

CHAPTER 2

The Policy of Kazakhization in State and Government Institutions in Kazakhstan

Erlan Karin, Andrei Chebotarev

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, kazakhization can be understood to encompass state policy — in all spheres of public life — directed at the revival, the strengthening, development, representation and domination of basic socio-cultural, ethno-demographic, economic, political, and legal values as well as resources of the Kazakhs. Following are the characteristic aspects of this policy:

— It is not recognized on the official level; as a matter of fact, it is denied.

— It is realized under the ideological and propagandistic guise of reviving the Kazakh people's language, culture and traditions, on the one hand; and adherence to the officially recognized principles of internationalism, friendship of peoples, and the building of a multinational state, on the other.

— It is not integrated; it is carried out in the form of various events with respect to domestic, personnel, language, educational, cultural, informational, and other policies, within the framework of current activity of corresponding state structures; nonstate organizations that are close to it; mass media; and private individuals.

— Its defining characteristic is preserving the superiority of basic values and resources of the Kazakhs over those phenomena of the republic's nonindigenous population.

We shall examine in detail the widest variety of aspects of kazakhization in the political and governmental relations of Kazakhstan, including its obvious and likely consequences.

The government's deliberate insertion of ethnic Kazakh ways of thinking into the republic's socio-cultural sphere

As a specific phenomenon of the Republic of Kazakhstan, kazakhization has made an impression not only on the principles and character of how individual organs of republic government and the entire government structure function but also on the mutual relations between government and society, the peculiarities of state mechanisms on Kazakhstan's society [sotsium]. This is most pronounced in the socio-cultural and spiritual sphere.

Kazakhization as it is realized in these particular areas will be reconsidered in a concrete manner below. First, however, it is useful to establish the following defining tendencies: state organs, regardless of where they stand in the hierarchy, deliberately incorporate into the republic's mass consciousness the Kazakh ethnic value system. They ignore, meanwhile, the mindsets of the state's other peoples.

This represents, in fact, a direct violation of human and civil rights, a conscious and deliberate violation by authorities of the constitution, which provides that "ideological and political diversity are recognized in the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Section 1, Article 5). In addition, this leads to the stifling and loss of traditions for those citizens of the republic who belong to nonindigenous peoples.

For example, over the course of several years, there have been widescale, statewide celebrations of the anniversaries of prominent Kazakh figures: Abai, Zhambyl, etc. These celebrations included not only festive events but also sizable appropriations from the state budget for advertising them. It is significant that at the same time there was a lack of government support on the same level for events connected with ethnic issues of Kazakhstan's many peoples. These events, too, called for popularizing the activities of prominent personalities. As a result, the character and influence of such events on the spiritual life of the country was insignificant.

So in this particular case, one of many like it, one can see discrimination in Kazakhstan in the spiritual and cultural sphere and, within it, the strengthening of the process of kazakhization. Of course, on the formal, official state level, freedom and advantages are universally declared for nonindigenous peoples in the republic to develop their national cultures and traditions. But this has a formal, declarative character. Thus, the establishment at the authorities' initiative of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (a consultative body to facilitate potential conflicts among different ethnic groups) has no real authority or capabilities.

One could say the same about the many cultural centers for the peoples of Kazakhstan. All of them are no more than nominal bodies, created to mask the real situation with respect to the interethnic reality in the republic, to create the appearance of a mechanism of normal coexistence of diverse ethnic groups. The reality is that they cannot serve as a genuine mechanism for protecting the interests of Kazakhstan's nonindigenous ethnic groups, withstanding the gathering momentum of the kazakhization process and maintaining the national and cultural traditions of Kazakhstan's many peoples under the assault of the Kazakh way of thinking and culture.

If we consider kazakhization as phenomena in the republic's social and cultural sphere, then we can say that it has been affected by such fundamental areas as ideology, culture, and education. We shall now consider the phenomena of kazakhization in these particular areas.

In spite of the fact, therefore, that there is no officially recognized political ideology and that an ideological pluralism is assumed, an observer cannot help but

notice this sufficiently obvious fact: a state ideology is being formulated in which there are clearly manifested patriotic and revivalistic characteristics of the Kazakh people. In this sphere, the process of kazakhization serves as an attempt to assert a state ideology that extols the Kazakh nation and its historic past, defining it as the republic's state-forming ethnic group [gosudarstvooobrazuiushchii etnos].

