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Phenomenon of Movement in the Life and Culture of Nomadic Kazakhs across the Frontier Zone, Late 19th to Early 20th Century

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Abstract. *Introduction.* Nomads once maximally incorporated into nature and surrounding landscapes had tended to retain their identity through the pastoral way of life, way of thinking, and mentality. The gradual — though further accelerated — emergence of the new development logic set forth by the Russian Empire made the Kazakhs develop new adaptation mechanisms for survival and self-realization in the suggested circumstances. *Goals.* The article analyzes a variety of sources, works and studies characterizing existential specifics of nomadic economic patterns — to examine the shaping of new life strategies adopted by Kazakh nomads across the frontier zone in the 19th and early 20th centuries. *Materials and methods.* The analyzed materials include those contained in Collection 175 of the State Archive of Orenburg Oblast, Interim Provisions on Governance in Steppe Areas of Orenburg and West Siberian Governorates-General, and Materials on Kirghiz Land Use published between 1896 and 1915. Besides, a number of Kazakh literary works that serve as unique historical sources have been considered. *Results.* The critical approach to different historical sources makes it possible to compare factual materials and reconstruct the transformation and changes in self-identity and outlooks of ex-nomads. At the turn of the 20th century, Kazakh elites were trying to answer the traditional questions of the intelligentsia: Who is to blame and what is to be done? Then and there it was urgent to decide on further prospects of life — whether to preserve nomadism or to seek for other forms of semi-nomadic life, or gradually get sedentarized at all. *Conclusions.* The Russian Government did not interfere with the nomads' land use practices, and tended to solve land matters of exclusively plowmen's communities. In these conditions, the nomadic Kazakhs were left to themselves. As a result, they had to develop new daily practices. Having lost their traditional lifestyle, the Kazakhs still succeeded in preserving their national distinctness in terms of language, oral folklore, genealogies, rituals, etc. The specificity of the frontier zone manifested itself in that

Kazakh nomads were actively involved in daily life transformations and developed a habit of turning to local authorities for support (rather than relying on their own resources only) to defend lands from competing peasant immigrants.

Keywords: Kazakh nomads, nomadism, nomads, imperative of behavior, life strategy, frontier, acculturation, Russian Empire


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Феномен движения в жизни и культуре кочевых казахов на территории фронта (конец XIX – начало XX вв.)

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Аннотация. *Введение.* Кочевники, максимально вписанные в природу и окружающий ландшафт, сохраняли свою идентичность посредством реализации пасторального образа жизни, типа мышления и ментальности. Постепенное, все более активное проявление новой логики развития, предлагаемой Российской империей, заставила казахов выработать новые механизмы выживания и самореализации в предложенных обстоятельствах. *Цель.* В статье на основе анализа различных источников, а также трудов и исследований, посвященных характеристике специфики существования номадических форм хозяйствования, проанализирован процесс формирования новых, отличных от традиционных, жизненных стратегий казахов-кочевников имперской фронтальной зоны XIX – начала XX вв. *Материалы и методы.* К анализу были привлечены материалы фонда 175 Государственного архива Оренбургской области, а также «Временные положения об управлении в степных областях Оренбургского и Западно-Сибирского генерал-губернаторства» и «Материалы по киргизскому землепользованию», изданные в период с 1896 по 1915 год. Кроме того, были привлечены отдельные произведения казахской литературы, которые являются уникальными историческими источниками. *Результаты.* Критический подход к различным историческим источникам позволил сопоставить разноплановый фактологический материал и реконструировать трансформацию и изменение самосознания и мироощущения вчерашних кочевников. Казахская элита рубежа XIX–XX вв. стремилась дать ответы на классические вопросы интеллигенции: кто виноват и что делать? Необходимо было определить дальнейшую перспективу жизнедеятельности: сохранять кочевье, искать иные замещающие формы полукочевого хозяйствования или же постепенно переходить к оседлости. *Выводы.* Российское государство не вмешивалось в вопросы землепользования кочевников, решая вопросы исключительно земледельческой общины. В этих условиях казахи-кочевники были предоставлены сами себе. В итоге им пришлось вырабатывать новые повседневные практики. Утратив традиционный уклад жизнедеятельности, казахи смогли сохранить свою самость в языке, устной народной памяти, генеалогии, поведенческих ритуалах казахской культуры и т. д. Специфика фронтальной территории проявилась в том, что казахи-кочевники были активно втянуты в процесс преобразований повседневной жизни и для защиты своих

земель от все возрастающей конкуренции в лице крестьян-переселенцев научились опираться не только на собственные ресурсы, но и находить поддержку у местных властей.

Ключевые слова: казахи-кочевники, кочевничество, номады, императив поведения, жизненная стратегия, фронтир, аккультурация, Российская империя

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Introduction

Resorting to the study of 19th to early 20th century nomadic experiences of the Kazakhs is not accidental since the latter are one of the few nations to have preserved nomadic lifestyle up to the 1930s and lost it only as a result of forced collectivization. Substantial — although not that sizeable — historiography of nomadism has been created [Khazanov 2002; Oushakine 2012; Bruno 2017]. It is supplemented with modern historiography of the phenomenon of imperial acculturation policy, the study of which in Russia is just starting [Lyubichankovskiy 2017; Dmitriev, Lyubichankovskiy 2017; Dzhundzhuzov, Lyubichankovskiy 2017b; Dzhundzhuzov, Lyubichankovskiy 2017a; Vasilyev 2018]. Authors of the mid-20th century undoubtedly made their unique contribution to the development of the history of nomadism although not all of their assertions are now perceived as indisputable. So, the phenomenon of nomadism — largely due to A. Toynbee — gradually turned into a ‘forced’ concession to the environment, and the nomads were thereby gradually perceived as failure in land cultivation [Toynbee 1991; Markov 1976: 279].

