Kazakh tribe Bersh, who died tragically at the hands of the Tsar's troops while leading an uprising in 1836. The poet remarks that hope is in vain when even Isatay fails to achieve his goal of justice - «Erдин sony Isatai barmagyn tistep otken jer!».

A characteristic feature of "Zar zaman" poetry is predictions about the future, about the fact that people expect more trials and humiliations and the multiplication of misfortunes [2, 111 p.]. They predict new waves of «infidels» from the "East" and "West" [13, 15 p.]. Dulat and Shortanbai warn Kazakhs that is not far off when Russia will take their sons into the army («balandy alar soldatka» → «children will be taken into the army»). This actually happened in the years of the First World War. The depth of poverty will be such that the Kazakh nomad will not sit astride a horse but walk on foot («mine almasy jaldy atka»). The fate of everyone will be administered by paper, increased bureaucracy and formalism («alakanday bet kagaz, tabynarsyn mandatka" – «you will worship mandates, a piece of paper»). In the poet Murat we find prophecies about the «black» future of the Kazakhs in the sense of mass Russification and impoverishment: «kynama beshpet kiersin» – "you will wear a tight coat", i.e. Russian clothes unlike the ample robes of the Kazakhs; «arbagas mashtek jegersin» – "you will harness the nag to the cart".

Dulat, Murat, Shortanbai and others unanimously condemn a portion of the Kazakh people, who, in disgrace, served the new political system and assisted in the management of territory. In a negative sense Shortanbai mentions the *bolasnai* (parish government), the *bii* (local judge) and *aulnai* (head of a village council), that is, those Kazakhs who served in the lower levels of the administrative and political system of Tsarism. They, in his opinion, support and serve the infidels: «kapirdin sozin makuldap» («they accept the word of the infidel").

There are ideas on the foreignness of Russian culture: «orys degen atynan, teris jazgan khatynan" ("the Russian, who writes in reverse», i.e. unlike Kazakh in the Arabic script, their letters are written from left to right). The people suffer countless cruelties at the hands of the Russians, as evinced by the words «orystan korlyk korgen son otyryp biler alkindi» («the notables sigh after suffering humiliation at the hands of the Russian») [1, 16 p.]. Overall, the word «korlyk» (humiliation) was a word "Zar zaman" poets very often used to describe the state of the Kazakh people under Russian domination.

It was difficult for the popular consciousness of the Kazakh Muslims to accept the features of settled, industrial civilization. Therefore, we see that the traditional nomadic life, with the white felt yurts of its heritage, is opposed to the wooden Russian hut ("endi kelip kamaldyn orys salgan ku tamga" – «and now you're forced into a miserable hut, built by a Russian» – Dulat). The opposition of the nomadic mentality and that of settled culture are visible in these lines: «Ak ordalar tark bolyp, Balshyktan salgan tam ozdy» («White yurts became unnecessary and popular – houses of clay»).

For the steppe peoples the colonial city was the symbol of a hostile civilization (most of the cities of Kazakhstan was founded by Russia). It was to the cities, according to Dulat, that impoverished Kazakhs would be drawn, en masse, in search of work; this because the steppes would be made desolate from cattle and become unusable. Hired as Russian servants, Kazakhs will even be forced to graze pigs («Kalaga karai shubyryp, malailykka juresin ...Pana bolmai dalannan ...Shoshkasyn bagyp sabylyp...»). Another image of this civilization as an "other" is that of the Russian prison («abakty») - the symbol of cruel laws («zakun») and an autocratic regime.

The beginnings of trade, and many new features of Kazakh life, borrowed from Russian traditions, for example, the samovar and tea, cause dissatisfaction. Dulat thinks that the end of the world has come, for all sorts of unworthy people have appeared, along with the samovar and tea, and also wealth, called «money» and *tarantass*/four-wheel vehicle ("aluan-aluan jan shykty, samawar men shay shykty aksha degen

mal shykty tarantas degen at shykty”) [23, 11 p.]. In Shortanbai, tea is included among the signs of a decaying era («and even he drinks only tea»). It is important to clarify that the majority of Kazakh nomads, drinking a variety of sour-milk drinks, were unfamiliar with tea until the 19th century.

The poet Abubakir (who died in 1903) also rejects the coming technological civilization. The poet places technology, as false, “official” science, and the administration of the Tsars, in a single depraved, apocalyptic series [12, 232 p.]. In contrast to this are freedom, prosperity and a heroic past, as well as oneness with nature, which can only be recalled with bitterness.