From the very beginning of Kazakhstan's independent statehood, there were the first attempts, at the highest levels, to link the values of a sovereign Kazakhstan and the principles of a democratic system with the traditions and the ways of the Kazakh people. In demonstrating this assertion, we can cite excerpts from Nursultan Nazarbaev's speech delivered at a ceremonial session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, on the occasion of his assumption of the presidency of the Republic of Kazakhstan on December 10, 1991: "Speaking of sovereignty, I certainly do not mean that Kazakhstan should become a closed system. Clearly this would have a pernicious effect on the possibilities of realizing political and economic independence. The wise Abylai, too, understood the unique and inimitable quality of Kazakhstan's situation; he succeeded in the eighteenth century in reestablishing Kazakh statehood, then on the brink of collapse, and putting relations with adjacent states into good-neighborly order."¹

The following extracts from the speeches of President Nazarbaev can serve as further, unambiguous evidence of the implementation by the current government of the process of deliberately introducing the Kazakh ethnic state of mind into the civic consciousness. In general, one can state with certainty that addressing Kazakh spiritual values (historical events and personalities; proverbs and sayings; turns of phrase) are not, as they might seem at first glance, the unavoidable costs of euphoria accompanying statehood and independence. Hardly. During ten years of independence and the existence of a sovereign republic, the persistent tendency has been preserved in Kazakhstan of an active kazakhization of mass consciousness.

"We are the children of the majestic mountains and the boundless steppes. Here, hundreds and hundreds of generations of Kazakhs were born, gained strength, and reached manhood. These boundless spaces are our cradle, our inheritance, our legacy. It is here that our glorious predecessors would hoist their banner of statehood, which was recognized by states near and far. Our native tongue acquired the status of a state language. The historical names of localities are returning; the good names of renowned sons of Kazakhstan have been restored, and their anniversaries are commemorated. In preserving this national distinctiveness, much has been done in the past several years. We have carefully restored everything that was lost: half-forgotten traditions, historic rights, culture, language, belief. My duty, as a person and as president is to be

¹ <http://www.president.kz/main/mainframe.asp?lng=ru>, section "Suverennomu Kazakhstanu —10 let" [Sovereign Kazakhstan —10 years], 1991, in Russian.

concerned constantly about the preservation and development of the Kazakh nation, its unique national characteristics. The fact that everyone clamors for the well-being of his nationality is entirely natural.

[...] "We must preserve the current interethnic peace and accord in the republic as we would the pupil in an eye. And the guarantor of interethnic accord must be, first and foremost, the Kazakh people, the legal successor of this country. Only if the Kazakh people can carry out and realize a policy of civic peace, interethnic accord, and positive mutual relations with the outside world can they become a true master: a citizen of a civilized state. 'He who has saved the Motherland will endure.' That's what our people said in ancient times. Glory to the Almighty! They saved the motherland; they defended this land. And there cannot be anything on earth more dear than one's native land."²

"And I sincerely believe that the republic's peoples relate with a sense of understanding to the changes taking place in the consciousness of the Kazakh people and will show them spiritual and intellectual support. It is Kazakh state patriotism, in fact, that serves as the main support for a rebirth of the republic and all nations and nationalities residing within it."³

From Nazarbaev's work entitled "A Strategy for Creating and Developing Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State": "What strategic goals do we set for ourselves today? In politics, they consist of the following. It is quite appropriate if in our state where, regardless of ethnic affiliation, the principle of equality of opportunities for all and equality before the law is valid, if in particular cases special provision is made for the interests of the native nation, the Kazakhs, as happens in many states. The relevant areas would be the revival of national culture and language; reestablishment of spiritual, cultural, and other links with the Kazakh diaspora; and the creation of the preconditions necessary for the return of those who were forced to leave Kazakhstan."⁴

From a report by Nazarbaev at the first session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (March 24, 1995): "For many centuries, the Kazakh people had to struggle for their independence and sovereignty. Owing to their better qualities; their ability to rally in moments of difficulty; and, not least, their striving to live in peace, accord, and in a neighborly way with other peoples, they have endured in the course of history and, after several decades, have succeeded in reestablishing their statehood. The Kazakh people, having endured the trials of time, possess a rich and complex history. Today they should offer assistance to all the peoples living in Kazakhstan, to understand better the roots of our unity and to eliminate historical offenses, for in looking at the past we need to see the future. It is no fault of the Kazakhs that the twentieth century

² N. Nazarbaev, Speech at the World Kurultai of Kazakhs, 1992. "Suverennomu Kazakhstanu — 10 let," 1992, in Russian.

