**Lecture 5**

**Formation of Kazakh culture. Kazakh culture in the 18th – late 19th centuries.**

**1. Formation of Kazakh traditional culture. Forms of folk poetry. Musical creativity of *akyns* and *zhyrau*. Cultural values and ethics of *batyrs*.**

The socio-political circumstances which determined the historical fate of the Kazakh people and their statehood have been a solid reason for the development of Kazakh culture. The role and significance of millennia of common Turkic prehistory are enormous. Along with the close interweaving and interaction with other Turkic-speaking peoples, Kazakh people's customs, traditions, and language developed; cultural and civilizational changes took place, which contributed to the gradual internal differentiation of the joint and diverse Turkic integrity as a unity. M. Orynbekov mentioned that the socio-historical process of cultural as well as civilizational development which occurred on the territory of contemporary Kazakhstan and its adjacent regions could be named as the proto-Kazakh period. According to Orynbekov, the same process has its inception from Saka-Hunnic times (*M. Orynbekov. Proto-philosophy of Kazakhs*).

The appearance of the Kazakh Khanate in 15th century gives a start to the process of formation and development of Kazakh culture. Historians describe the period from the 15th - 19th as the period of classical, that is traditional Kazakh culture.

During this period, moderate Islam has been widely prevailing in the steppes, representing a kind of synthesis of Islamic pillars with the preserved traditions of the *Tengrian* worldview.

Oral poetry and music developed widely in the 15th - 18th centuries. The works of Kazakh *akyns* and *zhyrau* beautifully depicted the process of formation of Kazakh culture. *Akyns*, *storytellers-zhyrau*, *poets-improvisers* represented *verbal creativity*.

Oral folk art, diverse in genres and topics, had developed widely. The most common genres of oratory in the 16-18 centuries include the following:

1. tolgau - instructive songs-reflections on life and death, on the present and the future;

2. ritual songs (zhar-zhar, zhoktau, etc.);

3. proverbs and sayings;

4. fairy tales;

5. epics, divided into heroic (“Er-Targyn”, “Er-Kokshe”, “Kambar-batyr”, “Koblandy”, etc.) and lyrical (“Kozy-Korpesh - Bayan-sulu”, “Kyz-Zhibek”, “Sulushash”, etc.).

The performers of oral traditions were *akyns*, *sals*, and *sery*. But the dominant role in the 16th-18th centuries still belonged to *zhyrau*.

The main themes of *zhyrau poetry* of the 15th-18th centuries have been the issues of cohesion and unity of the tribes that make up the Kazakh Khanate, and the strengthening of the state and its military power. In *tolgau poetry*, (poems-reflections) *zhyrau* touched upon the issues of ethics and morality, honour and dignity. The largest representatives of *zhyrau poetry* of the 15th-18th centuries were: *Asan-kaygy zhyrau, Kaztugan zhyrau, Dospambet zhyrau, Sypyra zhyrau, Shalkiiz zhyrau, Zhyembet zhyrau, Margaska zhyrau, Aktamberdy Bukhara zhyrau, and Umbet zhyrau*. In the circumstances of patriarchal clan society, the *tolgau* played a sizeable social role. The *tolgau zhyrau* performers held a special place in society and were highly respected; they often helped solving significant state problems.

*Bukhar zhyrau Kalkamanuly* (1668-1781) is an outstanding singer - storyteller, statesman. He was one of the most influential *biys* under *Tauke Khan*. In the “Years of the Great Calamity” (“Aktaban shubyryndy”), that is the invasion of the *Dzhungars*, he had served as the chief adviser of Abylai Khan. He created many didactic songs-reflections expressing the idea of maintaining and strengthening independence of the state. He narrated it in the poems “Goodwill”, “Abylai, you are 11 years old”, “When I saw you”, “Sleep serenely, my Khan”, etc. At the same time, some of his poems denounce the Khan's despotism, greed, and lack of attention to people's needs. Among them were “I say”, “Take care of your people”, etc.

Bukhar zhyrau was a well-educated person and mostly wrote in Arabic. About 1200 lines have survived from his poetic heritage.

**In traditional Kazakh society batyrs were established as individual social group and had own ideology, life of style according to their public service, military tradition, rules and ethics to follow in interrelation with other social groups and their own “estate” features.** One of the main features was that they were specialized only in military art profession. These facts were mentioned in Kazakh folk literature such as epic tales, historical poems, zhirau’s poetry and etc. Along with idea of protection motherland from enemies in epic poems there are described heroes world perception, self-assessment, moral-ethical concepts, ideals of heroism, consciousness, understanding of life meaning, and other ethnical features. Hence, batyr institution in Kazakh society should be regarded as part of national spiritual values systems.

