



## ‘We are children of Alash ...’

### The Kazakh intelligentsia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in search of national identity and prospects of the cultural survival of the Kazakh people

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Men qazaq, qazaqpyn dep maqtanamyn,  
Uranga alash degen atty alamyn.  
Süigenim qazaq ömiri, özim qazaq,  
Men nege qazaqyqtan saqtanamyn?

I am a Kazakh, and I am proud of that,  
I use the name of Alash as my war-cry.  
I am a Kazakh, and I love my Kazakh life,  
Why should I keep away from my kazakhness?

Sultanmakhmud Toraigyrov, ‘Aitys’

By the beginning of the 20th century economic and social problems caused by the Russian colonization of Kazakhstan had reached a critical point. In general the Russian colonization was characterized by the seizure of the best Kazakh grazing lands, connected with the mass immigration of Russian *muzhiks* (peasants) to Kazakhstan. The Russian bureaucratic system of rule aimed at the destruction of the traditional social structure of Kazakh nomadic society, as well as the Russification of the Kazakhs with subsequent conversion to Christianity. All these factors further intensified the general crisis of the Kazakh nomadic way of life and a critical decline in the Kazakhs’ standard of living. The political crisis in Russia itself after the revolution of 1905 and later World War I resulted in an intensification of political activity both in Russia and its provinces. At the head of the Kazakh national-liberation movement Alash stood Alikhan Bokeikhanov (1866–1937), Akhmet Baitursynov (1873–1937), Myrzhaqyp Dulatov (1885–1937), Mustafa Shoqaeu (1890–1941), Mukhamedzhan Tynyshpaev (1879–1937), Bakhytzhan Qarataev (1860–1934), Zhansha Dosmukhamedov, Khalel Dosmukhamedov (1883–1939), Zhaqyp Aqbaev (1876–1934), Alikhan Ermekov (1891–1970), Mukhtar Auezov (1897–1961), Sultanmakhmud Toraigyrov (1893–1920), Magzhan Zhumabaev (1893–1937) and others.

At the same time Russian colonization favoured closer acquaintance of the

Kazakh people with the Russian and Western cultures. Akhmet Baitursynov, one of the most important Kazakh leaders, wrote about the ‘two fires’, which determined the social and cultural atmosphere of the Kazakh society of that time: (a) the influence of Muslim culture, and (b) the Russian and Western influences (Baitursynov, 1989, p 262). Finding themselves between these ‘two fires’ Kazakh intellectuals were faced with the problems of national and cultural survival of the Kazakh people, i.e. the preservation of Kazakh culture and mentality—‘qazaqtyq’ (Kazakhness). Against a background of growing economic and social crisis in Kazakh nomadic society, and due to pressures generated by Russian assimilation policy and the Islamic Tatar influence, this problem took on vital importance.

The beginning of the 20th century was a turning point in the history of the Kazakh people because, for the first time, segments of Kazakh society realized that it would be necessary to change the traditional nomadic way of life. Under the influence of the above-mentioned ‘cultural fires’ emerged two groups of Kazakh intellectuals. In the early years of this century these groups were represented by the Islamic-oriented editors of the magazine *Aiqap* and the Russian (Western)-oriented leaders of the national movement Alash, grouped round the newspaper *Qazaq*. The representatives of both these groups had received Russian education and did not doubt the backwardness of Kazakh nomadic society and the necessity to learn from European culture. They most actively discussed the problem of choice between the nomadic and sedentary ways of life, as well as possible ways and means by which the transition to sedentarization might be accomplished. Among other important issues Kazakh intellectuals discussed the role of Islam in Kazakh nomadic society, the preservation of the Kazakh language and the development of Kazakh culture and literature. The analysis of these discussions is of great interest, because it provides us with an idea of the general cultural atmosphere of Kazakh society in the transitional period of its history.

### **Nomadic or sedentary?**

Choosing between the nomadic and sedentary ways of life was ardently discussed between the two leading Kazakh periodicals of that time, namely the magazine *Aiqap* and the newspaper *Qazaq*. *Aiqap* was published in 1911–16 in the city of Troitsk (North Kazakhstan). The most important authors of this magazine were Mukhamedzhan Seralin (editor-in-chief), Bakhytzhan Qarataev and Zhikhansha Seidalin. The newspaper *Qazaq* was published in 1913–18 in the city of Orynbor (North Kazakhstan) by Akhmet Baitursynov (editor-in-chief), Alikhan Bokeikhanov and Myrzhaqyp Dulatov. These authors debated whether the Kazakhs should accept land according to the so-called settled norm and begin to farm, or whether they should accept land in accordance with the nomadic norm and continue wandering. For the Kazakhs the so-called nomadic norms of obtaining land were fixed by the Shcherbina expedition, conducted in 1896–1902 in 12 districts of the Aqmola, Semei and Torgai provinces (North

and East Kazakhstan). The remaining lands (‘izlishki’—surpluses) were declared state property. Later on these nomadic norms were several times reduced, so that in the end, the Kazakhs could not pasture their animals on sharply diminished territories. In accordance with the Tsar’s decree of 9 June 1909 the Kazakhs, in the same way as Russian *muzhiks*, could accept land according to the sedentary norm (Bokeikhanov, 1913c). The sedentary norm amounted to 15 dessiatinas<sup>1</sup> of land for each man, whereas the nomadic norm was 15 dessiatinas for each person (Baitursynov, 1914a). The Tsarist policy of seizing the Kazakh lands was accompanied by propaganda stressing the advantages of sedentarization, identified with ‘culture’, progress, European civilization, etc. At the same time the nomadic life was associated with backwardness, regression, wildness and barbarism. Thus, for example, G. Agarevsky, in his discussion with the Kazakh revolutionary Turar Ryskulov, argued as follows: ‘As is well-known from economic history all so-called nomadic peoples were poor and careless. But they could not be different, because during frequent migrations, it was difficult to take many things along. If the saying “two moves are equal to one fire” is true, then a nomad lives through a lot of such moves, when so much things get spoiled, broken and lost. Therefore the nomad is unable to save material wealth. It is also well-known that people without economic power do not have spiritual values and are incapable of engaging in the sciences and arts. A nomadic people will never be able to compete with settled peoples and—one can say with certainty—will remain in economic dependence on the latter and be subdued by them. Economic dependence in turn leads to political dependence’ (Agarevsky, 1918).

Alikhan Bokeikhanov, one of the important Alash leaders, underlined that the Tsarist government forced the Kazakhs to sedentarization not because of its desire to bring the Kazakhs closer to culture, but in order to make available more free land for Russian *muzhiks*. Bokeikhanov stressed that the government was not much worried about the fact that by the beginning of this century, the best lands had already been occupied by the Russians, and the Kazakhs could not successfully farm on the remaining lands, because they lacked the necessary agricultural experience. He also pointed out that the Kazakhs should accept land in accordance with the sedentary norm only of their free will. He cited the speech of Glinka at the Fourth Russian Duma: ‘We give the Russian *muzhiks* only lands useless to the Kazakhs. If we give the Kazakhs land in accordance with the nomadic norm, there will remain no lands for the Russian *muzhiks*.... In general it is unnecessary to give the Kazakhs land for use in perpetuity’. Glinka also maintained that the Kazakhs on their own initiative applied for land according to the sedentary norm. Alikhan Bokeikhanov noted that the last statement was a complete lie (Bokeikhanov, 1913b).

Akhmet Baitursynov, another important Alash leader, stressed the necessity to distinguish the political and cultural aspects of this problem: and although the Tsarist government emphasized the cultural aspects of its settlement policies, its main activities were aimed at the solution of Russia’s own agrarian problems. Baitursynov observed that the editors of *Aiqap* as well as some Tatar leaders did not distinguish between cultural and political aspects of the migration policies of

the Russian government, which pressured the Kazakhs to settle down as soon as possible. He believed that this policy resulted from the lack of information about the concrete situation in the Kazakh steppe (Baitursynov, 1914a).

Soviet historiography has characterized the editors of *Qazaq* as conservative and reactionary adherents of the old order (the nomadic way of life). On the other hand, the editors of *Aiqap* have been considered a progressive part of the Kazakh intelligentsia, agitating for a complete transition to sedentarization (Beisembiev, 1961, 1965). More detailed analysis of the discussion between the two above-mentioned periodicals allows us to conclude that in fact both groups of Kazakh intellectuals spoke out in support of sedentarization. The principal distinction among them consisted in their understanding of the ways and forms this transition was to take.

The *Aiqap* leaders maintained that the earlier the Kazakhs began to lead a sedentary way of life, the sooner they would gain an education and join European culture. Mukhamedzhan Seralin believed that the transition to the sedentary way of life was an important condition of the preservation of the Kazakh people as a nation: 'We are convinced that the building of settlements and cities, accompanied by a transition to agriculture based on the acceptance of lands by Kazakhs according to the norms of Russian muzhiks, will be more useful than the opposite solution (the nomadic norms—G.K.). The consolidation of the Kazakh people on a unified territory will help preserve them as a nation. Otherwise the nomadic auyls<sup>2</sup> will be scattered and before long lose their fertile land. Then it will be too late for a transition to the sedentary way of life, because by this time all arable lands will have been distributed and occupied' (Zimanov and Idrisov, p 118). Seralin also pointed out that modern science had proved the advantages of sedentarization in comparison with nomadism. He claimed that the time of nomadism had passed quite a while ago, but the Kazakhs continued wandering and regarding the nomadic way of life as their only happiness. Mukhamedzhan Seralin and Bakhytzhan Qarataev organized settlements with the help of their own relatives in the native Qostanai province (North Kazakhstan) in order to demonstrate by personal example the advantages of sedentarization. But on the whole, sedentarization did not become popular. The ideas of Seralin and Qarataev were supported mainly by poor Kazakhs. Seralin himself explained this fact by the cultural backwardness of Kazakhs, who 'were unable to distinguish between useful and useless things' (Zimanov and Idrisov, p 120).