³ N. Nazarbaev, Speech at the Forum of Peoples of Kazakhstan, 1992. "Suverennomu Kazakhstanu — 10 let," 1992, in Russian.

⁴ "Suverennomu Kazakhstanu — 10 let," 1992, in Russian.

became for them an age of tragic events that transformed them into a minority in their own homeland. And those who cast doubt on the right of this people to statehood either do not know or do not want to know the depth of this drama. I am certain that the Kazakh nation is worthy of statehood no less than any other nation. It suffered its history for this."⁵

Here, for example, is how President Nazarbaev, addressing the citizens of the republic in a yearly address (in 1999 in this case) spoke of the spiritual essence of Kazakhstan. He directly links it to the spiritual essence and history of the Kazakhs. These are his words: "One and a half thousand years ago, in the center of vast Eurasia, there appeared the great empire of the ancient Turkic people. It continued in the form of powerful state conglomerations, which managed to subjugate the territory from the Byzantine Empire to China. From these times in northern Eurasia, where population patterns remain virtually unchanged, our ancestors lived and we live today. The Great Kerei and Zanibek [founders of the Kazakh khanate in the 15th century] created a political entity here. The past five centuries of our national history have been a history of the struggle for life-sustaining territory [zhiznennoe prostranstvo].

"The supply of national energy was sufficiently great that we emerged victorious. It was precisely at this moment that we comprehended the simple but eternal truth that if we are united, we are invincible. It was at this moment that Ab[y]lai-khan, the people's unifier, upheld the nation against two persistent forces pressing upon the country from without. We approached a new century with a difficult legacy and yet with opportunities unavailable to any other generation in our national history. During this difficult and dramatic decade, we built what hundreds of generations had done without: an independent state. This is what serves as the main guarantor of the fact that today, the winds of history cannot wipe us from the face of the earth."⁶

As one can see from the extracts cited, the president of Kazakhstan himself is the main ideologue of the active kazakhization of civic consciousness. Of course, one cannot but acknowledge that in his speeches there are appeals to the need for interethnic accord in the republic as well as appeals to the ancient spiritual Kazakh ethnic values. As a rule, however, such appeals serve as a necessary caveat, intended to smooth over his thinking's blatant pro-Kazakh character, which is perceived in the republic as discriminatory.

It is apparent, therefore, that the citizens of Kazakhstan, representing more than one hundred nationalities, are being presented with a national patriotic ideology of the revival and self-identification of the Kazakhs. At the same time, it is quite clear, the

⁵ "Suverennomu Kazakhstanu — 10 let," 1995, in Russian.

⁶ Address of the president to the people of Kazakhstan, "Stabil'nost' i bezopasnost' strany v novom tychiacheletii"[The Country's Stability and Security in the New Millennium], <http://www.president.kz/main/mainframe.asp?lng=ru>, section "State," in Russian.

history and spiritual values of the republic's other peoples, which under Kazakhstan's constitution are supposed to enjoy equal rights with Kazakhs, are ignored.

It is not merely on the literal level of declarations that the formation of Kazakh values takes place in the state's ideological sphere. This is also manifested on the level of political symbols, which are an integral part of any state and its political ideology.

So, for example, the state flag of Kazakhstan contains graphic elements directly or indirectly connected to the national culture of the Kazakhs: the steppe eagle and the vertical stripe with the national ornament. The same can be said about the state emblem. This depicts a *shangyraq* (a section of the *yurt*, a Kazakh dwelling) and mythic horses. Even on the level of state monuments and structures, there is a preponderance of objects that personify the history and spiritual traditions of the Kazakh people. This is in contrast to the values of other peoples. In other words, even in the sufficiently liberal sphere of construction and city planning, there is a lack of accepted parity and consensus.

