

Analysis of the survey

Kazakh nationalists

This group includes Aldan Aimbetov, editor in chief of *Kazakhskaiia Pravda*; Sabetkazy Akatai, chairman of the National Party Alash; Khasen Kozhakhmet, chairman of the Civil Movement Azat; and Kaldarkhan Kambar, a journalist for the Kazakh-language newspaper *Turkistan. Kazakhskaiia Pravda* is a nationalist newspaper, though it is printed in Russian. Unlike the others, Kambar is not a self-proclaimed activist. It is perhaps appropriate to include him in this group, however, as Kazakh-language newspapers serve as a forum for Kazakh nationalists and for those who are concerned about the language, culture, traditions, and history of the Kazakh people.

A summary of the positions of our Kazakh nationalists is as follows. Kazakhstan should build a multiethnic state with certain privileges for the Kazakh people, and the government actually pursues a nationalities policy that follows this strategy. There is little possibility of civic nation-building because of the absence of a common idea and democratic institutions through which interethnic relations can be regulated, as well as Russia's intention of serving as a guarantor of the Russian population in Kazakhstan, the disdainful attitude of non-Kazakhs toward Kazakh culture and language, and the indifferent attitude toward the country's future among the population. The decrease of the non-Kazakh population will eventually lead to the formation of a monoethnic Kazakh state. The Kazakh language should be developed to realize this.

The Kazakh language should be the only state language. Government support for the Kazakh language and culture is insufficient and must be strengthened. State symbols should reflect the history and traditions of the Kazakh people, but in reality they do so only imperfectly. It is appropriate to rename cities and streets, as this is a necessary process for the reestablishment of historical justice as well as for elevating the level of ethnic consciousness of Kazakhs. Some renaming, however, cannot be justified.

The return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represents the reestablishment of historical justice and is absolutely correct. It is also necessary in order to increase Kazakhs' share in the whole population of Kazakhstan. Non-Kazakhs are leaving the country not because of discrimination against them but of their own accord (for economic reasons or to return to their historical homeland). The government is unsuccessful or not interested in preventing population flight. Overrepresentation of Kazakhs in the state structures, caused by deliberate government policy or by Kazakh tradition is justifiable and entirely fair. State policy in conflict prevention is generally correct, and there is little danger that it will lead to interethnic tension. The president has greatly contributed toward maintaining interethnic accord.

Among Kazakh nationalists, Aimbetov, Akatai, and Kambar agreed on many

aspects with respect to questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. They are of the opinion that the current nation-building policy shows concern for Kazakhs' culture and tradition and gives Kazakhs certain privileges (Q1). In their opinion, there is no possibility for civic nation-building in Kazakhstan (Q3). When asked about the reasons for it, Akatai marked all suggested responses, while Aimbetov indicated Russia's role as a guarantor of Kazakhstan's Russian population, the population's indifferent attitude toward the country's future, and contempt toward the Kazakh culture by non-Kazakhs. Meanwhile, the three expressed the belief that a monoethnic state of Kazakhs could be built (Q4). The common reason mentioned by them was a steady decrease of the non-Kazakh population. Akatai also noted the government's policy of increasing the number of Kazakhs as well as its support for the Kazakh language.

Kozhakhmet answered these questions in a slightly different manner from the others. He did not see a clear nationalities policy, and while he avoided giving his opinion on the possibilities of civic or ethnic nation-building, he marked all reasons but one (some Kazakhs think their rights should predominate) for why it is difficult to build a civic nation in Kazakhstan. He expressed the belief that underdevelopment of the Kazakh language was an obstruction to building a monoethnic Kazakh state.

Asked about a necessary state policy on nation-building (Q2), three of four chose the second answer: a multiethnic state should be established with certain privileges for Kazakhs (one respondent commented that it would be necessary to build, in the distant future, a monoethnic [Kazakh] state). One respondent expressed a preference for a monoethnic Kazakh state that presupposes subsequent ousting of other nationalities.

To question 5, on what the state does with respect to the nationalities question, Akatai marked all the suggested answers — regulating the language problem, raising the ethnic consciousness of Kazakhs, reviving Kazakh culture, regulating migration, and regulating personnel questions in the state sector. Kambar marked migration and personnel affairs only. Aimbetov and Kozhakhmet were more skeptical: they expressed the belief that the government was doing nothing.

All four insisted that the state language should be Kazakh only (Q6). Aimbetov, however, agreed with the opinion that Russian should acquire official status. Here we should note that there is a fault in our questionnaire. Question 6 does not make an allowance for multiple answers, but as Aimbetov pointed out, the first answer (no language but Kazakh should be the state language) and the third answer (Russian should not become a state language but should acquire official status) are not mutually exclusive. From the four answers we proposed, we cannot determine who is against giving Russian an official status among those who oppose making it a state language. One may assume, however, that those who chose the first answer were, if not against, at least unenthusiastic about making Russian an official language.

Kazakh nationalists disagreed on question 7. According to Akatai, the Kazakh language grows in importance while Russian declines; in the view of Aimbetov and Kambar, Russian still prevails, and the significance of Kazakh remains unchanged;

Kozhakhmet expressed anxiety over the declining significance of Kazakh against Russian's continuing dominance.

