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THE CONCEPT OF “TURKISTAN” IN THE IDEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DISCOURSE OF THE KAZAKH INTELLIGENTSIA OF THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

Abstract

The article analyzes selected aspects of the concept of “Turkestan” as an ideological and cultural phenomenon in the discourse of the Kazakh intelligentsia of the early twentieth century. It examines the intellectual, political, and sociocultural prerequisites for the emergence of the idea of Turkic unity and regional solidarity under the conditions of late imperial and early Soviet transformations. The relevance of the study is determined by the need for a comprehensive understanding of the ideological foundations of the national liberation movement, the role of the intelligentsia in shaping national identity, and the significance of the concept of Turkestan in the process of political mobilization of Turkic peoples. The exploration of this issue contributes to a deeper comprehension of the historical mechanisms of self-determination and cultural consolidation in Central Asia.

The aim of the article is to identify and analyze the key ideological and cultural dimensions of the concept of “Turkestan” in the intellectual discourse of the Kazakh intelligentsia. The main objectives are to reveal the ideological sources of the concept, to determine the role of national leaders in its formation, and to analyze the factors that influenced its transformation during the Soviet period.

Materials and Methods. The study is based on the analysis of archival documents, journalistic and programmatic materials, as well as scholarly works by domestic researchers. The research employs the methods of historicism, comparative historical analysis, and discourse analysis.

Results. The findings demonstrate that the concept of Turkestan integrated ideas of Turkic and Muslim unity, anti-colonial resistance, and aspirations for political autonomy. The activities of representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia facilitated its institutionalization; however, the polyethnic composition of the region and the pressure exerted by the Bolshevik authorities limited the possibilities for its practical implementation. The concept of Turkestan played a significant role in shaping the national consciousness and political culture of the Kazakh intelligentsia, preserving its historical and ideological value within the broader context of the development of the Turkic world.

Keywords: Turkestan, Kazakh intelligentsia, Turkic unity, national elite, Jadidism, national liberation movement, colonial policy, identity, political discourse.

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XX ҒАСЫР БАСЫНДАҒЫ ҚАЗАҚ ЗИЯЛЫЛАРЫНЫҢ ИДЕОЛОГИЯЛЫҚ ЖӘНЕ МӘДЕНИ ДИСКУРСЫНДАҒЫ «ТҮРКІСТАН» КОНЦЕПТІСІ

Аңдатпа

Мақала XX ғасыр басындағы қазақ интеллигенциясының дискурсында «Түркістан» концептісінің идеологиялық және мәдени феномен ретіндегі кейбір қырларын талдауға арналған. Кейінгі империялық және ерте кеңестік трансформациялар жағдайында түрік бірлігі мен аймақтық ынтымақтастық идеясының қалыптасуына ықпал еткен зияткерлік, саяси және әлеуметтік-мәдени алғышарттар қарастырылады. Зерттеудің өзектілігі ұлт-азаттық қозғалыстың идеялық негіздерін, ұлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастырудағы интеллигенцияның рөлін және түркі халықтарының саяси бірігу үдерісіндегі Түркістан концептісінің маңызын кешенді тұрғыдан пайымдау қажеттілігімен айқындалады. Аталған мәселелерді зерделеу Орталық Азия кеңістігіндегі тарихи өзін-өзі айқындау мен мәдени топтасу тетіктерін тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді.

Мақаланың мақсаты – қазақ интеллигенциясының зияткерлік дискурсында «Түркістан» концептісінің негізгі идеологиялық және мәдени аспектілерін айқындау және талдау. Негізгі міндеттерге концептің идеялық қайнар көздерін ашу, оның қалыптасуындағы ұлттық интеллигенциясының рөлін анықтау және кеңестік кезеңдегі трансформациясына әсер еткен факторларды талдау жатады.

Материалдар мен әдістер. Зерттеу архив құжаттарға, публицистикалық және бағдарлама-лық материалдарға, сондай-ақ отандық ғалымдардың ғылыми еңбектеріне негізделген. Жұмыста тарихилық, салыстырмалы-тарихи және дискурс-талдау әдістері қолданылды.

Зерттеу нәтижелері ретінде Түркістан концептісі түркі-мұсылман халықтарының бірлігі, отаршылдыққа қарсы күрес және саяси автономияға ұмтылыс идеяларын тоғыстырғаны анықталды. Қазақ интеллигенциясы өкілдерінің қызметі оның институционалдануына ықпал етті, алайда аймақтың полиэтникалық сипаты мен большевиктік биліктің қысымы бұл идеяның практикалық тұрғыда жүзеге асу мүмкіндігін шектеді. Түркістан концептісі қазақ интеллигенциясының ұлттық санасы мен саяси мәдениетін қалыптастыруда маңызды рөл атқарып, түркі әлемінің даму контекстінде тарихи және идеялық құндылығын сақтап қалды.

Кілт сөздер: Түркістан, қазақ интеллигенциясы, түркілік бірлік, ұлттық элита, жәдидшілдік, ұлттық-азаттық қозғалыс, отарлық саясат, бірегейлік, саяси дискурс.