One additional example. There are in the republic's new and old capitals, Astana and Almaty, sculptural and architectural monuments and sites depicting dramatic moments and pictures from Kazakh history and cultural life. These serve as a kind of "calling card" [vizitnaia kartochka]. There is a monument to the Saka [an ancient nomadic people whose language is believed to belong to the Eastern Iranian group] warrior (symbol of Kazakhs' ancestors and courage) against a scene from Kazakh history; a Kazakh boy with a wolf; and three *bi* (Kazakh judges) before the Supreme Court Building. This list could be continued ad infinitum.

In addition, kazakhization is manifested at state holidays. So, for example, Nawruz, commemorated on March 22, has the status of a state holiday. This is a holiday of the Turkic peoples that signifies renewal and the coming of the new year.

Kazakhization has also found its expression in the area of state onomastics. During the years of sovereignty there has been widescale renaming, from Russian into Kazakh, of settlements, streets, and geographic sites. Naturally, the situation described above cannot but have a corresponding reflection on other aspects of the spiritual life of Kazakhstan, especially science, education, and culture. It is important, therefore, to emphasize that the activation of the process of kazakhization, in which the country's leadership plays an essential role, receives significant ideological and theoretical support from the republic's national scientific and creative [tvorcheskaiia] intelligentsia.

In this context, one can state with certainty that, owing to various subjective and objective motives, such as the natural striving to study and popularize the accomplishments of Kazakh spiritual life as well as opportunism, many representatives of the republics' intelligentsia — regardless of ethnic affiliation but naturally the overwhelming proportion of it consists of ethnic Kazakhs — have supported ideologically the deliberate imposition, strengthening, and defense of mental values of the Kazakhs in the republic's civic consciousness.

This is manifested quite clearly with respect to the subject of humanities in the republic, where there has been a broad and multifaceted development in the study of Kazakh history and culture, achievements in social sciences, and the current social and political situation. This occurs against the background of the neglect of the similar activities of other peoples of Kazakhstan. To prove this point, we can cite data from a report on the results of basic and applied research in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 1996 to 1997, published at Kazakhstan's official site.⁷

"In this connection, five basic research programs have been developed, with nine individual subjects [temy]. Among these are one program and two subject areas funded by the state. The following important scientific results have been obtained:

"1. Work on creating a scholarly grammar of the Kazakh language. On the basis of a new approach to the grammatical regularities of the Kazakh literary language, the peculiarities of the phonetic structure and principles of morphological analysis have been defined; the classification of basic syntactical constructions has been achieved; and a review has been conducted of theoretical aspects of lexicology and phraseology and individual questions of the history of the Kazakh language and speech culture.

"In light of the new Law on Languages of the Republic of Kazakhstan, work has been done on the theoretical and practical problems of establishing a scientific terminology on the state language, on establishing a methodological basis for Kazakh terminology, and for creation of appropriate dictionaries in various branches of science.

"2. On the basis of historical archival material on early twentieth-century Kazakh literature, a new interpretation of 'blank spots' [i.e. proscribed subject matters] in Kazakh literature of the 1920s and '30s has been established. At the same time, the problem of contemporary national art has been examined from the perspective of the spiritual and moral values of the Kazakh people.

"3. The prose of Abai has been subjected to textual analysis. Work has begun on scholarly commentaries to prose classics. Research is under way on the life and work of Turagul Kunanbaev, Abai's spiritual successor.

"4. Work has commenced on the reproduction of a biography by M. O. Auezov. Books with twenty-two entries have been published. Unpublished archival documents have been put into scholarly form. Traveling exhibits and restored displays have been created for the scientific-cultural center known as House of Auezov.

⁷ <http://www.president.kz/main/mainframe.asp?lng=ru>, section "Science and Education," subheading "Social sciences and humanities," in Russian.

"5. The dialectical interpretation has been worked out of the mutual relationship of the idea of reality in reforming Kazakhstan's spiritual and socio-cultural areas; a [civic] all-national idea has been substantiated and a basis has been established for the idea of all-Kazakhstani patriotism.

"6. The classical form of Kazakh philosophy has been elaborated, informed by the very tradition of nomadic civilization.

"7. Research has been conducted into the transition period as a particular stage in Kazakhstan's socio-political development. Political culture as an element of all-national culture has been studied. These research projects are necessary preconditions for the cultural unity of Kazakhstan's peoples.

"8. The most constructive forms of investigative and normative social surveys have been identified. The essential content of citizenship has been uncovered.

"9. The principles have been worked out for investigating social stratification processes in the transition period.

