

ANNOTATION

to the dissertation of Makhmet Muratkhan for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty «6D020600 - Religious Studies» on the topic «Religious and Worldview Ideas of Akyt Ulimzhiuly»

General outline of the research work. This study comprehensively analyzes the religious and philosophical ideas of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly, a thinker born in the Altai region, now part of the People's Republic of China. The research delves into his religious, cultural, and social perspectives, as well as his historical role in Kazakh society. Additionally, a textual analysis of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's works has been conducted to determine the place of his legacy within Kazakh culture and religious thought.

Relevance of the research work. Since Kazakhstan gained independence, the revival of spiritual, cultural, and historical values ensuring national identity, unity, and the cohesion of a multiethnic and multicultural society – has become a key priority. Special attention has been paid to maintaining adherence to traditional Islam, which has long served as a fundamental mechanism for preserving national identity. President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has emphasized: "We must counteract religious extremism and archaic interpretations by firmly adhering to the tenets of traditional Islam, which is one of the main pillars of national identity. We must always proceed from our own understanding of the world and follow our unique cultural code."

Traditional Islam is one of the core values symbolizing the national identity of the Kazakh people. The statement "We can resist extremism and terrorism by firmly adhering to Islam" highlights the significance of preserving the country's traditional religious values.

Kazakh compatriots living outside Kazakhstan form an ethnic group closely connected to their historical homeland. Preserving their national identity, language, culture, and traditions plays a crucial role in strengthening the unity of the Kazakh nation. Kazakhstan's national identity also requires considering the unique cultural characteristics of Kazakhs living abroad.

At the Second World Congress of Kazakhs, Kazakhstan's First President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, noted the role of Kazakhs in China in developing spiritual culture: «The current trend of national development among the more than 1.5 million of our compatriots in China is positive. A rich and vibrant environment for the native language has been established there. All the treasures of ancient Kazakh culture, traditions, and customs have been preserved in their original form. A significant part of our nation's oral heritage is also safeguarded by our compatriots in China.»

Kazakhs in China contribute significantly to Kazakhstan's international recognition, prestige, and the promotion of Kazakh cultural heritage. They introduce the world to Kazakh national culture and traditions, showcasing the rich history of the Kazakh people. Thus, protecting the rights and interests of Kazakhs abroad, promoting their cultural and religious achievements, and strengthening cultural and economic ties with them are key aspects of Kazakhstan's diaspora policy. This, in

turn, positively influences the establishment of strong connections between Kazakh communities abroad and their historical homeland, as well as Kazakhstan's foreign policy.

Kazakhstan has played a significant role in establishing itself as an independent state, a full-fledged participant in both domestic and international affairs, and a recognized member of the global community. The return of Kazakhs from abroad has made a substantial contribution to the country's demographic growth and ethnic composition. Their repatriation has not only increased the population but also introduced new cultural and economic experiences.

From this perspective, studying the spiritual heritage and religious status of Kazakh compatriots is invaluable in understanding their way of life over the centuries and the religious influences that shaped their worldview. The close diplomatic relations between Kazakhstan and neighboring countries where Kazakhs reside have provided an opportunity for a deeper study of the history and culture of Kazakhs living abroad. In this context, there is a unique opportunity to explore the religious and educational activities of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly—a poet and philosopher who was born and lived in China and became a significant figure in Kazakh intellectual history.

Object and subject of research work. Object of the Study: The religious and social status of Kazakhs in China, along with the life and work of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly. Subject of the Study: The religious and philosophical ideas of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly, his religious, cultural, and social views, and his historical role in Kazakh society.

The purpose and objectives of the research work. The primary goal of this research is to determine the significance of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's creative legacy in modern society by comprehensively studying his religious and philosophical ideas. The study aims to analyze the role of Akyt's religious views in shaping Kazakh spiritual, cultural, and intellectual thought, as well as his connections with other thinkers.

