

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2020.23.3.26>**АНТИКЛЕРИКАЛЬНЫЕ МОТИВЫ В ПОЭМЕ АСАНА ЧЕРГЕЕВА «АДЖЫ ИСЛЯМ МОЛЛА» (МУЛЛА АДЖИ ИСЛЯМ)**

Научная статья

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**Аннотация**

В статье рассматриваются антиклерикальные мотивы в творческом наследии классика крымскотатарской литературы Асана Чергеева. В идейно-тематическом и жанрово-стилевом развитии крымскотатарской поэзии рубежа XIX – XX вв. Асан Чергеев сыграл значительную роль. В рецепции поэта находили отражение многие социальные проблемы эпохи, осуществлялся поиск их решения. В частности в поэме «Аджы Ислям Молла» (Мулла Аджи Ислям) автором поднимается вопрос недобросовестных мулл, искажающих нормы ислама, вводящих в заблуждение набожный люд. Цель нашего исследования – изучить антиклерикальные мотивы в поэме Асана Чергеева «Аджы Ислям Молла». Основные задачи исследования – выявить характерные черты лжеблудителя шариата Муллы Аджи Исляма, определить авторскую оценку его деятельности. В процессе исследования было выявлено, что главный персонаж поэмы – собирательный образ. Автор обличает корыстолюбивую и подлую личность муллы, высмеивает его глупость и жадную натуру, тем самым демонстрируя общественные пороки рубежа XIX – XX вв.

**Ключевые слова:** Крымскотатарская поэзия, Асан Чергеев, период Пробуждения, антиклерикальные мотивы.

**ANTICLERICAL MOTIVES IN ASAN CHERGEEV'S POEM «ADZHY ISLAM MOLLA» (MULLAH ADZHY ISLYAM)**

Research article

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**Abstract**

The article discusses the anticlerical motives in the creative heritage of Asan Chergeev, the classic of Crimean Tatar literature. Asan Chergeev played a significant role in the ideological-thematic and genre-style development of Crimean Tatar poetry at the turn of the 20th century. Many social problems of that epoch were not only reflected in the poet's reception, but a search for their solution was carried out, as well. In particular, in the poem «Adzhy Islyam Molla» (Mullah Adzhy Islyam), the author raises the question of unscrupulous mullahs who distort the norms of Islam, misleading the religious people. The purpose of our research is to study anticlerical motives in the poem of Asan Chergeev «Adzhy Islyam Molla». The main objectives of the study are to identify the characteristic features of Sharia's false keeper, Mullah Adzhy Islyam, and to determine the author's assessment of his activities. During the research, it was revealed that the main personage of the poem is a collective character. The author demonstrates social vices at the turn of the 20th century by denouncing the mullah's selfish and vile personality, ridiculing his stupidity and greedy nature.

**Keywords:** Crimean Tatar poetry, Asan Chergeev, Awakening period, anticlerical motives.

**Introduction**

In recent decades, there has been a significant interest in Asan Chergeev's works. There are a number of objective reasons for tendencies like this in domestic literature. Today, the life and work of the poet and writer are touched upon in the works of D. Abibullaeva, [2], I. Kerimova [5], [6], [7], [8], T. Kirimova [9], [10], L. Asanova [3], L. Memetova [11], [12], and A. Muradosilova [13], [14]. Thanks to them, many previously unknown works of the author were introduced into scientific circulation, the biography and certain aspects of creativity were studied, and attempts were made to systematize his literary heritage as a whole. However, despite such positive dynamics, the particular problems of his poetic creativity remain unexplored. For example, anticlerical motives in the author's poetry have not been the object of special scientific research. Based on the above, the study of anticlerical sentiments in the poetic heritage of Asan Chergeev seems relevant, which defines the scientific novelty of our work. The purpose of this research is to study anticlerical motives in Asan Chergeev's poem, «Adzhy Islyam Molla».

**Methods**

According to the set goal of the study, various literary methods and principles are used in this research. The material is presented consistently through a descriptive method. The cultural-historical principle contributes to the study of the poet's creativity within the historical chronicle and the aesthetic ideals of the epoch. In the interpretation of a poetic work, priority is given to the basic principles of hermeneutics.