"10. A review has been conducted of the general understandings and conditions in the republic for confirming contact between religious groups and spiritual accord. An analysis has been conducted of such philosophical problems as the spirit, spiritual impoverishment, and renewal in the context of philosophical culture. Research materials were used in the preparation of the conception [kontseptsiia] 'state and religion.'

"11. The characteristics and basic elements of traditional Kazakh culture have been clarified and analyzed. The significance of its traditions and innovations has been identified. The spiritual sources of the worldview of Kazakh *aqyns* [poets] and *zhynrau* [storytellers, singers] have been interpreted. The role of folklore has been defined in the creation of Kazakh philosophy.

"12. Shakarim has been studied as a poet of Abai's tradition. The important characteristics of his poetic style have been investigated: his approach to the philosophical problems of human existence and the fate of the nation in the twentieth century. Textual analysis has been carried out employing the approaches and methods of hermeneutics.

"13. For the first time, an integrated study has been carried out of the development of culture and religion and their influences on various aspects of social and political life.

"14. The fundamental characteristics of *shezhire* [Kazakh genealogy] have been defined as a source for the history of Kazakh *zhuz* and their ethnic composition on the territory occupied [by them]. The genealogy of estates (in particular, the Chingizids,) the life and creative output of prominent persons of the Kazakh people have been researched.

"15. A fundamentally new light has been cast upon the history of the colonization of Kazakhstan in the first half of the nineteenth century. The types

of colonization processes have been enumerated — military, peasant, and Cossack. In addition, the degree of their influence on the region's socio-political life has been shown.

"16. In accordance with the basic idea that the totalitarian legacy must be overcome and must not be allowed to return, internal aspects of national security have been researched. Structures and potential factors that could destabilize society have been identified.

"17. Close anthropological connections have been established between Kazakhs and the Turkic-speaking peoples of Central Asia.

"18. The role of the Russian empire's law-making acts (1849-1913) in Kazakhstan's social and political life has been defined. From new scholarly perspectives, the reasons for the resettlement of Kazakhs in the 1920s and '30s have been reinterpreted and explained.

"19. The character and peculiarities of the political reparations of the first half of the late 1940s and early 1950s have been exposed and explained in the context of strengthening interethnic accord and rehabilitation of the victims of political repression.

"20. The succession of state formations of the Huns and ancient Tiurks has been defined, along with the role of the political formations of the Ak-Orda and Mogulistan as predecessors to the Kazakh khanates. A two-volume scholarly *History of Kazakhstan from Ancient Times to the Present* has been published in Russian and Kazakh.

"21. A research data bank, "Repression Policies in Kazakhstan," has been established. A comprehensive analysis has been implemented of English-language literature on current issues concerning Kazakh history: questions regarding Russian diplomacy in Asia, the national liberation movement in Kazakhstan, and nationalism in Western ethnosociology. The works of K. I. Satpaev, published in the 1920s and '30s, have been researched.

"22. The unique Paleolithic monuments of southern Kazakhstan, which are unusual for the region of Central Asia, have been uncovered and, having received world renown, are now the subject of study. These include Shoktas and Koshkurgan. Excavations are continuing of the important trade, economic, and cultural center of the middle ages, the settlement of Saraichik (Little Sarai) in northern Kazakhstan. A theoretical model and reconstruction have been proposed of the historical process from the Stone Age.

"23. The age of Turkestan has been revised; it is 2000 years old. An in-depth study is being conducted by mutual relationship and integral quality of city and nomadic civilization on Kazakhstan's territory as a precondition for a qualitatively new stage of civilization.

"24. A Russian-language translation has been prepared of a series of eastern sources on problems of the history of Kazakhstan and Central Asia in the Middle Ages. Information has been received on the history of Kazakh statehood.

"25. The scientific bases for the orthography, pronunciation, and terminology of the Uighur language has been worked out."

The above mentioned social science portion of the 1996-97 report on basic scholarly research accomplishments allows one to determine rather quickly the significant preponderance of pro-Kazakh subject matter.

In addition, this preponderance of pro-Kazakh subject matter in social sciences sometimes takes on radical forms with respect to the views of individual scholars. Thus, for example, a famous Kazakh demographer, a recent member of the presidential administration and an associate of Nazarbaev, expresses the following sorts of ideas, from which deliberate assimilation results: "The possible large-scale presence in Kazakhstan of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Karakalpaks will in no way 'spoil' our national language, culture, and religion; on the contrary, they will, to a degree, provide ethnic 'enrichment' offering a regional flavor to our own... ethnogenetic component.

