

ФИЛОСОФИЯ

IRSTI 02.15.51

<https://doi.org/10.47526/3007-8598.6451>**ALMASBEK SHAGYRBAY** 

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A RELIGIOUS STUDIES ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS WORKS OF MASHHUR ZHUSUP KOPEYULY

Abstract. This article examines the spiritual and moral content of the works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly (1858–1931), a prominent Kazakh poet, ethnographer, and religious thinker who made a significant contribution to preserving and promoting the spiritual heritage of the Kazakh people. The aim of the study is to analyze his writings from the perspective of Religious Studies and to identify their religious, ethical, and educational dimensions. The research is based on textual and thematic analysis of selected poems and prose works. The findings demonstrate that Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly addressed a wide range of issues related to faith, morality, social responsibility, knowledge, and personal development. His works contain valuable reflections on the spiritual challenges of society and emphasize the importance of ethical conduct, religious values, and the moral upbringing of younger generations. Many of his ideas remain relevant to contemporary social and spiritual issues in the twenty-first century. The study concludes that Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's literary and religious legacy represents an important source for understanding traditional Kazakh religious thought and moral culture. His works contribute to the preservation of national spiritual values and support current efforts aimed at strengthening cultural identity and promoting ethical education in modern Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly, religion, spirituality, religious studies, moral education, Kazakh culture.

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Мәшһүр Жүсіп Көпейұлының дінге қатысты туындыларына дінтанулық талдау

Аңдатпа. Бұл мақала қазақ халқының рухани мұрасын сақтауға және насихаттауға зор үлес қосқан көрнекті ақын, этнограф әрі діни ойшыл Мәшһүр Жүсіп Көпейұлының (1858–1931) шығармаларындағы рухани-өнегелік мазмұнды қарастырады. Зерттеудің мақсаты – оның еңбектерін дінтанулық тұрғыдан талдап, діни, адамгершілік және тәрбиелік қырларын анықтау. Зерттеу барысында ақынның таңдамалы өлеңдері мен прозалық шығармаларына мәтіндік және тақырыптық талдау жүргізілді. Зерттеу нәтижелері Мәшһүр Жүсіп Көпейұлының иман, адамгершілік, әлеуметтік жауапкершілік, білім және тұлғалық

***Cite us correctly:**

Shagyrbay, A. (2026). A Religious Studies Analysis of the Religious Works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly. *НИКМЕТ*, 2(8), 65–78. <https://doi.org/10.47526/3007-8598.6451>

Мақаланың редакцияға түскен күні 02.06.2026 / қабылданған күні 24.06.2026.

даму мәселелеріне кеңінен тоқталғанын көрсетеді. Оның шығармаларында қоғамның рухани мәселелері туралы құнды ойлар айтылып, ізгі мінез-құлықтың, діни құндылықтардың және жас ұрпақ тәрбиесінің маңыздылығы айқын көрініс табады. Сонымен қатар, ақын қоғамдағы адам болмысы мен рухани кемелдену мәселелеріне ерекше назар аударады. Ақынның көптеген идеялары бүгінгі ХХІ ғасырдағы әлеуметтік және рухани мәселелермен сабақтас. Зерттеу қорытындысы бойынша Мәшһүр Жүсіп Көпейұлының әдеби және діни мұрасы дәстүрлі қазақ діни ойы мен рухани мәдениетін түсінудің маңызды дереккөзі болып табылады. Оның шығармалары ұлттық рухани құндылықтарды сақтауға, мәдени бірегейлікті нығайтуға және қазіргі Қазақстандағы адамгершілік тәрбиені дамытуға ықпал етеді.

Кілт сөздер: Мәшһүр Жүсіп Көпейұлы, дін, руханият, дінтану, адамгершілік тәрбиесі, қазақ мәдениеті.

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Религиоведческий анализ произведений Машхура Жусупа Копеева, посвящённых религии

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается духовно-нравственное содержание произведений Машхура Жусупа Копеева (1858–1931) – выдающегося казахского поэта, этнографа и религиозного мыслителя, внесшего значительный вклад в сохранение и популяризацию духовного наследия казахского народа. Цель исследования заключается в анализе его творчества с религиоведческой точки зрения и выявлении его религиозных, нравственных и воспитательных аспектов. В работе использованы методы текстуального и тематического анализа избранных поэтических и прозаических произведений автора. Результаты исследования показывают, что Машхур Жусуп Копеев уделял большое внимание вопросам веры, нравственности, социальной ответственности, знаний и личностного развития. В его произведениях содержатся ценные размышления о духовных проблемах общества, подчеркивается значение нравственного поведения, религиозных ценностей и воспитания молодого поколения. Многие идеи мыслителя сохраняют актуальность и в современных социальных и духовных условиях ХХІ века. В заключение отмечается, что литературное и религиозное наследие Машхура Жусупа Копеева является важным источником для понимания традиционной казахской религиозной мысли и духовной культуры. Его труды способствуют сохранению национальных духовных ценностей, укреплению культурной идентичности и развитию нравственного воспитания в современном Казахстане.

