
ISLAM AND MODERNISM IN KAZAKHSTAN

MASHKUR ZHUSUP'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS

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Abstract

In order to reveal religious views of Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev we should revise his religious education and religious works and issues he considered, taking account historical time when he lived. It is necessary to identify significance, potential and necessity of Mashkur Zhusup's views, comparing novel religious movements from his time and religious situation in current time. It is important to use heritage of such prominent personality who had features of sanctity and the people revered him as a saint. In this article the necessity and significance of the analysis of Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev's world views have been revealed.

Keywords: public, comparison, renaissance, consciousness, heritage

1. Introduction

Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev was born in 1858 in the current Pavlodar region, in Bayanaul district, in the area called Nayzatas, on Friday during the prayer of the Kopeevs family. His father's name was Kopzhasar, his mother's name was Ulbala. His real name was Zhusup.

In winter of 1858 Kopeev Sermuhamedovich bought the cattle from the profits of the caravan and moved from Kyzylzhar to Kyzyltau. But in 1861 when Adam Zhusup was 5 years old, Kopeev's father lost the cattle. This made Kopeev Sermuhamedovich send his son to school. Thus, the scientific and educational way of the prominent Kazakh thinker began.

The first Zhusup's teacher was Bayzhan Nazhimaldin Smagulovich. The boy was 8 years old when he entered the Haziret Kamariddin mosque. In 1870 Zhusup got education in the Kamaraddin Haziret mosque and then studied in the higher education institution in Bukhara. Teachers taught not only religious subjects, but also books in Arabic, Persian and Shagatay languages. While

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reading these books teachers revealed the basic idea and the spirit of each work of literature.

At the age of 9, telling kissa-dastans (short poems and epics of the Kazakh people) Zhusup drew attention of Musa Shormanovich, who presented him taqiya (national Kazakh headdress) and said: "This boy will be Mashkhur (famous) among his people", and since then he was called Mashkhur Zhusup. In the madrassa (religious school at a mosque) he studied very well and at the age of 15 he began writing poetry.

When Zhusup was 16 years old, he began to teach the son of a wealthy man Alibek during two years. Alibek presented him 'ten horses' during the first year of study and many cattle in the following years [1].

Since childhood Zhusup was interested in Science, literature and learned folk poems and epics by heart. If we read the lines from Mashkhur Zhusup's songs: "When I was 15 years old, I lost my head because of one passion", we can understand that his creative activity began at the age of fifteen. Zhusup wrote about it in his poems:

"I began to write poems at the age of fifteen,
The people said, 'What do you need it for? Stop it.'
But I could not stop, I'm used to that,
I do not reproach my people anymore.
Thank you, Lord, for all I have,
At the age of fifteen I had creative inspiration,
One day, when I was asleep,
The lines of poetry appeared in my head like in writing." [2]

Since 1875, for a long time, Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev worked as a teacher. He also sent poems to the 'Dala Ualayaty' newspaper. Since 1875 alongside with teaching, Mashkhur Zhusup raised money and taught children in the village. In order to improve his education, in 1886, Zhusup arrived in Bukhara and entered the religious institution of higher education. Then he continued his studies in Tashkent. In the years of 1887-1890 Mashkhur Zhusup travelled around Central Asia, visited Samarkand, Tashkent, Turkestan, Bukhara. One year he lived and studied in Bukhara. He learned the following languages: Arabic, Persian, Shagatay, Turkish, etc., he also could speak Uzbek, Tajik and other languages and understand their traditions. He read a lot of scientific works. After reviewing the eastern classical literature, he went to Kazan where he became acquainted with the turkologist W. Radloff, and since then Zhusup began to collect samples of oral literature. He wrote down chronicles, aytys (Quranic verses) and many historical epics in order to pass them to the next generation.

During his entire conscious life Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev wrote poetry and studied art and Science. He was always in a creative search. His three books, titled 'Saryarkany kimdiki ekendigi', 'Hal-Ahual', 'Tirshilikte kup zhasagandyktan kurgen bir tamashamyz', were published in 1970 by the Kusayinovyh library in Kazan.