All four were quite skeptical about state support for the Kazakh language (Q8). Three besides Akatai expressed the opinion that support for Kazakh was of a declarative character. In Akatai's opinion, Kazakh is not being developed despite state support: an answer not consistent with his answer to the previous question. As for cultural policy (Q9), Kambar alone was of the opinion that efforts were being made to build an all-Kazakhstan multiethnic culture. The other three indicated that the state was doing practically nothing in this sphere (Akatai again contradicted himself: he marked "culture policy" in question 5).

To the question on state symbols, Akatai answered that the symbols reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs; according to others, they reflect them somewhat or rather weakly. Kozhakhmet was critical of the fact that the music of the national anthem is that of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, while the lyrics do not reflect the history [of the Kazakh people]. In his view, the emblem resembles that of the Kazakh SSR. While he approved of the color of the flag (sky blue), the sun and eagle do not, in his opinion, reflect the spirit of [Kazakhs'] ancestors. Kambar complained that the emblem looks like a symbol of pagan religions. He asserted that the flag should be bluish-green. According to Aimbetov, "the state symbols were adopted hastily, largely as a formality. There was also a desire not to upset the Russian diaspora [by creating symbols of too monoethnic a character]."

Asked whether state symbols should reflect the history and traditions of the Kazakh people (Q12), all four answered positively. They answered affirmatively to question 13, on the renaming of cities and streets: all welcomed this, considering it to be necessary for the reestablishment of historical justice (4) and for elevating the level of ethnic consciousness among Kazakhs (3).¹ It is noteworthy that Aimbetov and Kozhakhmet stated that renaming was not always justified with respect to the merits of the persons for whom streets were named. Aimbetov maintained that world-famous names should not be disturbed. According to Kozhakhmet, the "names of figures under the totalitarian regime of the USSR" should not be used. What he means here is that such names, even those of Kazakhs, do not deserve to be commemorated.

To the question on the rewriting of history (Q14), all acknowledged that history was being reviewed, yet three respondents were of the opinion that it happened infrequently. One regarded it as extremely insignificant. How can we interpret these answers? The rewriting of history can be understood in two different ways: to "correct distorted history" and to "distort correct history." The first implies that history was distorted under the Soviet regime and the second that history is distorted under the current regime. As discussed below, many non-Kazakhs expressed the opinion that history was frequently rewritten. In light of the disparity between the answers of Kazakhs and non-Kazakhs, this question appears to

¹ Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of respondents who agreed with a suggested answer, unless otherwise noted.

have been understood by a majority of respondents according to the second interpretation. In this respect, Kamar's explanation is very interesting: "Kazakh's history is a muddle. Ideology demands clear facts. Hence we sometimes have to juggle the historical facts." For his part, Kozhakhmet is of the opinion that more effort should be made to review history: "With an eye to Moscow, the authorities are afraid of revealing themselves by their actions because those who are now in power are those who serve the colonizers and the totalitarian system."

Concerning the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad (Q15), three respondents answered that it represented the reestablishment of historical justice, two respondents stated that it was necessary for increasing the share of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan. Kamar, however, expressed his disapproval: "If we were to deal with increasing the self-consciousness of local Kazakhs, we would see a greater effect than with a billion *oralmans*. As for returning to the motherland, this is a matter of honor. There is no need to waste state money on it."

As for the reason for the population flight (Q16), a poor economy (3) and desire to return to the historical homeland (3) were cited. Nobody agreed with the opinion that population flight is driven by discrimination against non-Kazakhs. Respondents disagreed on question 17: Akatai expressed the opinion that there is a desire to halt the outflow of the population and much is being done to achieve this. In Kamar's view, the state, while not in favor of the population flight, conducts a policy that facilitates it. According to Aimbetov and Kozhakhmet, the state has no desire to halt the flight.¹

To the question "Do you believe that Kazakhs have a dominant position in the state structures?" (Q18), all four answered positively. Aimbetov, Akatai, and Kamar expressed the opinion that this was justified and entirely fair, while Kozhakhmet commented that "the [p]redominance of Kazakhs in state structures has not brought the Kazakh people anything in terms of development, rehabilitation, spirituality, or economic advancement." They gave different reasons for Kazakh domination. According to Akatai and Kamar, it results from a deliberate state policy for increasing the share of Kazakhs in the state sector. In Kozhakhmet's view, it can be explained by tradition that compels Kazakhs to employ their relatives and fellow-countrymen. Aimbetov expressed the belief that leaders within state structures prefer not to hire non-Kazakhs, as they fear that they may soon leave Kazakhstan.

The three positively evaluated the state's conduct regarding prevention of interethnic conflict (Q19), naming the president as a main contributor to the maintenance of interethnic accord (Kamar also pointed to the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan). Kozhakhmet alone answered that no real work was being done to prevent ethnic conflict: he viewed the state's actions as limited to sloganeering and declarations that aggravate the situation. Asked about what should be done to provide greater guarantees of interethnic

¹ Kozhakhmet chose "others," commenting that "the state is indifferent to this process." The closest suggested answer here is that the state has no desire to halt it.

accord (Q20), only Kozhakhmet indicated constitutional and legislative reforms. The others admitted that there were problems but opposed changing anything now, as any changes would disturb the existing balance and make the situation worse.