Ключевые слова: Машхур Жусуп Копеев, религия, духовность, религиоведение, нравственное воспитание, казахская культура.

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Maşhur Zhusip Köpeyulı'nın Dinle İlgili Eserlerinin Din Bilimleri Açısından Analizi

Özet. Bu makalede, Kazak halkının manevi mirasının korunması ve tanıtılmasına önemli katkılar sağlayan seçkin Kazak şairi, etnografı ve din düşünürü Maşhur Zhusip Köpeyulı'nın (1858–1931) eserlerindeki manevi ve ahlaki içerik incelenmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, onun eserlerini Dinler Tarihi ve Din Bilimleri perspektifinden analiz ederek dinî, ahlaki ve eğitsel

boyutlarını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırma, seçilmiş şiir ve nesir eserlerinin metinsel ve tematik analizine dayanmaktadır. Araştırma sonuçları, Maşhur Jusip Köpeuli'nin iman, ahlak, toplumsal sorumluluk, bilgi ve bireysel gelişim konularına geniş yer verdiğini göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte eserlerinde toplumun manevi sorunlarına ilişkin değerli düşünceler yer almakta olup, ahlaki davranışın, dinî değerlerin ve genç neslin eğitiminin önemi vurgulanmaktadır. Özellikle onun birçok düşüncesi günümüzün sosyal ve manevi meseleleri açısından da güncelliğini korumaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Maşhur Zhusip Köpeyli'nin edebî ve dinî mirası, geleneksel Kazak dinî düşüncesi ve manevi kültürünün anlaşılması için önemli bir kaynak niteliğindedir. Eserleri, millî manevi değerlerin korunmasına, kültürel kimliğin güçlendirilmesine ve çağdaş Kazakistan'da ahlaki eğitimin geliştirilmesine de katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Maşhur Zhusip Köpeyli, din, maneviyat, din bilimleri, ahlak eğitimi, Kazak kültürü.

Introduction

The spiritual heritage of the Kazakh people has been shaped through a close interaction between religion, culture, and intellectual thought. Throughout history, religious values have played a significant role in the formation of moral principles, social norms, and collective identity. In the Kazakh context, Islam has served not only as a religious system but also as an important source of ethical guidance, education, and cultural continuity. The transmission of religious and moral knowledge was often carried out through literature, poetry, oral traditions, and the works of prominent scholars and thinkers (Әбдиманұлы, & Шортанбаев, 2017).

Among the distinguished representatives of Kazakh spiritual and intellectual culture, Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly (1858–1931) occupies a special place. Known as a poet, ethnographer, historian, educator, and religious thinker, he devoted much of his literary activity to addressing questions of faith, morality, knowledge, and human responsibility. His writings reflect the synthesis of traditional Islamic teachings and the cultural values of the Kazakh people, offering valuable insights into the religious worldview of Kazakh society during a period of significant social and political transformation.

The relevance of studying Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's religious heritage has increased in contemporary Kazakhstan, where issues of religious identity, spiritual development, and moral education continue to attract scholarly and public attention. Since independence, the revival of religious consciousness has stimulated renewed interest in the intellectual legacy of national thinkers who contributed to the preservation of traditional Islamic values and cultural identity. In this context, Mashhur Zhusup's works provide an important source for understanding the historical foundations of Kazakh religious thought and its significance for modern society.

Although Mashhur Zhusup's literary, historical, and ethnographic contributions have received considerable academic attention, the religious dimensions of his writings remain insufficiently explored from the perspective of Religious Studies. A systematic analysis of his religious ideas can contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between religion, morality, and social life in Kazakh intellectual history. Furthermore, such research may help clarify the role of traditional religious values in addressing contemporary ethical and spiritual challenges.

The aim of this study is to examine the religious content of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's works and to identify their theological, ethical, and educational dimensions. Through textual and thematic analysis of selected poems and prose writings, the article explores key religious concepts reflected in his legacy, including faith (iman), wisdom ('aql), patience (sabr), gratitude (shukr), good manners (adab), and spiritual responsibility. The study also evaluates the significance of these concepts within the broader framework of Islamic thought and their contribution to the preservation of Kazakh spiritual culture (Ecim, 2010: 34–58).

The findings of this research contribute to the growing field of Religious Studies in Kazakhstan by highlighting Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's role as an important representative of Kazakh Islamic intellectual tradition. His works demonstrate how religious teachings can serve as

a foundation for moral education, social harmony, and cultural continuity, making his legacy relevant not only to historical scholarship but also to contemporary discussions on spirituality and national identity.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative research design based on Religious Studies analysis. The main purpose of the method is to examine the religious, moral, and educational ideas reflected in the works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly and to interpret them within the broader context of Kazakh Islamic thought.