The editors of *Qazaq*, Akhmet Baitursynov, Alikhan Bokeikhanov and Myrzhaqyp Dulatov, considered themselves Westernizers: 'We are Westernizers. We do not look to the East or the Mongols in our striving to bring our people closer to culture. We know there is no culture there. Our eyes turn to the West. We can get culture from there through Russia, through the mediation of Russians' (Martynenko, 1992, p 139). In their political, publicistic and literary activities, Bokeikhanov, Baitursynov and Dulatov criticized the negative characteristics of Kazakh nomadic society. They propounded the need to learn from European culture and sciences as well as the necessity to begin a new life. In Bokeikhanov's opinion: 'The culture of our Russia is low. Russia has no

factories and plants capable of producing valuable things. Culture is in Western Europe: in France, England, Belgium and Germany’ (Bokeikhanov, 1915e).

However, these writers supported the idea of a gradual and cautious transition to sedentarization with due regard for climatic conditions and necessary agricultural knowledge and skills in order not to cause damage to the traditional Kazakh nomadic way of life. The truth of their warnings was proven by the terrible famine of the 1930s in Kazakhstan, which destroyed more than 40 per cent of the native population. This famine was a consequence of the Soviet policy of mass collectivization accompanied by the forced settling of the nomadic Kazakhs.

The author of the series of articles ‘Sharualyq özgerisi’ (‘Change of Economic System’) in the newspaper *Qazaq* emphasized that the Kazakh nomadic economy was first of all caused by the climatic conditions of the Kazakh steppe, where (except for some regions of the northern provinces) only nomadic livestock breeding was possible: ‘If we ask what kind of economy is more suitable for Kazakhs—the nomadic or the sedentary—the question is incorrectly posed. A more correct question would be: what kind of economy can be practised under the climatic conditions of the Kazakh steppe? The latter vary from area to area and mostly are not suitable for agricultural work. Only in some northern provinces do the climatic conditions make it possible to sow and reap. The Kazakhs continue wandering not because they do not want to settle down and farm, or prefer nomadism as an easy form of economy. If the climatic conditions had allowed them to do so, they would have settled a long time ago’ (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1916). In the author’s opinion, the climate must be regarded as one of the necessary conditions for sedentarization, the most important characteristics of the latter being the quality of the soil, the air, the possibilities of irrigation, etc. (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915e). The author concluded that the nomadic economy was the kind of economy best adapted to the climatic conditions of the Kazakh steppe (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1916).

Moreover, the author of these articles was unconvinced by the idea that the Kazakhs must lead a sedentary life and that only in this way, would they become a civilized people. As proof of this statement the propagandists of sedentarization affirmed that all civilized peoples were settled peoples. Therefore, sedentarization must be regarded as an obligatory condition of civilization. The author observed that these propagandists did not speak about the conditions of transition to sedentarization for the Kazakhs (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915e).

The author of the article ‘Zher zhumysyna din zhumysyn qystyrlamau’ [‘Do not mix religious and land problems’] considered agricultural knowledge and experience another necessary condition of the transition to sedentarization. The author believed that the Kazakhs, without any sufficient agricultural, scientific or handicraft experiences and after selling their animals, would be condemned to die out or to apply for wage work. Wage-workers would soon be impoverished and might easily be converted to Christianity. Therefore, it was necessary first to teach the Kazakhs handicrafts, sciences and arts, so that they would be able to use small territories and non-fertile soils. Only after this preparation one might

encourage them to adopt a sedentary way of life. But the bureaucrats from the Russian Resettlement Committee did not speak about these things. They only pressured the Kazakhs to build cities and wanted to allot them 15 dessiatinas: ‘One may compare it with dressing some Kazakh in European fashion and sending him to London, where he would either die or, in the absence of any knowledge and relevant experience, work like a slave. If the government is ashamed of our nomadic way of life, it should give us good lands instead of bad as well as teach us sciences. Only after that can the government ask Kazakhs to live in cities. If the government is not ashamed of not carrying out all the above-mentioned measures, then the Kazakhs also need not be ashamed of their nomadic way of life. The Kazakhs are wandering not for fun, but in order to graze their animals’ (Zher zhumysyna ...).

The newspaper *Qazaq* reported an attempt by 64 Kazakh families from the Qapal district (North Kazakhstan) to settle down in a town especially built for this purpose. These Kazakhs decided to farm and ‘live in houses like *muzhiks*’. They even chose a starosta (village elder) in imitation of Russian peasant communities. But after three years this town collapsed. The author of the article noted that apart from endless disputes there were not even any completely built houses or other ‘cultural signs’. In the absence of the necessary knowledge and skills, the Kazakhs of this town farmed in a primitive manner. They were very sad when wandering in summer was forbidden to them. The author came to the following conclusion: ‘It is not easy to adopt a strange way of life all at once’. He wrote also about the plans to divide these Kazakhs into groups of 10 families in order to join each group to a Russian village or to teach them how to live in a city (Qala bolgan ...).

The discussion between the leading Kazakh periodicals concerning the nomadic/sedentary dilemma led them to wider issues, such as the meaning of culture in general and its relationship with Kazakh nomadic society, in particular. The author of the article ‘Zher zhumysyna ...’ believed that nomadism was a classical form of cattle-breeding, and that cattle-breeding itself is not incompatible with culture and life in cities. He cited as an example such a highly developed country as Switzerland, which successfully combined life in cities with cattle-breeding (Zher zhumysyna ...). Here it is important to stress that often by the term ‘culture’ the Kazakh intellectuals understood the level of technical (industrial) development. The author of ‘Sharualyq özgerisi’ maintained that undeveloped countries depended on nature, while to the contrary, technically developed countries were masters of nature (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915b). The developed societies were those who used water and steam to produce electricity and different machines. Myrzhaqyp Dulatov in his famous book *Oïian, Qazaq! [Awake, Kazakh!]* listed the following products of culture (technical progress): the steam-engine, the telegraph, the car, the telephone, the steam-ship, the balloon, the machine, the bomb, the mine, the machine-gun, the pistol, the revolver, the Browning, the electrical machine, the gramophone, the telescope, the factories and plants, the printing-houses, the newspapers and the magazines (Dulatuly, 1991, pp 23–25).

Different factors influence the development of culture (types of economy): climate, religion, density of population, handicrafts, laws, customs, etc. The author of ‘Sharualyq özgerisi’ believed that the Kazakhs must get to know different kinds of economies, because at the moment they were facing the very important problem of changing their traditional economy. Favourable climatic conditions make it easier for society to adopt culture. Under unfavourable climatic conditions the adoption of culture occurs with the help of sciences and techniques. According to the author of these articles there are the following general stages of humanity’s economical development: (a) the development of private economy, satisfying the requirements of individual families. This period is characterized by the absence of trade and barter; (b) the development of a city economy, aimed at the satisfaction of the requirements of one city and based on the trade with surrounding villages; (c) the development of a national economy based on the satisfaction of the requirements of one nation; and (d) the modern development of a world economy, characterized by close economic relations and mutual dependence between different countries as well as an international division of labour. The last period began in the 19th century (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915a).

The author of ‘Sharualyq özgerisi’ connected the origin of sedentarization and nomadism with the dynamics of changes in population density. The more people, the more food and territory are needed. If the growth of people is accompanied by a corresponding extension of their territory, then they will not need to change their traditional economy. For example, if growing flocks and herds correspond to an extension of nomad territory, then the nomads will continue wandering. Otherwise, the lack of territories for pasture will cause a reduction of cattle and provision for the population. The nomads will be forced to look for other means of making a living and begin settling down in order to farm. However, the author believed that density of population alone does not influence culture. Thus, for example, he claimed that China had both a high density of population and a low cultural level (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915c).

Due to the lack of territory, people may also develop their skills and sciences in order to learn using small territories effectively. Alikhan Bokeikhanov believed that such peoples as the Swiss in Europe as well as the settled peoples of Turkestan and the Altai province in Central Asia were forced to combine agriculture with a limited form of wandering, because of the lack of territories accompanied by unfavourable climatic conditions. As a result these peoples have been living in cities and pasturing their animals on the foothills close by (Bokeikhanov, 1913d).

In the opinion of the author of ‘Sharualyq özgerisi’, culture can be divided into: (a) ‘tabigi is’ (natural activities): hunting, cattle-breeding, agriculture, building of houses, trade, etc., and (b) ‘önerli is’ (artistic, skilled, handicraft activities): industry, factories and plants. If the former activities were of ancient character and had been handed down, from generation to generation, the latter needed to be learned. However highly the ancient societies of Egypt, Greece and Rome were developed, they could not be compared with modern developed

societies, because they did not have modern industries, factories and plants, nor did they use steam, water and wind to produce electricity (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915d). The above-mentioned types of cultural activities were developed in the following historical sequence: (a) hunting, fishing, gathering; (b) cattle-breeding as a result of animal domestication; (c) agriculture; (d) handicrafts; (e) trade; (f) techniques (Sharualyq özgerisi, 1915a).