**Discussion**

The Crimean Tatar servants of Sharia have been the personification of moral purity and legality for centuries. Their competence included the regulation of moral and ethical norms in society, and they were the conductors of enlightenment to

the masses. During the khanate, the servants of Sharia constituted an enlightened stratum. Most of them became famous scientists who gained fame far beyond the borders of Crimea in various religious centers of the Ottoman Empire [1, P.148]. The spiritual mentors ensured the development and harmony of the Crimean society by fulfilling divine prescriptions and exchanging experiences with other widespread areas of Islam.

However, by the turn of the 20th century, due to socio-political reasons, most of the highly intellectual spiritual mentors of the Crimean Tatars were forced to emigrate. Those who remained suffered various kinds of oppression. When the Tauride Mohammedan spiritual government was established «on the model of the millet system that existed among the Ottomans» [15], the Muslims of the peninsula found themselves in a new reality. The two-stage organization was approved in the Tauride muftiate: province – district. The governing body consisted of the chairperson — the mufti, who was considered the spiritual head — and his assistant. The assistant was the qadi asker, and he had representatives in various districts. There were also local parish clergy, which consisted of imams, mullahs, khatibs, and muezzins [16]. Spiritual guides were selected according to their political trustworthiness. People who made a pilgrimage or visited Turkey «were forever prohibited any doctrinal activity or any position» [4, P. 553]. As a result, the people lost connection with the enlightened mentors who were educated in foreign spiritual institutions. This contributed to isolation and the loss of centuries-old cultural ties. «Henceforth, a Crimean who had received education abroad, even a secular, could not become a mullah...the mullahs who graduated from domestic, but the most progressive madrasahs (Galeevskoe or Khusainovskoe) could gain access to the position with great difficulty»[4, P. 553].

Such restrictive activity inhibited the full-fledged life activity and further development of the ethnos. The appointment of a clergyman who was completely incompetent and not interested in the enlightenment and cultural development of his people was a frequent occurrence. «Trustworthy» clerics opposed any progressive manifestations in society. Using their influence on people, they tried to preserve the conservative foundations of the Crimean Tatar society, which was more familiar and convenient for the realization of their own goals.

This phenomenon has received a rather critical assessment in the work of A. Chergeev. The poetry of the author has a negative attitude towards the deliberate misrepresentation of Islamic doctrine.

The most expressive anticlerical sentiments are observed in A. Chergeev's poem «Adzhy Islyam Molla» (Mullah Adzhy Islyam). This satirical work is in the lyric-epic genre, in which the events from the life of the Crimean Tatars of the early 20th century are shown. To display this, the author created the vivid characters of the mullah, his wife, and the muezzin. The main heroes of the story are Mullah Adzhy Islyam and Khislety Ana (Mother Khislety), whose figures are exposed by the monologues and dialogues. The work consists of logically successive narrative parts. At the beginning of the poem, the main character, Mullah Adzhy Islyam, appears as a righteous keeper of God's law.

*Ne kerek aqqına kirmek,  
O baş edi cümlege,  
Aqşam, saba iç qalmayıp  
Keter edi camige.  
Tayaq alır, kiyer cübbe  
Tesbih tüşmez elinden.  
Bara keke soqaq yapmış  
Camigece evinden. [17, P. 55]*

#### Interlinear translation:

*No need to denigrate him,  
He was the head of everyone,  
In the evening, in the morning never staying  
Went to the mosque.  
Take his cane, put on a robe,  
Doesn't let go of the beads,  
Trod the path  
From home to mosque.*

He regularly attends the place of worship and performs his official duties. Everyone loves him, respects him, and considers him to be a very educated person who knows the laws of Sharia and life.