Asked whose interests are expressed by the state's nationalities policy (Q21), Akatai and Kambar answered Kazakhs first of all, but with consideration of the interests of other ethnic groups. Aimbetov answered that the nationalities policy was an expression of the Kazakh majority of the bureaucratic apparatus, the president, and his henchmen. The opinion expressed by Kozhakhmet was slightly different. He indicated that the policy reflected the interests of bureaucrats, regardless of national differences, and the president. Asked whether the nationalities policy could lead to interethnic tension, all three except Kozhakhmet denied any such possibility (Kozhakhmet found the question difficult to answer).

Russian nationalists

Let us proceed to Russian nationalists. This group includes Victor Mikhailov, chairman of the Republic Slavic Movement Lad (Harmony); Iurii Bunakov, leader of Russkaia Obshchina (Russian Community); and Boris Tsybin, chairman of Russkii Soiuz (Russian Union).

We can summarize their opinions as follows: The government aims to build a monoethnic Kazakh state by culturally assimilating or by ousting non-Kazakhs. It is necessary, however, to establish a state for all nationalities without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. There is little chance for civic nation-building because of the absence of a common idea capable of consolidating society; lack of democratic institutions; the claim by ethnic Kazakhs of special privileges; and the sense among non-Kazakhs of discrimination and lack of full-fledged citizenship. For a monoethnic Kazakh state to be established, it would be caused by a decrease of non-Kazakh population. Yet it is impossible to assimilate completely or drive out nontitular ethnic groups. In addition, the Kazakh language has not been established to the degree at which it could prevail in society.

Russian should become a state language. State symbols should reflect Kazakhstan's multiethnic population, yet in reality they reflect only the history of Kazakhs. Frequent rewriting of history and renaming of cities and streets will alienate non-Kazakhs.

The return of Kazakhs from abroad is politically motivated and does not represent genuine assistance to them. It is also premature since Kazakhstan does not have necessary resources for their housing and employment. The population flight of non-Kazakhs is driven by economic as well as political reasons: non-Kazakhs feel that they are discriminated against, and the government deliberately provokes or does not take any measures to stop their departure.

The state conducts a policy of increasing the share of Kazakhs in the government sector, which is unfair with regard to other nationalities. Conflict-prevention measures are not very effective. To maintain interethnic accord, constitutional and legislative reforms are necessary; new government institutions to regulate interethnic relations should be formed; territorial autonomy ought to be created; and a quota system should be introduced for ethnic groups in state organs. The current nationalities policy may lead to interethnic tension.

All three respondents expressed the belief that a Kazakh monoethnic state was being established — by culturally assimilating non-Kazakhs (Mikhailov and Tsybin) or by driving them out (Bunakov) (Q1). Regarding what kind of state Kazakhstan should be (Q2), Bunakov and Mikhailov answered that it should be a common home for all nationalities without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. Tsybin seems to have forgotten to answer question 2.

The Russian nationalists expressed little optimism in the possibility of civic nation-building (Q3). Tsybin blamed lack of a common idea capable of consolidating society,¹ while Mikhailov explained that there were no democratic institutions through which interethnic relations could be regulated, Kazakhs think that their rights should predominate, and non-Kazakhs feel discriminated against and thus do not consider themselves to be full-fledged citizens. Bunakov rejected the very idea of civic nation-building: “The creation of a civic nation amounts to the degradation of the national consciousness of the peoples. Despite all efforts at doing this, it [national consciousness] of Russians and Kazakhs has not degraded.”

About the possibility of building a monoethnic Kazakh state (Q4), Tsybin answered positively, explaining this by a decrease in the non-Kazakh population. Mikhailov and Bunakov answered negatively, indicating that it would be impossible to assimilate or to drive out all non-Kazakhs. Bunakov commented: “There are not enough Kazakhs to hold onto this immense territory on their own.” Mikhailov (and Tsybin) also marked the underdevelopment of the Kazakh language.

As to the government’s role with regard to the nationalities question (Q5), Mikhailov indicated that it was raising Kazakh ethnic consciousness, reviving Kazakh culture, regulating migration processes, and regulating personnel questions in government structures. Tsybin indicated personnel affairs only; Bunakov expressed the opinion that government was doing nothing.

As would be expected, all three favored making Russian a second state language (Q6), but they disagreed about the existing language situation (Q7). In the view of Mikhailov and Bunakov, Russian continues to dominate, while the significance of Kazakh is unchanged. According to Tsybin, Kazakh is growing in importance, while Russian declines. As for the government support for the Kazakh language (Q8), Mikhailov

¹ Tsybin did not answer main question 3.

expressed the belief that the Kazakh language was being developed thanks to state support. Tsybin, on the contrary, indicated that it was not being developed despite state support. (Their answers to question 8 contradicted those to question 7.) Bunakov did not choose a suggested answer, commenting instead: “state support goes to support bureaucrats, and the Kazakh language remains where it is.”¹

As for cultural policy (Q9), Mikhailov indicated that conditions were being created for the development of Kazakh culture only. Tsybin answered that nothing was done in this sphere. Bunakov offered a slightly different opinion: “Money allocated to culture is basically wasted; at the same time, unjustifiably large sums of money are allocated to Kazakh rather than other cultures.”