The primary method used in the research is textual analysis. Selected poems, prose writings, religious narratives, and philosophical reflections of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly are analyzed in order to identify key religious concepts such as *iman* (faith), *tawhid* (the oneness of God), *sabr* (patience), *shukr* (gratitude), *adab* (good manners), *haya'* (modesty), knowledge, and moral responsibility. Special attention is given to the poems "Five Precious Virtues" and "Four Precious Virtues and Five Blessings," as these works clearly express the author's understanding of Islamic ethics and spiritual education.

The study also applies thematic analysis. Through this method, the main themes in Mashhur Zhusup's works are grouped and interpreted according to their religious and ethical meaning. These themes include faith and belief, the role of reason in understanding religion, moral education, social responsibility, religious enlightenment, and the preservation of traditional Kazakh Islamic values.

In addition, the research uses a comparative approach. Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's religious views are considered in relation to Islamic sources, including the Qur'an, Sharia principles, Sunni-Hanafi tradition, Maturidi theology, and Sufi thought. Where necessary, his ideas are also compared with the religious-enlightenment views of other Kazakh thinkers such as Abai Kunanbayuly and Shakarim Kudaiberdiuly.

A historical-contextual method is also employed to understand the social, cultural, and religious conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This method helps explain how Mashhur Zhusup's religious worldview was shaped by the spiritual traditions of the Kazakh steppe, Islamic education, Sufi influence, and the intellectual challenges of his time.

The research is based on secondary scholarly sources, religious texts, and selected literary works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly. The analysis focuses not only on the literary form of his writings but also on their religious meaning, ethical content, and relevance to contemporary Kazakh society.

Discussion and Results

The spiritual identity and worldview of the Kazakh people have historically been closely connected with religious values. Religion has played an important role in helping people understand themselves, the world around them, and the meaning of life. This can be clearly seen in both Kazakh oral literature and written literary works. Poetry and other forms of literary expression were important tools for passing moral values, wisdom, and educational ideas from one generation to another. Islamic teachings spread throughout the Kazakh steppe not only through religious institutions but also through epics, legends, poems, and the works of religious educators (Көпеев, 1992).

Throughout the history of Turkic and Kazakh culture, many outstanding thinkers and scholars expressed their views on life, society, and faith through literature. Beginning with Korkyt Ata and continuing through Yusuf Balasaguni, Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Ahmed Yugnaki, Suleiman Bakyrangani, as well as Kazakh poets, biys, religious educators, Abai, and Shakarim, these intellectual figures contributed to the development of the spiritual and philosophical heritage of their people. One of the most significant representatives of this tradition is Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly. His works are deeply connected with religious and philosophical thought and reflect

the influence of Islamic values on Kazakh society. Therefore, studying his legacy helps us better understand the religious worldview, spiritual culture, and intellectual history of the Kazakh people.

Today, the study of religion remains highly relevant due to the revival of religious consciousness and the growing interest in spiritual values in modern society. Since gaining independence, the role of religion in Kazakhstan has increased significantly and has become an important factor in shaping both national and religious identity. At the same time, many people still have limited knowledge of religious teachings and practices, while discussions about traditional and non-traditional religious movements continue. These circumstances highlight the importance of studying religious worldview from a scholarly perspective.

In this context, the works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly, one of the leading representatives of Kazakh intellectual thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, deserve special attention. A religious studies analysis of his worldview is important both academically and socially. Such research contributes not only to a deeper understanding of Kazakh religious and philosophical thought but also to a better interpretation of contemporary spiritual processes in Kazakhstan. Therefore, a systematic study of the religious ideas reflected in Mashhur Zhusup's works is an important task for modern religious studies scholarship.

Mashhur Zhusup was a prominent representative of the Islamic enlightenment movement. Criticizing the Soviet policy directed against religion and the native language, he promoted Islamic values and encouraged people to pursue knowledge and education. He authored numerous poems and narrative works (qissas and dastans) devoted to Islam and Islamic law (Sharia). As one scholar notes, “Mashhur Zhusup’s religious heritage serves as a guiding light for the field of religious studies” (Хасенова, & Жүсіпов, 2016: 121–123).

The statement that “he was recognized as a saint during his lifetime” is reflected in the many legends, stories, and oral traditions about Mashhur Zhusup that continue to circulate among local people today. Accounts of his extraordinary deeds and spiritual abilities have led many to regard him as an *awliya* (saint). In his article *Mashhur Zhusup and the Nature of Sainthood*, A. Pazylov, an employee of the Baba Museum, explains the concept of *awliya* as follows: “The word *awliya* is the plural form of the Arabic word *wali*. In Kazakh, it refers to a ‘friend of Allah,’ ‘a person close to Allah,’ ‘a person under Allah’s protection,’ or ‘a person blessed by Allah’s mercy’”. The author further describes a number of extraordinary events associated with Mashhur Zhusup that have remained in popular memory.