In the years of 1906-1907 the creative idea of Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev was deepened. The works under his authorship written these years were devoted to problems of freedom of the Kazakh people, its political and economic rights, and other problems. The book written by Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev 'Saryarkany kimdiki ekendigi' is a work considering all the problems of our country. Although this book was published in 1907, it harmonized with thoughts and dreams of representatives of the Alash movement formed in 1917. Speaking about the problems of the people, the poet said: "The Sun is setting on the Syrdarya, sunrise is on Irtysh, the river Zhetisu is in the southern part, Edil and Zhaiyk are in the northern part of the country. Kazakhs acquired this land through the wars Karakerey Kabanbay, Kanzhygaly Bogenbay, Kazybek, Shakshakuly Zhanibek. We have acquired this land through blood and sweat." This is the way the poet shows his compassion to the people.

The time when Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev lived, was full of injustice, the poor suffered from the rich, it was a feudal society. In winter and summer the village was in constant bustle. In those days young people were not interested in any science or study, and the poet considering this reality appealed to the people:

"My people, pay attention to the art,
Give up stealing, do not commit violence to each other.
We do not have solidarity in our relations,
That is why we have so much trouble." [2, p. 60]

These thoughts were written in the form of poetry, he published these poems in his book. He wrote his every creation on paper and carefully collected poems in alphabetical order. His first poems began to appear in the newspaper 'Dala Ualayaty' since 1889.

Between 1889 and 1890 the poet published several articles and five poems: 'Engine', 'Beri kyska, erkin duniege keledi eken', 'Kedeylikke ush kyrsyk oralady', 'Kun shykray erte turyp' and 'Bilmeydi ate enerlisin aulak bolar'. All these poems were created to motivate young people to pursue Science and art, to study and engage in trade. The poet criticized the young people who did nothing with the following words:

"We have to think about everything from the beginning,
What can we expect from a young man who can do nothing?" [2, p. 50].

Thus, criticizing the youth who did nothing, the poet made them blush. But he did not tell them what activities they had to engage in. However, he encouraged them to work, noting that the work is important. Born for the sake of his people, he called for science, learning, literacy:

"If someone does not have children, the Kazakh say:
'If God does not give us the children, what can we do?:
- No, that's not true. Do you think if God does not give children,
It means the God is miserly, he gives someone children, but deprives another one?

The mercy of God is the same for everyone", - said the poet.

Speaking about the role of a man in this world and his abilities, Mashkhur Zhusup Kopeev said: "A man must decorate this world".

The God's mercy can manifest to the people through a man.

Mashkur Zhusup lived his life observing the canons of the Muslim religion. Let us cite one poem of this great poet:

“One of the five commandments of Islam is
The belief that there is no god but Allah.
A person collecting money will be able to comprehend
None of these commandments,
While an honest working person can be called
A person who can sacrifice his life for God.” [2, p. 70]

2. Main part

The time when folklore scientist, historian and theologian Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev (1858-1931) lived, the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, was the time when huge and complicated changes happened in the whole world including Muslim Oriental Countries with Kazakhs. In this age, Muslim countries were passing through degradation in all parts of their life due to the dependence from western powers. At those times occurred movements of defenders who offered ideas of innovation of Islam adapted to changes occurring in the society. It is accepted to title these movements as reforming ones since they happened under influence of modernization. However, it is unacceptable to go against the basic dogmas of the religion, since Islam does not allow any reforms. Initially the term ‘reforming movement’ was used by western scientists who applied orientalist research approaches. But later this term started to be used in all worldview's literatures and methodological works. In some sources these movements are also titled as Pan-Islamism. We have decided that this movement and the process which covered Egypt, Pakistan and the Russian Empire (which came to the Kazakh region through Crimea and Volga) should be titled as religious modernistic movements.

Religious modernistic movement was founded in the end of 19th century. As ideology it is connected to the Muslim personality of Zhamal ad-Din al-Augani (1839-1897). This religious political ideology is identified with the unity of all Muslims in the world and necessity of creation of the unified Islam state.

After al-Augani in Egypt, Muslim modernism ideas were continued by Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), Rida Muhammad Rashid (1865-1354), Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949) and Sayyid Qutb (1906-1967). In 1928, Sayyid Qutb founded the ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ association. This party remains politically active nowadays.