Mikhailov and Tsybin expressed the opinion that state symbols reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs. According to Bunakov, they do so but rather weakly (Q11). When asked whether state symbols should reflect the history of Kazakhs (Q12), only Tsybin answered that they should; the others insisted that they should reflect the multiethnic composition of the population. All three criticized the renaming of cities and streets (Q13), saying that history should not be rewritten (3) and that it facilitated alienation of non-Kazakhs (2). In addition, Mikhailov noted that renaming was not always justified.

In the opinion of all respondents, the revision of history is a very frequent phenomenon (Q14). Bunakov condemned “attempts to excise from history the deeds of non-Kazakhs, especially Russians, to inculcate within them the idea that this is not their land or state.” Mikhailov said: “it [revision of history] comes from the very top; in the guise of reviving [Kazakh] national consciousness, there is excessive praise.”

Concerning the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad (Q15), Russian nationalists expressed the belief that it was conditioned by political goals and did not represent genuine assistance to them (2); moreover, it was premature because of insufficient resources for their housing and employment (2).

Regarding the reason behind population flight (Q16), Mikhailov and Bunakov indicated only discrimination against non-Kazakhs. Tsybin cited economic difficulties alone. As for migration policy (Q17), Tsybin expressed the belief that the state sought to stop the departure of the population but could not. In Bunakov’s view, the state has no desire to halt it. Mikhailov expressed doubt that the state was deliberately conducting a policy to facilitate population flight.

To question 18, “Do you think that Kazakhs have a dominant position in the state structures?,” both Bunakov and Tsybin answered “yes” and condemned this situation as being unfair. The text of question 18 was different in the questionnaire used for respondents in Astana. It stated: “Do you think that Kazakhs *should* have a dominant position in the state structures?” As Mikhailov was interviewed in Astana, we cannot compare his answer with that of others, but it appears that he is also against monopolization of the state sector

¹ This opinion is close to the third answer.

by Kazakhs. As for the reason for their opposition, all three expressed the opinion that it was a result of a deliberate policy.

Regarding a state policy for maintaining interethnic accord and preventing conflict (Q19), Bunakov and Tsybin said that it was satisfactory. Mikhailov was of the opinion that no real work was being done to this end. In Tsybin's opinion, the president was the main contributor toward maintaining interethnic accord. Mikhailov disagreed, according this role to the people of Kazakhstan. At the same time, according to Tsybin, appropriate goals may be established but they are not fulfilled by bureaucrats. In the view of Mikhailov and Bunakov, the state's actions are limited to declarations, and little is done in reality.

As to what should be done to provide greater guarantees of interethnic accord (Q20), the three agreed that quotas in organs of government should be introduced for various nationalities. Mikhailov also indicated support for constitutional and legislative reforms, as well as territorial autonomy and establishment of new institutions through which interethnic relations could be regulated.

Regarding the interests expressed by the nationalities policy (Q21), Bunakov indicated that they were those of the Kazakh majority of the bureaucratic apparatus. Mikhailov, while expressing agreement with Bunakov, added the president and those closest to him (Tsybin did not answer question 21.) It is noteworthy that nobody expressed the view that the nationalities policy reflects the interests of Kazakhs, without regard to the interests of other ethnic groups.

According to Bunakov and Mikhailov, the nationalities policy could lead to interethnic tension (Q22). Tsybin found question 22 difficult to answer. Bunakov cited language policy as a factor that could harm interethnic relations, while Mikhailov agreed with all the suggested answers provided here: language policy, renaming of streets and cities, reviewing and reevaluating history, changes in the system of education, migration policy, and personnel policy in state structures. Tsybin, while refraining from giving a positive answer to question 22, basically agreed with Mikhailov here.

Kazakh intellectuals

This group consists of eighteen people: Berik Abdygaliev, Zhulduzbek Abylkhozhin, Ravil' Aitkaliev, Gaziz Aldamzharov, Murat Auezov, Madel Ismailov, Rustem Kadyrzhanov, Erzhan Karabekov, Klara Khafizova, Dos Kushim, Seidakhmet Kuttykadam, Marat Mazhitov, Zhanbolat Murzalin, Azat Peruashev, Zhanibek Suleev, and Sabit Zhusupov (for profiles, see the attached list). We failed to ask two persons in Astana whether they would mind including their names on the questionnaire. For convenience, they are designated below as Anonymous No. 1 and No. 2. Within this group of Kazakh intellectuals, a variety of opinions are to be found: some individuals expressed views that were quite similar to those of the Kazakh nationalists, while others held opinions resembling those of Russian

intellectuals. Because of their views on various issues, it is difficult to divide this group into pro-Kazakh nationalist or pro-Russian subgroups.