According to Mukhtar Auezov, one of the most prominent Kazakh writers, hunting was the first historically formed type of culture. It was followed by nomadism, then by agriculture, and later on by fishing. All other forms of economic activities were developed later. Various climatic conditions as well as forms of economic activities influence both people's character and their abilities to adopt culture. For example, hunting as well as fishing demand from a person a lot of energy, strong will, self-control, patience and courage. All these characteristics favour a relatively easy adoption of culture. The character of nomadic peoples depends on the character of their neighbours. If the latter disturb the life of the nomads, then the nomads become courageous, constant and warlike. But if there are no factors breaking the calm life of nomads, then the character of the latter becomes inconstant, lazy and petty. Peoples possessing the last-named characteristics adopt culture and sciences only with difficulty. Mukhtar Auezov was convinced that the Kazakhs constituted one of the latter peoples. Therefore, they had to change their traditional economy and settle down. Only in this way could they revive their forgotten energy, will and warlike character. Auezov also emphasized that not all peoples involved in cattle-breeding are nomads (the Swiss, the Dutch). The latter achieve considerable success in cultural fields, because of their strong spirit. On the whole, settled peoples adopt culture and the sciences best of all, thanks to the following traits of their character: patience, energy, constancy, pride and collectivism (Auezov, 1918).

Alikhan Bokeikhanov distinguished two sorts of culture: 'spiritual' culture, which involves newspapers, magazines and books of any level, including poetry and philosophy. But culture is also material culture, which involves the production of different kinds of material goods. Material culture was advanced by the so-called cultured (European) peoples (Bokeikhanov, 1915c).

A well-known Kazakh poet, Sultanmakhmud Toraigyrov, went further in his interpretation of culture. From his point of view, culture can be characterized by 'dene azygy' (physical characteristics) that is techniques making the life of humanity easier, such as the steam-engine or the telegraph. In addition, culture involves 'ar azygy' (moral characteristics) or justice. Technical progress by itself, without justice, cannot make humanity happy. As proof of this statement Toraigyrov refers to the example of World War I, initiated by the technically developed European countries, and which caused unhappiness and grief to millions of families. Technical progress without control by considerations of morality may even have harmful effects, namely when technically developed countries try to enslave undeveloped and poor countries and prevent them from achieving modern technology. However, Toraigyrov believed that the Kazakhs must learn from European culture, because only in this way would they be able



to preserve Kazakh national identity (‘qazaqtyq’). He enthusiastically maintained that 20 to 30 years would be enough to achieve the level of modern European civilization (Toraigyrov, 1993, Vol 2, pp 157–158).

Alikhan Bokeikhanov suggested another interesting way of competing with Europe. In one of his articles he wrote that life had changed. If in the past cattle were wealth, then today money played this role. Therefore the Kazakhs now using their skills in the nomadic breeding of livestock could earn money by selling their products in the market. The Kazakhs could also exchange animal-products for the agricultural produce of Russian *muzhiks*, satisfying in this way both their own needs and those of the Russian *muzhiks* (Bokeikhanov, 1915f).

We may conclude that none of the above-mentioned groups of Kazakh opinion leaders considered the nomadic way of life as preservation of national identity, or connected sedentarization with the change or loss of ‘qazaqtyq’. Furthermore, they did not regard Kazakh nomadic society as a specific mode of production, but only as a particular sort of cattle-breeding, caused by specific climatic conditions, density of population and size of territory. Therefore, they did not see any fundamental differences between cattle-breeding in Switzerland and Holland and the nomadic livestock breeding in the Kazakh steppe.

### **Islam and Kazakh customary law**

The Islamic-oriented editors of *Aiqap* blamed the editors of *Qazaq* for intending to leave the Kazakhs without religion. They believed that Islam was a significant characteristic of the Kazakh way of life and mentality (‘qazaqtyq’) and argued in favour of speedy sedentarization, as this would lead to an increasing role for Islam among the Kazakhs. Alikhan Bokeikhanov supported the idea of separating religion from the state. This fact among others caused him to leave the Russian Constitutional Democratic party in July 1918 (Bokeikhanov, 1918).

The contradictions between Islamic- and Western-oriented groups of Kazakh opinion leaders came to light at the All-Muslim Congress held in 1914 in St Petersburg, which concerned the problem of the Kazakh judiciary. The introduction of the Russian court system had especially negative effects on the regulation of Kazakh legal relations. The lack of Kazakh judges with a knowledge of the Russian language gave an advantage to the interpreters attached to the Russian courts. The latter often abused their positions, accepting bribes and increasing the arbitrariness of the Russian judges. The Kazakh deputies to this Congress, Zhikhansha Seidalin and Bakhytzhan Qarataev (*Aiqap*), believed that the introduction of the Sharia (Islamic law) could reduce abuse and violence in the Kazakh justice. Other Kazakh deputies decided to support them because, as delegates to an Islamic congress, they found it more appropriate to speak in favour of Islamic law.

Alikhan Bokeikhanov was definitely against the introduction of the Sharia into Kazakh life, emphasizing that among the Kazakhs the Sharia had never regulated such important legal matters as cattle suits, disputes about dowries and inheritance. The latter were mainly regulated by Kazakh customary law: ‘Our

Kazakhs (hopefully no outsider is listening) do not use the Sharia, they merely call themselves Muslims.... There are not even any mullahs knowing the Sharia.... The Sharia is a fixed, written law common to all countries and peoples. It is incapable of change and inflexible' (Bokeikhanov, 1914c). He ironically responded to his opponents: 'What is the value of the Sharia, if people do not use it? The Sharia may demand that a thief's hand be cut off. Which Kazakh would do such a thing in practice? Who will cut off a thief's hand? If the hand is cut off, will Kazakhs be happier?' (Bokeikhanov, 1914e).

Bokeikhanov was convinced that the introduction of Russian law ('orys zakony') destroyed the institution of Kazakh customary law and caused bribery, violence and disorder in Kazakh legal relations: 'Since the Kazakhs have joined Russia, they have lost their traditional biis (people's judges—G.K.), whose improvisational oratory was reminiscent of a fast runner or an inborn ambler. Those, who adulate the Russians also lash out at their people. The few eloquent, just and unpretentious former biis that still survive nowadays do not enjoy any more respect. Today, bribes make white black and vice versa' (Bokeikhanov, 1914a). On the other hand, the newspaper *Qazaq* blamed Islamic law for recent disorders in the Kazakh judiciary: 'We are now living in a time when our Kazakh biis have taken the road of injustice. Therefore it is no wonder that the people have also lost their ability to distinguish between true and false ways. Other peoples observing this situation may come to the conclusion that the Kazakhs do not have any court system at all. But it is not true. The Kazakhs have lost their customary court system because of Sharia interference' (Bilik, 1914).

*Qazaq* claimed that the Kazakh youth graduating from both Russian and Muslim institutions had no idea about Kazakh customary law. It had therefore become an urgent task to collect and revise all remaining Kazakh laws, customs and regulations ('zhol', 'zhoba', 'erezhe'). It was also imperative to collect and analyse all information about the lives and works of the most famous Kazakh people's judges (biis). On the basis of this information, the state organs should work out common regulations for all Kazakhs. *Qazaq* explained the most important characteristics of the Kazakh traditional justice in the following sentence: 'A bii terminates controversy, a judgement is the sentence of a bii concerning the controversy. If the sentence is correct, both sides will be satisfied, otherwise further disputes will arise'. Other important terms also were defined: 'Zhol' (way) is an ancient way of conducting important ceremonies; for example dowry, marriage or inheritance. 'Zhoba' (shape, form) is a system of customs, by which these ceremonies are conducted; for example putting on a robe, granting a dowry (which should include nine kinds of different things: camel, horse, etc.). 'Erezhe' (directions) are general perspective regulations for 'zhol' and 'zhoba', while 'zhaza' (punishment) is a sentence passed over a guilty person. 'Aiyp' means paying a fine in the form of animals (Bilik, 1914).

As Kazakh nomadic society could not function without its customary law—the preservation of this law (*Qazaq*) was regarded as a precondition for the preservation of the society itself. On the other hand, the introduction of Sharia

law (*Aiqap*) was at variance with traditional Kazakh legal relations. Emphasis on both traditional Kazakh regulation and the introduction of Sharia was equally incompatible with the attempt to bring Kazakh culture closer to European culture, and indicates the diversity of opinion current among Kazakh intellectuals at the beginning of this century.

A relatively low level of Islamization among the Kazakh nomads gave an advantage to other settled Muslim peoples of Russia, especially to the Tatars and the Uzbeks, whose life was traditionally more influenced by Islam. This fact may also explain why Russian missionaries considered the Kazakhs to be amenable to future conversion.

In contrast to the above-mentioned Muslims, the Kazakhs did not have their own religious board, e.g. a territorial administration of the Muslims of Russia. This problem had been repeatedly discussed by the leading Kazakh periodicals. After the February revolution of 1917 the Kazakhs decided to provisionally join the Tatar Religious Board centred in Orynbor (Qarashev, 1917; Dulatov, 1913).

A certain isolation of the Kazakhs from other Russian Muslims had been revealed in the activities of the Muslim Faction of the Russian Duma. As is generally known, after the Second Russian Duma (1907) the Kazakhs were not permitted to send their own deputies to Russian Dumas. Their interests were represented by the deputies of the Muslim Faction of the Third (1907–1912) and the Fourth (1912–1917) Russian Dumas. Alikhan Bokeikhanov, in his reports on the work of the Dumas, claimed that the Tatar deputies of the Muslim Faction had no understanding of the lives and problems of the Kazakhs and looked down upon them as uncivilized nomads. He invited them to visit the Kazakh lands in order to become acquainted with the life of the Kazakhs. He also emphasized that the Kazakhs must have their own deputies in the Muslim Faction (Bokeikhanov, 1916a,b).

The leading role of the Tatar intelligentsia at the beginning of this century has been principally explained by the popularity of the ‘usuli jadid’ (‘the new method’) of Ismailbek Gasprinsky, a well-known Tatar scholar and educator. The Kazakh leaders supported the ideas of the jadidists (Ismailbek Gasprinski). Akhmet Baitursynov used the phonetic method of ‘usuli jadid’ for the teaching of the Kazakh language. Kazakh students became acquainted with this method at Tatar madrasahs, in particular at the madrasah ‘Galiyeh’ in the city of Ufa.