In the 1960s, the Kazakh Soviet Republic and the whole country witnessed the emergence of a special generation — the so-called ‘Sixties’, men of the sixties who laid a foundation for the neo-renaissance of Kazakh culture and philosophy. A kind of informal center of this movement was the group of authors of the joint monograph titled ‘*Nomads. Aesthetics. Cognition of the World by Kazakh Traditional Art*’. That was the first fundamental work by Kazakh authors on nomadism which disclosed its universal human essentials. All the articles were pursuant to the common task of ‘comprehending and reconstructing the spiritual world of nomadic society’ [Auezov, Karataev 1993: 3]. Unfortunately, for many years very few people

were aware of this book since in the late 1970s it was withdrawn from sale for censorship reasons, namely — ‘absence of a class approach and idealization of the past’ — and it was not until 1993 that it found its readers again.

In the 1970s, G. Deleuze and F. Guattari proposed a new unique approach to analysis of the world in the format of nomadology, which is confirmed by the emergence of the nomadic project concurrently in different parts of the world, including the one closed from the rest of humanity by the Iron Curtain. Kazakh authors proceeded from characteristics of exclusively Kazakh nomadic culture, which was understandable since it was an attempt to move away from the complex of nomadism and civilizational rehabilitation of the latter. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari rightly stress that ‘... history is always written from the viewpoint of the sedentary ... even if there are nomads in its center’ and thus go far beyond the national boundaries [Deleuze, Guattari 2010].

We understand movement / mobility as a synonym for nomadism. First of all, we will talk about physical mobility overcoming various boundaries (existing and imaginary ones). The article will proceed from the methodological position of the Russian anthropologist A. V. Golovnev on the ‘anthropology of movement’ with the main emphasis laid on the thesis that a person on the move is he who communicates [Golovnev 2009: 5]. In addition, Tilman Mush’s position is used that ‘mobility does not exclude territoriality’ proposed by him in the article *Territoriality and mobility. Note on migrating communities and the question of territorial “rootedness”* [Mush 2012]. The monograph by N. E. Masanov *Kazakh Nomadic Civilization* in which the author traced the closest interaction between ecology and ethnic history of nomadic Kazakhs also serves as methodological basis of the article [Masanov 1995]. The features of ecological niche form a

system of material production which leads to the formation of unique everyday life practices and a system of values. In addition, movement for a nomad becomes the main imperative of behavior.

The concept of a 'region', the ideas, myths and images it is associated with undergo transformation in the course of time. One of the singularities in Kazakhstan's history is that it was traditionally referred to different space-geographical categories.

The duality of space — the way of geographic opposing — was typical for Kazakhstan at different phases of history. The principle of opposing nomadic space to the areas of settled land cultivation remains most common. The distinction between steppe parts and oases of the Central Asian / Kazakhstan region can be traced from pre-Saka times (first millennium BC). The conditional boundary, as a rule, follows the line: Mangyshlak – Aral Sea – Syr Darya – Tashkent – Ketmen-Tyube Valley – Torugart Pass. The Syr Darya and the Tian Shan were a natural geographic boundary dividing the steppes of Eurasia from the agricultural oases of the south for centuries.

One of the varieties of this opposing paradigm is Kazakh Steppe (nomad space) and Turkestan (a settled land cultivation area). By the 19th century, dual geopolitical situation had taken shape when the region was both the northernmost tip of the Muslim world and the south of the Eurasian space [Kovalskaya 2014]. This article examines the territory of the Younger¹ and Middle Zhuzes², which is the most suitable one to delineate characteristics of a nomad space. In the mid-19th century, the territory of the Kazakh was divided into three governorates-general: Orenburg (Ural and Turgay regions), West Siberian (Akmola and Semipalatinsk regions), and Turkestan (Semirechye and Syr-Darya regions) ones. The processes to have occurred in the territory of Orenburg and West Siberian Governorates-General will be the subject of analysis in this article.

¹ Younger (or Kishi Zhuz) occupied the lands of the western part of Kazakhstan, starting from the lower reaches of the Syr Darya to the rivers Kayik and Tobol.

² Middle (or Orta Zhuz) occupied the central, northern and eastern parts of the modern territory of Kazakhstan.

Materials

The main source base for the study is a variety of primary and secondary sources. The primary documents include collections of the State Archive of Orenburg Oblast, as well as published materials included in the collections of documents. We have also examined diaries of priests and deacons contained in Collection 175 (Orenburg Diocesan Collection, Orthodox Missionary Society). Among them is the diary of Ven. Alexei Kilyachkov, priest of St. George Church of the city of Turgay, for the years 1902, 1903 and 1906.

The study explores published sources, such as 'Interim Provisions on Governance in the Steppe Areas of Orenburg and West Siberian Governorates-Generals', 'Interim Regulations on Governance in Semirechenskaya and Syr-Darya Oblasts', analyzes the Materials on Kirghiz Land Use issued between 1896 and 1915, materials collected and developed by various expeditions under the direction of F. A. Shcherbina, P. A. Khvorostansky, P. A. Skryplev, V. Kuznetsov, P. P. Rumyantsev.