A majority of Kazakh intellectuals support the idea that a state should be established as a common home for all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, yet some insist that certain privileges should be accorded the titular ethnic group. As to current policy, a variety of answers were expressed: a state is being established without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background; certain privileges are provided to Kazakhs; and there is no clear policy with respect to nation state-building. Some respondents in this group stated that while no privileges should be given to any particular ethnic group, in reality Kazakhs are favored. A majority expressed optimism about the possibility of civic nation-building in Kazakhstan, and all eighteen were of the opinion that building a monoethnic Kazakh state was impossible. According to half of the respondents, the state does not work on anything with respect to the nationalities question; according to a third, it regulates personnel questions in state structures.

As for the state language, the most popular opinion is to give Russian an official status while maintaining Kazakh as the only state language. In the view of some respondents, however, Russian also should become a state language. According to most respondents, cultural and language policies are mere slogans, or they do not contribute to the real development of the Kazakh language. A majority expressed the belief that state symbols should reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs, but according to a few respondents, the symbols should be abstract or reflect the multiethnic composition of the population. As for the renaming of streets and cities, the prevailing sentiment is positive.

Two-thirds of respondents in this group think that the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represents the reestablishment of historical justice and is, therefore, absolutely justified. At the same time, more than a half believe that it is conditioned by political goals and does not represent genuine assistance to repatriates. Some also point out such problems as the difficult adaptation of repatriates and lack of financial resources for their housing and employment.

According to an absolute majority, economic difficulties are a primary reason for emigration; a third indicate emigrants' desire to go back to their historical homeland. A few blamed discrimination against non-Kazakhs. As for migration policy, the two main explanations are: the state would like to halt the population flight but is incapable of doing so, and the state is not in favor of the outflow of the population but conducts a policy that facilitates it. A few expressed the belief that the state had no desire to stop it, or deliberately conducted a policy to promote emigration.

Almost everyone acknowledged the predominance of Kazakhs in state structures. Yet various opinions are to be found as to the reasons for it and whether it can be justified. Responses include the following: it can be justified and is driven by Kazakh traditions or by a deliberate state; it is caused by a deliberate policy and is unfair; it is not correct but the government is not to blame for it. As for a policy for conflict prevention, one-half of

respondents gave an evaluation of positive or satisfactory; the other half offered a negative estimation or expressed the opinion that nothing was done for this purpose. Half called for constitutional and legislative reforms, while a few were of the belief that introduction of new government institutions or of quotas in state organs would be useful for maintaining interethnic accord. Half the respondents expressed serious concern that a Kazakhs' dominant position in state structures might lead to ethnic tension.

To question 1, six respondents answered that a state was being established without any privileges and discrimination on the basis of ethnic background, while another six expressed the belief that a state was being built with certain privileges for Kazakhs. Four answered that they did not see a clear policy on nation-state building. In Ismailov's view, the government seeks to build a monoethnic Kazakh state by ousting other nationalities. Kushim disagreed with all of the suggested answers and wrote his own opinion: "A cosmopolitan society of people is being created. To this end, there is discrimination against the Kazakh language and an ideological and administrative struggle against Islam." Kushim complained about discrimination of Kazakhs, but to question two he insists that Kazakhstan should be a common home for all nationalities.

Asked about what kind of state should be established (Q2), thirteen answered that it should be a common home for all nationalities without any privileges or discrimination; four answered that it should offer certain privileges to Kazakhs. Kuttykadam elaborated on his answer: "That is, privileges with respect to language and culture." He apparently opposes any other kind of privileges. Aitkaliev ignored the suggested answers and commented: "any variant that decreases the real severity of ethnic division." Among the six who are of the opinion that the current nationalities policy gives certain privileges for Kazakhs, only Abdygaliev said that this was what Kazakhstan needed, and other five (Abylkhozhin, Kadyrzhanov, Khafizova, Murzalin, and Zhusupov) expressed the belief that a state must give equal opportunities to all nationalities.

A majority (fifteen respondents) expressed optimism about the possibility of civic nation-building (Q3). Two of these respondents added the following comments: "in the future" and "at present, no, but in the future, yes." Only three answered that there was no possibility of civic nation building. Those who answered positively gave the following reasons: people understand that all Kazakhstanis share a common fate (9); the majority of people understand that everyone should live under equal conditions (8); nationalists do not enjoy support of the population (7); and many Kazakhstanis, regardless of their nationality, have a common mentality and consider one another compatriots (4). One respondent said civic nation-building was possible because of "the high level of ethnic and confessional tolerance."

Regarding the reasons for a pessimistic view on civic nation-building, the following factors were mentioned: lack of a common idea capable of consolidating society (8); lack of democratic institutions through which interethnic relations can be regulated (5);

some non-Kazakhs do not respect the Kazakh language and culture (5); and some non-Kazakhs think that they are discriminated against and thus do not consider themselves to be full-fledged citizens (4). It is noteworthy that five respondents answered that civic nation-building was difficult because some Kazakhs think that their rights should predominate.

As for the possibility of building a monoethnic Kazakh state (Q4), all eighteen answered that there was no such possibility, saying that it was impossible to assimilate or oust non-Kazakhs (12); objective processes, despite the state's efforts, would be conducive to a multiethnic state (10); and the Kazakh language and culture had not been established to the degree at which they could prevail in society (10). One respondent offered another reason: "Among Kazakhs themselves, there is an active hostility toward the state's monoethnic character."