**2. Musical creativities of Kurmangazy, Tattimbet, Zhayau Mussa. The “Zar-Zaman” phenomenon in Kazakh culture**

Kazakh traditional music can be divided into two genres: instrumental music and vocal music. Instrumental music is called Kuy and performed by soloists using Kazakh traditional musical instruments, e.g. dombra, kobyz, etc. Among the most famous kuy composers there are Kurmangazy, Dina, Dauletkerey, Tattimbet, etc.

**Kurmangazy Sagyrbayuly** was a Kazakh folk musician, composer, dombra player, author kyuis (pieces for dombra) (1818 Bukei Horde, Russian Empire - 1889, Bukei Horde, Astrakhan Province, Russian Empire). Had a great influence on the development of the Kazakh musical culture. Born in 1823 in Bukeyev Horde, in the tract Zhidelev (now a district of Zhanakala, West Kazakhstan region), in a yurt poor Sagyrbaya. From an early age engaged in playing the lute. Early in the boy appeared propensity for music did not cause his father approval. Mother Kurmangazi Alka person and individuality and a strong will, on the contrary, shared the love of a son for music and supported him. At the age of 6 years under the pressure of dire necessity Kurmangazi was given to the shepherds. In his native village Kurmangazi enthusiastically listened to the visiting kuishi, among which stands out kuishi Uzak who noticed a young Kurmangazi a special interest in music, and he predicted a great future. At the age of 18 years Kurmangazi leave his native village and starts wandering life wandering kuishi. Together with legalize it participates in the competition, develop their skills and put forward a series of outstanding dombra players.

Kurmangazy’s *kuyi’s* were like a poetic motto that lifts the freedom-loving spirit of the Kazakh people, an astonishing epic of national history, written in the language of melodies.

The core motives in his work are the liberation of the people and the freedom of the individual. The national liberation struggle of the 30s of the 19th century takes a special place in his works. He witnessed the popular uprising of the Kazakhs of the *Bukeev Horde (or Inner Horde)* (1836-1837) under the leadership of *Isatay Taimanov* and *Makhambet Utemisov* against *Zhangir Khan*. Kurmangazy’s kyu “Kishkentai” (“Small”) narrates the popular uprising. In other kyuis like “Akbai” “Aksak kiik”, “Turmeden Kashkan”, and “Adai”, the composer expresses the people’s desire for freedom and the struggle against injustice. Kurmangazy beautifully depicts various social and psychological circumstances of the relationship between a person and society. The *kyui’s* “Aman bol, sheshem, aman bol” (Stay healthy my dear mother, stay healthy), “Kairan sheshem” (My poor mother), “Ertek ketem”, “Bytym-bytym” traces the rhythm of the human voice. “Balbyrauyn” and “Asem” kuyis are written in a playful and festively elevated rhythm.

Kurmangazy was persecuted for openly criticizing the rich. The authorities had imprisoned Kurmangazy repeatedly. But the spirit of the composer, who fought for the liberation of his people, has been unshakable. In the prisons of Uralsk, Orenburg, and Urkit, he wrote “Alatau” and “Saryarka” kuyis, in which he conveyed his profound thoughts on the independence and freedom of the people.

To date, 60 kyuis of Kurmangazy have survived. The zenith of Kurmangazy's creativity is the “Sary-Arka” kyu filled up with light tonality, and depicting a picture of the endless expanses of the Kazakh steppe. The unique techniques of Kurmangazy's playing, which in many ways developed the musical approach of that time, have been carefully perceived and produced by his students and followers. Among them were *Makhambet Utemisov, Dina Nurpeisova, Ergali Eshchanov* and many others

*Kazangapuly Tattimbet (1815-1860)* is an outstanding kyuishi-composer and one of the founders of *classical dombra music* of the 19th century. He considers being an unsurpassed author and performer of *kyuis* of the *shertpe style*. Tattimbet was born and raised on the territory of the present Karkaralinsky district of the Karaganda region and is coming from the Karakesek clan of the Middle Zhuz.