In Islamic tradition, a *karamat* (miracle) is understood as a divine gift granted by Allah to a saint, similar to the miracles bestowed upon prophets. More specifically, a miracle is regarded as a manifestation of Allah’s favor that appears in His righteous servants as a result of perfect faith, spiritual knowledge (*ma'rifa*), and piety. Such extraordinary events cannot be explained through ordinary natural laws and are therefore considered metaphysical phenomena. Those who attain this elevated spiritual state possess a unique spiritual authority and differ from others in their perception, understanding, and even their actions.

“Five Precious Virtues”

*“The very first thing one needs is **faith**,” he said.*

“Believe in the affairs of the Hereafter,” he said.

Merely saying, “God will forgive me,” is not enough;

“One who does not know the tenets of faith cannot be secure,” he said.

*“The second thing one needs is **wisdom**,” he said.*

“Without wisdom, divine guidance runs dry,” he said.

Angered by the smallest matter, one may ruin his religion

And sell his faith for disbelief, he said.

*“The third precious thing is **patience**,” he said.*

“The patient person attains his goal,” he said.

In every matter, the repentance of the impatient is hardship itself;

Impatience invites one misfortune after another, he said.

“The fourth precious thing is **gratitude**,” he said.
 “Ingratitude for blessings is a form of unbelief,” he said.
 Lying idle and merely saying, ‘God, forgive me,’ is disgraceful;
 Seek the means and strive upon the straight path, he said.
 “The fifth precious thing is good manners,” he said.
 “It is remarkable for faith to dwell in one who lacks manners,” he said.
 “Disbelief finds no place in the well-mannered,
 For good manners are the path that leads to Love,” he said.

Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly’s poem “Five Precious Virtues” presents, in a clear and accessible manner, the noble values and reflections that are regarded in Islam as the fundamental bond between the Creator and the believer (Көпейұлы, 1990: 157).

The first virtue highlighted in *Five Precious Virtues* is faith (*iman*). The concept of *iman* is one of the central pillars of Islam. To have faith means to affirm belief in the Creator, profess it with one’s words, and embrace it sincerely in one’s heart. It is established as the foremost requirement among the fundamental duties and principles of the religion. In Islamic law (*Sharia*), *iman* signifies affirming and accepting, without any doubt, the truths and divine commands conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Allah the Exalted, while sincerely believing in their truthfulness. The essential principle of faith is to confirm it in the heart and profess it with the tongue. For a person to be considered a complete Muslim, he or she must inwardly affirm the foundations of faith and openly declare belief in them.

The second virtue discussed in *Five Precious Virtues* is wisdom and intellect (*ghaqyl*). In the Sunni schools of Islamic thought, great importance is attached to the concept of reason, for it is through reason that human beings come to know, recognize, and submit to the Creator. By reflecting deeply, considering the principles of faith rationally, and engaging in intellectual inquiry, a person accepts religious belief through conscious understanding. Imam al-Maturidi stated:

“Allah can be known through reason. Reason is a gift bestowed upon us by Allah the Exalted so that we may comprehend the mysteries of creation. Moreover, we are obliged to reflect deeply upon creation. However, reason has its limits. It cannot fully grasp the infinite divine wisdom of Allah or the realities that He has kept hidden as mysteries.”

Imam al-Maturidi further explains that the Holy Qur’an declares:

“We never punish until We have sent a messenger.” (Qur’an, Surah al-Isra, 17:15).

According to him, this verse indicates that even before the sending of prophets, human beings were granted rational evidence pointing to the oneness of God. Otherwise, when a prophet called his people to faith, they could have responded: “Who are you? Who sent you?” Therefore, reason itself serves as a proof that leads human beings to recognize and know Allah, the Creator.

Thus, in Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly’s poem, *ghaqyl* (wisdom) is presented not merely as intellectual ability, but as a divine gift that enables a person to attain faith through reflection, understanding, and the recognition of God’s existence and unity.

The third virtue emphasized in *Five Precious Virtues* is patience (*sabr*).

Patience is also regarded as one of the divine attributes associated with Allah’s Beautiful Names. For this reason, being patient is considered one of the fundamental principles that helps a believer fulfill the requirements of faith and endure the hardships and trials of life.

Several passages in the Holy Qur’an emphasize the importance of patience. For example:

“O you who believe! Seek help through patience and prayer (when afflicted by hardship, sorrow, or adversity). Indeed, Allah is with the patient.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:153)

Another verse states: “Indeed, those who are patient will be given their reward without measure.” (Surah az-Zumar, 39:10)

These verses demonstrate that patience occupies a central place in Islamic teaching. It is not merely the ability to endure difficulties, but a spiritual virtue through which believers seek

Allah's assistance, remain steadfast in their faith, and attain immeasurable reward. In Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly's poem, patience is therefore presented as an essential quality that enables a person to overcome trials and ultimately achieve his or her goals.

The fourth virtue discussed in *Five Precious Virtues* is gratitude (*shukr*).