The emergence of the jadidists’ ideas led to the split of Central Asian Muslims into progressive and conservative groups, which on the eve of the October revolution of 1917 manifested itself in the foundation of two organizations (both with their centre in Tashkent). The organization ‘Shurai-Islam’ [Islamic Council] headed by the well-known Uzbek leader Munawwar Qari united the progressive part of the Central Asian intelligentsia and supported the ideas of jadidism. This organization was also popular with the progressive Kazakh leaders. At the Muslim Conference, 13–20 April 1917, ‘Shurai-Islam’ elected the ‘Turkestan Musulman Merkezi Shurasi’ (The Turkestan Muslim Central Council), which later became the ‘Milli Merkez’ (The National Centre). Mustafa Shoqaeu was one of its leaders. About 30 Kazakh delegates took part in the All-Muslim

Congress of 'Shurai-Islam' held in Moscow in May 1917. They were also charged with the preparation of the draft programme of the future national party 'Alash'.

Zh. Tileulin in his report on the 'Shurai-Islam' Congress wrote that the approximately 800 delegates were divided into federalists (autonomists) and unitarists (centralists). The federalists supported the idea of a democratic, federative and decentralized state, providing self-government to each people of Russia, with the central government considering only matters of concern to the state as a whole. The unitarists came out in favour of a democratic parliamentary state, with all citizens considered to be part of a single people. They maintained that if power were to be given to the peoples of Russia, then due to the lack of education of a national intelligentsia and general backwardness, only the rich from among each people would achieve power. This situation might favour the restoration of Nicholas II. In addition, the oppressed position of women among all these Muslim peoples would not change.

Taking into account the missionary activities of Russians, the Congress declared it important to strengthen Islam among the Kazakhs and thereby ensure closer ties with other Muslims of Russia on the basis of a common Islamic culture. The delegates spoke out in favour of a rapprochement between Islamic and Western cultures, as well as stronger solidarity among both Turks and Muslims. The last issue became especially important because of the absence of a strong government in Russia (Tileulin, 1917).

The conservative and clerical part of Central Asian Muslims founded their own organization ('Ulema Jemyeti') under the leadership of Serali Lapin. They also organized an Assembly ('Mahkomai-Sharia') consisting of certain members of the 'Ulema' organization and attached to the Turkestan Committee of the Russian Provisional Government. One of the main duties of this Assembly was the final ratification of the laws issued for Turkestan by the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. The Assembly of 'Ulema' had the right to change these laws in accordance with the Sharia (Islamic law) after preliminary examination and before final ratification. 'Ulema' spoke out in favour of an autonomy for Turkestan within the framework of a Russian federative state. Mustafa Shoqaeв, one of the Alash leaders, remembered that these two powerful organizations, 'Shurai-Islam' and 'Ulema' were strong antagonists and argued with each other (Shoqai, 1992, pp 129–130). The leaders of 'Ulema', Serali Lapin and S. Khozha, criticized Alikhan Bokeikhanov for his alleged deviation from Islam and propaganda in favour of the Russian way of development (Kelden, 1917).

In fact the Western-oriented Kazakh leaders advocated the preservation of the traditionally limited role of Islam in Kazakh society. They restricted the influence of the Kazakh mullahs in the draft programme of the 'Alash' party to the matters of marriage, birth, death and divorce ('Alash' partiiasy ...).

### **Language, literature and national identity**

As has been demonstrated above, the editors of *Qazaq* did not consider it necessary to retain the nomadic way of life in order to preserve Kazakhness.

Neither was the Islamic factor regarded as a necessary condition for Kazakh national identity. In any case, certain spheres of Kazakh everyday life were regulated by rules which were unconnected with the Sharia. According to the editors of *Qazaq* the preservation of the Kazakh language and the development of Kazakh literature and culture were to form the basis of national identity:

The indispensable condition of both the preservation and disappearance of a people is its language. If we want the Kazakh people to be preserved as a nationality, we must think of the preservation of our language as much as of our daily bread. If the present-day condition of our language is not changed, it will disappear. It is quite clear: if we want to have relationships with other peoples and do not wish to be left behind, we must acquire an education. (Baitursynov, 1913b)

The *Aiqap* editors also emphasized the importance of education and the Kazakh language. However, they stressed that only the immediate transition to a sedentary way of life would make it possible to preserve the language, promote education and join European culture.

At the beginning of this century the decline in the educational sphere and the critical condition of the Kazakh language may explain the great attention Kazakh intellectuals paid to the problems of language and education. Moreover, eloquence, and particularly poetical skill, had always been highly esteemed in the Kazakh system of traditional cultural values. It was no coincidence that Akhmet Baitursynov, Alikhan Bokeikhanov, Myrzhaqyp Dulatov, Mukhamedzhan Tynyshpaev and other leading Alash men, though without a professional literary or philological education, became self-educated writers, poets, linguists, historians of culture and enlighteners of repute. In the absence of a political life in the European sense of the word (political struggle, parties, etc.) the Kazakh leaders used the traditional poetic form of appeal in order to politicize Kazakh society. The collected poems *Masa* [Gnat] (1911) by Akhmet Baitursynov, and *Oiiän, Qazaq!* [*Awake, Kazakh!*] (1909) by Myrzhaqyp Dulatov were in fact political manifestos addressed to the Kazakh people in poetic form.

Next to the improvement of the Kazakh language Akhmet Baitursynov emphasized the reform of Kazakh primary schools and the preparation of the necessary teaching materials (spelling primers and text-books). He was deeply concerned about the low level of the Kazakh language and education in Kazakh primary schools. In general he regarded the primary schools as the most important link in the educational sphere.

At the beginning of this century there were two main sorts of primary schools for the Kazakhs: the Kazakh mekteps (schools) and the Russian or Altynsarin schools. Teaching at the Kazakh mekteps proceeded in Kazakh written in the Arabic script. It was based on the so-called ‘eski zhol’ (‘the old way’) method, i.e. influenced by Islamic educational traditions. The so-called Altynsarin or Russian schools were first organized by the well-known Kazakh enlightener Ibragim Altynsarin (1841–89), who introduced the Cyrillic alphabet adapted to the Kazakh language. This alphabet was compiled by the Russian orientalist and missionary N. Il’minsky, who was convinced that the Cyrillic alphabet would

serve as the first step to the Russification of Kazakhs with a subsequent conversion to Christianity. The newspaper *Qazaq* also mentioned a third type of Kazakh primary school which used the so-called ‘zhana zhol’ (‘the new way’) method of teaching, which closely resembled the well-known ‘usuli jadid’ method. These schools were in the process of establishment and not widely spread. The Kazakh mekteps required the payment of school fees, because they were not financially supported by the government. These schools had poorly qualified teachers and did not use progressive methods of teaching. The Russian schools were free of charge, as they received government support in the form of special school taxes. Therefore they had well-trained teachers and were provided with learning materials. However, the Kazakhs preferred to send their children to Kazakh schools, because they were afraid that in the Russian schools their children would forget their mother tongue and become Russified (Baitursynov, 1914b).

Akhmet Baitursynov observed that the Kazakh village children could attend only the Kazakh primary schools and were given a substandard education. In the Russian schools the Kazakh children learned to write Kazakh in the Cyrillic script, and the majority was not able to either read or write in the Arabic script:

Children after two to three years of study at Russian schools became useless for society. On the one hand, they can not read Russian books, newspapers and magazines, because they do not know the Russian language, but only the Cyrillic alphabet. On the other hand, despite knowing the Kazakh language they are unable to read Kazakh literature, because they do not know the Kazakh alphabet. The state strives to standardize the languages, religions and alphabets of the subject peoples ..., but each people wishes to preserve its own language, religion and alphabet. Therefore first of all the Kazakh primary schools should be separated from the missionary activities and politics of the government. Their first task must be the preservation of the Kazakh religion, language and alphabet. (Baitursynov, 1914b)

After graduating from primary schools, Kazakh children could continue their education only at Tatar or Uzbek madrasahs, because there were no Kazakh madrasahs available. Often these madrasahs were overcrowded, so that the Kazakhs could not enter them. The students of Muslim madrasahs had to pay for their study and did not receive any grants, whereas the students of Russian institutions were accorded monthly grants of 20–25 roubles. The newspaper *Qazaq* was especially concerned about the financial situation of the Kazakh students and organized assistance. The newspaper collected more than 10,000 roubles for the students at both the Muslim and Russian institutions. Among the Kazakh students the most popular Muslim madrasahs were the ‘Galiyeh’ in the city of Ufa, the ‘Khasaniyeh’ in the city of Orynbor, and the ‘Rasuliyeh’ in the city of Troitsk. In 1913 *Qazaq* reported that more than 10,000 Kazakh students were studying at the madrasahs of Troitsk, Semei, Qarqaraly, Orsk, and Qyzylzhar (Zhantalin).

*Qazaq* wrote that students graduating from Muslim and Russian institutions

were like members of two different peoples, speaking different languages. The Kazakhs studying at the Muslim madrasahs learned the so-called literary language, a mixture of the Tatar, Arabic, Persian and Uzbek languages. The more strange words were used, and the more incomprehensible it was for ordinary people, the more literate the language was considered. The Kazakhs graduating from the Muslim madrasahs were ashamed of using the Kazakh language and wrote either in the literary language or in the Cyrillic alphabet. Later they became men of religion (mullahs) and teachers at Kazakh primary schools.