To achieve this goal, the research sets the following objectives:

- Examine the religious and social status of Kazakhs in China in the 19th–20th centuries and its influence on Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's work.
- Investigate the life and literary legacy of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly.
- Identify theological issues within Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's worldview.
- Study the religious and ethical values reflected in his works.
- Assess the impact of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's works on religious literature of his time.
- Compare the continuity of religious and ethical ideas in Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's work with those of other thinkers.
- Evaluate the contemporary relevance of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's writings.

The level of research of the topic.

The theoretical and methodological foundation of the research work is based on the works of A. Ulymzhiyuly, as well as scholars specializing in Akyttology, including G. Akytuly, K. Zhanabiluly, K. Nurtazauly, Zh. Myrzakhanov, A. Kaliuly, B. Zhumabaiuly, B. Bopaiuly, D. Kapuly, G. Omarova, and A. Kirishbaeva.

As theoretical and methodological guidelines, the research also relies on the works of foreign scholars such as N. Katanov (Russia) and Nergis Biray (Turkey), among others. The study of the political, religious, and cultural situation of Kazakhs in China is based on the works of both domestic and foreign scholars, including Su Bihai, M. Isakhan, Ya. Kumaruly, Zh. Shakenuly, and Joseph Esherick.

Furthermore, in defining the concept of religious worldview, the research draws upon the scientific works of both domestic and foreign scholars, including G. W. Hegel, M. Eliade, W. Dilthey, Bertrand Russell, V. N. Toporov, M. Akhundov, A. Turgynbaev, S. Myrzaly, and N. Baitenova.

Scientific methods and approaches of research. To accomplish the research objectives, the study employs various methodological approaches:

- Historical-comparative method (analyzing Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's work within its historical and cultural context).
- Comparative method (comparing Akyt's religious and philosophical ideas with those of other thinkers and traditions).
- Hermeneutic method (interpreting religious texts in Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's writings).
- Phenomenological method (examining Akyt's worldview, religious experience, and philosophy without bias).

The novelty of the research work. This research is the first to conduct a religious studies analysis of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's religious and philosophical ideas. Key findings include:

- The historical settlement of Kazakhs and the spread of Islam in Xinjiang, along with internal and external factors affecting the religious and social status of Kazakhs in China.
- The development of religious education among Kazakhs in China in the late 19th–early 20th centuries and its influence on the people's religious and social life.
- A comprehensive analysis of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's religious worldview, highlighting the cultural and ethical foundations of his religious ideas.
- A study of the moral and ethical challenges addressed in Akyt's literary works and their impact on Kazakh literature and culture.
- An exploration of how Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's religious ideas were shaped by historical events and socio-political conditions.
- An assessment of the significance of Akyt Ulymzhiyuly's religious and ethical philosophy for modern society and its potential application in addressing contemporary religious and cultural issues.

The main scientific conclusions proposed for protection:

1. The Influence of Family and Socio-Political Environment on the Religious Worldview of Akyt Ulimzhiuly The first factor that shaped the religious worldview of Akyt Ulimzhiuly was his family and surroundings. The period in which the poet lived, from the late 19th to the mid-20th century, was marked by political upheavals in the Xinjiang region. By the late 19th century, the Altai Kazakhs were entirely dependent on Beijing, receiving the titles of Wang and Gong from the Qing Manchu Empire, with regional power officially granted to the holders of these titles and four elected biys. Later, during the rule of Xinjiang warlords such as Yang Zengxin

(1912–1928), Jin Shuren (1928–1933), and Sheng Shicai (1933–1944), individual freedoms were suppressed, and education and science were severely restricted. Religious and spiritual life also stagnated. Akyt Ulimzhiuly reflected this period in his works. The study of the socio-political situation during his lifetime provides valuable material for shaping modern Kazakh Islamic studies. The research findings will contribute to the study of China's religious policies in the 19th and 20th centuries and the people's efforts to preserve their religious values.