Political Islam or Islamism, as accepted in social opinion, has high significance in the life of oriental countries. In India the Indian Khalifat movement raised against dominance of England. This is why Gandhi and Indian National Congress supported them. Islamism appeals had anti-imperialist features. In India this movement led to the crash of colonialism and separation of Pakistan. The most prominent Muslim modernists who took part in that

movement were the leaders educated in England, such as Said Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), Said Amr Ali (1849-1928) and Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938).

The religious situation in the times of Mashkur Zhushup Kopeev was characterized by the conflicts between conservative and liberal parties. In the Russian Empire these two parties were called Kadims and Jadids. The Jadidism ('modernism' in translation from Arabic) is a social-political and intellectual movement which was widespread in Muslim Turkish countries in the late 19th and early 20th century, whereas Kadimism ('conservatism' in translation from Arabic) is a conservative movement which rejects modernism and requires total accordance to Shariah laws.

There is no doubt that Jadidism which is close to Ijtihad and Kadidism had influenced such Kazakh religious thinkers as Abai, Shakarim, Shangerei Bokeev, Shadi Tore, Maral Ishan, Nauan Qaziret, Gumar Qarash and Mashkur Zhushup. Jadidism supported improvement of the Turkish language and literature, teaching non-religious subjects, using scientific achievements and women's equity. The list of the most prominent representatives of Jadidism includes the following scientists: Shgabuddin Marzhani, Qusain Faizkhanov, Ismail Gasparali, Musa Bigeev, Rizaetdin Fakhretdinov, Miftakhetdin Akmolda, Muhametsalim Umbetayev, Zainulla Rasulov and others. This movement was supported by the Qusainov brothers from Orenburg, the Iaushevs from Troitsk, S. Nazirov and G. Khakimov from Ufa. The list of the well-known jadidists from Central Asia includes the following scientists: Minuar Qari Abdirashidkhanov, Faizulla Qozhayev, Makhmudkhozha Bekhbudi, S. Mirzhalelov.

Jadidism movement started at madrassas with teaching of 'Usul-i-jadid' which uses a new method of teaching. This method was initially used in 'Gusmania' madrassa in Ufa, in 'Qusainia' madrassa in Orenburg and in 'Muhammadia' madrassa in Kazan. In madrassas 'Rasulia' and 'Galia' in Sterlibash, the preparation of professional teachers started in 1890. This method was fully established and approved in Bashkortostan. Professional teachers were also trained in Istanbul and Cairo reformed madrassas and on pedagogic courses in Bakcharay and Kasymov cities. The basic education was limited to one year. European teaching standards were introduced in the educational process. Women's maktap was founded in Orenburg.

There were 92 maktaps and madrassas of a jadidism direction by 1913 in whole Turkestan. In Kazakhstan the following madrassas were opened: Gabdullayevs in Vernyi, 'Mamania' in Aqsu, 'Jakobia' in Qapal, 'Qazaqia' and 'Qizatia' in Zaisan, 'Amiria' in Kargaly, etc. The number of students at those madrassas used to increase year after year. In 1912 in 'Amiria' madrassa the number of students exceeded 150 [*Madrassa, Aikhap*, 14, 1912, 331].

The conflicts between these two directions, which were also noticed in Abai and Qunanbay's views, were found in Kazakh papers such as 'Kazakh' and 'Aikhap'. It should be taken into consideration that this conflict between Islamic fundamentalist and liberal views is still a topical issue. Comparison of views on the religious situation in the Kazakh society in past and nowadays can be found

in the works of Alma Sultangalyieva 'Retrieval of Islam to Kazakhstan' [3], A. Nysanbayev and E. Qurmanbayev's 'Revival of Islam in the 19th and 21st centuries in Kazakhstan' [4].

Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev collected myths, legends, historical stories, oratory words, types of folklore such as epic poems, ritual tales, fairy-tales, proverbs, poet's aitys. Along with them he also collected religious manuscripts and religious folk data and published them in papers such as 'Dala vilayat paper', 'Aikhap' and 'Kazakh' and he also presented his religious views in those articles.

Mashkur Zhusup gave the exact number of statistics for his collections. For instance, he wrote that his book 'Science knowledge' includes 129 sahifas including 12 verses from Quran, 18 hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad passed by his companions), 43 proverbs and 114 folk songs. (Sahifa in Arabic means a page.) In his story 'Amr' he counted 26 sahifas and 104 folk songs. Moreover, the poet created the following works: 'Prohet Hazrat Yusuf', 'Shaiq Burq the Saint who was born from sturgeon', the story 'Oshaqty Konyrbay Kalpe', 'Hazrat Noah was given prophecy in age of 370', 'Seeding Apocalypse', 'Creator created the Earth on Sunday', the poem 'The Sky and the Earth' and other works containing religious data.