First Kazakh writing is considered a shame, then perhaps speaking in Kazakh will be regarded as a shame. One may very well imagine the following development.... The name of our newspaper is *Qazaq* which means that it aims at the preservation of Kazakhness. But this is only feasible if the Kazakh name and language remains a part of our lives. (Baitursynov, 1913b)

*Qazaq* was the only newspaper to employ the pure unadulterated Kazakh language, written in the newly adopted Arabic alphabet. At the end of the first editorial Akhmet Baitursynov wrote:

Finally, we would like to tell our brothers preferring the literary language: we are very sorry if you do not like the simple Kazakh language of our newspaper. Newspapers are published for people and must be close to their readers. (Baitursynov, 1913a)

The Kazakhs did not trust the graduates of Russian institutions, because they imitated the people of another religion, wearing their clothes, smoking, etc. As a rule, these students did not stay with the Kazakhs or attempt to understand their needs either.

The Kazakh intellectuals opposed an attempt of the Tatar clergy at the All-Muslim Congress of 1914 (St Petersburg) to subordinate the Kazakh to the Tatar language. The draft law discussed at this Congress made the use of the Tatar language obligatory in the religious affairs of all Russian Muslims. One of the Kazakh delegates, Bakhytzhan Qarataev (*Aiqap*), supported this project and even maintained that the Kazakhs did not have a language of their own. Alikhan Bokeikhanov commented on this project:

Among all the Turkic peoples in Russia, the Kazakhs live in the most compact groups. As they have no idea about our language and country, our Muslim brothers do not know that we have been issuing magazines, newspapers and books for three to four years already. The Kazakhs have the clearest language.

Further, Bokeikhanov expressed his hope that the Kazakh language would continue to progress and occupy a worthy place in the future. After a long discussion on this issue the Congress arrived at a compromise settlement. A so-called ‘Tatar-Turkic language’ was to be used as a common official language by all Russian Muslims (Bokeikhanov, 1914d).

Akhmet Baitursynov believed that the Kazakh primary schools must be supported by the government and be attended by all children of the appropriate

age. In his projected reform of primary schools he proceeded from the assumption that the knowledge of the Russian language was necessary for a people living in Russia and subject to the Russians (Baitursynov, 1913c). According to this reform project the study at primary school should last five years. In the first three years children were to learn in the Kazakh language using the Arabic alphabet: 'This alphabet came to the Kazakhs with Islam and both are ineradicable' (Baitursynov, 1914b). In the following two years children were to learn in Russian and master the Cyrillic alphabet. The primary schools were to be of two types, namely city schools and steppe schools. The latter were to be divided into *auyl* and *ulus mekteps* (village and district schools). Teaching at the village schools was to proceed in Kazakh language, while in the district schools Russian language was to be used. The following subjects were to be included in the programme of the primary school: reading, writing, religion, mother tongue, national history, arithmetic, geography, orthography, biology. These subjects were to be taught in Kazakh. Teaching at the next stage was to proceed in Russian and was meant to correspond to the primary classes of Russian secondary or technical high schools. After finishing this sort of primary school the Kazakhs would be able to continue their studies both at the Muslim or Russian institutions (Baitursynov, 1914b).

The Arabic script used at the beginning of this century was poorly adapted to the Kazakh language. Therefore Akhmet Baitursynov believed that:

The majority of Kazakh teachers graduated from the 'Galiyeh' and 'Khasaniyeh' madrasahs do not know how many vowels the Kazakh language possesses and what they are. They believe that the number of vowels in Kazakh corresponds to the number of (Arabic—G.K.) letters. (Baitursynov, 1913c)

Since most Kazakh teachers had not mastered the phonetics of the Kazakh language, they used the so-called visual method of teaching. By contrast, Baitursynov attached great importance to the phonetical method which, in his opinion, should form the basis of teaching. He gave preference to the 'usuli sävtiia' method of Ismailbek Gasprinsky, because of its pronounced phonetical character (Baitursynov, 1913d).

In fact the work of Akhmet Baitursynov on the reform of the Kazakh language involved an investigation of the main theoretical and practical aspects of the Kazakh language and the basis of modern Kazakh linguistics. In his autobiography he described this work as follows:

Since 1901, during school vacations I had been involved with self-education, and after coming to Orynbor I first began to investigate the phonetic and grammar systems of the Kazakh language. After that I worked on the systematization and facilitation of the Kazakh alphabet. Thirdly, I tried to free the written Kazakh language from unnecessary and foreign words as well as the syntactic influence of other languages. Fourthly, I began with the creation of a scientific terminology in order to liberate Kazakh prose from its artificial character and bring it closer to the speaking practice of people. I also worked on models, which might help to improve the style of the Kazakh language. (Syzdykova, 1992, p 16)

In reforming the Kazakh alphabet Akhmet Baitursynov introduced some new



marks to designate the vowels not represented in the former alphabet. He also removed some letters of the Arabic alphabet which did not reflect the phonetics of the Kazakh language and used a special mark for the designation of ‘soft’ vowels (the so-called ‘däiekshi’). Baitursynov’s book *Oqu qural* [*Means of Teaching*] published in 1912 in Orynbor represented the Kazakh spelling primer based on the newly adopted Arabic alphabet. In the following editions of the book Baitursynov improved this alphabet several times. During 1912–15 the book was reprinted seven times and proved to be a great help for Kazakh primary schools. According to Myrzhaqyp Dulatov Baitursynov pursued the same goal as Gasprinsky, that is ‘to adapt the Arabic alphabet to the Kazakh language in order to facilitate Kazakh writing’ (Dulatov, 1912).

In 1915 Baitursynov issued the first text-book of the Kazakh language *Til qural* [*Means of Language*] consisting of three parts. The first part was devoted to the phonetics of the Kazakh language and was reprinted seven times (1915–17). The second (1914) and the third (1916) parts of the book analysed the morphology and syntax of the Kazakh language. Each of these parts was reprinted six times altogether. In 1928 Baitursynov published a guide to the practical use of the Kazakh language—*Til zhumsar* [*Use of Language*]. He also wrote the first manual of Kazakh literature and literary criticism—*Äebiet tanytqysh* [*Guide to Literature*].

In Bokeikhanov’s view, the development of Kazakh literature and the knowledge of Kazakh culture and history belonged to the important characteristics of ‘qazaqtyq’ (Bokeikhanov, 1913a). If a people does not know its own history or has lost contact with its past, this people may ultimately disappear. ‘History is a guide to life, pointing out the right way’ (Bokeikhanov, 1913a). M. Dulatov considered historical literature ‘the soul’ of each people and a pledge of the preservation of their national identity in the future. Peoples without their own history and culture could easily be assimilated by other peoples (Dulatov, 1991, p 250). A famous Kazakh poet, Magzhan Zhumabaev, believed that: ‘From the European viewpoint the Kazakh people are poor, because they do not have their own cultural and literary heritage’ (Zhumabaev, 1992, p 73). In the early Soviet period he initiated the first Kazakh literary society ‘Alqa’ [Necklace], which was to undertake the formation of a new generation of Soviet Kazakh writers.

The character of Kazakh literature at the beginning of this century was characterized by Sultanmakhmud Toraigyrov in 1913 in the following words:

It is well-known that ten or fifteen years ago the most popular books among the Kazakhs were: *Zarqym*, *Sal-sal*, *Alpamys*, etc. These books represented nothing but fantastic, invented and improbable legends full of different kinds of dragons, fairies, witches, giants, etc. (Toraigyrov (1993), Vol 2, p 138)

Under these circumstances the acquaintance with European and especially Russian literary traditions had a powerful impact on the development of Kazakh written literature. A prominent poet, Abai Qunanbaev (1845–1904), was the first Kazakh writer to deeply experience the influence of Russian literature. The Kazakh intellectuals Alikhan Bokeikhanov, Akhmet Baitursynov, Myrzhaqyp

Dulatov, Magzhan Zhumabaev, Mukhtar Auezov, greatly appreciated his work and commented on it in detail. According to Bokeikhanov, Abai was the first Kazakh poet of a new type. While his predecessors were traditional poets who enlivened holidays and festivals, Abai attached great social meaning to poetry (Bokeikhanov, 1992). Bokeikhanov acquainted the broad Russian public with the name and works of Abai. He edited the first collected verses of Abai issued in St Petersburg in 1909. According to Bokeikhanov, Abai was very well acquainted with the works of the following Russian writers: A. Pushkin, M. Lermontov, N. Nekrasov, L. Tolstoi, I. Turgenev, M. Saltykov-Shchedrin, F. Dostoevsky, V. Belinsky, N. Dobroliubov, D. Pisarev and Tchernyshevsky.

Myrzhaqyp Dulatov believed that in the true sense of the word there was no Kazakh literature before Abai (Dulatov, 1991, p 250). In the opinion of R. Marsekov (1915) the poetry of Abai formed a special period in the development of Kazakh literature, a new stage which followed upon the period of oral tradition and the subsequent dissemination of the written tradition through Islam.

Akhmet Baitursynov distinguished two main periods in the history of Kazakh literature: the 'dindar дәуір' ('religious period') and the 'dilmar дәуір' ('linguistic, literary period'). Both of these periods were the result not of an authentic development, but due to the influence of other literary traditions. The first period was characterized by the spreading of Islam among the Kazakhs and the influence of the Tatar and Uzbek literatures. The latter in turn had been strongly influenced by Arabic and Persian literary traditions. This period, wrote Baitursynov, favoured the development of religion, but not the development of Kazakh language and literature. The so-called literary language developed in this period was in fact a mixture of the Kazakh and the Tatar languages. The second period began after 1850 and was characterized by attempts on the part of Russian authorities to diminish the influence of Islam and the Tatar language by introducing the Cyrillic alphabet.

