

Aspiration for truth as a driving force to live and write: lifestory and memories of Gulnar Dulatova (1915-2013) – daughter of Myrzhakyp Dulatov

Dinara Assanova

Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan

E-mail: dassanova@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7283-1282>

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Abstract. *This paper examines the memoirs of Gulnar Dulatova, a member of the family of “the enemy of the people”, and discusses her aging processes as well as other female family members of the repressed through their memoirs. Typologically and chronologically, the analyzed women were divided into two different time phases: spouses born in the early 1900s – aged in the 1960s and children born in the 1920s – aged in the 1980s.*

Starting from her 60s until she turned 95, Gulnar Dulatova dedicated herself to the revival of her repressed father’s heritage doing research, writing memoiristic books, articles, and giving interviews. This paper presents the first effort to trace the background origins of the motivation behind her aspiration to write.

This paper provides an analysis of how aging members of repressed families struggled with the consequences of repression and how their memoirs operated despite forced silencing and personal traumas. It was identified that justice and the desire to commemorate motivated and inspired Gulnar Dulatova and others. These books, articles were written as a tribute to the victims of political repressions and were perceived by them as a duty they were obliged to fulfill. Political repressions were traumatizing not only for the first, but for the second generation of those repressed as well. The fight with the traumas is continuing in some cases in third and even fourth generations of victims of political repressions indicating that the Stalin’s repressiveness still triggers them today.

Keywords: *Central Asian studies; repressions; memoirs; recollections; biography; trauma; intelligentsia; memory; ageing; archive.*

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Introduction

Many victims of political repressions have published memoirs recalling their experiences during the Stalinist period. Some historians defend the value of these memoirs as historical texts,

stating that memoirs provide information that is inaccessible through other historical sources. Other scholars remain skeptical about the use of memoirs as historical sources. However, women's history was a private sphere rather than a public one (Landes, 2003), and memoirs can reveal vital details that provide insights into their lives.

Memoir literature of the Stalinist period became a source for researching cultural life, the Soviet regime, and state abuses as early as the 1950-1960s in West scholarship. Moreover, the "tone of the scholarly literature of that period was strikingly similar in tone to the memoir literature of the intelligentsia" (Fitzpatrick, 1976: 211). The largest part of the known memoirs used in most of the research were texts of Russian intelligentsia, and female memoir literature comprises very little part of it. In addition, limited research is done on Central Asian written narratives, including Kazakhstan. Autobiographical writing from Central Asia has yet to make a substantial impact on how our region is studied by historians and historiography in general (Kalinovsky, Scarborough, 2021: 211). Because by now "soviet Central Asian history is still predominantly a history about (Soviet) 'victors'" (Kassymbekova, Chokobayeva, 2021). Oral stories of Kazakhstan can drastically reframe and reinterpret the existing research.

Nomadic past of Kazakhstan didn't consider memoir as well as other written practices, instead there were strong oral traditions such as epic Zhyrau texts - individual-author poetry deriving from XV-XVIII centuries (Zhanabayev, Nagymzhanova, Shaimerdenova, Turgenbaeva, Tleubayeva, 2022) "Tolgau" [reflections] can be considered as an alternative to the written practices where one reflects on life describing events, people, emotions in details and in philosophical way (Zhanabayev, 2023). This is one of the main reasons why not many written memoirs can be found in Kazakh culture until 1940-1950s.

The written female memoir genre was long characterized as "conversations with the mirror" where women constructed their self-sense in compliance with the patriarchal world (Savkina, 2007: 400) and has remained invisible, systematically ignored, and unknown. However, when scholarship realized the scope and richness of female ego-documents on stalinism, many works were dedicated to different aspects of it (Kelly, 1994), (Fitzpatrick, 1976), (Fitzpatrick, Slezkine, 2000), including texts written by wives and daughters of repressed (Robey, 1998), (Hignett, Ilic, Leinearte, Snitar, 2018). There are many female memoirs, as well as interviews dedicated to motherhood and survival in the Stalinist GULAG (Main Directorate of Corrective Labour Camps) based on these memoirs, the same can be seen from the memoirs of those who suffered from forced displacements, such as deportations and exiles. However, they are not centered around women of Kazakhstan. Very few studies on stalinism can be found on the aging victims of the Stalinism era. Ego documents from the Stalinist period in Kazakhstan were examined by the historian Albina Zhanbosinova (Zhanbosinova, 2020).

There are only a few memoirs written by Kazakh females of so-called members of the family of "the enemy of the people" at the time of state violence. Historian Zhanat Kundakbayeva divided ego-documents produced by women of Kazakhstan during the early Soviet era into two groups: the first group of written female narratives was Soviet and the second group bore completely another angle of subjectivity – non-Soviet and self-centered (Kundakbayeva, 2017: 110). Most female memoiristic works were written only after the collapse of the Soviet Union and when mass rehabilitation processes started. Although there are two exceptions: Fatima Gabitova (1903-1968 pedagogue, journalist, researcher of Kazakh culture) and Gulnar Dulatova. According to Kundakbayeva who dedicates most part of her article on the analysis of Gabitova's ego-documents, Fatima Gabitova considered her memoirs "as place where she could spill out, scream out her sufferings and break a taboo" to deconstruct the "discourse of coercion" (Kundakbayeva, 2017: 117). The topic of subjectivity in Fatima Gabitova's memoirs has also been researched by historian Maria Blackwood (Blackwood, 2017). Dulatova's writings share similar characteristics with Gabitova who "practiced writing as a response to repression, a means of preserving what she had lost to Stalinist terror and of actively shaping historical memory" (Blackwood, 2017: 3). As for Dulatova, she doesn't only explore her past as the daughter of the repressed, but also recovers other stories and gives them their voice. Analysis

of these texts can demonstrate the postcolonial and post-traumatic state, where Dulatova tries to re-own her narratives, memories and voice and can be considered as “post /colonial moves” (Smith, Watson, 2016: 29). This framework of memoirs can provide a unique value for historical research and significantly contribute to the broader understanding of memory of stalinist repressions.