He wrote about one of the five Islam commandments, Iman: "You cannot expect those five commandments from the wealth. Those men who sacrificed their lives in the sake of God with diligence and pure sincerity deserve real admiration." It is no denying that the poet's religious views had been established within the basis of Islam passed from previous Kazakh ancestors. The attention should be paid to the fact that for Kazakh people Sufism of Sunnah Islam of Hanafi Mazhab had great influence.

In his article 'Brom Baianauil' in 6th and 7th issues of the paper 'Dala vilayat', written in 1890, the enlightener Mashkur Zhusup criticized various stereotypes and believes which claimed that the Islam religion confronted with Science and rejected education, especially education of women. He appealed to Kazakhs who denied art and paid attention to gaining wealth, to study either Muslim or Russian sources and wrote the following words: "Do not think of being wealthy. Try to learn Science and have wide background, because Science is the heritage of the prophet. Wealth is the heritage of wealthy men. Those who gain much wealth have many enemies; those who gain science have many friends. If you start spreading wealth it ends, if you start spreading knowledge it increases. The one who has wealth starts to be selfish and ignorant. Those who have knowledge become modest." [M.Z. Kuandyk, *Religion and Mashkur Zhuzp*, Yegemen Kazakhstan gazetty, 20.09.2014, 329, <http://abai.kz/node/2911>].

The teacher Mashkur Zhusup paid great attention to child upbringing. He wrote: "There is a saying: 'The nature of a man is based on mother-milk. Then a child develops according to that direction.' Child's nature is based on his home nutrition. If this is measured from the early childhood and turned into a habit, it will be very helpful for a child when he grows up. When he is aged 6-7, he

should be given to Mullah. This Mullah must be highly educated by qualified scientists and ishans. He must get permissions from previous teachers and prominent people to teach. The Mullah must be a high-qualified specialist! It is not good to become a clerk getting knowledge from Nogai or a concomitant near Sart (trader). If Mullah's knowledge is not good and he gained it in wrong places, he will spoil a child too. After that, the life of a child will go in a wrong direction." [5]

Mashkur Zhusup admitted well-developed Western European and Russian cultures and underlined that their prominent views and philosophy accords with Islamic initial views. "The philosophy and knowledge Europe are all taken from Islamic sources. The thing, which makes our Muslim people in poor condition, is the words of the others, and that leads to degradation. If Europe had understood the profound meaning of the Islamic philosophy, it would have been closer to humanity. Then those works are being translated and explained by educated Muslims for us. Lermontov, Saltykov, Tolstoy – all of them knew good Mullahs and showed their point of view according to well-known, prominent Muslim educators. It can be noticed in their speeches. Their works are also translated to us by Muslims. In short this can be described as 'See the places which they take from Quran in Quran!' We see their views which accord with Hadith analyzing Hadith. Both books are available for us. So when their words accord with ours we admit them." [5]

The change of spiritual condition in Kazakhstan after gaining independence gives us an opportunity to understand and reveal new paradigms and philosophy of Kazakh religious thinkers including Mashkur Zhusup's heritage. Changes in worldview directions and settings, the end of Marxist dogmas and stereotypes make us re-evaluate the phenomenon of Muslim culture and understand that the heart and the soul of traditional culture is Islam. The prominent enlightener Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev, who was rejected during the Soviet Union times, supported the Islam culture and spiritual ideology. He considered that intellect and Science lead to the understanding of the Creator. In the current unstable world it is very important to investigate theoretical basis of Islamic culture and philosophy. It is very significant to identify spiritual humanistic power and humane direction of Islam, which is considered as one of the main religions in the world. Only in this case it will be possible to prove that the main principles of Islam are spiritual revival, understanding and peace between nationalities. This can prove that Islam totally confronts to ignorance and filth, violence and villainy. For current Kazakhstan's scientists a new opportunity to reject previous ideological marks and look from a new approach to works of Kazakh thinkers and their contribution to Kazakh culture has emerged.