Finding themselves between two fires (the Russians and the Tatars) the Kazakhs, through Russian literature, became acquainted with European literature. The Kazakh literature began to use new and previously unknown words. This was a result not of religious influence, but of a change in the language itself. (Baitursynov, 1989, pp 262–263)

Thus, according to Baitursynov, the influence of the Russian and European literatures was the salient feature of the second period of Kazakh literary development.

The Western-oriented Kazakh leaders considered it necessary to learn from European literature, culture and history. Nazipa Külzhanova, one of the first educated Kazakh women, maintained that this learning should not be a simple imitation, but the adoption of the spirit of criticism characteristic of European literature:

But before our national literature can reach world level we must first learn about and know our own life. We need to collect and systematize examples of the Kazakh traditional oral literature in order to become very well acquainted with all aspects of the life of our own people. (Külzhanova, 1916)

These aims determined the main activities of the Alash leaders. Apart from the investigation of Kazakh language and literature, Akhmet Baitursynov concerned himself with the collection and publication of Kazakh folklore, the history of world culture and translations. In 1925 Akhmet Baitursynov and Alikhan Bokeikhanov edited and published ‘23 zhoqtau’ [23 Mourning-Songs], which included songs of Kazakh folklore, some of them 400 years old. Baitursynov translated the works of the following authors into Kazakh: I. Krylov, F. Voltaire, M. Lermontov, S. Nadson and Zhadovskaia. In 1923 Baitursynov wrote a monograph devoted to the history of world culture *Mädeniet tarihy* [*History of Culture*]. Unfortunately, this book was lost, possibly because of confiscation by the KGB, as Baitursynov’s house was frequently searched and the author himself arrested.

Another important Alash leader, namely Alikhan Bokeikhanov, regularly acquainted the readers of *Qazaq* with Russian and European culture, history and literature (Bokeikhanov, 1915a,b,c). In his article ‘Roman degen ne?’ [‘What is a Novel?’] Bokeikhanov characterized this literary genre in the following way:

The inner essence of the novel involves the truthful depiction of the bright and dark sides of life. The novel pitilessly exposes humanity’s life and its time. The noble goal of the novel is the improvement of mankind’s character, delivering the latter from shortcomings and ignorance. The novel attempts to set up educational and didactic examples. (Bokeikhanov, 1915a)

On Bokeikhanov’s initiative the newspaper *Qazaq* announced a competition which was to produce the first Kazakh novel and appealed to rich Kazakhs for financial assistance (Bokeikhanov, 1915d). The literary activities of Bokeikhanov included the collection, analysis and publication of Kazakh folklore, literary criticism and the translation of Russian and European scientific, popular-scientific and fiction into the Kazakh language. He published a series of articles devoted to Kazakh epics: ‘Zhenshchina po kirgizskoi byline Koblandy’ [‘Woman in the Kirgiz Epic Koblandy’] (1899), ‘Batyр Bekeт’ [‘A Hero Bekeт’] (1923), ‘Qalqaman-Mamyр’ (1915), ‘Myрza Edige’ (1923), ‘Qara Qypshaq Qoblandy’ (1915). He also discussed the structure of Kazakh folk song: ‘Än, ölen khäm onyn quramy’ [‘The Structure of Melody and Song’] (1914). Bokeikhanov also pointed out the unequal position of women in traditional Kazakh society: ‘Bespravnost’ kirgizskikh molodykh’ [‘The Deprivation of Kazakh Young Women of Civil Rights’] (1902), ‘Qyzdy malga satu’ [‘Selling Girls Like Cattle’] (1925). He equally translated the works of the following authors: L. Tolstoi, A. Tchekhov, V. Korolenko, D. Mamin-Sibiriak, Aesop, Guy de Maupassant, K. Flammarion.

Myрzhaqyp Dulatov became famous after the publication of his work *Oïian, Qazaq!* [*Awake, Kazakh!*]. He was also the author of the first Kazakh novel *Baqytsyz Zhamal* [*The Unhappy Zhamal*] published in Kazan in 1910. The novel represented a love-tragedy, involving a young educated Kazakh girl, Zhamal, unable to withstand the traditional customs of society. In 1913 he published the collected poems *Azamat* and in 1915 the poetic anthology *Terme*. He also wrote

manuals of mathematics (*Esep qural* [*Means of Counting*], 1922) and literature (*Qiraqat kitabı*, 1911; *Oqu kitabı* [*Book of Reading*], 1922) for Kazakh primary schools. Among his translations into Kazakh are the works of A. Pushkin, M. Lermontov, I. Krylov, Abu Firas, F. Schiller and Tukai. In 1922 M. Dulatov wrote a play in four acts *Balqiia* discussing the oppressed position of Kazakh women.

We may assume that Kazakh intellectuals saw mainly the cultural and not the economic or social aspects of the nomadic/sedentary dilemma. The Kazakh cultural dilemma involved a collision between the oral and written cultural traditions. At the beginning of this century Kazakh intellectuals witnessed the dramatic aggravation of this tension. The mechanisms of the Kazakh oral tradition were incapable of withstanding the powerful pressure of the ‘two cultural fires’, namely the Islamic and especially the Russian written traditions. Pressure from the two literate traditions resulted in a critical condition of the Kazakh language and a decline in the educational system.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the outstanding Kazakh poet Abai Qunanbaev did not write down his poems and opposed their publication. Thanks to the efforts of A. Bokeikhanov, the poems of Abai did not get lost and were published after his death. Under these circumstances Abai appears as a poet of the transitional cultural period, personifying the past and the future of the Kazakh oral tradition. In fact the essential activity of the Alash leaders was the creation of the Kazakh written tradition, which they considered the only way of preserving the Kazakh language and traditional oral heritage. A written tradition was regarded as the main condition of the cultural and national survival of the Kazakh people, which ultimately would enable the Kazakhs to equal European culture.

### Poetic solutions to the nomadic/sedentary dilemma

The Kazakh poets of the early 20th century (Magzhan Zhumabaev, Sultanmakhmud Toraigyrov, Zhusuppek Aimauytov) proved to be especially sensitive, reflecting the differences of mentality between the steppe and the new Kazakh city dwellers. In their poetic works the nomadic/sedentary dilemma often took the form of a discussion between two characters concerning the relative advantages of city and steppe ways of life. As an example we may mention two young men, Sherniiiaz and Basarbai, the characters of the play *Sherniiiaz* by Aimauytov. Sherniiiaz is a representative of the steppe and Basarbai is a new city dweller. Sherniiiaz sharply criticizes the city way of life, especially the moral code of city dwellers:

Qazaqtyn qarap tursan ädet-gurpyn,  
Minez zhoq adamynda qyltyn-syltyn.  
Suise de, zhek körse de ashyp aitađ,  
Boialyp buzbaıdy äiel minez-qulqyn

If you observe the Kazakh customs,  
You will see that the Kazakhs

Are not double-faced.  
They frankly speak about their love and hate,  
Their women have neither air nor grace.

(Aimauytov (1989), p 517)

The sympathies of Aimauytov are on the side of Sherniiiaz. The whole play has been written with the intention of pointing out the moral shortcomings of Bazarbai.

In the poetry of Magzhan Zhumabaev, one of the most popular Kazakh poets, the moral code of city dwellers is such as to make them almost a different people:

Äelderi uiiatsyz,  
Künde süigish, turaqsyz.  
Qylmyndasar, keriler.  
Zhüzderinin qany zhoq.  
Közderinin zhany zhoq,  
Erkekteri—'periler'.  
Olarda otty zhürek zhoq,  
Tamaqtan basqa tilek zhoq.  
Qorsyldagan 'donyzdar'!  
Tün balasy periler,  
Zhumaqtan artyq köriner—  
Olarga sasyq üngir tar.  
Kökti körmes kör olar,  
Qarashy qansha zhuldyz bar?  
Külip qana zhüzedi ai.  
Qalaga kelip qangyrdym,  
Sar dalamdy sagyndym,  
Aida atyndy, Särsembai!

City women are shameless, inconstant,  
Falling in love every day, mincing and flirting.  
There is no blood in their look,  
And no soul in their eyes.  
City men are 'ghosts'.  
There is no fire in their hearts,  
And no desire besides food.  
They are like grunting 'swines'!  
These ghosts of night  
Love their stinking cramped hole  
More than paradise  
Unable to see the blue sky.  
Look, how many stars are over there!  
With a smiling moon floating on the sky.  
I've lost myself after coming to the city  
And miss my golden steppe very badly  
Urge your horse on, Särsembai!

The city is identified with night and darkness. The city is a monster, a life on a strange planet, inspiring fear and depression:

Aida atyndy, Särsembai,  
 Agaryp altyn tan atpai,  
 Shygaiyq qyrğa, dalaga.  
 Shu-shu-shu,  
 Ätten gana bul oqu!  
 Kelmes edim qalaga.  
 Qarashy keiin burylyp:  
 Taudai bolyp sozylyp

Qala—bir zhatqan дәu peri.  
 Ainalasy—tuman, tün.  
 Dem alysy—ot, tütün.  
 Zharq-zharq eter közderi,  
 Sözi u-shu, en da zhyn  
 Sasyq iis auyr tym.  
 Tunshyqtym goi, qudai-ai!  
 Keiin qarap netemiz  
 Aylğa qashan zhetemiz?  
 Aidashy atty, Särsembai!

Ride your horse hard, Särsembai,  
 Before the golden daybreak comes,  
 Let us go out to the steppe.  
 Gee-up, gee-up  
 If it were not for this study!  
 I would never come to the city.  
 Look back: the city is a monster with sparkling eyes.  
 Laying in darkness and mist,  
 And rising like a mountain.  
 Its breath is fire and smoke  
 Its speech is loud and indistinct  
 Oh, my God, I've almost choked  
 With its heavy stinking stench!  
 Why should we look back?  
 When will we finally arrive at our aul?  
 Ride your horse harder, Särsembai!