Female ageing members of the repressed families were the most active creators of the memoiristic texts. This can be explained by psychoanalyst Erik Ericson’s conceptualization of eight psychosocial stages, where it is the memoir writing that has ego healing potential at the eighth (old age) stage (Henkin, Walz, 1990: 62). Another reason for creating memoirs by elderly members of the family of “enemy of the people” was their “need to uncover their grandparents secrets in order to free themselves from the shadow of the Soviet past” (Falcus, Hartung, Medina 2023: 396). Number of research demonstrates that “spontaneous and organized biographic work is an integral feature of life experience in old age” (Bozhko, Zdravomislova, 2015: 134).

The phenomenon of ageing among the victims of Stalin repressions and their motivational and behavioral characteristics in connection with their memoirs has not yet been researched. However, there are works on aging holocaust survivors and their coping methods with extreme childhood trauma (Fridman, Bakersmans-Kranenburg, Sagi-Schwartz, Van, 2011) as well as on those who used memoirs as a healing instrument from holocaust trauma (Duchin, Wiseman, 2019).

In the face of state violence, many people of the first and second generations of the repressed have been living in trauma, silencing, and fear. The children of the repressed born in the 1920s and the 1930s had to remain silent for the most part of their lives. Exploring families of the repressed in Kazakhstan, we find that their children and relatives often wrote the family stories themselves. It was their fight against silencing and justice. Due to social isolation, ageing victims of political repressions were in need of each other. To mourn, recall, and hope.

Women aged between 1945 and 1991 were born in the early 1900s and faced uprisings, revolutions, wars, and hunger in the 1930s. Most of them had their close male and sometimes female relatives to participate in WWII, and some of them did not return. Women aging from 1945 to 1991 can be divided into two groups and labelled as “Obverse” (non-repressed) and “Reverse” (repressed).

These two groups of women left their memoirs and published them during the period when the rehabilitation processes in the Soviet Union intensified (since 1988). The year 1991, when Kazakhstan gained its independence, marked a turning point in the public discourse on Stalinist political repressions. Victims, particularly their descendants, began to share their experiences more openly. In most cases, it was the second generation who found time to reflect and write after their retirement in their 70s-80s.

“Obverse women” were a part in the Soviet system, obeyed the system and were praised by the system. Most of them received state awards and worked hard to become and stay Soviet. They were female symbols who successfully entered and lived within in the Soviet system. Women in this group have left more memoirs than repressed women did. Very little about the repressions were written there. However, it is important to note that the extent of openness varied over time. For example, Shara Zhienkulova (1912-1991) was the first professional female dancer. She published her memoirs in 1983 at the age of 71. She wrote about ethnographic trips, concerts, and fans: She mentions: “My university study suddenly was over. Destiny has spread its net over my young life and started to squeeze” (Zhienkulova, 1983: 18). Whereas in the second edition of the book published in 1992 she found strength to add that she was suspended from the university because her grandfather was arrested in the 1920s and they all lived in fear. No other mentions of repressions were made (Zhienkulova, 1992: 17). However, her relatives remember the 1930s very differently: “Revolution, hunger, repressions in 1937, World War II have made Zhienkulov’s family almost disappear” (Kassymova, 2019: 37). It is worth mentioning that in 1920-30s Sh. Zhienkulova used only her first name “Shara” during her performances (videos, postcards) probably aimed at hiding her “bai- kulak” background.

Bibigul Tulegenova (1929) – first Kazakh female opera singer, who sang Russian and world classic songs in original versions. She published her memoir book in 1984 at the age of 55 (Tulegenova, 1984: 4). This book is mainly devoted to tours, concerts, collaborations, and relationships.

Gaziza Zhubanova (1927-1993) – first female composer. Starting from 1986, Gaziza Zhubanova published only memoirs and other books about her late father, Akhmet Zhubanov. During this period, she wrote her own memoirs and essays that chronologically started from the 1960s until the 1990s (Zhubanova, 2017: 175), and they were compiled and published by her daughter in 2017 (Zhubanova, 2017). Gaziza Zhubanova in her memoirs mentions her repressed uncle Kudaibergen Zhubanov (Zhubanova, 2017: 369) and tells the story on how this affected her father's career and health – he lost the job several times and had to flee to Moscow to avoid pressure (Zhubanova, 2017: 369-379).

These examples and many more illustrate that the topic of repressions in the memoirs of the «Obverse women» was avoided until 1991, when Kazakhstan gained its independence. There were also many aging poetesses who published books from the 1970s to the 1990s. Topic of repressions is completely missing.

Repressed women who aged during the times frames we are looking at consists of two types – wives and daughters. These women went through the processes of disenfranchisement and dekulakization in the 1920s, 1930s and consequently faced deportations and exile (usually if the head of the family was defranchised or dekulakized, his spouses, children, sometimes parents or siblings were similarly stigmatized and sent to camps, exile or faced relocation/deportation) (Alexopoulos, 2008: 99). In early 1935, the NKVD Special Council sentenced 4,833 heads of households and 6,239 family members to camps, exile, and relocation (Alexopoulos, 2008: 104). Some of them fell under order no. 00486 of August 15, 1937–detailed repressive measures to be taken against the family members of “enemy of the people” or “traitors of motherland”. How many of them were sent to labor camps? How many were sent for exile? How many were relocated/deported? Collective punishment as a result of Stalin's politics of kinship created collective memory that needs to be contextualized within different narratives.

Materials and methods

In the present study, we seek to explore the experiences of researching and writing and the meanings that Gulnar Dulatova attributed to her writings on her traumatic past. A narrative approach is used to examine the writing and publishing processes in relation to overcoming trauma. Studied complexes of memoiristic texts over the number of years in relation to her age helped to identify and systematize Dulatova's worldview, her attitude to events, to herself and others. The qualitative analysis of her texts yielded three main themes: Dulatova struggled with trauma, silencing, and fear.

Another group of memoir texts of other female authors was analyzed in chronological order using quantitative methods to contextualize the representation of female memoirs related to Stalinist repressions. Analyzed memoirs provide an overview of memoirs published, as well as the kinship ties of the authors to victims of political repressions. This illustrates the willingness to write about trauma.