We also used ethnographic data collected and systematized by A. Seidimbek and Z. Suraganova. Literary works of Kazakh authors were also used as secondary sources. Those are ones by the poets of the 'Zar-Zaman' era ('Era of Grief', mid-19th century. — *author's note*) — Shortambay Kanaev, Dulat Babatayev. These poets have taken a worthy place in the history of Kazakh literature since they created the mournful pedigree of the Kazakh people with their works. They described the tragedy of the people cut off from the nomadic way of life that had developed over the centuries, from the steppe institution of power developed by previous generations, the people who were forced to submit to the policy of colonization.

We also used works of classics of Kazakh literature from the mid 19th to early 20th centuries — Chokan Valikhanov, Ibrai Altynsarin, Abai Kunanbayev, Magzhan Zhumabaev and many others. They stood at the origins of Kazakh written literature. In addition to literary works, they wrote historical researches. All the authors deeply analyzed what was happening in the Kazakh Steppe and tried to find the answer to how to get out of the crisis into which the Kazakh society was falling deeper and deeper.

In particular, the novel by the famous Kazakh writer Abish Kekilbayev *Pleiades — The Constellation of Hopes* is dedicated to one of

the most interesting, in our opinion, periods in the history of Kazakhstan's accession to the Russian Empire. We took as a basis one of the novel's plots revealing the key idea of our article — the interaction of nomads with sedentary farmers in the conditions of a rapidly advancing frontier deep into the Kazakh Steppe.

External sociocultural and civilization-al characteristics of the Kazakh Steppe had substantially transformed during the period in question in connection with the establishment of the Russian administration and government system paralleled by traditional Kazakh socio-political institutions; concurrently in one territory, heterogeneous ethnosocial, ethnoreligious and ethnocultural structures were developing, co-existing to varying extents. So, the study of 19th to early 20th century nomadic experiences of the Kazakhs is not accidental because the Kazakhs are one of the few peoples to have preserved the nomadic lifestyle to the 1930s and lost the latter only as a result of Soviet forced collectivization. The article seeks to analyze how the phenomenon of nomadic movement correlated with features of the frontier zone, with the ever increasing influence of the Russian (sedentary) culture, and the Russian state system built on its basis.

**Imperative behavior of Kazakh nomads:
“Move! Don't be sedentary!”**

We need to determine the general basis on which sociocultural processes and phenomena develop throughout the development of the nation and its culture. This basis is a set of the most significant non-historical conditions, namely: geopolitical position, landscape, biosphere (habitat and other indicators), fundamental properties of this ethnos and the immediate ethnic environment. All of the above determines distinctness of the people and their culture, the national character, the historical destiny, the national image of the world (view of life, world outlook, which is manifested in mythology, folklore, customs, rituals, forms of religious worship, later in philosophy, literature, art, sociopolitical, state-legal, moral-ethical identity of the nation).

To describe all of the above, the term mentality is used which combines a variety of meanings one way or another associated with national identity. It should be remembered that the concept 'mentality' is broader in terms of semantic content than national peculiarity.

Among the diverse definitions of this concept, we have chosen the following one: the mentality of culture is the in-depth structure of culture historically and socially rooted in the consciousness and behavior of many generations of people, and therefore, for all its historic variability is fundamentally constant, representing the most common content, encompassing various historical epochs in the development of national history and culture. Unlike ideology, mentality is something common that unites the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the intuitive, the social and the individual, the theoretical and the practical.

If we single out the national-psychological characteristics of the Kazakhs, among them, first and foremost, it is necessary to note the strong tribal links which in turn are highly binding to the community members. Respect for the elders and the so-called 'institution of gifts' are well developed [Suraganova 2009].

From times immemorial, the culture of speech, trust and respect for national traditions, habits, literature and art are valued. For the steppe people, a practical mindset is typical, a rational way of thinking, without abstract judgments and abstract concepts, with weakly expressed external emotionality, reserve, composure and discretion, obedience, honesty, respect to leaders and unpretentious life style. Kazakhs are intrinsically freedom-loving, hospitable, sociable, brave, keeping their word.

By date, several researches on the Kazakh mentality have been published, however, in fact, development of the topic is just beginning. First and foremost, it should be noted that the Kazakh ethnos had been forming over a fairly long time, and the people were able to preserve the mechanisms of national-cultural reproduction. Besides, a high level of national identity is characteristic of the Kazakhs. Among the characteristics of the Kazakh consciousness, first of all, the traditional system of law — *adat* — be singled out, strong bloodline relations and knowledge of genealogy, verbal folklore.

The article focuses on the fundamental basis of nomadic mentality — the imperative of behavior which was formulated between the late 1st millennium BC and the early-to-mid 1st millennium AD. It was during this period that the ideological canon of all Turks of Eurasia attributed to the half-legendary Oghuz Khan was formulated: 'Move! Do not be sedentary!' [Masanov 1995: 243]. The nomadic way of life

created the structure of nomadic man, N. Masanov said, emphasizing that the contraposition of their culture and value stereotypes is a property of the ethnicity of nomadic culture. In the traditional mentality there was crystallized the thesis that only the dead stay where they are. Man must move, as does the sun, the moon, beasts, birds.