*Cümle sever ve sayarlar,  
Ortalyqta birinci,  
– Olmasa kerek, – der ediler,  
Onday daa bilici. [17, P. 55]*

#### Interlinear translation:

*Everyone loves and respects,  
The first in the district,  
— Probably not exist in the world, —  
Smart person like him.*

However, later in the poem, we can see a slightly different interpretation of the rural mullah's nature. Despite his «highest spiritual Muslim title of adzhy» [13, p. 134], the mullah intimidates the people with false Sharia and «laws» and openly shows his greedy personality. He gathered the people and said:

*Ey, cemaat, vaaz ideyim,  
Büyük-küçük diñleñiz,  
Eki şeyi olanlar,  
Birin lâbit beriñiz.  
Vermeyenler ahret künü,  
Lâbit otta yanacaq,  
Bu dünyaiñ içersinde,  
Kimler olmey qalacaq? [17, P. 56]*

#### Interlinear translation:

*Listen everyone –  
Old and small,  
Who has two things,  
Let them give one.  
Who will not give –  
It will burn in fire in the judgment day.  
In this world,  
Who will not die?*

Enjoying the folk's trust and ignorance and being a respected person amongst them, Adzhy Islyam Mullah tries to rob the devout people deceitfully. The villagers panic and cry, but he doesn't care about it. He begins to think about how rich he can

become, how he can become famous and increase respect for himself, and, perhaps, how he can be appointed as mufti of Crimea.

*İşte devlet qapusını keň açtım ben gendime,  
Seyir etiň, nasıl kelsin em malları elime.  
Ketirseler şeyleri men orta eve uyerim,  
Eger canım ister ise, bazardan da tüyerim.  
Qullandyğı vaquf yerni veririm ben arenda.  
Taçankalar ekdirip giderim men anda, mynda.  
Bay olursam halqlar bana pek itibar iderler,  
Sanarım beni Qırımğa mutlaq mufti eterler. [17, P. 56-57]*

**Interlinear translation:**

*So I opened wide the doors to the state for myself,  
Look how the goods will come to my hands on their own.  
If things are brought, I will arrange them in the middle room,  
And if I want to, I'll take it to the market.  
I will lease the land used by the vakuf,  
I'll harness the carts and ride here and there.  
If I get rich, people will respect me,  
I think they will definitely make me the mufti of the Crimea.*

Nevertheless, when he came back home as Adzhy Islyam Mullah, the villagers were shocked. His wife, having heard the instructions of the mullah from the other people, also quickly takes away household utensils and clothes from their home.

Mullah tries to explain to his spouse that these rules do not concern their family, but on the contrary, people will bring them their things. However, she answers him:

*Benim de canım, aytçı  
Cennet istemey mi, ey hoca! [17, P. 58]*

**Interlinear translation:**

*Tell me, my soul  
Don't you want to go to heaven!*

Realizing his mistake, the mullah discovers the true reason that prompted him to this act.

*Ne ettirmez kişiye baylıq,  
Bu paralar torası,  
Gendi tatlı olsa da o,  
Çoq büyüktür belâsı. [17, P. 58]*

**Interlinear translation:**

*What does pushes a person greed for profit  
It's all about the money,  
Although they are very sweet,  
There are a lot of troubles from them.*

This poem reveals the insatiable nature of individual representatives of that time. Even when the mullah realized the shamefulness of his deed and went to the river to drown himself, people who saw him extended their hand to him and shouted «Ber» (give), but he did not respond to their offer. Only when the people began to shout «Ma» (take) did he respond and take their hand. This passage further confirms the greed and commercialism of the mullahs, who do not correspond at all to their post in terms of human qualities, knowledge, and behavior.

The poem ends badly for the mullah, because his wife, Khislety Ana, suppressed all of his actions to mislead the people. To teach her unfair husband a lesson, she asked muezzin for help.

