

The Kazakh Khanate of the 15-18th Centuries in the Kazakh Oral Historical Tradition

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Abstract: During the Soviet period the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has been on the political-ideological pressure. The Kazakh rich oral historical tradition has been ignored by the Soviet historiography and hardly supposed as a source for study of the Kazakh people history. Western historians also skeptically treated the oral historical sources. Before the gaining of independence, the Kazakhs studied their own history in narrow ideological frameworks. We would like to stress, that the same situation was elsewhere in the Soviet Union on researching of history of all other “small” nations. Native sources, as well as national self-cognition’s approach did not use in the Soviet historiography. Moreover, uniqueness of the oral historical creativity of the Kazakh people has been observed in many researches for a long time.

Key words: Cultural heritage • Historiography • Historical research • Oral expressions • Traditions • Source study • Classification • Methodology

INTRODUCTION

The oral historical tradition of the Kazakh people is an important constituent of the cultural heritage of the nation, an object of research in source-study, being the subject of scientific disputes in the Kazakh historical science.

The topicality of the theme of the research is stipulated by the heightened interest in modern society to the past of the Kazakh people. The conceptual development of this idea became the “Cultural heritage” State Programme initiated by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A.Nazarbayev. The implementation of the wide-scale historical-cultural project is a vivid example that only through its unique and rich past any nation has the possibility “to present” itself to the rest of the world.

The uniqueness of the Kazakh people is in their history, in the mechanisms of conservation and representation of their historical heritage which executes the socially important functions and is in itself within the system of the nation-forming constants. The timely questions of research. During the Soviet period the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has been on the

political-ideological pressure. The Kazakh rich oral historical tradition has been ignored by the Soviet historiography and hardly supposed as a source for study of the Kazakh people history. Western historians also skeptically treated the oral historical sources. Before the gaining of independence, the Kazakhs studied their own history in narrow ideological frameworks.

We would like to stress, that the same situation was elsewhere in the Soviet Union on researching of history of all other “small” nations. Native sources, as well as national self-cognition’s approach did not use in the Soviet historiography. Moreover, uniqueness of the oral historical creativity of the Kazakh people has been observed in many researches for a long time.

The Kazakh history has also preserved it in works of oral legends collectors, travelers, chroniclers, thinkers and illuminators. There are famous and recognized authors and compilers of written sources and archival materials as Uthemish-Khodji, Abu-l-Gazi Bakhadur-Khan, Qadyrgali Zhalairi, Muhammad Haidar Dughlat, Mashhur Zhusip Kopeev, Shakarim Khudayberdiev, Qurbangali Khalidi and others among them. Therefore, it is understandable that oral historical tradition on history

of the Kazakh Khanate in 15-18th centuries has been recorded in written appearance. That is why, history of the Kazakh Khanate in 15-18th centuries is studying on the base oral historical tradition, for the first time in Kazakhstan's historiography [1].

The unique materials from manuscripts of famous Kazakh scholar Mashhur Zhusip Kopeev, preserved in the private collection of K.P. Zhusupov, files collected in the Central Scientific Library of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, written funds of the Institute of Literature and Arts named after M.O. Auezov, as well as files of the Omsk Central Scientific Library, the Museum of Novosibirsk State University are the source background of the work.

While the study of Qazaq manuscript sources for the Islamic history of the Qazaq Steppe under Russian rule is still very much in its infancy, it would be mistaken to treat Mäshhür-Zhüsip as an isolated or marginal figure in Qazaq religious and intellectual history. His Islamic education in the steppe and in the cities of Bukhara and Tashkent was prestigious, but by no means unusual among the nomads. Indeed, Islamic education was much more the norm among Qazaq scholars than Russian education, let alone Russophilia, in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Similarly, Mäshhür-Zhüsip can in no way be considered a modernist or reformist *jadid*, although he certainly showed the capability for critical evaluations of religious institutions and figures. Mäshhür-Zhüsip's information demonstrates above all the role Qazaqs themselves played in developing and staffing these institutions, as well as their ability to adapt these institutions to the nomadic environment. In this regard his example brings into question the oft-encountered stereotype that Islamic institutions and Islamic religious figures were "imported" to the Qazaqs from sedentary Central Asia or the Volga-Ural region. At the same time, the extension of Russian administrative control into the steppe regions in the first half of the 19th century facilitated the establishment of Islamic institutions among Qazaq nomads. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the case of Bayanaul and Musa Shorman-ult's role in attracting and sponsoring Qazaq religious scholars to settle there. Mäshhür-Zhüsip also demonstrates the continued significance of *khwajas* in the Middle Zhüz, particularly those functioning in the capacity of Sufi *shaykhs* [2].