If we further trace history of the shaping of Eurasian nomads' value system, then the prohibition of transition to sedentary way of life was recorded in Genghis Khan's *Yassa*. The phrase attributed to Kasym Khan is widely known: 'We are steppe dwellers, we have neither rare nor expensive things, our wealth is chiefly in horses; meat and animal skin are our best food and clothing ... there are no gardens or buildings on our land; to admire the grazing cattle — that's the purpose of our walks; so let's go to the herd, look at the horses, and by the way, have a good time together in a pleasant company', which confirms the thesis about the economic-cultural opposition of nomads to the sedentary land-cultivating world [Doughlat 1969].

A certain disdain for sedentary farmers sitting on the land was expressed in the Kazakh language through words employed to denote the latter, e. g. *jatak* ('lazybones, lazy people') and 'grave-diggers' (those engaged in digging the earth). Even in the late 19th century, diggers for the construction of industrial facilities in the Kazakh Steppe had to be brought from other regions of the Russian Empire, mainly from Smolensk, Kaluga, Ryazan, Grodno, Orel, Tambov and other provinces [Bekmakhanova 1986: 102]. The need for specialists of this kind was not caused by a lack of manpower as such but rather by the attitude to work related to land in the mentality of nomads and their unwillingness to perform it. Something similar will manifest itself later in the events of 1916 when non-Slavs were requisitioned for rear work and considered it a humiliation for themselves. The Kazakh intelligentsia put a lot of effort into persuading the Tsarist Government of the need to form cavalry detachments of the nomadic Kazakhs. Unfortunately, their appeals went unheeded.

When it comes to address the way the main imperative of the nomads' behavior was circulating and who reproduced it in various forms, one should recall the classical Kazakh literature of the early 20th century. One of the best

examples, in our view, is the poem *I Love* by Magzhan Zhumabaev translated into Russian by L. Stepanova. Here is a fragment confirming our thesis:

'He looks half-eyed — and won't open eyes wide,

Walks on the steppe with laziness in tow

In malakhai pulled down low,

Lives like his ancestors as of old:

Strolls after flock of sheep,

Together they will graze and rest.

This is Alash, and I love him,

I do not understand

For what and why ...' [Zhumabaev 1991: 2–3].

The children of nomadic Kazakhs, boys, had such a custom, a kind of an omen: they would catch a ladybird at the start of migration, put it on the palm and shout in chorus: 'Where do the people go?'. The beetle climbed on the finger, stood up and a kind of looked around. The boys had to catch in what direction it was looking to answer their question. The boys resorted to all kind of tricks to turn the bug in the direction the *aul* was moving. And although in practice the direction could be completely different from what the bug showed, the boy who correctly indicated the direction felt like a hero. This custom taught the children to learn the nomadic process, the strategy of the steppe nomadic life [Seidimbek 2012: 285].

Under the conditions of easily alienated property of nomads, i. e. livestock, the custom of branding both large and small animals was widespread enough. This branding symbol was called '*tamga*'. During the branding of livestock the elderly people gave little children the cut pieces of sheep's ears sprinkled with milk, which the children had to throw into an ant-hill into which twigs of different heights were stuck. Firstly, this custom meant the desire to increase the livestock which was to multiply like ants. And secondly, the sign said: grass will rise to the height the ants will climb up along the twigs [Seidimbek 2012: 314]. The green of the grass determined the direction of nomads' movement. It was the main indication of the beginning and direction of the nomadic movement.

Personification of animals, giving them human essence was characteristic of many nations. Among the nomads, it was the main source of imagery. Four livestock species stood for the fullness of man's social status — horse,

camel, sheep, and cow. A special place, of course, belongs to the horse. In the epic, the horse always goes next to the hero. The animal is both a mentor and a friend. Tarlan helps Yer-Targyn, Tayburyl helps Koblandy, Baychubar helps Alpamys. The many proverbs also confirm a special significance of this animal: 'He who never sat on horseback is not a *jigit*', 'Horse is like wings to a true *jigit*'. It was believed that the horse is a heaven-sent being, a symbol of the Upper World, the world of wisdom and ancestors. It is no coincidence that all the key family rites, such as childbirth, funerals and weddings, were never performed without this animal in one form or another.

Interesting enough in this respect is the interrelation between the *yurt* interior and the traditional Kazakh calendar, consisting of a twelve-month animal cycle. A twelve-year cycle in the *yurt* decoration started with the mouse area — it was the place for chests where possessions were stored and where guests would take seats. Then there came that of the cow — the space up to the bed (*kobezhe*) embodying prosperity; tiger — the place where the host sat; hare — the hostess's place; snail — the place of food and gifts; snake — the place for pottery, boilers, kettles, buckets; horse — the area at the entrance as a symbol of movement; sheep — the space for small and poor ones; monkey — gourds with *koumiss*, weapons and horse trappings; bird — the place for youth and guests; dog — the place of male guests; boar — place of honorable guests and the most valuable property; the mouse completes the circle again. Ideally, the nomad would have liked to stay in the same place but was forced to move endlessly changing stay sites.

Steppe knowledge is conservative enough since it is oriented, first of all, to the connection with the ancestors, and only in the second place it serves to assume reality as such. At this point, it is appropriate to mention such a concept as 'generic time'. In general, the idea of time is one of the central organizing factors of nomadic literature. Time is perceived by a nomad as an indivisible whole, a synthesis of the past and the present. There is no future as such; it is an obligatory repetition of the past. If this past does not recur then there is no future, there is no prospect. Dead ancestors exist in the people's minds helping or opposing them in real life. Time is perceived as static, non-linear and is reflected in the Kazakh language today

too: 'He is three *mushels* old', '[Period of] time equal to a milking of one mare', '[Period of] time equal to what is required to boil milk'.