*Ey, oglum, sen mynda kel,  
Sana bir shey soyleyim,  
Ka, bakaym bir ish yap,  
Akajlygyn bileyim.  
Bilesinmi, molla agan  
Saban sure kyblada,  
Mana yurmek yaman agyr,  
Baralmaym men anda.  
Hisleti ana uylelik  
Dzhiberdi dep, ayta ber,  
Kop eglenmey, anlaysynmy,  
Ozyun tez-tez kayta kel.  
Em bu balygy da sen  
Baraznaya komersin,  
Dzhanym oglum, pek sakt ol,  
Molla baban kormesin. [17, P.63]*

*Hey son, come here,  
I'd like to say something to you,  
Do some work,  
I want to see your manhood.  
Do you know that your brother Mullah  
Plows the land in the south,  
It's very difficult to me,  
To go there.  
Tell him, that you send  
By Khislety Ana,  
Don't mess around, for a long time,  
Come back soon (Come back as quickly as possible).  
Then you should dug  
This fish into the furrow,  
And my dear son, be very careful,  
Do not let to Mullah see you.*

Muezzin did everything as Khislety Ana said. Later after a hard day, Mullah said to his wife:

*Bugun taadzhipte kaldym,  
Cholde saban surgende,  
Tonkurayip balyk yata  
Baraznanyň ichinde.  
«Bismillyah!» dep, tez ony  
Tyktym koyun ichine,  
Ana kary var bizge  
Bugunlikke kechinme. [17, P. 64-65]*

*When I was plowing the land,  
I was so surprised,  
There is a fish  
In the furrow.  
I say: "Bismilylah!" (for the name of God the  
Gracious and Merciful),  
And put it in my bosom  
So, my wife, it is our food for today*

In this episode, Khislety Ana brings her idea to its logical conclusion – she exposed the mullah as mad before the people, because he claimed to have found a fish in a field.

*Hodzhama bir shey olgan,  
Ummet-mamed keliniz.*

.....  
*Kordinizmi, o delirmish,  
Tez dzhamige kapanyz,  
Em chuvalny, em torbany  
Arkasya atyny! [17, P. 65-66]*

*Something happened to my husband,  
Hey folk, come here.*

.....  
*Do you see, he lost his mind,  
Hurry, lock him up in the mosque,  
And sack, and bag  
Put on his back!*

Thus, Khislety Ana, speaking for justice, saves the religious people of her village from the pseudo-dogmas of her spouse — the miserly Mullah Adzhy Islyam. The culmination of the poem is the author's solution to the problem of unscrupulous mullahs — his desire for justice, honesty, and decency.

In the work, Asan Chergeev often uses stylistic techniques that help increase the overall expressiveness of the poetic text to promote its special rhythm melody. The poet appeals with epithets (*ken yaly* – wide field; *gayet muskul belya* – really bad misfortune; *eyi kary* – good wife; etc.), with antithesis (*saba* / *aksham* –

morning / evening; *buyuk* / *kuchuk* – big / small; etc.), and with metaphors (*devlet qapusyny achmak* – to open the state door; *chuyden uchkan khalaty* – robe flew off the nail; *suv astyndan yok olmak* – to disappear in the water; etc.). The author skillfully uses the wealth of the national language and uses stable expressions (*sokak yapmak* – to tread a path; *chubuk sokmak* – to thrash; *bashyna toplamak* – to gather around him; *kulak asmak* – consider somebody's opinion; *turna kongan yery* – make it too hot for somebody; etc.).

### Conclusion

Asan Chergeev is a poet who raises the social problems of the era in his works. In the poem, «Adzhy Islyam Molla», the author exposes «the whole nature of the rotting clergy, servants of which have forgotten about simple divine commandments» [18, P. 95] and denigrates the bright appearance of Islam, the true sowers of Muslim wisdom. The poet's satirical laughter indicates such negative traits of certain representatives of the clergy as greediness, baseness, and meanness. Among the works of A. Chergeev, this is not the only one on this topic. He also created the prose work «Grief», which also actualizes the outrages among the clergy.

The figure of a mullah-hypocrite is a collective figure that existed in the Crimean Tatar society in the second half of the 19th century and into the early 20th century. During that time, some of them lost the appearance of true clergy. Many of them had unlimited power, abused their position, and brought confusion into the lives of the people.

Anticlerical motives were inherent in the work of other Crimean Tatar poets of the Awakening period. Many Crimean Tatar poets of the Awakening period raised anticlerical topics in their works. The development of this topic in the literature was associated with the emergence of progressive reform processes in the life of Crimean Muslims in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century, which hugely shook the pseudo-traditions and contributed to the refraction of illogical stereotypes.

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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