Through gratitude, human beings reflect upon, understand, and appreciate all the blessings bestowed upon them. Such awareness contributes positively to the strengthening of harmony, mutual understanding, and social cohesion within society. In Islamic teaching, gratitude is not merely an expression of thanks; it is a recognition of the countless favors granted by Allah and an acknowledgment of humanity's dependence upon His mercy.

The Holy Qur'an emphasizes the dignity and blessings bestowed upon humankind:

"Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam. We carried them on land and sea, provided them with good and lawful sustenance, and favored them greatly above many of those whom We created." (Surah al-Isra, 17:70)

Another passage describes how human beings have been created in a highly honored state and surrounded by innumerable blessings for which they ought to be grateful: *"It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and sent down rain from the sky, thereby bringing forth fruits as provision for you. He has subjected ships to you so that they may sail upon the sea by His command, and He has subjected the rivers to you. He has made the sun and the moon, constant in their courses, beneficial to you, and He has subjected the night and the day to you. He has given you of all that you asked of Him. If you were to count the blessings of Allah, you could never enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is truly most unjust and exceedingly ungrateful."* (Based on Surah Ibrahim, 14:32–34)

These verses illustrate that gratitude occupies a vital place in Islam. By recognizing the countless blessings granted by Allah, believers cultivate humility, contentment, and a deeper awareness of their responsibilities toward both the Creator and society. In Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly's poem, gratitude is therefore presented as a precious virtue that strengthens faith and encourages people to value the gifts they have received rather than taking them for granted (Аманкул, Шагырбай, & Молдахмет, 2024: 160–169).

The fifth virtue discussed in *Five Precious Virtues* is good manners (*adab*) and modesty (*haya'*). These concepts are regarded as among the fundamental moral values of Islam. Numerous religious sources contain sayings such as "Modesty is half of faith" and "One who possesses modesty possesses faith." It is also warned in religious teachings that faith itself may depart from a person who abandons modesty and moral restraint. Thus, the concepts of good manners and modesty demonstrate their significant role in fostering a humane and ethical society in the modern world.

First and foremost, it is necessary to identify the three fundamental pillars of Islamic etiquette (*adab*):

1. **The etiquette between the Creator and His servant;**
2. **The etiquette among people;**
3. **The inner etiquette of each individual.**

It is at the intersection of these three essential dimensions that genuine Islamic conduct and moral character are manifested. When a believer fulfills his or her duties toward God, treats others with respect and compassion, and cultivates inner moral discipline, the true spirit of Islamic *adab* becomes evident.

In Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly's poem, *adab* and *haya'* are therefore presented not merely as social virtues, but as qualities deeply connected to faith itself. They serve as moral foundations that strengthen the relationship between the believer and the Creator, promote harmonious human relations, and nurture personal integrity and spiritual refinement.

In his poem "Four Precious Virtues and Five Blessings" (*Tört Asyl, Bes Bereke*), Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly clearly articulates a number of principles grounded in Islamic teachings.

The poem begins by affirming the doctrine of Tawhid, the absolute oneness of God. The poet emphasizes that it is not sufficient merely to proclaim with one's tongue that God is One; rather, this belief must be sincerely affirmed by the heart and soul. True faith requires harmony between verbal confession and inner conviction.

The poet further stresses the importance of performing righteous deeds with sincerity and dedication, while living in accordance with the Sunnah—the example and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). According to the poem, these qualities constitute the Four Precious Virtues, which must become firmly rooted in a person's thoughts, character, and actions. Only when faith, conviction, righteous conduct, and adherence to the Prophetic example are united can an individual fully embody the ideals of Islamic moral and spiritual life.

*“God is One; there is no other,” let your tongue proclaim.
Let your heart and soul truly know the truth your tongue declares.
Devote yourself wholeheartedly to righteous deeds through your faith,
And let your days pass in accordance with the Prophet's Sunnah.
These, indeed, are the Four Precious Virtues within you,
Provided they are firmly established in your thoughts and actions.
If you are unable to fulfill all four completely,*

The works of Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeýuly one of the Kazakh people's renowned poets, ethnographers, and enlighteners, clearly demonstrate his commitment to promoting religious education among the public. This objective is reflected through his active use of axiological reflections (value-based perspectives) and epistemological texts concerned with knowledge and understanding (Мамытова, 2018: 369).

Drawing upon such profound religious and ethical concepts as faith (*iman*), belief, reason (*ghaqyl*), patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), good manners (*adab*), and modesty (*haya*'), he conveyed complex spiritual and moral ideas in a language that was accessible and understandable to ordinary people. Through clear and thoughtful expression, he sought to deepen the religious consciousness of his audience while fostering moral cultivation and intellectual reflection.

Thus, Mäshhür Jüsip's literary legacy represents not only a valuable contribution to Kazakh literature and culture but also an important source of religious, ethical, and educational thought. His works continue to illuminate the relationship between faith, morality, and human understanding, offering guidance that remains relevant to contemporary society.