(Zhumabaev, 'Aida atyndy Särsembai!' [Ride your horse hard, Sarsembai!], 1989, p 71)

The opposition of city/steppe in the poetry of the well-known Kazakh poet, Sultanmakmud Toraigyrov, takes on some new characteristics. His last unfinished poem 'Aitys' (1919) represents a discussion between the city and steppe akyns (poets) in form of a traditional Kazakh poetic competition—aitys (Toraigyrov, Vol 1, pp 210–239). Each of these poets lists arguments in favour of his own way of life. The steppe poet colourfully describes the beautiful steppe nature accompanying the whole life of nomadic Kazakhs. He enthusiastically

recounts the most important features of the Kazakh traditional mentality: hospitality, generosity, respect of elders, mutual aid, etc. opposing all these characteristics to the city’s moral code. The steppe dwellers are characterized by straightforwardness, honesty, sincerity, strength and purity of mind, whereas the city dwellers seem to the steppe poet to be false, artificial, shameless and inconstant.

The steppe poet could never conceive exchanging the freedom and breadth of the nomadic life for ‘Paris’ and ‘Moscow’, because he was unable to comprehend how city dwellers could live out their whole lives in one and the same apartment, which to the steppe poet appeared to be nothing but a grave. Even festivals organized in cities did not warm the poet’s heart, because they were incomparable to steppe holidays. The steppe poet was proud of the traditional nomadic life of his ancestors. Thanks to its natural and self-sufficient character, the nomadic economy was always independent from the city economy with its money relations and sharp stratification of the population into the poor and the rich.

The Kazakh language and Islam in the eyes of the steppe poet constituted an integral part of Kazakh life. The Kazakh language is associated with the poet’s mother, his first discovery of the world, his first love and free nomadic life. Islam is described as the most perfect religion and the only way of happiness for humanity in its entirety, because ‘Islam is based on justice and for this reason may be compared with socialism’. The steppe poet also admired Kazakh khans, batyrs (heroes), biis (people’s judges), pirs (religious tutors), emshis (people’s doctors) and aqyns (poets). In his description they all appeared as wise, just tutors and protectors of the Kazakh people. The steppe poet especially emphasized the role of the Kazakh aqyn—a mirror of society. Nobody could prevent the aqyn from openly criticizing all social phenomena, because of his divine quality. Toraigyrov consciously put into the mouth of the steppe poet a nostalgia for the nomadic way of life, which inevitably turns into an idealization of the ‘Golden Age’ of nomadism. The more perfect nomadic society was in the imagination of the steppe poet, the more distant and unreal it became. In other words in Toraigyrov’s opinion the Kazakh nomadic way of life had definitely become a thing of the past. This idea formed the basis of the reply of the city poet, who responds to the nostalgic stance of his steppe confrère. Unfortunately, the answer of the latter is incomplete, because Toraigyrov could not finish his last poem. But even the remaining text allows us to conclude that Sultanmakmud Toraigyrov sided with the city poet and supported his argumentation.

The city poet criticized nomadic society from the vantage point of a changed modern life. He believed that the Kazakhs could not any more be called a people, because they had lost their former pride and feeling of unity. In the view of the city poet the most serious shortcoming of modern Kazakh life was the lack of education and low level of the sciences and handicrafts. Kazakh nomadic society remained unfamiliar with the achievements of European civilization. The only authority respected by the Kazakhs was a semi-literate mullah. The city

poet maintained that the ‘Golden Age’ of nomadism had passed away a long time ago. Possession of lands and their riches would not make people happy, if the latter were not educated, skilled and technically equipped. Therefore, concluded the city poet, Kazakh society had been sickening for a long time and needed to be treated.

If for Toraigyrov the backwardness of Kazakh nomadic society could be overcome through an adoption of European culture and sciences within 20 to 30 years, for Magzhan Zhumabaev the future of Kazakh society was deeply rooted in and determined by its historical past, particularly the moral and cultural heritage of both the Kazakh and Turkic peoples of Central Asia. For Zhumabaev the opposition of city and steppe takes on a broader cultural meaning. It turns into the opposition of the West, meaning Europe, night, darkness and blindness, to the East, which stands for the Turks, but also for day, fire, sun and sunlight. Magzhan Zhumabaev experienced a strong influence of the Russian and European literature during his study and work in 1920s in Moscow. He was especially influenced by Russian poetical symbolism (D. Merezhkovsky, A. Fet, A. Blok) and the whole intellectual atmosphere of Russian society of that time. The last was to a considerable degree determined by Oswald Spengler’s book *The Decline of the West*. The ‘Eastern theme’ with the traditional opposition of East and West, popular both in Russian and European culture of that time, received a new interpretation in the poetry of M. Zhumabaev. If, in the Russian and European cultural tradition ‘The East’ appeared as an exotic and unachievable ideal in contrast to the perishing civilization of modern Europe, then ‘The East’ in the poetry of Zhumabaev had a concrete historical character, embodying the poet’s brilliant cultural heritage and representing a subject of pride:

Türkistan—eki dünie esigi goi,  
 Türkistan—er türiktin besigi goi.  
 Tamasha Türkistandai zherde tugan,  
 Türiktin täniri bergen nesibi goi.

Ertede Türkistandy Turan desken,  
 Turanda er türigim tuyt ösken,  
 Turannyn tagdyry bar tolqymaly  
 Basyndan köp tamasha künder köshken.

Turkistan is the gate to both realities,  
 Turkistan is a cradle of glorious Turks.  
 Turkistan is a beautiful heritage  
 Given by the heavens to the Turks.

Earlier Turkestan was called Turan,  
 Where my ancestors were born and grew up.  
 Turan has a splendid fate  
 Rich in wonderful events

(Zhumabaev, ‘Türkistan’, 1989, p 173)

In the poem ‘Türkistan’ M. Zhumabaev eulogized the nature of Turkistan: its



high snowy mountains—Tien Shan, Pamir, Altai, golden sands and mighty rivers—Oxus (Amu Darya) and Jaxartes (Syr Darya). The poet is delighted with the famous history of Turkistan and enumerates the most famous historical figures of Central Asia—Afrasiab, Genghis-khan together with his sons and generals, Timur, etc. as well as the famous Turkistan scientists—Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ulugbek. He also mentions the famous Kazakh leaders of the past—Qasym-khan, Ädil-khan, Esim-khan, Ablai-khan and others (Zhumabaev, 1989, pp 173–176).

For his poem ‘Paigambar’ [‘Prophet’] M. Zhumabaev took as a motto a fragment from a poem bearing the same name, whose author was D. Merezhkovsky, a well-known Russian symbolist. In Merezhkovsky’s poem feelings of weariness, pessimism, uncertainty and vagueness form an atmosphere of waiting, as a new prophet is being expected. By contrast, Zhumabaev’s stance is optimistic, as he announces the real coming of the new eastern prophet. The poet himself becomes both a personage in his own story and an eye-witness of the events he recounts:

Erte künde otty künnen Gun tujan,  
Otty Gunnen ot bop oinap men tugam  
Zhüzimdi de, qysyq qara közimdi  
Tua sala zhalynmenen men zhugam

Qaigylanba, soqyr sorly, shekpe zar,  
Men—kün uly, közimde kün nury bar.  
Men keletin, men keletin, men kelem,  
Künnen tujan, Gunnen tujan paigambar.

Soqyr sorly, körmei me äldä közin kör?  
Künshygystan tan keledi, endi kör.  
Tan keledi, men keletin—paigambar,  
Küt sen meni, ‘lakhualandy’ oqi ber!

Künshygystan tan keledi—men kelem,  
Kök künirenedi: men de köktei künirenem.  
Zherdin zhüzin qarangylyq qaptagan  
Zher zhüzine nur beremin, kün berem!

Long, long ago Hun<sup>3</sup> was born from the fiery sun  
Like a playing fire I was born from the fiery Hun,  
Soon after birth I washed properly with flame  
My face and my narrow black eyes.

Do not grieve and mourn, oh poor blind ones,  
I am a sun child, sunshine in my eyes  
I am coming, I am coming, I will come  
A prophet born from the fiery sun and the Hun.

Don’t your eyes see, oh poor blind ones,  
Look, the daybreak is coming from the East.

That is daybreak coming, that is I coming—a prophet,  
Wait for me and begin to pray!

That is daybreak coming from the East, that is I coming,  
The sky is moaning and I repeat after it,  
I will give the sunlight, I will give the day,  
To the earth, cloaked by the darkness.

(Zhumabaev, 'Paigambar' [Prophet], 1989, p 52)

Zhumabaev's idealization of the past ('Türkistan') betrays both his nostalgia and his recognition of the fact that it is impossible to return to or restore this 'Golden Age' of Kazakh history. Here Zhumabaev offers his own original poetic solution to the nomadic/sedentary dilemma. He gives nomadic life a new existence in his poetry, transforming real life into poetical reality and immortalizing it in this fashion. The essence of the nomadic way of life, namely wandering, is personified in the image of the poet—a central figure of Zhumabaev's poetry. The poet as created by Zhumabaev is a creature of inconstancy, permanent motion and change. Therefore Zhumabaev associates the figure of the poet with wind, fire, a fast horse, a butterfly and a rapid current:

Aqyn—zhel, eser, güler zhüirik zheldei,  
Aqyn—ot, laulap zhanar aspanga örlei.  
Qıialy, zhan zhüregi—oinagan ot,  
Aqyndy alasurtar tynyshtyq bermei

A poet is a skimming, flying, droning, strong wind,  
A poet is a fire blazing up to the sky.  
His sensitive heart is a playing fire  
Making him mad and giving no rest.