Ethical and aesthetic assessments and characteristics of the hero are connected with the static perception of time. The past always serves as a model for imitation. The ideal of medieval Kazakh poetry is *ataly* ('he who has glorious ancestors'). The more there were such ancestors, the better. You might have no merits but belonging to a clan that stems from the dignified was sufficient to determine your personal social status. The modern mentality has kept this feature in many respects.

Space for a nomad cannot be large or small but is necessary and appropriate depending on the extent of convenience and satisfaction of needs. The number of horses and the size of the land was the benchmark. The dwelling became that space which was clearly segmented and imposed certain bans on residents and guests. For example, it was considered an insult to the host if the guests stepped on the threshold; it was forbidden for guests to walk counter-clockwise in the *yurt*, etc.

The perception of space and time coincided in the consciousness of Kazakh nomads; there was an interdependent oneness of these categories. This thesis is fully supported by the classic phrase of Kazakh *zhyrau* Kaztugan: 'The steppe land is infinite like time' [Poets 1993: 29]. For example, the word *ұзақ* (*uzak*) 'long' relates equally to time and space: a long road, a long day. Space was perceived in time parameters. We support the approach of A. Seidimbek who divides into four parts the real time that Kazakhs use: ecological, genealogical, situational, historical time [Seidimbek 2012: 221]. Ecological time is connected with the space through nomadic places of stay – winter place / *kystau*, spring place / *kokteu*, summer / *jailau*, autumn / *kuzeu*. Time and space are integrated. For example, the phrase 'during the movement to *jailau*' indicates the period of nomadic movement and the destination area, too.

It is very important that time is perceived by a nomad not linearly but cyclically, going round in circles. He is not interested in the usual course of time but in what happens within it. The movement started at the conditional point 'A' in the spring should be completed there, at the same place. Otherwise, the nomadic cycle is disrupted which leads to tragic consequences.

Length of the way is measured by time — the number of days it takes to move from one place to another. That is, time was perceived by the length in space, through the way made. Kanat Nurlanova who published a lot on this subject confirmed her thesis linguistically [Nurlanova 1994]. For example, *zaman* is the era, the age of man, the life of one generation. *Duniye* (*dyhue*) is the universe, the world, the world of man's things [Nurlanova 1993: 228].

Genealogical time, in addition to other grounds, is related to space too. Many expressions on genealogical facts contain information about the time / date and space / location. For example, 'it was on Arka, during the memorial *asa* (commemoration dinner a year after death) of Sagynay'.

Situational time is associated with life events or everyday practices. For example, 'when Ablai was elected Khan' or 'it was during the anniversary of Bogenbai Batyr'. Historical time is measured by the calendar dates of the annual cycles, by *mushels* equal to twelve years. Interestingly, a person's life is also measured in *mushels*. Kazakhs have the expression '*bir mushel otti*' (literally 'one mushel passed') which means '12 years have passed'. Five *mushels* form a 60-year *tolyk mushel* (complete mushel). The transition years (13th, 25th, 37th, 49th, etc.) are called *mushel zhas* — the year of the mushel which miraculously coincide with the periods of restructuring of the hormonal system of the human body. The time of the mushel is cyclical. This timing and spacing for nomads is the basis of the personal. Talking of a great man/national hero, they usually said: 'his age is equal to one hundred mushels'. This means that he deserved an eternal memory and his name became immortal.

For so long as ethnoses 'inscribed into nature' — including nomads — are able to preserve their individual self in the way of life, the type of thinking and mentality, they retain their subjectivity. However, when it comes to obey to logic of development they become an object that is manipulated. In this case, in our opinion, categoricalness is not entirely appropriate since freedom of will remains, and not only an individual person but even certain groups (ethnic, social or any other ones) have the right to determine their own destiny without replicating the life cycle of their ancestors or other predecessors, especially given that under the contemporary conditions such an opportunity

did exist. It is another matter how voluntary this new choice was, whether the people themselves wanted to meet this new pace of life. This, in our view, contains the main problem of the conflict of values, and it can be seen that it has several levels — from personal to ethno-national, and in either case the situation can be entirely different.

The process of Kazakhstan's accession to Russia had brought to life two trends in the nation's sociopolitical thought: pro-Russian and anti-Russian ones. Otherwise, those can be referred to as westerners and national loyalists, educators and conservatives. The latter are represented by poets of the 'Zar-Zaman' era ('Era of Grief'). Ardent criticism of everything that is characteristic of modern Kazakh life is the main feature of Shortambai Kanaev's and Dulat Babatayev's works.

Poets of the 'Zar-Zaman' era find nothing in the entire Kazakh reality that pleases the heart. Immorality, gossip, tongue-tied speech, contempt for the sufferings of others, stupidity, ignorance filled the Kazakh world, and it seems that even cattle became disobedient and obstinate. The criticism of the *aul* reality is supplemented with loathing of alien, non-Kazakh things to have penetrated into the steppe along with the colonization of Kazakhstan. The authors are deeply discouraged unable to find solace in anything. The past alone seems ideal to them, religion alone brings salvation. Preservation of the traditional nomadic lifestyle is viewed a salvation.