2. The Late Institutionalization of Islam in the Altai and Khovd Regions Despite the early spread of Islam in the Altai and Khovd regions, full acceptance of the religion, the establishment of religious educational institutions, and the overall Islamicization of the population occurred much later. This was due to the policies of Xinjiang's rulers, who sought to keep the population in ignorance, isolate them from the outside world, and repress the intelligentsia. These factors hindered the development of social and religious spheres. However, local elders and wealthy individuals recognized that the only way to awaken and unite the people was through education. They took urgent measures to eliminate illiteracy by establishing mosques and madrasas. In 1870, the first madrasa, "Zhotakazhi," opened in the Altai. Later, the number of madrasas increased in areas with compact Kazakh populations. In some regions, nomadic educational methods were used based on local living conditions. These institutions not only provided religious education but also significantly influenced the cultural, social, and spiritual development of the community. Studying the religious education system of the Kazakhs in China is crucial for developing the scientific and theoretical foundations of traditional Islam in alignment with Kazakh national identity.

3. Akyt Ulimzhiuly's Reflection on Social Stagnation and Cultural Backwardness. Akyt Ulimzhiuly philosophically reflects on the stagnation and "staleness" of the society in which he lived. Thanks to his early religious education and proficiency in Arabic, Persian, Chagatai, and Turkish, he was exposed to the works of Eastern thinkers and poets at a young age. His acquaintance with the Kazakh poet Abai significantly influenced his literary style and philosophical outlook. Through his poetry, glorifying the words of God, Akyt encouraged the people to seek faith and knowledge. His lifelong educational and enlightenment efforts played a significant role in forming a Kazakh intelligentsia in China.

4. The Religious-Philosophical and Sufi Influences in Akyt Ulimzhiuly's Works. Akyt Ulimzhiuly's literary heritage, derived from oral traditions and systematically compiled from books published by the Kazan publishing house, has been preserved in several volumes. His poetry represents the pinnacle of religious, educational, and philosophical trends in Kazakh literature. Sufi literature, which developed within the Arab-Turkic Muslim literary tradition, is prominently reflected in his works, aligning with Kazakh worldview. His poetry incorporates the principles of the Maturidi school of Islamic creed, widespread in Central Asia, and moral-ethical teachings found in Sufi tariqahs. Akyt Ulimzhiuly poetically traces his spiritual lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad. He utilizes the Naqshbandi Sufi order's teachings as a methodological tool to call people to morality, faith, and self-improvement. Studying his religious worldview allows for a better understanding of

the religious-cultural status of the Kazakh people at that time and provides insights into the religious situation in the region. His preserved works serve as a methodological basis for this research.

5. Akyt Ulimzhiuly as a Founder of Kazakh Written Literature Akyt Ulimzhiuly is one of the founders of Kazakh written literature. His ethical and religious views, which form the core of his works, hold a special place in Kazakh literary heritage. He used the Quran and Hadiths to glorify truth and religious values and emphasize the importance of moral and ethical principles. His approach played a key role in shaping his religious worldview. His works, combining lyrical beauty and spiritual depth, provide concrete answers to eternal existential questions about love for God, the meaning of life, and the essence of faith. Another significant contribution of Akyt to Kazakh literature is his ability to present religious topics in a clear and accessible manner, akin to the style of Abai. This solidifies Akyt Ulimzhiuly's legacy as a poet, educator, thinker, religious scholar, and "bookish akyn".

6. Influences on Akyt Ulimzhiuly's Religious Worldview The key factors shaping Akyt Ulimzhiuly's religious worldview include his social environment, family upbringing, and exposure to the works of Eastern poets such as Navoi and Nizami, as well as Turkic and Kazakh philosophers such as al-Farabi, Yassawi, and Abai. His engagement with these thinkers left a profound impact on his literary and philosophical legacy.

This study conducts a comparative analysis of the moral philosophy of Akyt Ulimzhiuly and al-Farabi, as well as its connections to the works of Khoja Ahmed Yassawi, Abai Kunanbayuly, and Shakarim Kudayberdiuly. The research also examines the political situation in China during Akyt's encounter with Abai's works and how Abai's philosophy influenced Akyt's poetry. Furthermore, the study highlights Akyt's crucial role in introducing Abai's works to the Kazakhs of China.