"In order to carry out the gradual indigenization of Central Asian immigrants, we must 'intermix' them to an optimal degree and spread them evenly over the northern territory together with Kazakhstan's other local multiethnic groups. [...] we have to avoid the possibility of their compact settlement in increasing monoethnic groupings."⁸

Kazakhization has affected not only science and ideology but also education and culture. In the field of education, a package of legislative acts and enabling [podzakonnye] documents has been enacted, including a document on the State Conception of Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan. To various degrees, these facilitate the activation of the kazakhization process. For example, the Kazakhstan Department of Education has excluded the Russian classics from its instructional program. And yet, programs and educational projects with a pro-Kazakh orientation, in schools and instructional literature, have been widely broadcast and have received substantial support.

With respect to Kazakhstan's culture — or rather, the country's cultural life — it is also necessary to note that there have been significant domination and deliberate imposition of the ways of the Kazakhs. Thus, the official website of Kazakhstan (that is,

⁸ M. Tatimov, "Demograficheskaia depopuliatitsiia i strategicheskie posledstviia slozhivsheisia demograficheskoi situatsii v Kazakhstane" [Demographic Depopulation and Strategic Consequences of the Demographic Situation in Kazakhstan], N. A. Nynsanbaev, ed., *Kazakhstan na puti k ustoiichivomu razvitiuu* [Kazakhstan: On the Path to Stable Development], Almaty: Institute for the Development of Kazakhstan, 1996, pp. 194-196.

the official site of the president) provides the following data on significant social events in the republic's life and culture:

"At the beginning of July (1999), the first volume came out of a six-volume national encyclopedia, *Kazakhstan*. A variety of material in the first volume provides clear presentations of the treasures of the Kazakh people — creators of unique material and cultural artifacts. The meaning of nomadic civilization is shown, as is the fact that the Kazakh territory provided a developed urban culture and gave the world such scholars as Abu Nasr al-Farabi and Ahmad Yasavi, who have enriched humanity's cultural inheritance. It was President Nazarbaev's idea to publish the encyclopedia.

On December 15, an international academic workshop was held in Astana entitled 'The Poem 'Batyr Alpamys': 1,000 years.' Organizers of the conference were the Ministry of Culture, Information, and Civic Accord; the Eurasian University; and the M. Auezov Institute of Literature and Art.

January 11, 2000. Construction of the state national museum is complete. Its eight halls will contain displays telling of the Kazakh people's ancient predecessors, the ethno-social and political history of the Kazakhs, and the military and contemporary history of Kazakhstan.

February 11. The ceremonial unveiling took place of a bust of Abylai Khan, the prominent statesman and unifier of Kazakhstan's lands. His political, state, diplomatic, and military talent made possible the founding, the defense, and the expansion of the fundamental bases of the Kazakh state. The bust has been situated at the Kazakh State University of International Relations and World Languages, which bears the name Abylai Khan.

A celebration was held in Almaty on November 18, 1999, devoted to the 1,300th anniversary of the storyteller dede Qorqyt and his heroic epic *Kitaby dedem Qorqyt*. He was the father of the *kiui* [music played by Kazakh national instruments], a musician, and a philosopher.

A conference on Kazakh national culture in the twentieth century was held in Almaty on March 10. Conference participants noted that although Kazakh culture had achieved world status, there was a need for serious state support to preserve national identity and the nation's spiritual outlets.

On June 13, a cycle of celebratory events began in Northern Kazakhstan oblast devoted to the hundredth anniversary of the Kazakh literary legend Sabit Mukanov."⁹

As they say, the material cited above renders commentary superfluous. These are not selected individual indicators of kazakhization; this is a simple list of ordinary facts. Consequently, it is possible to state with certainty that an active process of kazakhization is taking place in the republic, which is initiated by the current

⁹ <http://www.president.kz/main/mainframe.asp?lng=ru>, section "State," subheading "Civic Life," in Russian.

government and which clearly testifies to blatant discrimination against other ethnic groups residing on Kazakhstan's territory, the number of which, in total, is almost the same as that of a titular ethnic group.