According to Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev each person has an ability for good and evil. There is one more thing which deserves our attention. Zhusup Kopeev thought that Allah gave independence and the right of choice to his creatures: "Even though He created His creatures, he gave them independence of choice". In this sentence one idea does not confront to the other. Here he points

to the fact that the actions and behaviour of a man is measured by his choice, and he also considers the responsibility and weight of the results of this choice. Hence, a high attention is paid to man's independent choice. From above said statements we can conclude that Kazakh thinkers considered independence and fate as a gift of the Creator but these two concepts are not equal. Independence is given when you have to choose amongst good and evil in your destiny [6].

3. Conclusions

Mashkur Zhusup Kopeev in his work 'The Sky and the Earth' wrote: "In two days He created the Earth, in two days He created the Sky, in four days He created a pair to each creature on Earth. He had the power to create them in an hour, but He did it in order to make us think of it". By this he considered antinomy (as in dialectics) not as confrontation, but as parts of a pair which fulfil each other. In the works of Mashkur the unity, not separation, is projected from ontological view on society at the level of human relationships. He preached religious values and appealed to reject separation and conflicts, become humane and feel the iman (belief) and spiritual light.

From this point of view, Mashur Zhusup's views are significant for current Kazakhstan's religious condition. In spite of the fact that analytics consider current religious situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan as stable, we should not ignore strengthening of the religious factor in the world geo-policy. We should not forget that the openness of Kazakhstan's society to the world process related to religion may lead to problems connected with extremism, terrorism and ignorance and hypocrisy in religious context.

The Kazakh thinker concluded his idea with the following words: "Kazakh ancestors used to say: 'Ewe is spoiled by non-castrated ram, while people decay because of a liar'. We can see the obvious example of this proverb today in our life. Who are there amongst Kazakhs? There are people who escaped from different places and who saw evil in their life." [5, p. 347]

Saint Mashkur Zhusup feels grievance for decrease of Kazakh cattle breeding culture. He appeals Kazakh people not to blame others for that fact, and blames Kazakhs' own nonchalance. "You say it is due to cold winter or strong snowstorm, if so, then why are rabbits and sparrows still alive? There was no one who saw that a rabbit or sparrow died because of strong winter and windstorm. There is a proverb in Kazakh which states that a bad man reasons everything to God. So he sees every fault in God's destiny. This is wrong. Why will God ruin and destroy the property and creation which He created? No one will ruin his own creations. There will be fixed time when God ruins all the creatures he created." [5, p. 343]

The poet continues: "Where do so many disasters come from? You do not know what is a blessing. You do not evaluate your blessings and you are not satisfied. There is no need to list all blessings given to you by God. Anyway I will point out one of the most significant blessings for which you should be thankful". After these words he considers one of the most topical problems in

present times. “Oh, my brothers who can see and listen! You must take as the highest blessing your ruler who is looking after you, because with his power your life and wealth are under protection. So, one of the most important blessings is to be in real unity with your ruler. It is not important who your ruler is. Allah said to Muhammad that Allah elects the one as the owner of his wealth whom He decides to elect. Then if by choice of the All-Mighty God he was elected as the owner of His wealth, we must be humble to him and pray for the increase of his wealth.” [5, p. 344]

As an example he wrote about Kokand vilayat which was considered in the 18th century as the Islamic centre where rulers were unfair to their citizens. Zhusup reminded the proverb “Do not say that you have wealth when Akzhalau is alive”. Akzhalau was an army of Kokand khanate which attacked peaceful people. He stated that the defence from enemies who attack people, from the wolf who attack the cattle, and from burglars, means being solidarity to your ruler. He affirmed that this would lead to the change of a person.” The poet even wrote the prayer: “Oh, my Lord! We pray only to you... So let our ruler be fair and merciful for his slaves. So let him spend his lights in the sake of the whole country!” [5, p. 346]

As this rule is being neglected nowadays, the real Islamic worldview is being decreased. One more reason for this decay is weakening, even vanishing of ‘Ulems’ (accepted well-known Islamic scientists) power in the society. This occurs in many Oriental Muslim societies which had experienced atheistic policy and colonization, whereas such ‘ulems’ as Mashkur Zhusup are preservers of right methodology of Islamic sources and Islamic heritage.

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