Akyt Ulimzhiuly was not only a religious poet but also a public figure who lamented the suffering of his people in times of turmoil. His works express deep sorrow for a society engulfed in ignorance and godlessness, aligning him with the "Poets of the Sorrowful Era," led by Shortanbai Kanaiuly. Thus, studying Akyt Ulimzhiuly's religious worldview provides valuable insights into the religious and social conditions of the Kazakh people during that time.

Theoretical and practical value of the research work. The findings obtained in the course of this research can be utilized primarily for an in-depth study of various issues in religious studies. Additionally, the materials of this dissertation can be recommended as scholarly literature essential for the exploration of the understudied system of religious-philosophical ethics and worldview of Akyt Ulimzhiuly. Furthermore, the dissertation's results may contribute to the study of the religious and cultural environment, as well as the political and social status of Kazakhs in China during that period.

Publication and review of research work (approbation). The key findings of this research have been presented in scientific reports at international scientific and practical conferences, as well as in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education. Additionally, the results have

been published in scientific journals indexed in the Scopus database, including one article indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection:

1. The importance of religious education in consolidating Kazakh identity in China: A historical approach // Web of Science: Religious Education, 2021, Vol. 116, Iss. 5, pp. 521–530 (Quartile – Q1, Percentile – 78).

List of Articles Published in Journals Recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as Other Scientific Journals:

1. Manifestation of Maturidi Creed in the Works of Akyt Ulimzhiuly // Bulletin of KazNU. Series: Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Political Science, No. 4 (62), 2017, pp. 147-154.

2. The Role of the "Abakiya" Madrasa in the Religious Education System of Chinese Kazakhs // Bulletin of KazNU. Series: Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Political Science, No. 1 (63), 2018, pp. 178-186.

3. Features of Akyt Ulimzhiuly's Religious Worldview // Bulletin of KazNU. Series: Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Political Science, No. 2 (68), 2019, pp. 171-179.

4. Relationship between Religion and Customs Law in Traditional Kazakh Society // Bulletin of KazNU. Series: Religious Studies, No. 3 (31), 2022, pp. 36-44.

5. The Duality of Society: "Harmony – Disharmony" Through the Lens of the Quranic Revelation // Bulletin of KazNU. Series: Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Political Science, No. 1 (63), 2018, pp. 78-88.

List of Articles Published in Proceedings of Domestic and International Conferences:

1. The Formation of the Religious Educational System of Kazakhs in China // Materials of the XIII International Scientific and Practical Conference "Science Without Borders", 2018, pp. 54-59.

2. The Religious Situation of Chinese Kazakhs in the 20th Century and the Religious Policy of the Communist Party of China // Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference "Issues of Islamic Studies and Arabic Philology", Vol. XVII, 2019, pp. 73-83.

3. Akyt Ulimzhiuly's Views on the Afterlife // Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference for Students and Young Scientists "The World of Farabi", 2020, pp. 380-388.

4. A Historical and Religious Review of the Spread of Buddhism in the Kazakh Steppe // Proceedings of the Republican Scientific Conference "Religious Aspects of Tradition and Innovation in the Context of the Global and Kazakhstani Reality", 2022, pp. 173-181.

5. The Evolution of Religious Worldview in the Life and Works of Akyt Ulimzhiuly // Recent Scientific Investigation. Proceedings of the XLI International Multidisciplinary Conference, February 2023, pp. 135-144.

6. Religious and Ethical Concepts in the Worldview of Akyt Ulimzhiuly // Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference "The Legacy of Husamuddin as-Sygnaki in the Space of Islamic Civilization", 2023, pp. 140-146.

Articles Published in International and National Educational Journals:

1. The Concept of the Ideal Human in the Works of Akyt Ulimzhiuly // Aqiqat, 2023, No. 4, pp. 78-81.

2. The Spiritual Continuity of Moral Philosophy between Al-Farabi and Akyt Ulimzhiuly // Islamic Studies Research, No. 1 (001), 2024, pp. 165-174.

The dissertation was discussed and submitted for defense at an extended meeting of the Department of Religious Studies at the Egyptian University of Islamic Culture "Nur-Mubarak"

The structure of the dissertation. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. Each chapter is divided into three subsections. The total length of the dissertation is 159 pages.