All sources are systematized and studied in chronological order. On the base of the collected materials on the history of the Kazakh Khanate, such as:

Abu-l-Gazi, Kopeev, Shakarim and Khalidi, the catalog of manuscripts and oral historical works, was created by the authors.

In its turn, information given by the abovementioned authors is correlated with materials obtained by V.V. Radlov, G.N. Potanin, V.V. Veliaminov-Zernov, A.O. Bukeykhanov and S.S. Sadvakasov during the expeditions over the Kazakh steppe.

Conceptual modern approach is used by the authors as the theoretical-methodological background of thesis. Civilization approach in the revealing of historical regularities in Kazakhs' oral historical tradition as well as its place and analysis of its role in the world culture, as the methodological base is used by the authors also. The theoretical-methodological approaches of the French School of Annals as well as principles of historicism and objectivism were studied at the work.

The complex study of the Kazakh Khanate history of the 15-18th centuries in the Kazakh oral historical tradition is the goal of research.

The following tasks were posed out in the work:

- to determine the study-extent of the oral historiography in the Kazakh and world historical science;
- to assess the relevancy of the oral historical sources for the study of the Kazakh Khanate history of the 15-18th centuries;
- to implement the comparative analysis of oral and written traditions in the source studies;
- to give the full-fledged characteristics of reality and scientific justifiability of oral historical sources for the study of the Kazakh Khanate's history of the 15-18th centuries;
- to compare of the historical significance of the facts of various periods with the personalities of that times and to prove their role in the history of establishing and strengthening of the Kazakh Khanate in the 15-18th centuries;
- to reveal and substantiate the importance of oral steppe historiography for history of the Motherland;
- to identify the main specifics and characteristics of multivariate sources of oral historical tradition;
- to classify and analyze of the oral historical sources on the Kazakh Khanate's history of the 15-18th centuries [3].

On the base of oral historical tradition research on the Kazakh Khanate's history in the 15-18th centuries is made

for the first time. There is a scientific novelty of research. For the first time manuscripts by Mashur Zhusup Kopeev were fully translated and complex studied in work; the materials of the Kazakh oral historical tradition were comprehensively studied in the source aspect; the lists of the Kazakh khans, sultans, clans and their genealogies were compiled and chronologically systematized in the work; as well as the impact of Oriental historiography on the steppe oral historiography was proved, in the work. [4].

In the Main part of the work the issues of translation, transcribing, transliteration, employment of manuscript lists of sources, their authenticity and historical value for the adequate analysis and creating the full register of sources of Kazakh oral historical tradition were studied. Along with this, all the known sources of oral historiography were classified and translated and the methodology of objective study of the Kazakh sources was developed [5].

The issues of oral historiography in historical science are covered and the specific approaches for solving problems of the Kazakh Khanate's historiography are given in work. The comprehensive analysis of the works of thinkers, scientists, illuminators and collectors of the Kazakh oral historical tradition is implemented and on the base of these works the data on the Kazakh Khanate's history, unknown to the historical science, are revealed. [6].

Work gives the special consideration to the study of the Kazakh spiritual activity reflected in the oral historiography. The list of personalities, which played significant role in development of cultural life of traditional Kazakh society, was given in the Appendixes.

The main issues submitted for the defense of the thesis are the follows:

- the Kazakh oral historical tradition has the characteristics of multivariate and is fixed in various forms in the numerous written sources;
- history of the Kazakh Khanate lies in the base of oral historical tradition of the Central Asian nomads as the important constituent of cultural mentality;
- within the complex analysis of the manuscript materials, the opinion that Kazakh people did not have written history is disproved. Actually, the history had been passed on orally and had its peculiar features. Oral history is characterized by veracity, clarity of statements, inner unity of the

concepts of spiritual and cultural world-perception and hence oral historical tradition states as the original spiritual reflection of people historical memory;

- the oral historical tradition preserved in the written sources has turned out into the historical scientific knowledge of the Kazakh people;
- the history of Kazakh statehood found its natural reflection in the oral tradition. Political factors and real historical events in the Kazakh Khanate's history of the 15-18th centuries have influenced on the Kazakh oral historical tradition and its development;
- the Unique materials of the Steppe oral historiography are evidence of the role of historical personalities (Khans, Sultans, Batyrs, Biis) in the spiritual transformation of society in the 15-18th centuries [7].