In the ideological, cultural, and educational spheres an open policy of kazakhization that has an antidemocratic character is presented in the guise of the revival of the Kazakh nation, which had been oppressed during the Soviet period. At the same time, it is deliberately "forgotten" that other peoples were oppressed no less than the Kazakhs. This, however, provides no impetus on the state level for a spiritual revival on their part. The little that is done for the nonnative ethnic groups of Kazakhstan is mystification of civilized interethnic politics, rather than concern for the equal rights and development of the republic's many peoples.

Tribalism in the system of state governance and administration

The problem of tribalism has attracted serious attention of the republic's scholarly community. A. Nysanbaev, a famous scholar and academic in Kazakhstan, calls modernized tribalism "an aspect of the internal disintegration of the Kazakh people [etnos]"¹⁰ This phenomenon is becoming an increasingly widespread element that defines all spheres of civic life.

The contributing factor is the structure of the indigenous nation on the basis of *zhuz*, family [rod], and clan. Of course, the conditions of contemporary stages of development leave their mark on the character and form of tribalism, but protectionism, when everyone strives to provide protection for his relatives, is already a traditional trait of our mentality.

The republic's political system today is defined by paternal-clientelistic relationships and the division of Kazakhs into three tribal groupings [i.e. *zhuz*]. This is despite the fact that the internal differentiation had a completely different significance. Yet this is a historical peculiarity of the whole [Kazakh] people that for seventy years the Soviet authorities attempted, unsuccessfully, to eradicate. Now, the so-called substructures of the Kazakh people, as represented by the titular nation, have been to a large extent used as a mechanism for lobbying its interests in the organs of power.

It is worth noting that despite the imposition, as initiated by the political elite, of the individual attributes of a democratic society in political processes, the historic and ethnic character of Kazakhstan maintains its influence on the country's political situation. Domestic analysts have noted the growing influence of the division of Kazakhs into families and clans, as compared to the factor of the *zhuz*. This is confirmed by the fact that, with the certain exceptions of the regional level, the *zhuz*

¹⁰ [Article title missing] A. Nysanbaev, op. cit., p. 19.

factor, as distinguished from that of the clan, provides for substantive correctives in the division of government powers. It is possible, however, that with the growth of national consciousness among members of the titular ethnic group, there will be a strengthening of family ties. After all, family-tribal traditions among Kazakhs now play a defensive role in the social transformation.

The current Kazakh *nomenklatura* frequently consists of immigrants from villages where communal blood ties have become a form of survival and adaptation to contemporary circumstances, serving to extend their powers. Clan ties among those in privileged monopoly businesses carry particular weight. As a result of the symbiotic relationship between the *nomenklatura* and major business interests (those close to the government), the majority of Kazakhstan's political elite is represented by Kazakhs. The widescale staffing cuts in the state service and the ongoing optimization of the structures of government organs have led to a situation where representatives of the indigenous population constitute 80 to 90 percent of the administrative elite.

In this respect, a not insignificant role has been played by the genealogical connection with one's own clan. Family obligations, after all, do not permit one to "eliminate" or to fire one's own relatives. As a result, those who have been fired have been from other nationalities.

According to opinion research conducted over the past several years, many believe that family-tribal relations [rodoplemennyie otnosheniia] play an important role in promotions and hiring in important state posts.¹¹ At the same time, as V. Khliupin, a researcher at the Institute of Contemporary Politics, notes, the tensions between *zhuz* and clans have been inalterably deepened by the policy carried out by the country's leadership.

To sum up, almost all key posts today in organs of state administration, security, banking, and finance are occupied by Kazakhs. The same thing is occurring in the economy and in large and medium-size businesses. In percentage terms, the situation is as follows: "85 percent Kazakhs in the president's administration, 72 percent in the government and in republic-level ministries [vedomstvakh], and 77 percent in *akimats* (oblast-level administrations).¹²

"Only four Russian-speaking leaders have been confirmed from among sixteen territorial formations (fourteen oblasts plus the two capitals — the present and the former one): Almaty, Akmola, and Mangyshlak oblasts, and Eastern Kazakhstan

¹¹ N. Popov, "Natsional'nye problemy v obshchestvennom mnenii" [Nationality Problems in Public Opinion], EURASIA Informational and Analytic Center, Collection on Nationality Problems in the State Politics of Kazakhstan, <http://www.eurasia.org.ru/98/book7.html>.