Natural talent helped Tattimbet to improve the musical skills he received from local *kyui* performers, and to become the best of them. Masterfully owning dombra, he becomes the soul of companies. There is a story that while competing with a girl in the performance of *kyuis*, Tattimbet won the competition by taking off his shoes and performing the 40th kyui with his toes. He did so because the girl was not giving up the contest until the 39th kuy and showcased the strong dombra play. In those days, a girl could not take off her shoes and show her toes; thus, she forcefully had to admit herself as defeated. Enjoying the fun and beautiful girls who indeed splendidly mastered playing dombra Tattimbet created such kuyis as “Bylkyldak”, “Sylkyldak”.

However, those cloudless days which were spent among the loved ones have been left behind, and the clouds began to gather in the sky again. In those years, the process of rapid colonization of Kazakh’s fertile lands started. The enemies left Kazakh population with no grounds, forests and pastures. Tattimbet’s reaction to all this was enormous. He worried about what was happening and thinking about the future. That is how “Kokeykesti” and “Saryzhaylau” kyuis came into life.

The “Kyz Zhibek” and “Abay” operas used Tattimbet’s kuyis and were performed by the orchestra. His kuyis were in symphonic works, and continue to live in the hearts of the people forever.

Authors of many Kazakh traditional songs were forgotten long ago, thus these songs are called folk music. However, authors (composers) of many Kazakh songs are famous and respected.

**Jayau Musa Bayzhanuly** (1835-1929) is an outstanding Kazakh composer, a singer and a poet. Jayau means a pedestrian. As a nomad Kazakh could not be imagined without a horse, being a pedestrian was not usual, it was rather humiliating. There is a story of Musa becoming Jayau, which is still remembered because of the song “Ak sisa”, in which he describes how rich Mustafa took his horse, forcing him to became Jayau.

For the Kazakh steppe, the 19th century was a kind of farewell ball of the equestrian-nomadic civilization. The penetration of capitalism into Kazakhstan, the massive resettlement of peasants from the centre and the associated deep crisis in the economy, the moral and ethical state of the Kazakh nomadic *aul* (village) gave rise to a group of poets who, in their works, assessed these phenomena as the onset of the “Era of Sorrow” (*zar zaman*). The current situation prepared the people and the land for the coming hard times.

*Shortanbai Kanayuly* was the founder of *zar zaman* movement. In his work “Zar Zaman” he calls the period of Kazakh history after the annexation of Kazakhstan to Russia as an *era of sorrow*. Shortanbai criticizes a new social grouping in Kazakh society, that is *bayism*, which arose as a result of the development of commodity-money relations in the steppe. With bitterness, he describes the hard life of the *zhataks*, who give all the money they earn in a year to pay for the tax, and alarms about the corruption of morals and hypocrisy of people. The poet spoke about the growth of agriculture in Kazakhstan. He was worried about the destruction of traditional social relations and nomadic pastoralism. He believed that the collapse of the conventional economy would lead to a moral and psychological crisis of Kazakh society.

*Shortanbai* is a pessimist poet. In a desperate way to find the solution, he calls on people to seek protection in religion and observe religious rites. The poets of this trend usually include Dulat Babatayuly, Shortanbai Kanayuly, Murat Monkeuly, Aubakir Kerderi Borankululy, etc. Their poetry is an ideological and stylistic synthesis rooted in the creative traditions of zhyrau (especially the traditions of Shalkiiz-zhyrau and Bukhar -zhyrau). In mystical tones, they depict a picture of the world approaching inevitable death.

The subliminal expectation of the end of the world psychologically brings their poetry closer to the works of Kazakh Khanat era’s zhyrau poetry: *Asan Kaigy, Shalkiiz-zhyrau, Bukhar-zhyrau*.

The Quran and the works of the Quranian literature, in which the doctrine of the end of the world was described were in the centre of their understanding of the world. “Zar Zaman” literature contextually was about the idea of Kazakh statehood. It also reveals the religious views on the world of its authors. Because of this, during the years of the Stalinist regime, zar zaman poetry was subjected to severe criticism from officials, and thus was firmly labelled as reactionary.

The literature of that time vividly reflects all the political and social aspirations of the Kazakh people. Representatives of this *apocalyptic* vision of events gave the world the ability to change the current way of life. The main emphasis was placed on the call for the preservation of Kazakh customs and continuation of the practice of Islam. *Akhmet Baitursynov* called this period *the era of religious poets*. This testifies that they saw religion as a helping hand, which will protect against the endless injustice and darkness which covered the Kazakh land.