The crisis of the nomadic society was a turning point in the spiritual sphere of nomadism. Stratification of the nomadic society prompted a closer look at what was happening around, and most importantly they were looking for an answer to the question — what is to be done next? The clan, tribe, tribal union cease to be a relatively homogeneous mass — these motifs, new to steppe poetry, begin to appear in works of a number of poets, the first of which was Aktamberdy Sary-uly. Works by Chokan Valikhanov, Abai Kunanbayev, Ibrai Altynsarin, Mukhametzhan Seralin, Sultanmakhmut Toraigyrov and many others are highly critical. However, unlike the poets of the 'Zar-Zaman' era, representatives of the Enlightenment were characterized by different sentiments — advance is possible and necessary. Education becomes the main value to them. Changes in of the traditional nomadic way of life through

its combination with agricultural practices and other activities was deemed as salvation [Kendirbaeva 1999].

Contact with the sedentary world in some nomadic Kazakhs' opinion was in itself extremely dangerous, in the opinion of others — a useless pastime, in the opinion of the third group — a useful experience. One of the unique sources — diaries of the priests — contain an indirect confirmation thereto. All the material in the diaries of Aleksey Kilyachkov, Turgay district priest, for the years 1902, 1903 and 1906, can be conditionally divided into five groups: 1) Muslimism among the Kazakhs; 2) characteristics of sociopolitical situation in the Russian Empire and its impact on the situation in Kazakh society; 3) influence of the Russian language, education and Orthodox Christian religion on Kazakh culture, including the problems of the newly baptized Kazakhs; 4) characteristics given by Kazakhs and Russians to each other, and relationship between them; 5) the land issue and relations with the settlers which is most important to us. In his characteristics, we find both admiration of the migrants and resentment with their behavior towards the Kazakhs. In particular, A. Kilyachkov describes a meeting with 14 families of Ukrainian immigrants from the Caucasus who were heading for Pishpek (now Bishkek — authors' comment) on 40 carts with a huge number of cattle and sheep. They looked healthy but exhausted with too tanned faces and in shabby clothes.

‘Wonderful people are these settlers! Since April moving to Asia unknown to them, without any interpreter, without a guide in the steppe for months, going at random, asking: Is this the right way to Turgay? Yes. On they go, a long way round. How patient, and what a humble submission to fate.

Reasons for resettlement are thinness of cattle, shortage of lands in Stavropol Governorate. They marveled at our Turgay steppes: ‘Oh, God, how much land our Tsar-Father has’. They have good cattle... Local people were amazed at the settlers' cattle, wanted to buy it but the *khokhly* (Ukrainians) did not sell a single head to them’ [SAOO. Coll. 175. Cat. 1. File 40. P. 11].

Further the author continues: ‘Simple-minded and good-natured are the Kirghiz! The *khokhly* (Ukrainians) have passed 600 miles and were not attacked or robbed anywhere.

The Kirghiz did not care that thousands of cattle came to the steppe ruining their fodder. Unlike them, the *khokhly* were defiant, no subservience to the Kirghiz, feeling free, at home, and they even beat a Kyrgyz woman for not allowing them to trample grass at her wintering ground. She lamented a lot, saying: ‘Bad *khokhol!*’. And at Batpak-Kara they started a fight over dried dung fuel. The Kirghiz beat one *khokhol* for taking dung without permission.

Khokhly attacked the Kirghiz, tied two. When 40 Kirghizes came to their rescue, the *khokhly* took out rifles and warned that they would shoot. Merchant Arkhipov reconciled them. The *khokhly* thought only of the cattle, forgetting, it seemed, of the soul, apparently, in alien lands. All of them seemed to have grown wild, torn from their native territories. Then they split up, 6 families wintered at Batpak-Kara and did not reach Atbasar’ [SAOO. Coll. 175. Cat. 1. File 40. P. 11 rev.].

A. Kilyachkov writes this on the land question: the fact that ‘Russian settlers occupy the Kirghiz steppes in Kostanay and Aktobe Districts is a tremendous harm to the Kirghiz and to livestock-breeding. More settlers cannot be allowed, otherwise the Kirghiz of Turgay will become poor. Particularly harmful it is for Perovsk District, Zhapas people because of the summer waterlessness’ [SAOO. Coll. 175. Cat. 1. File 40. P. 9]. We see that the author is trying to objectively protect the interests of nomads, while acknowledging that land shortage and famine in their homeland forced the settlers to move further and further eastwards.

Fiction often gives unique examples of the relationship between Kazakhs and Russian immigrants which, unfortunately, are either not yet sufficiently explored or absent in other historical sources. In the novel of the famous Kazakh writer Abish Kekilbayev *Pleiades — the Constellation of Hopes* dedicated to one of the most interesting, in our view, periods in the history of Kazakhstan's accession to the Russian Empire, there is a short story about a rich and carefree steppe man Kumarbai who was very fond of merriment and naively lost the lands inherited from his ancestors [Kekilbayev 2009]. His Russians guests cheated him out of them.

‘What did the Russians care about steppe loiterers? More and more of them kept coming over, where were they all coming and coming from? At first, the former were as humble as sheep. But as time went on, the Russians began

to throw out different things ... They plowed the earth, arranged some garden beds, shouting at Kazakhs: 'Do not trample our crops, do not touch our garden beds'. That's when Kazakhs realized it was no laughing matter, and ceased to sneer at the Russians, pottering about and toiling away like ants'. A long period of conflict began. This extract shows the difference in the value systems of nomads and farmers.