¹² A. Chubar, "Oshibka prezidenta. Poidet li Nazarbaev na dosrochnoe pereizbranie?" [The President's Mistakes. Is Nazarbaev Headed toward Early Elections?], *Obshchaia gazeta*, October 15-21, 1998.

[oblast]. Meanwhile, among Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassadors, there are no representatives from the Slavic nationalities."¹³

According to information from Iu. Bunakov of Kazakhstan's Russian Community [Russkaia obshchina], "...Russians constitute 8 percent of personnel in government structures, at the same time Russian-speakers constitute up to 40 percent of the population. There are about 14.9 million inhabitants in Kazakhstan."¹⁴ In the view of V. N. Khliupin, the following ministries have conducted the most successful kazakhization policies: foreign affairs; oil and gas; information and press; and justice, which have achieved a level of about 80 percent. As of February 1996, the proportional breakdown of leadership positions in the presidential administration was as follows: Kazakhs, 99 (71.2 percent); Slavs, 38 (27.3 percent); and Koreans, 2 (1.4 percent). On the oblast level, as of January 1, 1998, of 75 persons, 54 were Kazakhs, 20 Slavs, and 1 a Tartar.¹⁵

A. Peruashaev, the leader of the Civic Party [Grazhdanskaia partiia] and department head of internal policy for the president's administration, noted the clear tendency toward suppression of political interests, especially in connection with ethnic minorities. He offers the following figures for Taldykorgan oblast, today a part of Almaty oblast: in ethnic terms, "Kazakhs comprise 50.3 percent of the population, Russians 34.8 percent, and others 14.9 percent. Of the top leaders in government, 78.7 percent are Kazakh, 18.1 percent are Russian, and other ethnic groups are 3.2 percent. The breakdown for deputy directors is as follows: Kazakhs, 53.4 percent; Russians, 35.4 percent; and others, 11.2 percent."¹⁶

At the same time, the increase in representatives of the titular nation in state service is affected by the principle of "rotating cadres" from the regional elite, which are recruited by the *zhuz* principle. In this way, the republic's elite is reminiscent of a closed circle with constantly rotating internal "elements." Entry into the regime is very restricted, and one of the chief criteria for joining this privileged group is family ties.

It should be noted that institutions of higher education also serve as a base for recruiting cadres. The head of state himself has spoken of the existence of a distinct imbalance in the admission of students to higher and specialized intermediate

¹³ Iu. Kirinitsianov, "Mozhet li Nursultan Nazarbaev poluchit' svoi 98%" [Can Nursultan Nazarbaev Receive His 98%?], *451 Fahrenheit*, no. 3(35), October 1998.

¹⁴ A. Dokuchaeva, "Russkii vopros v Kazakhstane" [The Russian Question in Kazakhstan], *Informational and Analytical Bulletin*, no. 17, Institute of CIS Countries, November, 1, 2000. [According to the latest census conducted in 1999, Russians constitute 30 percent of the total population of Kazakhstan. — N. O.]

¹⁵ V. N. Khliupin, "Bol'shaia sem'ia" *Nursultana Nazarbaeva* [Nursultan Nazarbaev's 'Big Family'], Moscow: Institute of Contemporary Political Research, 1998, p. 52.

¹⁶ A. Peruashev, *Politicheskie aspekty mezhetnicheskoi konkurentsii v Kazakhstane* [Political Aspects of Interethnic Competition in Kazakhstan], Almaty: Institute for the Development of Kazakhstan, 1994, pp. 10-12.

educational institutions.¹⁷ No one need demonstrate that the imbalance is taking place to the advantage of Kazakh-speaking youth.

This short analysis, therefore, allows us to draw the conclusion that "tribalism" is becoming a powerful factor in the expansion of the indigenous nation in Kazakhstan's corridors of power. It is quite possible that in the not-too-distant future, corporative society, with a strengthening of family and clan distinctions, will exert real pressure on personnel policy.

¹⁷ N. A. Nazarbaev, *K obnoblennomu Kazakhstanu – cherez uglublenie reform, obshchenatsional'noe soglasie* [Toward Kazakhstan's Renewal: Through Deepening Reform and Interethnic Accord], Almaty, 1994, pp. 13-14.