The structure of the work. Work consists of introduction, four chapters, conclusion, list of sources and appendixes.

Actuality of research. Kazakhstan has received its independence nowadays and historians began to research deeply their history of nation and write objectively. Especially source study of Kazakh history is paid much attention, many valuable sources were published under the programm "Cultural heritage". Thus valuable collected information in the period of the end of XIX c. and the beginning of XX c. of Native history such work as

"Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use..." having distinctive peculiarities is one of the important problems of the modern Kazakhstan history research devoted for the source study analyses. Because the information of this source elucidates history of traditional Kazakh society and promotes to distinguish it greatly again, can completely analyze the social and economic situation of Kazakh land, development tendency, internal potential and possibilities of society.

"Materials on Kirghiz land use" collected and revised by expedition on research of steppe regions of Kazakhstan at the end of XIX c. and the beginning of XX c. The main purpose of research work is solving the problem of ethnic and social development of Central Kazakhstan on the basis of source study analysis of historical source "Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use..."

- "Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use..." is a special type of written source giving valuable

information according to nomadic life, geographical position and the territory occupied by tribals, economic situation, ethnic structure, history of traditional Kazakh society;

- organization objectiveness of expedition to help collecting “Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use...” is considered to be the result of direct colonial policy of tsarist Russia Empire. In order to solve the problem of movement for their profit statistic parties were sent for capture scientifically “extra” Kazakh lands but couldn’t solve the set aims of Empire;
- The object of research “Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use...”, its organization history, list of specialists, methods and ways of research, economic analyses, authenticity of statistic tables information are on a high level. “Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use...” is possibility for defining each aspect of colonization of Kazakh society from Russia at the end of XIX c. and the beginning of XXc.;
- Historical information of many-volumed source “Materials on Kirghiz (Kazakh) land use...” is systematized, their main directions are defined and scientific analyses were made. To analyze the source is possibility to define, to supplement some unknown and unexplored information of Kazakh history. Specially it is important to research from many sides history of traditional Kazakh society.
- At the same time the oral historical tradition is the best illustration of the interaction of these complicated latent relations within the organism of the ethnos responsible for the functioning of the whole system in the course of a long period of historical development.
- The spiritual world of the nomads developed in the oral form in the course of the centuries. Having become part of the life of the ethnos, it was the synthesis of the life experience, the values and knowledge of the people, it was one of the constituent parts of the cultural gene-fond.
- The basis for the world perception of the nomads, the historical-cultural identification in the course of the long stage of history was the tradition of the oral historical memory. That is why studying the traditional Kazakh society should be the important component of research.
- The tradition of oral conservation of one’s own past must be understood as the factor of self-preservation and self-identification of the Kazakh people.
- The dogma of Eurocentrism and colonialism in the studies stipulated the negative attitude to the sources of the oral historical tradition.

- The importance of the oral historical tradition in the national historiography is in the determination of the national traits of the history of the Kazakh people.
- The sources of the oral historical tradition require detailed source-study investigation and they contain in themselves the rich empirical material.
- The oral historical tradition is a bright example of conservation of the unique past of the Kazakh people and its representation in modern times, one of the key elements in the revival of national consciousness.

In the main part of the work there are highlighted the issues pertaining to the origin of the oral historical tradition of the Kazakh people, there is given the analytical review of the historiography of the studied problem, there is disclosed the content and justified the adequacy of the conceptual-categorical apparatus used [8].

The author pays attention to the analysis of different concepts in the understanding of the given issue, whereas the investigative context is built in the prism of historical retrospect which makes it possible to trace down the development and formation of the subject of the research within the works written by the ancient, mediaeval and modern authors [9].

The problematics are studied from the point of view of historical epistemology, there is given the classification of sources. There upon concrete examples from the sources of the oral historical tradition are shown the peculiarities of the reflection of the historical facts and the character of their refraction in the historical context.

There is given the illustration of reflecting the multilateral information within the context of the sources of the oral historical tradition which is the testimony that the latter ones are the original sources for the studying of the past of the Kazakh people. The understanding of the socially significant functions of the oral historical tradition in the life of the nomads gives one an insight into their rich spiritual inner world [10].

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