There is certainly talk, in regard to the above works, of the limitations and hypertrophied psychological perception of the authors, of the mythologized image of the empire in the mind of the Kazakhs of that time. Dosmukhamedov expressed his opinion about the “*Zar zaman*” poets emphasizing that the mass of ordinary Kazakhs in the late 19th century knew Russia only through the individual soldiers and officers of the tsarist administration, where people did not know the «other, good Russians,» i.e., the authentic Russian culture, that of the intelligentsia, and could not hold a more accurate and objective view of Russia [24, 104 p.].

Religious, mystical and eschatological motifs in the texts of “*Zar zaman*”

“*Zar zaman*” poets were deeply religious Muslims and even mullahs (theologians). They actively used Arabic and Persian religious terms. They adhered to the traditions of Central Asian Islam, which was a synthesis of the Hanafi Sunnism and Sufism. Sufism (Tasawuf) was introduced to the region by the Yassavii and Naqshbandi mystical schools.

Their texts of works promoted the ideal of the God-fearing Muslim who obeys all of the Shari’ah. The dignity of the Quran and the Sunna are often praised, and the first man, Adam, and the Prophet Muhammad («Paygambar», «Rasool-Allah», etc.) are frequently mentioned. Shortanbai, Dulat, Murat, and Abubakir urge Kazakhs to strengthen their faith in God. Their sermons are not much different from the usual exhortations of mullahs. For example, Shortanbai extols the people to support such institutions of

Islam as the mosque, the madrasa, and to perform the *fard* of Islam (prayer, fasting, alms, and the hajj), and to also observe the boundaries of what is permitted (halal) and forbidden (haram). But at the same time they are demanding sincerity and not a mere formal relationship to religion.

These poets are not free from any religious and political sentiments in connection with the assault of Orthodox Russia: “Dini baska bireuler El bileidi aralap” – “gentiles began to rule the country – Murat”; “Kapirden bolar hakim’in” – “your rulers became infidels”, etc. But the accent is on issues of Islamic ethics, mysticism, and eschatology. Regarding the influence of the Sufi tradition, they speak using the words *wali*, *sopy*, *pir*, *nafsi* and others. There is a strong pessimism and asceticism in their texts. The idea of retribution beyond the grave, the shift from a life on Earth to the «eternal», lamentation and curses directed at the earth’s existence – all this testifies to the Sufi influence.

“*Zar zaman*” poets assess the condition of Kazakhs, especially the poverty and misery that befell the country, through the traditional Sufi notion of «baraka» (in Kazakh “berek») or the Turkic equivalent of the concept – «kut». They define the era of Russian domination as that of «gracelessness» (“ken konysyn taryldy, kut-bereken aryldy,” “kuty ketip jut bolmak»), while the pre-colonial period is described with nostalgia as a time when the country was imbued with «kut,» i.e. attended by Divine energy, by the grace of Allah.

According to A. Zhaksylykov, the pessimistic temper in the spiritual culture of the Kazakhs had already deepened by the late Middle Ages. «The reason was that the world of the nomads inevitably plunged into the abyss of the past after the death and decay of the great, unified empire of the nomads of Eurasia –the Golden Horde. With the strengthening of technical civilization in the West, and the extensive colonial expansion of young bourgeois states to the East, the eschatological mood and anxiety in the literature of the nomadic Steppe peoples will inevitably intensify» [12, 148 p.].

The classic eschatological *tolgau* of the poet Shortanbai, entitled “*Zar zaman*”, is animated by the central idea of an impending global disaster.

The main features of this that the author considers are moral decline and deepening injustice. The poet Dulat clearly expresses the idea of *Akyr Zaman*, meaning “the End of the World in line Muslim concept of «Kiamat» (Judgement Day), in his tolgau «Osiet-name». It draws a holistic map of the eschatological world in accordance with the canons of a religious world view. Poets, hence, were largely speculating as to the approach of the coming Judgment Day according to criteria set forth in sacred texts. Consequently, many changes of colonial era were interpreted as signs of the approaching global catastrophe: general moral decay, flagrant injustice, corruption, fraud and people devoid of spiritual aspiration reigning in society thinking only of money, enrichment, debauchery, and entertainment. According to Islamic tradition, people will lack faith on the eve of doomsday, observing religious rites for appearance, when in fact they are overwhelmed by the temptations of material wealth; moral vices and environmental disasters will multiply. Shortanbai and his followers thought that all these negative developments were already realities in Kazakhstan and in the entire world in the 19th century. It is interesting that the Russian assault on the East is seen as an organic part of *Akyr Zaman*.

