



Article

## Historical Reality in Zhyrau's Poetry

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**Abstract:** History is the result of life experience, while historical tolgau are a manifestation of spiritual art. In historical tolgau, information is not reality itself, but is a way of people's perception of reality. Thus, history is a spiritual world, saturated with artistic concepts and social ideas. Such works adapt history to the people's consciousness, presenting events in an interesting form, and are a special impact of artistic search, uniting the fate of the people, social relations and worldview. One of the significant parts of historical tolgau, containing a lot of information about the history of the Karakalpaks, are poetic works created in the Nogai period. The article discusses the reflection of the events of the Nogai period in terme-tolgau.

**Key words:** Nogai period, history, terme, tolgau, zhyrau

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### Introduction

The poetry of Zhyrau, a prominent figure in Kazakh literature, serves as a vital lens through which the historical and cultural narratives of the Kazakh people are illuminated. Zhyrau's works not only reflect the socio-political landscape of his time but also encapsulate the values, traditions, and struggles of his community. This article aims to explore the intricate relationship between historical reality and artistic expression in Zhyrau's poetry. By examining specific themes, motifs, and stylistic elements within his verses, this study seeks to demonstrate how Zhyrau's work functions as a historical document that offers insight into the collective identity and experiences of the Kazakh people during periods of upheaval and change. Through this exploration, we hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of how literature can serve as both a reflection and an interpretation of lived historical realities.

### METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative analytical approach to investigate the historical reality portrayed in Zhyrau's poetry.

### RESULTS

Zhyrau's poetry serves not only as an artistic expression but also as an essential historical document that offers insight into Kazakhstan's past while simultaneously addressing universal themes relevant to both his time and modern readers. The findings underscore the importance of preserving such literary works to better understand cultural heritage and collective memory within Central Asian studies.

### DISCUSSION

The poetry of zhyraus is an effective spiritual channel among the people of all the events in history that have reached the present day from the previous traditions of the people and will be shared in the future. The aesthetic and humanistic nature of zhyrau's poetry in the system of time and space, its artistic influence in the process of development of national literature, and the social aspects of society will always be important.

Historical truth built into fiction is often born from events that happened in life. Creating an artistic sentence is a product of creative mind and deep excitement, sharp and quick imagination. Of course, this is a creative trend that gives wings to the imagination and awakens creative inspiration.

The artistic truths of the Karakalpak zhyraus are the events witnessed by the zhyraus themselves. They created their works in the midst of these bloody and invading days. However, some of them reached us without the author being known. As the scientist K. Mambetov, who studied the Karakalpak tolgaus, noted, tolgaus are the path and historical life of the people. People's pain and cultural path are preserved in it [1, 6].

The genre that sings about the historical path of the people is historical laments. Historical sorrows reveal history.

If history is a connecting tool of life, historical sorrows are the opposite of spiritual connection. The information in the historical tolgaus is not the truth itself, but the people's concept of the truth. So, the history here is the property of the spiritual world, enriched with the concept of artistry and social views. Such works are a unique and impressive story of artistic research, which fills history in a way that suits the people's consciousness, changes events, fully reflects the destiny, social relations and worldview of the people.

A large part of the historical tolgaus that provide rich information about the history of the Karakalpak people are poetic works created in the Nogai period.

The Nogai period, which is full of violent events in the history of the Karakalpak, Kazakh and Nogai peoples, is also rich in epics, tolgaus and historical songs that express the spirit of that time. The literature of this period was written by P.P. Ivanov, S.P. Tolstov, V.I. Zhirmunsky, A. Kungirobayev, V.V. Researchers studying the history and folklore of Turkic peoples, such as Trepavlov, many local historians and literary scholars, including N. Davkarayev, S. Kamalov, M. Nurmukhamedov, I. Sagitov, Q. Ayimbetov, Q. Maqsetov, K. Mambetov, M. Tileumuratov, A. Kojibayev and others learned from different aspects.

The term "Nogai" itself is related to the name of a historical person. In the folklore of the Karakalpaks of the Bukhara-Navoi regions, the following is sung about Nogai:

*Alalay menen Bulalay,  
At boladı jorǵa tay,  
Er qádirin er biler,  
Ertede ótti Er Noǵay...* [2, 260]

In the Karakalpak family tree, he is known as "Er Nogai", "Amir Nogai" or "Nogai Mirza", "Nogai Sultan", "Nogai Khan". This person is known as one of the rulers of the Golden Horde, who founded the great ulus named after him. During the reign of Berke Khan, Nogai Sultan, who held the position of "district head" in the Golden Horde, had great military power and ruled the western regions of the country [3, 84].

According to K. Mambetov, "The family tree of the Karakalpaks begins with this Nogai..." [4, 30]. Nogai (1262-1301), who personally ruled Crimea and Bessarabia during the Golden Horde period, took part in the major movements of that time and rose to the rank of the head of the Mangits and the head of the nation. According to V. M. Zhirmunsky, the ulus led by Nogai acted independently of the Golden Horde [5, 413]. As a result, other tribes joined under the command of the renowned military leader known as "Er Nogai," and all of them began to be called "Nogai" or "Nogaily," after their leader.