The number of memoirs left by repressed wives born in the 1900s of Kazakh origin is very low. They consist of books and fragmented memoirs in the form of articles and interviews.

In the book *Memoirs of Alash* published in 2020 (Zhumagul, 2020) there are 54 entrees of female family members who wrote their memoirs in the form of books, articles and gave interviews. Their birth dates ranged from 1888 to 1958.

Eleven wives born between 1888 and 1925 wrote their memoirs (books, articles, interviews) in their late 60s, 70s, and 80s. Only 4 out of 11 wrote and published books: Mariya Shokai (1888-1969) in 1958 and 1999 at the age of 70 (lived in Paris), Tatyana Kuderina (1902-1978) in 1994, and Mariyam Kozhahmetkyzy (1909-2010) in 1993 at the age of 84. As for Fatima Gabitova (1903-

1968) she left her diaries that were published after her death (Did she know that these diaries would be published?). The other seven wives wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s) after 1989.

The daughters born in the 1920s – aged in the 1980s – left more memoirs while they aged. This second generation of the repressed was desperate to write, reflex, and commemorate the names of their parents suffered in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, and even 1950s. Almost all of the memoirs, articles, and interviews were written and published in the early 1990s.

In the book *Memoirs of Alash* mentioned earlier, there are entrees of 26 daughters born between 1903-1945 that wrote their memoirs. Five of them wrote books: Nadiya Battalova (1923-?), Saulet Donentayeva (1926-?), Aida Zhantalina (1930-?), Larisa Kuderina (1938-?), Saule Kozhykova (1945-?). Other fifteen wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s) after 1989.

There are eight granddaughters who wrote their memoirs. Only four granddaughters wrote books: Saule Alzhanova, Nadiya Zhainakova, Gulzhan Imankulova and Ulzhan Moldabekova (Gulzhan and Ulzhan wrote one book together). The other five wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s).

Five nieces wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s). Two great granddaughters wrote their memoirs. One of them wrote a book: Gulfarida Tolemissova, another wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s). Two daughters-in-law wrote article(s) and/or gave interview(s).

The analysis of the book *Descendants Remember* published in 2017 (Abdrakhmanova, Zhaksybayeva, Ergeldinova, Ayaganova, Tolepbergenova, 2017) by Alzhir Museum demonstrated that the number of articles authored by female family members comparing to males, was much bigger. Book has 79 articles of the family members: 26 of them were written by Kazakh women (family members of the repressed – wives, daughters), 22 by non-Kazakh women (family members of the repressed – wives, daughters), 18 by Kazakh men, 9 articles by non-Kazakh men. However, most of the books and articles written by wives, daughters, granddaughters of the repressed were centered around one person (husband, father, grandfather, etc.)

The memoirs of Dulatova provide a wide range of repressed biographies and stories, which increased her understanding of the place of her repressed father Myrzhakyp Dulatov in history. Dulatova had been collecting the materials starting from her 40s (1960-1970), and intensified her research in 1980s after her retirement in 1973 when she was 58. In 1987, she writes: “As I age, I start having different thoughts. I am reading the things I didn’t know; I realize something new and recall what has happened to me and do the best to write it down and hand in before I take the last breath” (Dulatova, 2013b: 192). As a grandmother she had to look after grandchildren and in 1985 she writes: “Old age is the beginning of illnesses: I am worried that I will not be able to go and meet people as I used to” (Dulatova, 2013b: 137). Her writings increased dramatically after 1986, which could be related to the events of December 1986 as well as the 1988 Decision of the Bureau of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan titled “About the creative heritage of Magzhan Zhumabayev, Akhmet Baitursynov and Zhusupbek Aitmauytov” (1988: *Kazakhstanskaya pravda*). This news gave her a hope that the time of Dulatov’s rehabilitation was also coming. In 1988, 73-year-old Dulatova writes: “Now it is 1988, I am writing my memoirs every day. In March I wrote to Moscow asking for a rehabilitation of Dulatov. In September 1988 one person (I will not mention the name) brought me the issue of the “*Literaturnaya gazeta*” (Literature newspaper) from Kiev, where there was a historical review of the literature of Ukrainian and Kazakh writers. It was magical for me to see Dulatov’s poems, who hadn’t been rehabilitated yet. “This kind of bravery could only be done by the Ukrainians. I was so happy” she writes in her book later (Dulatova, 2013b: 151).

Later in 1988 her dream came true – Dulatov was rehabilitated. It was November 6, 1988 – her 74th birthday – when she got the news (Dulatova, 2013b: 267). She continued her research and writing in the 1990s and even the 2000s despite her health problems. In her book she recalls the time, when she had a conversation with two other aging women, all three of them didn’t hear well and they had to talk very loud with each other (Dulatova, 2013a: 130).

Discussion

Dulatova has written and published two memoir books and there is only one chapter about herself in her second book (Dulatova, 2013a). She was born in 1915 in the family of Gainizhamal and Myrzhakyp. Here is a shortened fragment of data provided by Dulatova for the Alashorda Encyclopedia published in 2009 about her father Myrzhakyp Dulatov (1885-1935): “Myrzhakyp Dulatov – Alash movement figure, writer, akyn, playwright, journalist, a distinguished representative of the Kazakh culture and literature in early 20th century. He authored a poem titled “Jastarga” in 1907, which appeared in the only issue of “Serke” newspaper published in Saint Petersburg. His first arrest was made in 1911 leading to 19 months of imprisonment. Second arrest was made in 1922, which resulted in a shorter detention. Third arrest was in 1928. In 1930, he was initially sentenced to death, but the sentence later changed to 10 years of imprisonment. He passed away in 1935 in the camp” (Anes, Smagulova, 2009: 143-144).

Her mother – Gainizhamal Dosymbekova (1895-1940) was a daughter of well-known doctor Baimurat Dossymbekuly. She received education in both Kazakh and Russian languages and worked as a correspondent for the *Kazakh* newspaper in 1914 and as a librarian of the school library in 1923-24 (Dulatova, 2013b: 312). Dosymbekova and Dulatov married in 1914 in Omsk. There were four other children that died during their infancy. Gulnar Dulatova was their only survived child.