When one turns to sources of a different kind among which *Materials on Kyrgyz Land Use* take up a special place in terms of statistical information, it is possible to identify several stages of field research endeavors in the territory of the Kazakh Steppe for so-called 'land surpluses' that were to be transferred to the disposal of the Resettlement Foundation. The space sparsely populated by nomads and absence of traditions of cultivating land led to the imperial understanding of the 'terra nullius' (no man's land) principle [Etkind 2013: 144–148].

Despite the authorities were unaware of, and more often misunderstood or ignored cultural-historical and legal peculiarities, it was proposed to apply the general imperial jurisdiction to nomads. Politicians of that time believed that transfer of nomads to the legislation of the settled agricultural civilization would stimulate progressive process of transition to 'settled and civil way of life'.

The official political doctrine was the theory of S. E. Desnitsky, A. Smith's follower and the first Russian professor of law. Following his teacher, Desnitsky singled out four stages in the development of mankind, depending on the nation's subsistence sources: 1) gathering; 2) shepherding; 3) farming; 4) commercial stage. The first two stages are dominated by collective property which is conditioned, according to S. E. Desnitsky, by the imperfection of the labor process and absence of storage conditions for products.

The basis for his sociological and legal constructions with regard to shepherding peoples was also the assertion that the nomads had no right of 'alienation'. According to Desnitsky, the land does not belong to the nomads but is only in their use. It turned out that Kazakh lands formally did not belong to anyone, and it is impossible to buy 'nobody's land', so the very fact of transaction was considered unlawful [Kovalskaya 2003: 15].

Since the 1760s, the Russian Government had been gradually appropriating the right

to authorize the practical use of the Kazakh steppes issuing permits for house-building and similar activities, thereby acquiring proprietary rights. Another form of exercising actual ownership was land division, though secret at first (positions of land surveyors were introduced), followed by official administrative division after the adoption of respective governance statutes.

The problem of ownership of the nomadic territories would be resolved and arranged legally only in mid-19th century with the approval of the Interim Regulations on Governance in Semirechye and Syr-Darya Oblasts by Alexander II in 1867, and the Interim Regulations on Governance in Steppe Areas of Orenburg and West Siberian Governorates-General in 1868. So, Article 210 of the 1868 Interim Regulations fixed the transfer of Kazakh lands to the full jurisdiction of the Russian Empire. From this time on, we can talk about the colonial status of Kazakh lands in the Russian Empire. The fact that in peacetime all the power was held by military governors-general adds to the core characteristic of the land question.

To resolve the pressing problems of land allocation to the Russian peasants, the first expedition led by F. A. Shcherbina visited 12 districts of Akmola, Semipalatinsk and Turgay Oblasts from 1896 to 1903 [Materials 1898; Materials 1902; Materials 1907; Materials 1909; Materials 1903a; Materials 1903b; Materials 1908].

In 1904–1912, P. A. Khvorostansky's statistical crew was examining the resources of Ural and Turgay Oblasts [Materials 1910a; Materials 1910b; Materials 1915].

From 1906 to 1913, a research group led by P. A. Skryplev was working in Syr-Darya Oblast [Materials 1911]. In 1907–1909, Akmola Oblast was again explored under the leadership of V. Kuznetsov, and the 1909–1913 expedition led by P. P. Rumyantsev explored Semirechie / Zhetysu Uyezds.

The expeditions were to determine appropriate land sizes required for nomadic farms, so that the rest of the 'surplus' be given to the settlers. Most of the expedition members had no idea of nomadic livestock breeding and the required conditions. This complicated question is only at the beginning of research. Unlike many, F. A. Shcherbina was a liberal and tended to sympathize with the 'Kazakh nomad oppressed by the authorities', though sought to provide

land plots for landless Russian peasants. With all the imperial contexts in which the expedition was working, F. A. Shcherbina calculated the land norms for nomadic Kazakhs with a significant excess of the latter's real needs [Yankovsky 1924]. Almost a century later, in the monograph of the world-famous Kazakh scientist N. E. Masanov *Kazakh Nomadic Civilization* one can find the actual norms of land use for nomadic economy with due account of the natural-climatic zone. For example, grazing of a single horse in the steppe zone requires at least 20 hectares of pastureland, while in the desert zone this number increases by several times. One sheep needs 15–24 hectares in the semi-desert zone of Kazakhstan, 18–24 hectares in deserts, and on average in Kazakhstan — 20.5 hectares of pastureland [Masanov 1995: 65].

Close contacts in the frontier zone resulted in a clash of vital interests of the nomadic Kazakhs, migrant peasants, Cossacks, administrative bureaucracy and clergymen, and each group had certain land plots and claims for their increase. But it was not only the matter of land claims to each other. What happened can be called reverse assimilation which Afanasy Shchapov described as reverse aspect of the Russian colonization — when the Russians were adopting skills, customs, tools, clothing, language and even appearances of the local population. This was particularly evident in the Cossack population during the latter's expansion into the Kazakh Steppe [Etkind 2013: 183–188]. There are also interesting examples of interaction between migrant peasants and nomadic Kazakhs in the construction of dwellings and organization of everyday life [Rakhimbekova 2013: 132–135]. It should be emphasized that, in our opinion, the use of the theoretical and methodological concept of 'domination without hegemony' by Ranajit Guha in the study of Kazakhstan's history in the imperial period would be most appropriate [Guha 1997].