In the introduction to his work *The Relationship Between Human Beings and the Stars*, which addresses complex cosmological issues in Islamic thought, Mashhur Zhusup writes:

“...I believe that God is One, that He exists, and that He is Almighty. My faith and conviction in these three principles are strong. As for other matters, ‘What is heard by the ear is uncertain, but what is seen by the eye is certain.’ I do not believe until I see with my own eyes.”

Let us now turn to the issues of Islam, *iman* (faith), and *ihsan* (spiritual excellence) in the thought of Mashhur Zhusup (Бапатовна, 2010).

Compared to other systems of belief, Islam, both in its name (which in Arabic signifies peace and submission) and in its essence (that is, its religious teachings), is not associated with any particular individual or nation, nor is it a product of human imagination. Rather, it was revealed for all humankind. It represents a comprehensive worldview based on divine revelation from Allah Almighty, encompassing spiritual and moral, scientific and philosophical, social and political, as well as economic dimensions of life. Islam is capable of satisfying the intellectual and spiritual needs of every individual and guiding humanity toward goodness and happiness.

In reality, Mashhur Zhusup did not have a specific political doctrine or program of his own. In this regard, he did not depart from the primary sources of Islam. Numerous verses of the Qur'an, as well as the Sunnah, affirm the sovereignty of God's will; however, they do not assign political authority to any particular group, spiritual leaders, or ecclesiastical institutions (as is the case in

theocratic systems, whereas Islam has neither a priestly caste nor a church institution). Instead, they emphasize the responsibility associated with governance.

Therefore, the primary sources of Islam provide no explicit support for absolute monarchy, classical democracy, dictatorship, or anarchism. More broadly, the ideological interpretation of Islam contradicts its essential spirit, which encourages collective consultation (*shura*), dialogue, and decision-making based on mutual agreement, while upholding a system of rights that does not harm others.

Governance in Islam is founded upon a legitimate agreement between the ruler and the ruled. Moreover, the rule of law—which must be observed equally by both governing authorities and citizens—should be grounded in the Will and Word of Allah. To a certain extent, this principle may be compared with Rousseau’s concept of the “social contract” and with the modern idea of a constitutional state governed by the rule of law (Жүсіпов, 2005).

A person’s worldview is a complex system in terms of its structure. Religious worldview, in particular, is based on both knowledge and faith. In our view, the primary and fundamental core of any worldview and belief should be knowledge. Knowledge, in turn, may be divided into ordinary knowledge and scientific knowledge. As demonstrated in this dissertation, Mashhur Zhusup distinguished between *ilm al-hal* and *ilm al-qal*, giving priority to the former. He also classified knowledge into three categories: (1) the science of sustenance, (2) the science of the body, and (3) the science of the soul. The study of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly’s legacy shows that he was not only a highly educated and deeply knowledgeable person but also a man of strong faith who was believed to have performed extraordinary deeds beyond ordinary human comprehension.

Knowledge is a remarkable power of the intellect through which unknown phenomena can be discovered and understood. As this process deepens, one’s worldview becomes more refined, systematic, and stable. When knowledge enters the human mind and passes through the filter of life experience, it transforms into faith. Faith is the foundation and guiding principle of a worldview; it reflects a person’s commitment to their convictions, ideas, and actions. An individual with strong faith possesses a clear spiritual outlook and worldview, acts with confidence, and follows a well-defined path. Faith constitutes the core of a religious worldview. Human beings cannot live without faith. Only through faith can individuals understand who they are and why they exist in this world. When faith and worldview develop together, human consciousness becomes enlightened (Хасенова, & Жүсіпов, 2016: 122).

A scholarly analysis of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly’s religious views makes it possible to formulate several conclusions and practical recommendations.

1. In accordance with the aims and objectives of this dissertation, the concept of religious worldview was examined from a substantive perspective. Considering Saint Mashhur as a prominent Muslim thinker, we analyzed the doctrinal foundations of Islam (*aqidah* and *usul al-din*) reflected in his religious and literary works, including the teachings of Sufism (*tasawwuf*), as well as the principal worldview concepts characteristic of Islamic theology (*kalam*) and Islamic philosophy.

In order to reveal the distinctive features of the religious worldview of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly, a Kazakh thinker who left a lasting mark on Islamic spirituality, it is also important to note that his knowledge of the Russian language enabled him to engage with the advanced natural sciences of the Western world available during his time. There is no doubt that Mashhur Zhusup’s religious views were formed within the framework of the traditional Islam practiced by the Kazakh people for generations. In this regard, his worldview was undoubtedly influenced by the Sufi traditions that developed within Sunni Islam of the Hanafi school, particularly the Yasawi and Naqshbandi orders.

Further research into Mashhur Zhusup’s religious views can contribute to the ongoing development of religious studies in Kazakhstan by helping the discipline define its own intellectual foundations. Incorporating some of the findings of this research into courses and specialized

programs in Religious Studies may also contribute to the development of a healthier and more informed religious consciousness within Kazakhstani society.