K. Mambetov, who studied the Nogai period to a certain extent, concluded that "the three-century history of the Karakalpak people is connected with the name of this person, this nation, and this tribe" [4, 108]. Also, it can be seen that the works performed by zhyrau do not mention only the name of Er Nogai, but refer to the entire history of the era.

The fact that the tribes following Er Nogai united into one nation and, after a relatively short period, some of them returned to the Volga-Ural rivers, and by 1391, under the unification by the military leader Edige, completely separated from the Golden Horde to establish a new entity known as the "Nogaily jurty" (Nogai's country) is well-documented in historical records. Although these events are not fully depicted in the tolgaus (epic narratives), the name of the national hero Er Edige is always prominently remembered. For example:

*Edil babam kiyatır,  
Elge babam kiyatır,*

*Eliw attı quwalap,  
Edige babam kiyatır!*

Historical tolgaus created during Nogai period are well preserved among the people, and in some cases they are related to certain historical figures, great dances and famous zhyraus. For example, let's consider the following story about Orak and Mamai, famous people of the Nogai period:

*Ay Oraǵım, Oraǵım!  
Aylanay sennen qaraǵım  
Jabı jurtqa jaq bolǵan  
Jawǵa ılayıq jaraǵım  
Mamay menen ekińniń  
Maqul edi talabıń  
Baǵı ushın tuwǵan eliniń  
Batırı dep baladım  
Jalǵannıń salǵan sawdası  
Jalǵız qaldıń shıraǵım... [6, 64].*

Mamai is one of the thirty sons of Moses, the leader of the Mangits, the dance of the Nogai Horde. He was born to Khoja, the second wife of Mosa. Russian chronicles call him Mirza, who took the princely place. Mamay is one of the main characters of the epic "Orak-Mamay" in the cycle of epics "Forty Knights of Crimea". Musa had another son named Mamai, who is called Sheikh Mamai (King Mamai, sometimes Shamay).

After the death of the leaders of the Nogai Horde, Mosa and his brother Jamghurchi, a struggle for leadership begins between his children. However, Mamai Mirza does not participate in this fight, he supported his half-brother Alchagir. Alchagir's main rival was his half-brother Sheikh Mohammad. At that time, Janibek Khan suggested to Alchagir to completely defeat Sheikh Muhammad along with all his lands. Mamai agreed. As it is known, at that time, Janibek Khan defeated Sheikh Muhammad without waiting for the Nogais, which the Nogais did not like, because Janibek Khan took over all the properties and shares of Sheikh Mohammad himself. Deprived of all his wealth, Sheikh Muhammad confessed his guilt to Alchagir, but he imprisoned him. This situation caused the displeasure of many Nogai elders, so Mamai went with 50 loyal people, freed Sheikh Muhammad and took him away from Alchagir.

After the Kazakh attack and the death of the main leaders of the Nogai, Sheikh Muhammad and Alchagir, Mamai's role increased even more. He became one of the Nogai chiefs who led the struggle to expel the Kazakhs after the death of the Kazakh Khan Kasim.

In 1523, during the Kazakh attack, the Khan of Crimea, Muhammad Girey, started a campaign against the Khan of Astrakhan with the help of the Nogai who were subordinate to him. It is said that Mamai and Ogish beys led the Nogais in this campaign. Astrakhan surrendered without a fight, as it was useless to resist the incoming armed forces. But later the Nogai marched against the Crimean khan and killed him outside the city together with Bahadır Girey, the khan's successor [7, 752].

Mangit Mirza Orak was one of the sons of Alchagir, the chief of the Nogai Horde, and his mother was the sister of the Crimean Khan Mengli Girey. He is the father of Kazi, the founder of the small Nogai Horde. Together with his father, Orak took part in internal struggles between Sheikh Muhammad. Around 1516, Alchagir was defeated and together with Orak went to the protection of Muhammad Girey in the Crimea. In the 1520s, together with Said Ahmad, he actively participated in the fight against the Kazakhs on the borders of the Nogai Horde. In these wars, he killed one of the Kazakh commanders - Koblandi. According to epic legends, he participated in the campaign against the Crimea under the leadership of Mamai in 1523 [7, 752].

## CONCLUSION

In general, terma-tolgaus achieved several achievements in showing the true reflection of life with their artistic research. Along with the formation of the tolgaу genre created by zhyraus as an independent genre, for the first time he evaluated the social life, the relationships of various people in it, and expressed his opinion about the future. All this was manifested in

the form of wisdom and proverbs, and led to the formation of poems with didactic content in our folklore.

Although we can get historical information from historical tolgaus, using them as a historical source is a matter that requires great caution. This is because in historical folklore, events or persons from the past can be confused with epic events and characters. Time and space are variable in historical folklore examples. Nevertheless, the role of historical folklore examples, especially historical traditions, is very important in understanding the spirit of the era, the spirit of the people, and the spirit of the creator.

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