Dulatova graduated from the Medical Institute. She pursued her studies there after sending a rather brave letter to Mirzoyan, the First Secretary of the Regional Committee, in 1933, where she, a 17-year-old girl, wrote the following lines: “I can’t study, I can’t work, where justice is? How long I am going to be persecuted?” (Dulatova, 2013b: 90). She graduated from the Institute in 1939 and worked for 9 years in Shymkent (Dulatova, 2013b: 93). However, it wasn’t as easy as it seemed. In 1937, her mother was forced out of her apartment because, as the wife of “the enemy of the people” she wasn’t allowed to live in the capital so she moved to nearest city of Almaty – Talgar. Consequently, Dulatova immediately became homeless as well. Luckily, two friends helped her out: “These two ladies managed to accommodate the daughter of “the enemy of the people” in campus and have always protected me” (Dulatova, 2013b: 316). A few years later, in 1940, her mother Gainizhamal (who was 45) got sick and died. Before her death Gainizhamal asked her daughter Dulatova “to protect and save the heritage of Dulatov family for the sake of the future generations”. She handed her letters, books, photographs, writings and personal belongings that she had received from the prison where Dulatov died in 1935 (Dulatova, 2013b: 311). It was at this time that Dulatova realized the role of her father as a public figure and understood that his heritage needed to be passed to future generations.

In 1947, Dulatova became a doctor, moved to Almaty, got married (Dulatova, 2013b: 94-95) and had four children. Her husband was a literature expert, but later changed his career path and became a translator. This change was a result of the inevitable repressions towards him as the husband of the daughter of “the enemy of people”. He turned out to be the second person after her mother who stressed the importance of her father’s heritage and motivated Dulatova “to write down all she remembered” (Alim, Satybaldiyev, 2014: 86).

Results

Starting from 1991 Dulatova has made tremendous research collecting, storing, analysing, comparing, editing and publishing her father’s heritage.

Table 1. Books compiled, written and published by Gulnar Dulatova about/on her father Myrzhakyp Dulatov

#	Name of the book	Authors	Year of publishing
1	Writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov	M.Absemetov, G.Dulatova	1991
2	Writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov	M.Absemetov, G.Dulatova	1996
3	Writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov	M.Absemetov, G.Dulatova	1997
4	Collections of writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov. 5 volumes	G.Dulatova, S.Imanbayeva	2002
5	Collections of writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov. 5 volumes	G.Dulatova, S.Imanbayeva	2003
6	Collections of writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov. 5 volumes	G.Dulatova, S.Imanbayeva	2009
7	Collections of writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov. 5 volumes	G.Dulatova, S.Imanbayeva	2010
8	Collections of writings. Myrzhakyp Dulatov. 6 volumes	G.Dulatova, S. Imanbayeva	2013

Her father's works were first published in 1991, just when the country gained its independence, and memoirs took some time to be completed. She published her first memoir book in 1998. Comparatively, very little is written about herself comparing to what is considered a standard memoiristic text centered around one author. In Dulatova's case, both of her books mostly focus on people (biographies and life stories) who were around her parents and herself.

The first memoir book was published in 1998 when she turned 83, and the second one was published in 2010 when she turned 95. The last book was presented during her 95-year celebration. Dulatova's memoir books took longer time to complete because they contain around 200 biographies, life stories, a list of female prisoners of Alzhir, a list of her classmates, a list of those vacationing with Dulatov family and many more.

Table 2. Memoir books written and published by Gulnar Dulatova

#	Name of the book	Authors	Year of publishing
1	Shyndyk shyragy (Шындық шырағы) [The light of the truth]. 2 volumes	G.Dulatova	1998
2	Shyndyk shyragy (Шындық шырағы) [The light of the truth]. 1 volume	G.Dulatova	2012
3	Shyndyk shyragy (Шындық шырағы) [The light of the truth]. 1 volume	G.Dulatova	2013
4	Alashtyn sonbes jyldydzary (Алаштың сөнбес жұлдыздары) [Eternal stars of Alash]. 1 volume	G.Dulatova	2010
5	Alashtyn sonbes jyldydzary (Алаштың сөнбес жұлдыздары) [Eternal stars of Alash]. 1 volume	G.Dulatova	2012
6	Alashtyn sonbes jyldydzary (Алаштың сөнбес жұлдыздары) [Eternal stars of Alash]. 1 volume	G.Dulatova	2022

Table 3. Articles written and published by Gulnar Dulatova written in Soviet and Independence periods

Soviet period (years)	Number of articles
1989	3 articles
1990	3 articles
1991	3 articles

Independence period (years)	Number of articles
1992	3 articles
1993	1 articles
1994	1 article
1996	1 article
1997	1 article
1999	3 articles
2001	1 article
2003	1 article
2006	1 article
2007	1 article
2009	1 article
2010	1 article
2012	1 article
2013	1 article

One can imagine Dulatova's enormous efforts while preparing materials for publishing books of her father's heritage and her own memoirs. As Dulatova mentions, she has been collecting materials for the last 60-70 years of her life (Dulatova, 2013b: 3). That means the foundation of the materials for the books was collected long before 1991.

To compile the books about her father, she traveled all over the country, seeking out people who knew him. Dulatova wasn't just talking and meeting people, she conducted comprehensive research that included interviewing, attributions of photographs and comparative analysis afterward. She clarified biographical facts about her father, recorded their lifestories, biographies, and Dulatov's poems from those who still remembered them by heart. She asked people to identify individuals in photographs that she kept in her "sacred sandyk/suitcase" (Dulatova, 2013b: 285). Normally, she verified the information given to her and could follow up with people not once, but twice or even more. She writes: "I want to collect all data about those forgotten. Probably they got bored of me. But I don't care" (Dulatova, 2013a: 135).