2. If we summarize the formation and development of the religious worldview reflected in the life and works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly, it becomes evident that he was a thinker who was able to express his religious and philosophical outlook in a distinctive manner. This was made possible through his mastery of Arabic, Persian, Old Turkic, and Russian, his acquisition of both religious and secular knowledge, and his careful preservation of the cultural treasures, traditions, and identity of Kazakh society. He was a religious thinker; however, his religiosity did not remain at a purely dogmatic level. Rather, it was characterized by continuous intellectual and creative inquiry. He fully understood the importance of science and scholarly knowledge and therefore sought to interpret the religious issues he addressed not only within the framework of traditional historical understanding but also in light of the innovations and changes emerging during his era. Nevertheless, he remained firmly grounded in the foundations of traditional knowledge and faith. His life and religious writings continue to serve as an example for both his contemporaries and future generations.

3. There are a number of similarities between the religious situation in Kazakh society at the beginning of the twentieth century and that of the present twenty-first century. In Mashhur Zhusup's writings, one can observe concern regarding the activities of foreign religious preachers who entered the Kazakh steppe from outside. The major and complex transformations that took place throughout the world, in the Muslim East, and particularly in the Kazakh steppe during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century inevitably influenced the worldview of the Kazakh thinker.

In particular, this period witnessed the decline of many Muslim societies in various spheres of life and their increasing dependence on Western powers. As a result, movements advocating the reform and renewal of Islam in response to social change gained influence. Mashhur Zhusup was affected both by modernist Muslim thinkers from Egypt and Pakistan and by his contemporaries associated with the Jadid reform movement, all of whom promoted ideas of adapting Islamic thought to new historical realities (Ерланова, 2022: 102–109).

Mashhur Zhusup's analysis of the religious conditions of his time and the views he expressed in his journalistic writings remain relevant today. His works provide valuable insights for understanding and interpreting the contemporary religious situation in Kazakhstan. Therefore, his intellectual legacy may serve as an important methodological foundation for the study of current religious developments.

4. During the course of this dissertation research, we conducted a comparative analysis of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's religious views alongside those of two of the most prominent representatives of the Kazakh religious enlightenment movement of his era: Abai Kunanbayuly and Shakarim Kudaiberdiuly. By examining the concept of enlightenment and exploring the history of this phenomenon, we observed that the religious-enlightenment tradition occupied a dominant place within Kazakh spiritual culture.

The leading orientation of Mashhur Zhusup's diverse intellectual and literary activities was educational and enlightening in nature. He identified the causes of the backwardness and underdevelopment of his people and sought ways for Kazakhstan to join the ranks of more advanced nations. To this end, he encouraged the pursuit of education and scientific knowledge, the spread of literacy, honest labor, the acquisition of professional skills, and the cultivation of young people who embodied faith, morality, kindness, and human dignity. In these aspirations, he was in harmony with other Kazakh religious-enlightenment thinkers of his time.

Religious enlightenment remains highly relevant today because contemporary Kazakh society faces a clear need to develop Islamic intellectual thought, while there is also a noticeable shortage of religious scholars originating from within the Kazakh tradition. Enhancing religious literacy has become one of the most important priorities in meeting the spiritual needs of society, particularly those of young people who are searching for moral and spiritual guidance.

5. This dissertation also examined the preservation of the rich spiritual legacy left by the wise Mashhur Zhusup and the formation of contemporary Mashhurtanu (Mashhur Zhusup studies). The manuscripts that he personally wrote and left for future generations amounting to approximately thirty volumes are preserved in the Central Scientific Library and various archives. These manuscripts include religious epics and reflections, as well as works on history, ethnography, genealogy, and journalism. This invaluable heritage has not yet been fully studied or utilized. In particular, it is evident that this indigenous intellectual legacy can make a positive contribution to contemporary religious discourse both in Kazakhstan and internationally.

At present, numerous religious movements that are foreign to the traditional religious culture of Kazakhstan have spread throughout the country. Their proponents seek to introduce alien forms of religious consciousness and influence contemporary religious processes. In many cases, such religious activities are characterized by intolerance and fanaticism that are not traditionally associated with Kazakh society. They may undermine the unity of the Muslim community and weaken social cohesion. Therefore, the promotion of the traditional faith practiced by our ancestors for centuries, as well as the study of the works of religious thinkers who emerged from the territory of Kazakhstan including the heritage of Mashhur Zhusup has become increasingly important as a response to such foreign ideologies (Жүсіпов, 2005).

6. The influence of certain extremist and radical groups can also be observed among some communities that claim an Islamic identity, particularly those associated with intolerant interpretations originating from Saudi, Iranian, and Pakistani contexts. This influence is especially noticeable among young people. Such movements often take advantage of the fact that the worldview and spiritual culture of many young individuals are still in the process of formation. They exploit the natural spiritual search characteristic of youth and, at times, even their social and material difficulties. Through direct preaching in places where students and young people gather, as well as through internet resources, these groups seek to recruit new followers (Tumashbay, & Tankish, 2025: 52-65).