(Zhumabaev, 'Qorqyt', 1989, p 228)

Ushuga inkär  
Tura ma, tulpar  
Bir zherde ylgı shan zhutyp?  
Zhel edim, ushtym  
Talaidy qushtym,  
Ketippin seni umytyp.  
Bügin seni körip  
Qolyndy berip  
Qaıgymen qaraisyn  
'Sendim men zhazgan  
Süigenin zhalgan,  
Aldadyñ',—dep zhylaisyn.  
Aldaganym zhoq,  
Arbaganym zhoq,  
Sen sözime, sulu qyz!  
Tap sol sagat  
Süigenim khaq  
Küä mynau köp zhuldyz.

Can a race horse eager to fly  
 Stay at the same place swallowing dust?  
 I was the wind and I flew  
 I've left, and I've forgotten you,  
 Embracing many others.  
 You have met me today  
 And giving your hand told me  
 With sorrow and tears in your eyes:  
 'I believed you, oh, poor me,  
 Your love was just futility and lies'  
 No, I did not betray or decoy you.  
 Believe me, oh, beautiful girl.  
 At that very moment I loved you  
 These numerous stars may testify to this truth.

(Zhumabaev, 'Süigenim anyq' [It is true that I loved], 1989, pp 103–104)

Here is also another example of M. Zhumabaev's magnificent love lyrics:

Men aqynmyn—agynmyn  
 Syldyramyn—süiemin.  
 Men aqynmyn—zhalynmyn,  
 Shapshyp kökke tiemin.

Qaraqat közin möldirep,  
 Köp qarama, zhas sulu.  
 Syldyrap sipap, süigen bop,  
 Alypketer agyn su.

Alma ernin elbirep,  
 'Süishi, süi' dep zhalynba!  
 Otty oiynshy, dos bilip,  
 Zhaqyndama zhalynga!

Men aqynmyn—zhel zhüirik,  
 Güildeimin, ushamyn.  
 Men—oiynshy köbelek,  
 Köringen güldi qushamyn.

Zhas perishtem, sulu qyz,  
 Süimeshe, süime, suraimyn  
 Men aqynmyn, turlausyz,  
 Zhyrlaimyn de zhylaimyn!

I am a poet, I am a stream,  
 Which rings and loves  
 I am a poet, a flame,  
 Which shoots up to the sky.

Don't look much at me, young beauty,  
 With your shining black currant eyes,  
 The ringing, stroking, loving stream  
 May take you away.

Don't ask me: 'Kiss me, kiss'  
 With lips reminiscent of a juicy apple!  
 Don't approach and play with the flame,  
 If you would like to be in safety!

I am a poet, the rushing wind,  
 I am droning and I am flying.  
 I am a playing butterfly,  
 Which embraces the first met flower.

Oh, my young angel, beautiful girl,  
 Please, don't kiss me, I ask you,  
 I am an inconstant poet,  
 Who writes his verses and cries!

(Zhumabaev, 'Zhas suluga' ['To a young beauty'], 1989, pp 104–105)

The poet as created by Zhumabaev strives to identify himself with Qorqyt, a hero of the famous ancient legend of the same name popular with the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. In the interpretation of Magzhan Zhumabaev, Qorqyt was an ideal poet, a forefather of all poets. But, in the eyes of ordinary people Qorqyt appeared as a 'strange' person different from them all. Therefore the crowd regarded him as being crazed and not in his right mind. Qorqyt persistently tried to comprehend the meaning of life and to discover the secret of immortality. When he had become convinced of the perishable nature of everything in this world, he set off to look for a place of immortality. On his way he frequently encountered graves with boards behind them. On all these boards there was the same inscription: 'You will never save yourself from death, however much you try to escape. It is your grave, unlucky Qorqyt!' After reading these words Qorqyt became very sorrowful and unhappy. He made a qobyz<sup>4</sup> from wood and played a tragic melody, in which he expressed all his feelings. Until his death he played on his qobyz composing ever more new melodies, which contained all his sad reflections about life. Zhumabaev assimilated Qorqyt and his qobyz to the poet and his muse. Like Qorqyt, the poet's soul is in a state of permanent wandering and in search for the meaning of life. Unsatisfied with the answers to his questions obtainable in real life, the poet, similar to Qorqyt, applies to his muse. In this way he finds the desired immortality:

Ömirde armanym zhoq—Qorqytka ersem  
 Qorqyttai zhandy zhaspen zhua bilsem  
 Zhas tögip, sum ömirde zarláp-sarnap,  
 Qushaqtap qobyzymdy korge kirsem.

My only dream now is to accompany Qorqyt  
 To cleanse my soul with my own tears  
 To cry, sob, lament this damned life and, like him,  
 Enter my grave, my qobyz in my arms.

(Zhumabaev, 'Qorqyt', 1989, p 230)

Here again Zhumabaev’s ‘Qorqyt’, an ideal poet, appears at the same time as a ‘Great Nomad’, an embodiment of the nomadic life irretrievably slipping away. The graves he persistently encounters may be regarded as proofs of the near and inevitable death of nomadic life. Unable to avoid his death, Qorqyt finds salvation in his poetry. As mentioned above, it was also Zhumabaev’s own poetical solution of the nomadic/sedentary dilemma. But in ‘Qorqyt’ the solution is not offered in an optimistic or cheerful mood. The whole poem is penetrated by pessimism and tragedy.

In this connection we need to remember that Zhumabaev was attacked by the Soviet literary critics of the 1920s and the 1930s for the nationalist character of his poetry, idealization of the past and Pan-Turkism. But during the tragic years when Soviet power was established in Kazakhstan, forced sedentarization and the collectivization of agriculture led to the loss of innumerable lives. Against this background Zhumabaev’s idealization of the past and his pessimism regarding the future of his people take on a meaning of their own.

## Conclusion

The case of the Kazakh intelligentsia may be of interest as an example of the so-called ‘functional’ and ‘non-functional’ models of national identities. ‘Invented’ by two groups of Kazakh intellectuals, these models differed in their potential influence. The ‘Islamic’ model proved to be unrealizable and unpopular with the majority of the Kazakh population. By contrast, the ‘Western’ model succeeded during a relatively short time—from the revolution of 1905 to the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly in the summer 1917—in uniting and mobilizing the Kazakhs under the banner of Alash (Amanzholova, 1994, p 27). From this point of view it is important to emphasize not so much the ‘invented’ character of national identity but the analysis of the circumstances under which the ‘invented’ national identity becomes a real power able to influence objective processes. The ‘efficiency’ of an ‘invented’ national identity depends on a number of different social, cultural, political and psychological factors. In our case both groups of Kazakh propagandists had similar social and educational backgrounds, and the range of activities accessible was roughly similar: they issued newspapers, magazines and books, worked as teachers and were active as members of different democratic circles, which field of interest was popular education. They also tried to realize their ideas in practice: the ‘Islamists’ organized settlements and the ‘Westernizers’ were engaged in political activities. Both of these groups considered the transition to sedentarization, education, the development of the Kazakh language and literature, as well as learning from European culture indispensable for the preservation of the Kazakh people as a nation. Although the ideas of both groups were not free from contradictions, not the ‘Islamic’ but the ‘Western’ model of national identity became popular with the majority of the Kazakh people. However, we may doubt that the above-mentioned ideas could, during such a short time, deeply penetrate the Kazakh traditional society and serve as a real impetus to its

mobilization (with the exception of the insignificant number of educated Kazakhs).

On the basis of our preliminary research we may assume that the popularity of the 'Westernizers' was due to the way in which they understood the transition to sedentarization and the solution of the problem of land—the most acute problem on the Kazakh steppe at the beginning of this century. From the very beginning the 'Westernizers' consistently came out against the seizure of grazing lands and the immigration of Russian *muzhiks*. From the Tsarist government they demanded the return of these lands and the cessation of immigration until a final allotment of land among the Kazakhs had taken place. These demands made up the main items of their political programme. The 'Westernizers' advocated the gradual and cautious transition to sedentarization and the preservation of traditional legal relations, and at least for the time being this implied the preservation of the nomadic way of life and corresponding social institutions. For the overwhelming majority of the Kazakhs, who at the beginning of this century continued to lead a nomadic way of life, the struggle for land was the struggle for their 'living space' and traditional way of life, which ultimately meant their preservation as a people and nation.

The 'Islamists' also sharply criticized the agrarian policies of the Russian government and demanded the return of the appropriated lands. Nevertheless, their propaganda for immediate sedentarization and land occupancy in accordance with sedentary norms in practice would have resulted in the destruction of the traditional 'living space' and the nomadic way of life. For this, however, the majority of the Kazakhs was neither economically nor psychologically prepared.

In fact the 'Westernizers' activated the traditional idea of Kazakh national identity (Kazakhness) closely linked with nomadism and deeply rooted in Kazakh history and ethnic consciousness. They tried to connect this idea with the European ideas of nation and nation-building. On the whole they regarded the European nation-state building process as the only way to preserve the Kazakhs as a nation in the future and regarded popular education as a necessary preparation towards this goal.

We may conclude that the popularity of the 'Westernizers' can not be explained only by taking into account the material interests of the population. More significantly, they regarded these material interests as closely connected with the historically formed idea of national identity. Therefore they did not try simply to substitute this idea for a new one (as was true in the case of the 'Islamists') but to use it for the achievement of their political aims. For 'Westernizers' changing the traditional idea of national identity was a gradual process, achievable only sometime in the future.

## Notes and References

1. Measure of land = 2.7 acres.
2. Auyl is a traditional village of the Turkic nomad and semi-nomad population in Central Asia; a group of yourts, nomads' camp.

3. Huns—a nomadic pastoral people who invaded southeastern Europe c. AD 370 and during the next seven decades built an enormous empire there and in Central Europe (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol V, 1974, p 213).
4. A two-stringed bow instrument.

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