Dulatova always came prepared for the interviews, carrying her pen and notebook, and sometimes making recordings. After conversations or interviews, she asked her respondents to provide written confirmations that all that was said is true ((Dulatova, 2013b: 140-145). In the 1970s with the help of her respondents, she managed to reconstruct biographies of groups of people from one of her family's trips in 1922 (Dulatova, 2013b: 52-53). In 1988, she writes: "I always have certain photographs in my bag, I am trying to figure out who are on the photographs and write everything down" (Dulatova, 2013b: 241).

In her first book, most of the chapters have dates when they were written.

Table 4. Chronological timeline of chapters in Gulnar Dulatova's first memoir book

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
October, 1979	5.1.79, 6.1.86	28.11.1978	28.11.1988	23.10.80
Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9	Chapter 10
10.08.1980	20.01.1981	9.04.1984	5.11-27.11.1984	26.1.86
Chapter 11	Chapter 12	Chapter 13	Chapter 14	Chapter 15
04.III.86	14 January 1987	27.VII.87	04.VII.87	26.04.1987
Chapter 16	Chapter 17	Chapter 18	Chapter 19	Chapter 20
10.1987	13.06.1987	07.04.1987	12.06.1987	19.01.1987
Chapter 21	Chapter 22	Chapter 23	Chapter 24	Chapter 25
20.IX.1988	16.12.1987	2.III.89, 19.VII.89	VII.1991	17.XI.1988

The timeline of the chapters show that a significant part of her first book was written in 1987, based on her archival papers, interviews, and documents, as she mentions in her writings (Dulatova, 2013b: 8). At that time, Dulatova was 72, and her daughter used to see her mother at her desk, reading papers, looking at photographs and writing every day (Alim, Satybaldiyev, 2014: 89). After finishing her first memoir book, Dulatova immediately decided to start writing her next book.

If the first book was more about her father, their family, their friends and colleagues, her second book was dedicated to all victims of political repressions related to Alash orda, whom she had been interviewing since the 1950s. The second book doesn't have any dates for each chapter, although from the texts, it is evident that the period of her collecting the data varied between the 1960s and 1990s.

Dulatova asked everyone she knew to organize a meeting with her if she found out that there were people who knew her father, mother or any other relatives. She was actually a center – a connecting point of those who were repressed. She knew almost everybody, their addresses, and biographies (Dulatova, 2013b: 135). She was also a consultant for both those who were rehabilitated (Dulatova, 2013a: 135) and those who were not rehabilitated (Dulatova 2013a: 290). Dulatova provided advice to relatives on the rehabilitation processes and documentation requirements. With her help and guidance, Seidaly Orazalin (Dulatova 2013a: 290) and Trofim Borisov (Dulatova, 2013a: 326) were rehabilitated.

These interviews, discussions, phone calls, and sometimes letters of family members of the repressed were all filled with tears, sorrow, and hope. The women she talked to and interviewed were in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. Despite their age, they provided a lot of detailed information about their relatives and friends, cities, events and gave exquisite answers. Dulatova met many elderly people who were able to recite Dulatov's poems by heart. She writes: "I was amazed how they were able to do that despite their age" (Dulatova, 2013b: 247). Dulatova was in a hurry because she understood that "many of the old people didn't live long because of the camps they were imprisoned at, but some of their recollections I managed to write down" (Dulatova, 2013b: 284). She writes: "Time is flying, many of them are not alive anymore" (Dulatova, 2013b: 209).

One can only imagine how hard it was for both the interviewers and the interviewee to go back and recall the tragic pages of their lives. However, people trusted Dulatova and shared their stories with her because she was one of them, and they knew she wouldn't use the information in any inappropriate way. Besides, people were pleased to meet her because it was an honor for them to meet a daughter of Myrzhakyp Dulatov. Most of the time, Dulatova's arrival was special and touching, full of long hugs and tears. For Dulatova herself, "it felt like visiting my close relative", though in most cases, they were seeing each other for the first time (Dulatova, 2013a: 199). Dulatova was sometimes the only one who talked with them about the repressions because until the 1980s, these matters were kept in silence. "I will tell you what I know, there is nothing

I can hide from you” Clara Seitova, daughter of the repressed, once told her (Dulatova, 2013a: 211) and so did all others. Her long lasting research was not just a matter of collecting data. It helped her “to know another corner of Dulatov, not a father but a person” (Dulatova, 2013b: 254). For many years, Dulatova “didn’t find the courage to publish her writings because she was unsure of her writing skills”, her daughter reflects in her article dedicated to her mother (Alim, Satybaldiyev, 2014: 86).

Dulatova’s research, writings and interviews can be grouped into three categories: first – Dulatov, second – oral stories, mostly biographies from families of victims of political repressions, third – her own memories. Along the way of her research, she was mostly meeting women, as repressed men were shot, imprisoned, or sent to exile. She gathered a lot of stories from their wives, daughters, granddaughters, aunts and nieces. Dulatova made a significant contribution to women’s history by bringing the female voices and making them heard. Oral history from women’s perspective is a very peculiar and significant historical source (Gluck, 2004: 195-215). In the late 1980s, she reflects on meeting with different women – wives and daughters of the repressed at the ages of 80 and 90. “I was looking for people, some people were looking for me. One of them was Urkiya Yespolova. She was more than 80, but despite her age she was very active and was willing to tell her story” (Dulatova, 2013a: 137).

In 1970 she meets the wife of the repressed poet Magzhan Zhumabayev – Zyliha/Zuleiha Zhumabayeva (1894-1991) and writes down all Zhumabayeva told her about her own family and how she travelled to Karelia to see her imprisoned husband. They discussed photographs, trying to remember who was depicted there. Dulatova meets her again in 1989 when she is 74, and Zhumabayeva is 96. Dulatova was the one to hand over the published book of her repressed husband in the Writer’s Union of the Republic of Kazakhstan. During the official ceremony, Dulatova presented her a book, and Zhumabayeva cried: “Magzhan, I am finally witnessing the publishing of your book, now my dream came true” (Dulatova, 2013b: 84). During Stalinist repressions, Zhumabayeva put all of her efforts to release Zhumabayev from the prison and contributed to the rehabilitation of his literary heritage. In 1967, Zhumabayeva prepared poems to be published in “Prostor” magazine and in 1989, gave interviews and wrote memoirs (Zhumagul, 2020: 418).