According to Shortanbai, Russian colonialism is a symbol of universal evil and the triumph of injustice. Russia is merely a tool of Satan. Its policies reinforce and bring signs of the Last Day. The dark apocalyptic order of things imagined by “*Zar zaman*” poets are symbolized by such concepts and figures in the lives of 19th century Kazakhs as «duan» (military centers of administrative districts employed by the tsarist government), «tilmash» (translator), «maior» (Major) «jandaral» (General), «soldat» (soldier), «dushpan» (the enemy), «kapir» (infidel), «abakty» (prison), «zakun» (the law), «para» (a bribe), and others. The assault of Tsarism, the capture of lands, the destruction of tradition, and the enslavement of the Kazakhs are explained in the light of what is predicted in the Quran and the Sunnah regarding the suffering of Muslims and the multiplication of infidels as the end of the world nears. The poet Dulat believes that in the days preceding the end of things there will

be no just rulers («patshalardan ketip Adilet akyr zaman tarady «).

The central idea of the “*Zar zaman*” poets is the idea of Allah as the creator of the universe, the architect of the final Judgment and as a merciful God. Attempts to bring freedom and justice are futile, what is needed is to cry, pray, and plead for God’s deliverance from present suffering and the coming horrors— such is the leitmotif of “*Zar zaman*” poetry. In our view, all this shows that the majority of sensitive people in Kazakh society of the 19th century (in this case individuals of the poetic nature), as well as that part of the population affected by punitive actions and land seizures, were at that time in a state of deep mental depression. They always felt a sense of national inferiority, humiliation and insult at the hands of Tsarist officials and their arbitrary oppression. And to these people death itself and the end of things may have seem more palatable and easier denouement than endless spiritual and physical suffering.

In analyzing the religious world view of “*Zar zaman*” poets, we can see that despite their orthodox religious beliefs, they sometimes move away from doctrinaire religious belief and demonstrate a dialectical approach. In their ideology there is no clericalism. Links to mysticism, moralism and the philosophy of classical Sufism can be seen. On the other hand, there is a religious-form trend that emerges with the beginning of the 20th century.

Conclusion. Opposition sentiments and the dissatisfaction of Kazakh traditionalists with the political and social realities of the 19th century are expressed in the works of the poets the pro-Islamic movement “*Zar zaman*”. Considering Islamic values to be the bedrock of traditional spiritual culture, they sharply criticize an emergent industrial civilization that destroys the morality, traditional life and culture of the nomads; and condemn efforts to control the borderlands and spread Orthodoxy and Russian culture. Dissatisfaction with Tsarist policy (especially taxes, political repression, and the seizure of land) among ordinary Kazakhs was so profound that it seriously distorted the collective consciousness, driving many to pessimism and despair. This inner hatred toward

the tsarist regime and its agents, i.e. local Kazakh official, is expressed through the poetic words of Dulat, Shortanbai, Murat, Abubakir and other representatives of the traditional spiritual elite.

Unlike the 19th and early 20th century traditionalists (*Batyrs, Ishans*, etc.), calling for armed protest and jihad, "*Zar zaman*" poets did not call for an open fight, considering it useless and doomed to failure, and promoted lamentation, prayer, and an eschatological worldview in expectation of Judgment Day. At the same time, there could be no compromise or dialogue with a hostile civilization for these authors. In their works, the Kazakh poets created an extremely negative, mythologized image of Russia as a source of evil and demonic forces. Lacking full, objective information about Russian and European culture and the Christian world in general, traditionalists were unable to analyze what was happening in depth or to look for ways and forms of adapting, accommodating and culturally integrating the nomads in the imperial structure of Russia. Instead, they

saw a way out in isolation, humility, through migration, religious cleansing and hope in God. In general, these poets embodied a traditional Muslim Kazakh worldview, one unaffected by reformation. In our opinion, their outlook was controversial, eclectic, marginal, and for the most part passively religious, in comparison with later philosophies and ideologies spreading in Kazakhstan in the early twentieth century, like Jadidism which provided an optimistic spirit, calling for a struggle for liberation rather than passively waiting for the End of the World. A great Kazakh poet and philosopher Ibrahim (Abai) Kunanbai-uly was a forerunner of the Jadids, where Auezov notes on the proposition of enlighteners like Abai and Altinsarin to "cure" from social evil through dissemination of new knowledge and education. Nevertheless the significance of the "*Zar zaman*" is paramount in the analysis of the imagery of colonial era in the historical consciousness of Kazakhs as it is a crucial reflection upon development of distinct collective consciousness.