The most popular answer for question 5, what does the state work on, was that it does not do anything (9), followed by "regulating personnel questions in state structures" (6). Kuttykadam said: "increasing the living standards of the higher-level bureaucracy." In Ismailov's opinion "[The state is concerned with] the Kazakhization of personnel questions, and they facilitate the strengthening of tribal sentiments among the educated portion of the Kazakh population, making distinctions for one group and pushing another to the periphery of the political elite." Another respondent noted: "The territorial and demographic planning, or equalization of the proportion of ethnic groups in various regions." What he suggested was that the state was trying to make oblasts similar in terms of ethnic composition by changing administrative borders so that those oblasts with predominantly Russian populations would disappear.

There were various opinions concerning language policy (Q6). The most popular view was that Russian should be accorded an official status but should not become a second state language (10, including Anonymous No. 2: see below). One respondent explained his attitude as follows: "In principle, Kazakh should be the single state language, but this is fraught with the threats of Kazakh nationalism and discomfort among Kazakhs. Russian is a de facto state language, but the de jure strengthening of Russian would mean the actual discrimination against the less well developed Kazakh language. The current situation is more acceptable, but with a change in the significance and role of Kazakh in society, it would be possible to accord Russian the status of a state language."

Four respondents expressed their support for a Russian state language. One of them, Ismailov, added: "Attempts at intensifying the imposition of the Kazakh language upon all of those who live in Kazakhstan bring discredit to the language's authority, calling forth a reaction of rejection."¹ Hence, "There is no reason forcibly to implement Kazakh as a state language in the next twenty or thirty years. At the same time, the state should do its utmost to inculcate Kazakh on the ordinary level so that the majority of citizens do not

¹ This comment was given for question 7.

experience difficulty in communicating in the Kazakh language.”

Karabekov, Kushim, and Anonymous No. 2 answered that only Kazakh must be the state language. As mentioned above, because of a fault in our questionnaire, we cannot know what Karabekov and Kushim think about giving an official status to Russian. For his part, Aldamzharov commented: “In order to end the language debate, which is used for political purposes, a referendum should be conducted on [the adoption of] two state languages.” Suleev, without giving an answer to this question, emphasized the importance of the Russian language: “Without the Russian language the state, objectively speaking, will not endure. Consider for a moment what will happen if the Russian language, along with the information that we get thanks to this language, is no more. The state itself will collapse, because everything will come to a standstill, from the bureaucracy to transportation.”

On question 7, according to eight respondents, Russian continues to prevail while the significance of Kazakh remains unchanged. One respondent, who disagreed with all of the suggested answers, commented: “The Russian language continues to dominate, but the role of Kazakh grows in parallel. These are not contradictory tendencies — so far at least; they occur in different spheres. The role of Kazakh increases only among Kazakhs. This growth, however, offers the possibility of its further intensification.” Four respondents were of the opinion that Kazakh had grown in importance without causing harm to Russian. One of the four, Anonymous No. 1, nevertheless noted that “[t]he development of the Kazakh language is slowed by the absence of (terribly insufficient amount of) financing in matters concerning language training for personnel and a material basis for implementing the Language Law.” Kushim and Karabekov expressed their concern at the continued dominance of Russian and the declining significance of Kazakh. Kuttykadam was even more pessimistic, commenting: “The status of all languages (including the two leading languages) has become catastrophic.”

As to government support for the Kazakh language (Q8), ten expressed the opinion that it was of a declarative character, and seven indicated that Kazakh was in fact not being developed despite government support. Only Anonymous No. 2 expressed the opinion that Kazakh was being actively developed thanks to government support. One respondent noted: “State support exists, but the problem is not only with such support. There ought to be an economic demand for the Kazakh language. This is quite a long-term process. There have been steps forward, but not in the economic sphere.”

As for cultural policy (Q9), in the opinion of more than a half of this group, the state, for all practical purposes, is conducting no policy in support of culture (11). In this regard, Ismailov commented: “To say something about cultural policy is not possible, because the population’s level of culture has been falling precipitously from the ‘lumpenization’ of the majority of the population caused by the decline in living standards.” Among other opinions expressed were the following: conditions are being created for the development of the cultures of all nationalities (4) and efforts are being made to build an

all-Kazakhstan multiethnic culture (4). None of the respondents indicated that conditions were being created for Kazakh culture only.

There are a variety of opinions as to whether state symbols reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs (Q11): they do but not sufficiently (7), they do so rather weakly (5), they do so fully (2), they do so somewhat (2), and they do not (1). One respondent who answered “rather weakly,” elaborated: “Traditionally, a wolf is depicted on the Kazakh flag. The emblem is overly complex and does not correspond to the traditions of Kazakh visual art, where the idea is conveyed by very simple and deep symbols. The anthem may be too bombastic and difficult for singing.”

Meanwhile, a majority (12) expressed the opinion that state symbols should reflect the history of Kazakhs (Q12). Four answered that they should not. It is worth noting that such opinion was found among Kazakhs. One respondent, while refraining from choosing a suggested answer, provided a comment that is close to these four who answered negatively to this question: “It [symbols] ought to serve as the foundation, but with reference to the Republic of Kazakhstan’s multiethnic character: that is, it ought not to squeeze out civil, humanistic motives.”