In the 1960s, Dulatova met Shapai Buralkykyzy, who was in her late 60s. Buralkykyzy recalled the collectivization period, her father’s sufferings (he was the head of the rural municipality for 18 years), and shared life stories of her father’s friends and relatives (Dulatova, 2013a: 222-229).

In the 1960s-1970s Dulatova met Sara Yessova, who was in her 60s and then they again ten years later. Yessova told many stories related to Dulatov, as she used to work with him. During their last meeting, they took a photo together that has become a part of Dulatova’s archive (Dulatova, 2013b: 152).

In the early 1980s, she met Amina Yesengeldina, Dulatov’s colleague who was in her 80s (Dulatova, 2013b: 131).

In 1985, Dulatova met Sara Munitpasova, who was 79 years old at that time. Her father had worked with Dulatov. Munitpasova told Dulatova when she met her father, where they lived, where he worked in 1912. Dulatova was pleased and happy to get answers to the questions that had been bothering her. During this conversation, Dulatova obtained a lot of biographical details of her father. Dulatova also wanted to learn more about his romantic relationships and Munitpasova clarified some of the details. Munitpasova was so close to the Dulatov family that she named her daughter Gainizhamal in memory of Dulatova’s mother, and named her granddaughter Gulnar (Dulatova, 2013b: 140-145).

In 1940, Dulatova’s mother gave her a suitcase full of letters, books, photographs, and writings. It was in fact the way how the archive of Dulatov family appeared. Initially she was hoping and planning to publish materials from their family archive left by her mother (Dulatova, 2013b: 102). However, the archive in the “sacred sandyk” grew extensively over time. During her research, she stored her pieces of papers from her “field trips”: letters, and notes, which later transformed into her memoirs. Sometimes, if someone couldn’t meet her for some reason, such as being sick or too old, “they used to send their children to deliver an envelope” to Dulatova’s

home (Dulatova, 2013b: 178). So part of the materials used in her books was her by mail (Dulatova, 2013b: 253).

After the terrifying Great Terror that took place in 1937, Dulatova was afraid that something could happen to her or her family. The first warning came when her husband was fired. To save the archive, Dulatova decided to take her “sacred sandyk” and store it in the homes of her three university groupmates (who were Russian by ethnicity). In 1940, she got everything back (Dulatova, 2013b: 349).

After the December 1986 events in Almaty, Dulatova again experienced fear of instability and a possible threat. So, she took her “sacred sandyk” to her niece who lived in Jambyl city, located 500 km away from Almaty (Alim, Satybaldiyev, 2014: 88). Later, Dulatova went back to Jambyl to check the suitcase. One photograph went missing, but then it was found in nephew’s house (Dulatova, 2013b: 56). Once the situation was more or less stabilized, she got her “sacred sandyk” back home.

In her first book, Dulatova published most of these documents and photographs that she had been “keeping whole life as the most precious thing” (Dulatova, 2013b: 285). Very few people were brave enough to keep photographs and documents.

In 1987, Dulatova visited Gaziza, granddaughter of the repressed Dosmuhambet Kemengerov, who was 79 at the time. “Gaziza took out her photo album and said: I have been hiding this album for more than 50 years and never showed it to anyone. With tears in her eyes, Gaziza opened the album” (Dulatova, 2013b: 198). One of her respondents, Sara, who was 79 years old: “This frightening period caused so much pain, we had to burn a lot of letters and photographs that were so dear to us” (Dulatova, 2013b: 142). Dulatova’s publications about her father and her memoirs intensified when she turned 72 in 1987. In that year, Kaz SSR was marked by the beginning of democratization processes, especially after the events that took place in Almaty in December 1986 – strikes initiated by Kazakh youth (Zhubatkhanov, Yermukhanova, 2018: 23-35). During these events, 71-year-old Dulatova was sick at home, and as she heard screaming students who were running along Tulebayev street, she told her daughter: “This is the end of the Soviet era” (Alim, Satybaldiyev, 2014: 88). She knew that this was the beginning of the end.

From Dulatova’s texts, it is evident that Justice and Will to commemorate the spirits of her ancestors – Aruakhs motivated and inspired her during these hard times. Respect for the elders, the most important aspect of the Turkic value system, also encompasses the deceased elders – Aruakhs (Cirtautas, 2015: 3-4). Kazakhs considered, and still consider, that the souls of those who have passed away look after and take care of those who are alive. Every Kazakh feels the need to comfort them even after their death. It is important to talk about them, praise their achievements and express gratitude to them. Every Thursday-Friday, Kazakhs still fry dough to let their ancestors know that they are not forgotten. The fried oil is supposed to go up to heaven and remind them that they are remembered. According to Ilse Cirtautas, a turkologist, “the respect for the elders and for the spirits of the ancestors is definitely one of the main reasons for the survival of the Turkic peoples’ traditions, customs, and attitudes despite Soviet policies of relinquishing them” (Cirtautas, 2015: 4).

Dulatova mentions Aruakhs few times in her texts, writing that she is doing this for the their sake of them and uses a Kazakh proverb “Өлі разы болмай, тірі байымайды” – “If you don’t pay gratitude to the dead you will never succeed” (Dulatova, 2013b: 374). Aruakh concept can be one of the main reasons why it was so significant for Dulatova to find the grave of her father, who died in 1935 in the Solovki camp in Careliya. In 1989, she sends Marat Absemetov to go there, and he finds the grave. Afterwards, she decides to bring the remains to his birthplace and rebury him there (Dulatova, 2013b: 373). In 1991 and 1992, Dulatova asks Absemetov again to help her to negotiate with the city administration of the region about transfer and re-burial process of Dulatova’s remains. However, he couldn’t get any answers from them. So, in 1992, Dulatova who was 77 at that time, decides to go there herself. “Before the trip I was aware that my health is rather poor because of hypertonia and other health problems. I am not feeling good.