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Қазақстан тарихындағы әлеуметтік катаклизмдерді қабылдаудың исламдық ракурсы («Зар заман» мектебінің мұрасы мысалында)

Аңдатпа. «Зар заман» (қайғы дәуірі) дәстүрлі поэзиясының мәтіндері Қазақстан территориясындағы Ресей империясының отарлық басқару жүйесіне қарсы жағымсыз, кері әсерлердің қалыптасуына қатысты қазақ халқының ұжымдық санасындағы пессимистік, антиколониалдық және діни дүниетанымының айқын көрінісі болды. Шортанбай, Дулат, Мұрат және т.б. ақындар сияқты білімді қазақтардың мұсылмандық сана-сезімін суреттейтін поэзияның бұл үлгілері кеңестік кезеңде жеткілікті зерттелмеген күйінде қалды. Дегенмен, Қазақстанның саяси тәуелсіздік жылдарында бұл тақырыпты объективті зерттеу басталғанымен, ондағы еңбектерде филологиялық тұрғыдан талдау басым болды, сондай-ақ исламмен байланыс нақты қарастырылмады. «Зар заман» қазақ мектебінің рухани мұрасы пәнаралық терең зерттеуді қажет етеді. Қазақтардың діни, этникалық санасы және мәдениеті мәселелерін зерттеу кезінде оларды баламалы тарихи дереккөздер ретінде пайдалану да өз нәтижесін беретіні анық. Діни-философиялық бағыттағы қазақ ақындарының саяси режимге оппозициялық көзқараспен қараған бұл шығармаларында қазақтардың өзіндік тарихи санасы көрініс табады, империяның көшпелілермен өркениеттік қақтығысының ерекше тұстарының интерпретациясы беріледі. Сонымен бірге, «Зар заман» мектебінің жалпы сипаттамасы ретінде патшалықтан саяси жеңіліс табу фактісі мен шарифат пен суфизмнің діни-эсхатологиялық идеялары рухындағы халықтың моральдық деградацияға түсуіне өкіну мен оны жоқтауын көруге болады. «Зар заман» поэзиясының мәтіндері XIX ғасырдағы қазақ қоғамының исламдық сәйкестігі тұрғысынан қызықты, өйткені олардағы әлеуметтік катаклизмдерді бағалау мұсылман әлемі бейнесінің басты сюжеттерінің бірі – «Ақыр заманды» күту бойынша беріледі.

Түйін сөздер: қазақтардың рухани мұрасы; «Зар-заман» поэзиясы; отаршылдық; тарихи сана; әлеуметтік катаклизмдер; дін; мұсылмандық эсхатология.

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Исламский ракурс восприятия социальных катаклизмов в истории Казахстана (на примере наследия школы «Зар заман»)

Аннотация. Тексты традиционной поэзии «Зар заман» («эпоха печали») представляют собой особое отражение пессимистических, антиколониальных и религиозных настроений казахского народа в связи с негативным восприятием в коллективной памяти колониальной системы управления Российской империи на территории Казахстана. Данные образцы поэзии, которые иллюстрируют мусульманское

самосознание образованных казахов, таких, как поэты Шортанбай, Дулат, Мурат и др., оставались недостаточно исследованными в советский период. Хотя за годы политической независимости в Казахстане начато объективное изучение данной темы, но в имеющихся исследованиях преобладает филологический подход, а также не рассматривается связь с исламом. Духовное наследие казахской школы «Зар заман» требует глубокого междисциплинарного исследования. Не исключается их использование как альтернативных исторических источников при исследовании вопросов религии, этнического сознания и культуры казахов. В данных произведениях, созданных оппозиционно настроенными к политическому режиму казахскими поэтами религиозно-философского направления, отражается своеобразное историческое самосознание казахов, дается любопытная интерпретация цивилизационного конфликта империи с кочевниками. При этом общей характеристикой школы «Зар-заман» является сожаление и оплакивание факта политического поражения от царизма и моральной деградации народа в духе религиозно-эсхатологических идей шариата и суфизма. Тексты поэзии «Зар-заман» интересны с точки зрения исламской идентичности казахского общества XIX в., поскольку оценка социальных катаклизмов в них дается в соответствии с одним из главных сюжетов мусульманской картины мира – ожиданием Конца света («Ақыр заман»).

Ключевые слова: духовное наследие казахов; поэзия «Зар-заман»; колониализм; историческое сознание; социальные катаклизмы; религия; мусульманская эсхатология;

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