Being an intermediary between the Kazakhs and the settlers, the colonial administration basically understood that sedentarization of nomads would not happen that soon. The Kazakh intelligentsia widely debated this issue too. The main discussion was between representatives of two national periodicals titled 'Kazakh' and 'Aikap'. The article by Gulnara Kendyrbai 'We are children of Alash ...' outlines the main ideas of this discussion [Kendir-

baeva 1999]. The author concludes that the popularity of the so-called 'westerners' (representatives of the Alash Party and the *Kazakh* newspaper) was due to the way they understood transition to sedentarization and solution of the land problem integrally — opposition to further resettlement of Russian peasants and seizure of lands from Kazakhs, and demands to arrange land plots for both the Kazakhs and the already arrived peasants. They advocated a gradual and very cautious transition of nomads to a settled way of life which would preserve the national identity. The opposite side — referred to by the author as 'Islamists' — were also outspoken critics of Russia's agrarian policy and demanded the return of lands that were given to the peasants. Nevertheless, their propaganda of immediate sedentarization, in G. Kendyrbai's opinion, would have led in practice to destruction of the nomadic way of life since most Kazakhs were neither economically nor psychologically prepared for such a transition.

In the article by Peter Rottier *The Kazakness of sedentarization: Promoting progress as tradition in response to the land problem*, transition of nomads to settled life is also analyzed [Rottier 2003]. The author infers that the national elites realized that nomadism ceased to be the only possible way of life to Kazakhs as a result of significantly changed reality and transfer of significant land areas to the Resettlement Foundation and Russian peasants. Therefore, the national intelligentsia advocated encouragement of changes in the Kazakhs' land relations that would make the nation part of the world community. From nomadism as a way of life the emphasis shifted to the notion of homeland, which formed a sense of national identity in accordance with other laws, different from the previous ones.

The colonial administration, being an intermediary between the Kazakhs and the arriving settlers, basically understood that transition of nomads to sedentary life would not take place soon. At the same time, the views of nomadic Kazakhs about the rules of nomadism changed significantly. In this respect, we agree with V. Martin that the local population began to understand the land use system in the colonial law [Martin 2001; Martin 2009]. We also support the view of the British scientist A. Morrison that the Russian Empire was unable to control all the spheres of the colonized societies [Mor-

risson 2008]. Moreover, under the influence of local legal and other traditions the colonial power was creating new models of governance that often incorporated local traditional institutions. It can be said that the colonial officials themselves became bearers and mouthpieces of certain ideas of nomads whose lives they ruled.

Conclusion

The value system of the nomadic Kazakhs had been rapidly transformed under the pressure of the changing world before the era of world wars. The ever-growing presence of the Russian Empire in the Kazakh Steppe, especially from the second half of the 19th century, led to gradual development of new adaptation strategies by Kazakh nomadic people to meet requirements of the new reality or survival. The need to address the situation caused by the agrarian crisis in the Russian Empire led the government to eventually develop policies for resettlement which brought about significant reductions of pastureland in favor of agricultural cultivation by the migrants. Russia's policy was aimed at expanding Cossack and peasant use of land in the steppes which was enshrined in a series of laws on withdrawal of Kazakh nomadic lands for the agricultural population. The spontaneous colonization was significantly supplemented by the government policy of resettlement since the 1880s and became mass-scale after P. A. Stolypin's reforms. The legal reforms made Kazakh lands the property of government, while it was recognized that they remain in the 'public use' of nomads.

The 1896–1903 statistical expedition for the study of steppe areas led by F. A. Shcherbina estimated the areas of lands that were to be taken from the Kazakhs for the Resettlement Foundation, which ultimately led to an unprecedented reduction of nomadic land use and

transformation of nomadic paths. According to the Soviet Kazakh scientist S. E. Tolybekov, even back in the 1970s there were distinct traces of nomadic paths that were hundreds or even thousands of kilometers long [Tolybekov 1971: 495–594]. One should also mention a desire of certain executives to transform the Kazakhs' nomadic lifestyle into a settled one, which did not contradict the civilizing mission of the Russian state at large [Bykov 2003: 95]. Nomadic communities survived relying not only on their own reserves and resources but, paradoxically, on local authorities to protect their territories from competitors. This was an essential feature of the frontier territory. As the materials of the statistical expedition of F. A. Shcherbina show, the determination of boundaries between nomadic communities continued to remain within the frames of their understanding of the valuable from the 'pre-Russian times' [Dzhampeisova 2014].

The Russian Government did not intervene in the nomads' land use issues, tended to maintain a status quo in this question, and solved exclusively the plowmen's land matters. In these conditions, the nomadic Kazakhs, in fact, were left to themselves. As a result, they had to develop new daily practices. For example, since the new laws fixed the wintering grounds (*kystau*) to certain nomadic groups, there were multiple complaints and petitions requesting for allocations of winter territories from the summer grounds [Adzhigali 1995]. With the loss of their traditional lifestyle, the Kazakhs lost their nomadic lands in the so-called pure form but were able to preserve their national distinctness in the language, oral folk memory, genealogy, behavioral rituals of Kazakh culture, in architecture and interior of their homes, elements of everyday and festive clothing, decorations, etc.

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