To question 13, about the renaming of cities and streets, nine answered positively. Two of these gave provisos: “within reasonable bounds” and “agree somewhat.” Four respondents answered negatively. One respondent answered that he was indifferent, while three found it difficult to answer. Kuttykadam offered the following comment: “At the time, there was extremism (Sovietization, Russification). The rejection of this was correct, but now they’ve gone too far.”

Reasons indicated for a positive answer were that it is a necessary process for the reestablishment of historical justice (8); inculcating Kazakhstan patriotism (5); and elevating the level of ethnic consciousness among Kazakhs (4). The opinion regarding the link between the renaming of cities and streets and Kazakhstan patriotism was found only among Kazakh intellectuals. One respondent commented: “All peoples living in Kazakhstan should know the history, culture, and traditions of Kazakhs in order to gain a conscious sense of respect and [friendly] relations [with Kazakhs]. Every people has its scholars and military leaders, its Pushkins, etc., whom one should be knowledgeable of and to whom one should give their due.” Another explained: “This is a process of social rehabilitation and liberation, not only from colonial politics but from the colonial mentality.”

Seven respondents answered that renaming was not always justified. Khafizova commented: “A new capital is being built, with new streets; the ambitions of some relatives may be realized there and in other new cities and settlements, if the current government manages to build them.” Other reasons for a negative answer were: it facilitates alienation among non-Kazakhs (5); history should not be rewritten (4); and it is a waste of money by bureaucrats (2).

Answers regarding the reappraisal of history (Q14) were divided. Nine

respondents answered that history was frequently reviewed. Kushim said: “History is the maid-servant of politics. And historians are prepared to interpret history with respect to the [political] situation” Murzalin was more straightforward: “Authorities use the upswing in national self-consciousness of Kazakhs as a means of legitimizing their authority.” Khafizova, however, explained the situation differently: “This is a natural process in connection with the separation from the USSR and the latter’s collapse. In Soviet times, many historical periods in the history of the Central Asian peoples were distorted and falsified.” For all practical purposes, Suleev agreed with Khafizova. The reviewing of history, in Suleev’s view, is explained by Kazakhstan’s sovereignty.

Eight indicated that history was being reviewed, but not on a mass level. Aitkaliev, one of the eight, saw the reason for this review of history in “the collapse of communism, [and] the demise of the USSR.” In the opinions of others, “there is a gradual, evolutionary process, without the euphoria of sovereignty”; “this is a process that is more objective; it is not an ideological evaluation of events — though there is a degree of haste and subjectivism. This is apparently a ‘growing pain,’ connected with the surge of national consciousness. In time, it will take a normal course.” Anonymous No. 2 answered that there were no cases in which history was being reviewed.

A variety of opinions were expressed as to Kazakh repatriates (Q15). Eleven respondents were of the opinion that the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represented the reestablishment of historical justice. Anonymous No. 1 commented: “The return of Kazakhs — it is their right to return to their historical homeland for the sake of future generations. There is no politics here.” Others answered that repatriation was conditioned by political goals and did not represent genuine assistance to them (9); it was premature, since there were insufficient resources for their housing and employment (7); it was problematic because some repatriates found it difficult to adapt in Kazakhstan (7), and this was necessary for increasing the share of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan (4). One respondent indicated that it was unfair because the state should first resolve the problems of its own citizens regardless of nationality.¹ Kuttykadam criticized the government policy on repatriates: “They have to be returned, but this must be done very carefully, with every step well-prepared, not like now when people arriving in Kazakhstan are on the brink of poverty.”

As for the reasons for the population flight (Q16), almost all respondents (17) blamed economic difficulties; among these, six indicated a desire to return to their historical homeland. Abylkhozhin, Aldamzharov, and Kadyrzhanov expressed the opinion that the population flight was driven by discrimination against non-Kazakhs (Aldamzharov also identified the historical homeland and economic difficulties as factors, while Kadyrzhanov mentioned economic problems as an additional factor.) Murzalin’s opinion rather closely resembles the abovementioned views. He wrote that the population flight was caused

¹ This is one of multiple answers given by this respondent.

“partly by discrimination in the access to political decision-making.” Kuttykadam blamed this on “the regime’s authoritarianism and lack of democracy.”

To the question on migration policy (Q17), eight answered that the state wanted to stop population flight but was incapable of doing so. Of these, two emphasized economic factors: “there is a need to improve the country’s economy and the population’s well-being”; “This is an objective process. Gradually, it will weaken, if the economy develops, or it will grow if the economy collapses. I assume the first variant.” Seven respondents expressed the opinion that the state, while not in favor of population flight, conducted a policy that facilitates it. Four respondents (Aldamzharov, Ismailov, Kushim, and Kuttykadam) said that the state had no desire to halt population flight: Aldamzharov and Ismailov also said that the government deliberately provoked the outflow. Only one (Anonymous No. 2) agreed with the answer that much was being done to halt it. This same respondent, however, agreed that the state, while not in favor of population flight, conducted a policy that facilitated it.