Who knows what can happen with me during the trip, but nevertheless, I am alive, and until the day I take the last breath, I have to overcome everything, and until I have the strength, I will be doing everything I can for the Aruakhs of my father" (Dulatova, 2013b: 371-373).

"If we recall the past, it is clear that Kazakhs went through all possible difficulties. Their sufferings (hunger, imprisonment, relocations) were depicted by Juban Moldagaliev in the poem "Kazakhs who died thousand times and revived thousand times". My father was the first one to be imprisoned in 1928" (Dulatova, 2013a: 217). Dulatova saw her writings as an obligation in front of her children as well, she wanted them to know who their grandparents were. "So, until my mind is not affected (by the aging) I will be writing about my parents" (Dulatova, 2013b: 103).

Throughout her texts, it is seen that Dulatova and her respondents have experienced three main feelings throughout their lives: trauma, silencing and fear. The continued memories of trauma indicate that it wasn't always easy to recall tragic details of the past. By writing, Dulatova could have found her own method of overcoming her traumas. Learning about her father's life and his surroundings might have helped her to cope with trauma. Her earliest trauma goes back to childhood when she questioned herself why her father was in prison for most of the time, and why they always had to move from one city to another (Semei, Atbasar, Kokshetau) (Dulatova, 2013b: 47). It was traumatizing to recall her childhood memoirs, one of them was on the search when she was 10. In 1980, 65-year-old Dulatova writes: "In 1925, while the family was travelling on the train, OGPU searched us and made me take all of my clothes off, I still can not forget this" (Dulatova, 2013b: 110). In 1978, 63-year-old Dulatova recalled: "Visiting Medeo I remembered how employees of OGPU with the guns were taking him over (Dulatov) in 1928. I will always keep his last words in my heart. Fifty years have passed since then. That winter night was very windy, and still, these kinds of windy nights remind me of that night. Since then, I don't like the wind and the unexpected knocking at the door" (Dulatova, 2013b: 100). One of the respondents, Shapai, in her late 70s recalls: "I can't sleep when I think of my father's sufferings" (he had to hit himself so hard on the face to make his golden teeth come out. The teeth were then given as a bribe so he could get permission to return home from the exile) (Dulatova 2013a: 228-229).

Unlike the Holocaust survivors who are being assessed, researched, and treated (Kaplan, Mandel, Myrie, Sauer, 2016 https://roybal.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Aging_Holocaust_ChildSurvivors.pdf), Soviet survivors of the Stalinist repressions were not and are not being treated by the state similarly. They were and are finding their own ways to get over their traumas. The same refrain is echoed in the third and fourth generations of the survivors who are also in need of overcoming the past. Their memoirs are evidence that trauma is still there.

One of the biggest traumatic experiences all of those politically repressed lived in the Soviet era was silencing. Silencing after 1930s became a social norm. Throughout Dulatova's texts written in different periods (1970s to 1990s) in her 70s and 80s, she writes: "I need to write all I know". Despite being silenced her whole life, she was collecting and gathering the information during "these secret conversations" (Dulatova, 2013b: 3).

First warning came in 1933 when her father's colleague and friend Muhtar Auezov asked Dulatova "to pretend we do not know each other and not greet him" (Dulatova, 2013b: 96) and this was a common thing to hear for the members of those repressed for many years ahead. On October 1980, when Dulatova was 65 years old, she wrote: "Starting from 17 years, I have lived with secrets that were destroying my heart, now it is time to write about them" (Dulatova, 2013b: 101). In 1981, "Sapargali Begalin during one of our get-together parties whispered in my ear that he used to work with my father. I didn't question him for now – I decided to be patient and wait until this period of silence will be over, and we will be able to talk about this openly" (Dulatova, 2013b: 249).

Conclusion

What is clear from the analysis of the memoirs is that the topic of repressions was silenced to the level when repressed didn't even discuss it in their own households. Dulatova writes: "I am a mother of four children, I didn't talk about Alash party. No one could say its name out

loud, I never talked about the leaders of this party. I didn't tell anyone about my father at home. I started telling them about this only a few years ago. I was named a daughter of "the enemy of people" when I was 13. I lived in shame and humiliation. This broke my heart and caused a lot of pain. No one talked about what happened. My mind was full of heavy thoughts. I haven't had my end away. The terrifying Stalin period forced us to live in fear, and we are still living in it" (Dulatova, 2013b: 103). "We lived in fear" and had to hide everything related to the repressed at someone's houses (Dulatova, 2013b: 56). "1937 brought so much grief and the pain settled in us for a long time. We couldn't talk freely with each other; we couldn't even say our thoughts out loud. We were terrified even to think of "enemies of the people". An unexpected knock on the door made us scared to death" (Dulatova, 2013b: 253-254).

Despite this silencing, repressions were still discussed, usually behind closed doors. In 1987, Dulatova met Marat Absemetov, who later wrote the first dissertation on the works of Myrzhakyp Dulatov, and Dulatova was the one to guide him along the way. He came down to talk and listen to Dulatova's stories and once Dulatova told him: "Our fathers are "enemies of the people" – that's why don't tell anyone what you heard here and saw, and don't mention those that belong to Alash orda. There will be problems" (Dulatova, 2013b: 150). One of the respondents, Muratkhon Aidarkhanuly, whose mother was an Alzhir prisoner, recalls: "Every year on April 10, prisoners of Alzhir gathered in our home (in Almaty) and celebrated. Until 1985, there were letters coming to and from Moscow, Yalta, Simferopol, Tolyatti, and Akmola" (Dulatova, 2013a: 276). These pieces of evidence show that there were not only official gatherings at Akmola, which started in 1989 and were initiated by Ivan Sharf (Kuat, 2019 <https://rus.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-alzhir-museum-co-founder-raisa-zhaksybayeva/29974430.html>), but also non-formal gatherings of former prisoners of Alzhir camp who were from 60 to 90 years old at the time.