As a result, many young Kazakhs become alienated from the traditional Hanafi form of Islam that has been practiced by their people for centuries. In some cases, they distance themselves from society, the state, and even from their families and peers, joining non-madhab or foreign movements whose objectives may be unclear. Without realizing it, they may become instruments in broader geopolitical agendas driven by external influences.

The religious views of Kazakh thinkers, who historically adhered firmly to Hanafi jurisprudence and Maturidi theology, fundamentally reject interpretations that introduce anthropomorphic understandings of the attributes of Allah (Абишева, & Тұрышев, 2023: 9–21). Such interpretations, associated with certain Salafi theological positions, attribute human-like qualities or spatial characteristics to the Divine. This contrast can be clearly observed in Mashhur Zhusup's religious epics, narrative works, and writings on religious thought.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the religious works of Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly represent an important part of the spiritual, intellectual, and moral heritage of the Kazakh people. His writings show that religion was not only a matter of personal belief, but also a foundation for moral education, social responsibility, cultural continuity, and the formation of human character. Through his poems, prose works, religious narratives, and philosophical reflections, Mashhur Zhusup presented Islamic values in a language that was understandable to ordinary people and closely connected to the worldview of Kazakh society.

The analysis demonstrates that the central ideas in Mashhur Zhusup's religious thought are faith, knowledge, wisdom, patience, gratitude, good manners, modesty, and spiritual responsibility. These concepts are not treated separately in his works; rather, they form a unified moral and religious system. For Mashhur Zhusup, true faith is inseparable from knowledge, ethical conduct, and personal discipline. A believer must not only verbally acknowledge the existence and

oneness of God, but must also reflect this belief through righteous deeds, sincere intention, patience in hardship, gratitude for divine blessings, and respectful behavior toward others.

One of the main findings of this study is that Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly's religious worldview was formed within the framework of traditional Kazakh Islam. His ideas are closely related to the Sunni-Hanafi tradition, Maturidi theology, and Sufi ethical thought. In his works, reason and faith are not opposed to each other. On the contrary, reason is presented as a divine gift that enables human beings to understand creation, recognize the Creator, and strengthen their faith. This approach shows that Mashhur Zhusup's religiosity was not limited to dogmatic belief, but was also connected with intellectual inquiry, reflection, and the search for truth.

The poem "Five Precious Virtues" clearly reflects the moral and religious essence of his thought. In this work, faith, wisdom, patience, gratitude, and good manners are presented as essential qualities of a spiritually mature person. These virtues correspond to the main principles of Islamic ethics and demonstrate how religious teaching can be used as a means of moral education. Similarly, in "Four Precious Virtues and Five Blessings," Mashhur Zhusup emphasizes the doctrine of Tawhid, sincerity of faith, righteous deeds, and adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. These ideas show that his works were intended not only to inform readers about religion, but also to guide them toward spiritual and moral improvement.

The study also shows that Mashhur Zhusup paid special attention to the relationship between knowledge and faith. He regarded knowledge as a necessary foundation of worldview and religious consciousness. In his understanding, knowledge becomes meaningful when it leads a person to faith, moral responsibility, and spiritual clarity. This idea is especially relevant for contemporary society, where religious literacy and critical understanding are important factors in preventing superficial, radical, or distorted interpretations of religion.

Mashhur Zhusup's legacy also has significant social value. His works address issues such as moral decline, ignorance, social responsibility, the education of young people, and the preservation of national identity. These themes remain relevant in modern Kazakhstan, where questions of religious identity, cultural continuity, and ethical education continue to be important. His writings can therefore contribute to the development of a balanced religious consciousness based on knowledge, morality, tolerance, and respect for national traditions.

Another important conclusion is that Mashhur Zhusup's works provide valuable material for the development of Religious Studies in Kazakhstan. His legacy helps scholars better understand the historical development of Kazakh Islamic thought and the role of religion in shaping social and cultural life. At the same time, his writings offer a methodological basis for studying the interaction between Islam, Kazakh culture, literature, and moral philosophy.

The relevance of Mashhur Zhusup's ideas is also connected with contemporary challenges caused by the spread of non-traditional and radical religious movements. His works reflect the values of the traditional Hanafi-Maturidi understanding of Islam, which has historically been rooted in Kazakh society. By studying and promoting this heritage, it becomes possible to strengthen religious literacy, protect young people from destructive ideologies, and support social harmony.

Thus, Mashhur Zhusup Kopeyuly should be regarded not only as a poet and ethnographer, but also as a major religious thinker and educator. His literary and religious works preserve the spiritual memory of the Kazakh people and offer guidance for the moral development of society. His ideas about faith, knowledge, morality, and human responsibility continue to have scholarly, educational, and social significance. Therefore, further study of his religious heritage is necessary for a deeper understanding of Kazakh spiritual culture and for the development of contemporary Religious Studies in Kazakhstan.

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