Asked whether Kazakhs have a dominant position in state structures (Q18), fifteen respondents answered affirmatively. Khafizova answered negatively, saying that corruption occurs among all ethnic groups. Anonymous No. 1 did not indicate one of the suggested answers, noting that “they have to observe the principles of professionalism in hiring practices.” Among the fifteen, four expressed the belief that Kazakh dominance was justified and entirely fair, while six condemned it as being unfair to non-Kazakhs. Other opinions were as follows: in the opinion of Abdygaliev, “It is warranted but perhaps unfair in concrete cases.” Murzalin explained Kazakhs’ predominance “as a response to a longstanding blockade during Soviet times of Kazakhs to political resources.” According to Aitkaliev, “It is the result of the ethno-national structure of Kazakhs that came into being during Soviet times.” Suleev commented, “It is necessary to return to the Soviet dualism: the Kazakh as leader, the Russian as deputy, and vice versa. Kazakhs, in any case, are, on the whole, not as good as Russians at matters of state administration.” He added, “The situation in which the entire elite is, in fact, represented by Kazakhs does not reflect the idea that the Republic of Kazakhstan is a Kazakh state in all senses and parameters.”

As for the reasons for Kazakh predominance in state structures, six answered that it was a deliberate policy. Among these respondents, only one said that the predominance of Kazakhs in state structures was entirely fair, while Aldamzharov, Auezov, Ismailov, and Zhusupov evaluated it as unfair. Aldamzharov and Auezov also cited traditions as a reason for Kazakh predominance. Murzalin did not answer whether it was fair or not. Meanwhile, among the eight respondents who cited Kazakhs’ traditions, four offered single answers. Among these, Abylkhodzhin, Kadyrzhanov, and Karabekov criticized the predominance of Kazakhs (Suleev did not comment on its fairness). Thus, it seems, the three believe that Kazakh predominance is independent of state policy, but it cannot be justified. Two respondents explained Kazakh domination as stemming from the fact that non-Kazakhs do not seek to work in government structures. One of these two commented: “Objectively

speaking, people who have established themselves (in high-level positions) enter state service. In most cases, non-Kazakhs of high social status prefer to live in economically developed states or in their historical homeland.” Only one respondent agreed with the opinion that leaders within state structures preferred to refrain from hiring non-Kazakhs, as they feared that they might soon leave Kazakhstan. The opinion of Anonymous No. 2 resembled the last suggested answer: he saw the reasons for out-migration in the “absence of specialists among representatives of other nationalities; the departure from the Republic of Kazakhstan.”

Various answers were given as regards conflict-prevention (Q19). Four evaluated the government’s policy in this sphere positively, five satisfactorily, and four negatively. Seven said that no real work was being done to prevent ethnic conflicts (two of these respondents gave a negative evaluation of the government policy). As for who or what branch of government contributed to maintaining interethnic accord, six named the president, followed by the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (3). Three respondents credited the people of Kazakhstan: “the mentality of Kazakhstanis”; “the tolerance of Kazakhstanis or social apathy among them”; “the age-old mentality of the peoples who reside in Kazakhstan and a common historical fate.” Only two respondents indicated the government and the parliament. The most popular explanation for a negative evaluation was that the government’s actions were limited to sloganeering and declarations (8). Others said that state actions aggravated the situation (5) and that the goals were appropriate but not fulfilled by bureaucrats (2).

As to measures conducive to interethnic accord (Q20), nine respondents named constitutional and legislative reforms; four answered that there were problems, but nothing should be changed now; and another four said that new state institutions should be established. Aldamzharov, Suleev, and Zhusupov advocated the introduction of quotas in organs of government. Four respondents did not choose suggested answers and instead offered comments: “to defend human rights”; “it is necessary to expand the authority of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan”; “it is necessary to develop a complex conception and program with respect to nationalities policy. It is unclear who ought to [deal with this issue] and what he should deal with”; “a balanced, sensible policy concerning interethnic accord should be reinforced by a positive economy and improvement of the people’s well-being as a guarantee for the present and future.”

To the question of whose interests were expressed by the nationalities policy (Q21), the most popular answer was “the interests of the president and those closest to him” (9), followed by those of “bureaucrats, regardless of ethnic differences” (7); “the Kazakh majority of the bureaucratic apparatus” (6); “first of all Kazakhs with consideration of other ethnic groups” (4). Four answered that the interests of the whole people of Kazakhstan were expressed. Among these respondents, two respondents indicated agreement with other answers (Anonymous No. 1 and No. 2 each marked only one answer to this question). Nobody answered that the interests of Kazakhs without regard to the interests of others

were expressed. Kushim complained that the interests of Russian-speaking citizens were expressed, while the interests of the Kazakh-speaking population were discriminated against (note that Kushim said “Kazakh-speaking,” not “Kazakhs”). Aitkaliev commented: “no one’s [interests], in light of the absence of a nationalities policy.”

Asked about whether the nationalities policy could lead to interethnic tension (Q22), nine answered affirmatively, four answer negatively, and five found the question difficult to answer. The following factors were mentioned among those that might facilitate such tension: personnel policy in government structures (8), changes in the system of education (6), language policy (4), migration policy (4), reviewing and reevaluating history (3), renaming streets and cities (2), and “no solution to economic issues and the population’s well-being” (Anonymous No. 1).¹

¹ But he answered negatively to question 22.