Nevertheless, all of those repressed had hopes, and so did Dulatova: "Let everybody say that he is an "enemy", we get used to it, but there will be a time when our father will no longer be an enemy, and Stalin's name will be destroyed" (Dulatova, 2013b: 100). In her texts, Dulatova often shared her thoughts on injustice: "Books of my father are closed and stored in the secret rare book fund of the libraries. This is a blatant injustice. Who knows if I will be able to see his books free and if he will be rehabilitated? Will I be still alive? This is my dream. Some say only "shaitan" (devil) doesn't have any dreams. I am dreaming of reading their books" (Dulatova, 2013b: 104-108).

Throughout her articles written in different periods, Dulatova always mentions the youth and her fear "that they will not know the truth of what Stalin did to the people". She is worried they will not "get the opportunity to learn this lesson of bloody massacre". She wanted them "to know about this, remember it, and pay respect to the Aruakhs" (Dulatova, 2013a: 249). Close relatives and children lived with the guilt and the feeling of revenge. Starting from 1989, those members of the family of the repressed who somehow survived the purges were the ones to bring back the facts, the stories, the truth. They were writing their books, articles, and interviews to commemorate those who were expected to be erased from history and memory. Many of those who didn't have any descendants are still unknown. Dulatova wrote: "There were so many men in the Alash movement who became victims of Stalinist political repressions, but their names are still unknown and I think the reason lies in the absence of descendants" (Dulatova, 2013a: 249). By writing her books she tried to replace those vanished and bring back the truth. Stalin's collective punishment practice was directed not only to avoid close relatives from complaining, but as it turns out, also avoid them to write their memoirs. How many memoirs would they be if all wives, brothers, sisters, and children were not destroyed and frightened to death?

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Динара Асанова

Абай атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық Педагогикалық Университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан

Шындыққа ұмтылу - өмір сүру мен жазудың қозғаушы күші ретінде: Міржақып Дулатовтың қызы Гүлнар Дулатованың өмірі мен мемуарлық шығармалары (1915-2013)

Аңдатпа. Мақалада «халық жауы» отбасының мүшесі Гүлнар Дулатованың естеліктері зерттеліп, сондай-ақ қуғын-сүргінге ұшыраған отбасы мүшелерінің естеліктері арқылы олардың қартаюы қарастырылған. Типологиялық және хронологиялық тұрғыдан талданатын әйелдер 2 түрлі уақыт тіркесіне бөлінеді: 1900 жылдардың басында туған ерлі-зайыптылар – қартаю процессі 1960 жылдарға түскен, және 1920 жылы туған балалар – қартаю процессі 1980 жылдарға түскен. Г.Дулатова 60-тан 95-ке толғанға дейін өмірін репрессияға ұшыраған әкесінің мұрасын жаңғыртуға арнады – зерттеу жұмыстарын жүргізді, мемуарлық кітаптар, мақалалар жазып, сұхбат берді. Бұл жұмыс оның қартайған сайын жазуға деген ұмтылысының мотивациялық негізін анықтауға бағытталған алғашқы әрекетті ұсынады.

Жұмыста қуғын-сүргінге ұшырағандардың отбасыларының қартайған мүшелерінің қуғын-сүргін зардаптарымен қалай күрескені және мәжбүрлі түрде үнсіздік пен жеке жарақаттарға қарамастан олардың естеліктері қалай жұмыс істегеніне талдау жасалған. Әділдік пен ерік-жігер Гүлнар Дулатованы және басқаларды жігерлендіріп, рухтандырғаны анықталды. Бұл кітаптар, мақалалар саяси қуғын-сүргін құрбандарына тағзым ретінде жазылды және оларды орындауға міндетті парыз ретінде қабылдады. Саяси қуғын-сүргінге ұшырағандардың бірінші буынына ғана емес, екінші буынына да ауыр тиді. Кейбір жағдайларда саяси қуғын-сүргін құрбандарының үшінші, тіпті төртінші буындарында да жарақаттармен күрес жалғасуда, бұл оларды сталиндік репрессивтіліктің бүгінгі күні де тудыратынын көрсетеді.

Түйін сөздер: Орталық-Азия зерттеулері; қуғын-сүргін; мемуарлық шығармалар; естеліктер; өмірбаян; травма, интеллигенция, жады; қартаю; архив.

Динара Асанова

Казахский национальный педагогический университет имени Абая, Алматы, Казахстан

Стремление к истине как движущая сила жить и писать: история жизни и воспоминания Гульнар Дулатовой (1915-2013) – дочери Мыржакыша Дулатова

Аннотация. В статье через воспоминания Гульнар Дулатовой, члена семьи «врага народа», а также воспоминания других женщин, членов семьи репрессированных, рассматриваются процессы их старения. Типологически и хронологически анализируемые женщины делятся на 2 разные временные группы: супруги, рожденные в начале 1900-х годов, старость которых выпала на 1960-е, и дети, рожденные в 1920-е, старость которых выпала на 1980-е.

С 60 до 95 лет Г. Дулатова посвятила себя возрождению наследия своего репрессированного отца, занимаясь исследованиями, написанием мемуарных книг, статей и интервью. В этой статье представлена первая попытка проследить истоки мотивации ее стремления писать в старости. В статье анализируется, как стареющие члены семей репрессированных боролись с последствиями репрессий и как создавались их мемуары, несмотря на вынужденное замалчивание и личные травмы. Выявлено, что справедливость и желание почтить память мотивировали и вдохновляли Гульнар Дулатову и других. Эти книги, статьи были написаны как дань уважения жертвам политических репрессий и воспринимались ими как долг, который они обязаны были выполнить.

Политические репрессии травмировали не только первое, но и второе поколение репрессированных. Борьба с травмами продолжается в ряде случаев в третьем и даже четвертом поколении жертв политических репрессий, что свидетельствует о том, что сталинская репрессивная политика имеет свои последствия и сегодня.

Ключевые слова: Центрально-Азиатские исследования; репрессии; мемуары; воспоминания; биография; травма; интеллигенция; память; старение; архив.

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Information about authors:

Dinara Assanova – PhD student, Department of History, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Динара Асанова – Абай атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық Педагогикалық Университетінің Қазақстан тарихы кафедрасының докторанты, Алматы, Қазақстан.



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