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КОНЦЕПТ «ТУРКЕСТАН» В ИДЕОЛОГИЧЕСКОМ И КУЛЬТУРНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ КАЗАХСКОЙ ИНТЕЛЛИГЕНЦИИ НАЧАЛА XX ВЕКА

Аннотация

Статья посвящена анализу некоторых аспектов концепта «Туркестан» как идеологического и культурного феномена в дискурсе казахской интеллигенции начала XX века. Рассматриваются интеллектуальные, политические и социокультурные предпосылки формирования идеи тюркского единства и региональной солидарности в условиях позднеимперских и раннесоветских трансформаций. Актуальность исследования обусловлена необходимостью комплексного осмысления идейных оснований национально-освободительного движения, роли интеллигенции в формировании национальной идентичности и значимости концепта Туркестана в процессе политической мобилизации тюркских народов. Изучение данной проблематики позволяет углубить понимание исторических механизмов самоопределения и культурной консолидации в Центральной Азии.

Целью статьи является выявление и анализ ключевых идеологических и культурных аспектов концепта «Туркестан» в интеллектуальном дискурсе казахской интеллигенции. Основными задачами являются раскрытие идейных источников концепции, определение роли национальных лидеров в ее формировании и анализ факторов, повлиявших на её трансформацию в советский период.

Материалы и методы. Исследование основано на анализе архивных документов, публицистических и программных материалов, а также научных трудов отечественных исследователей. В работе применены методы историзма, сравнительно-исторического и дискурс-анализа.

В качестве результатов установлено, что концепт Туркестана объединял идеи тюркского и мусульманского единства, антиколониального сопротивления и стремления к политической автономии. Деятельность представителей казахской интеллигенции способствовала его институционализации, однако полиэтничность региона и давление большевистской власти ограничили возможности практической реализации. Концепт Туркестан сыграл значимую роль в формировании национального самосознания и политической культуры казахской интеллигенции, сохранив историческую и идейную ценность в контексте развития тюркского мира.

Ключевые слова: Туркестан, казахская интеллигенция, тюркское единство, национальная элита, джадидизм, национально-освободительное движение, колониальная политика, идентичность, политический дискурс.

Introduction. The latter half of the nineteenth century in the Russian Empire was a time of vigorous implementation of socio-economic reforms in an effort to modernize administrative structures and integrate various ethnic and social groups into the bureaucracy. In this period, there was

a need to reorganize the administrative apparatus, due to the inherent deficiencies in the existing bureaucratic system [1, pp. 112-115]. Low official education and the limited abilities of the estate-based elites were some of the crucial factors contributing to the poor efficiency of imperial bureaucracy. The multi ethnic nature of the corps of officials initially had been intended to help in the conquest of Central Asia, while at the same time helping to integrate the local elites, including the Kazakh aristocracy, into imperial authority structure.

During the late imperial modernization in Russian Empire, the Russian intelligentsia was an ideological movement that eventually grew into an anti-state force. Unlike the relatively coherent Russian intelligentsia, the national intelligentsia in Turkestan developed in a somewhat disorganized and weak manner and had been limited in educational training and political ability, making it difficult to formulate an autonomous status vis-à-vis colonial authority. While it served a transitional and coercive purpose of state administrative reforms in the region due to "military governance", its attempts to weaken the power of traditional elites manifested in the redistribution of the region's territorial administration units and the dismantling of clan structures [2]. The previously tribal structure-based volosts were divided into separate administrative units, identified with a place name in the region, with a goal of enhancing colonial control and restricting independent governance at the local level.

In parallel to these administrative reforms, an educational base was created for the upcoming national elite. Although, urban and parish schools, teachers' seminaries and other Western model educational institutions were established, the involvement of the local people in them remained very limited [3]. Primarily these institutions trained subordinate personnel to meet the needs of the administration which prevented them from performing educational and enlightenment tasks more broadly. The efforts of Jadids were especially crucial here as through their reformist and educational initiatives, they promoted the spiritual and cultural identity of Turkic Muslim communities and accelerated the awakening of political consciousness through unity and solidarity [4].

The significance of the present study is associated with the necessity of a complex analysis of the process of the formation of the national intelligentsia under colonial conditions and in the context of the late imperial transformation. This analysis helps to reconstruct the development of the intelligentsia into a social and political institution mediating between the colonial administration and the local population and, at the same time, becoming a locomotive of national liberation and cultural movements.

The problem is also due to the importance of Turkestan as a geopolitical and cultural center, where process of modernization, colonization and national elite formation went in the context of sharp ethno-cultural and social division. Characteristic features of the interaction between the local intelligentsia and colonial administration, participation of Jadids in education and political process, and transformation of the "Turkestan" into symbol of political unification and cultural cohesion were typical for this region.

The goal of the study is the systematic identification and analysis of the factors shaping the formation of national intelligentsia and its role in the politics, education and culture of Turkestan region in late 19th – early 20th centuries. In achieving this objective, several interrelated tasks are undertaken, including the reconstruction of the ideological and intellectual basis of intelligentsia formation, analysis of the role of Jadid reformers and institutions in training national cadres, analysis of the interactions between colonial power and local elites and reinterpretation of the concept of "Turkestan" within late imperial and early Soviet transformation.

The scientific novelty of the study resides in the comprehensive analysis of the intelligentsia's formation as an institution, that ensured the processes of culture and political unification in the region, and taking into account internal factors (education, social structure, cultural values) and external factors (colonial administration, imperial modernization process). The analysis also specifically focuses on the correlation of modernization, political mobilization and the construction of cultural

identity; this understanding of intelligentsia beyond merely social group allows it to be seen as a political and cultural institution.

Working hypothesis of the study posits that the formation of the national intelligentsia was caused by interaction of internal factors (Jadids' enlightenment and educational activities, social-ethnic structure, values) and external factors (colonial administration, imperial modernization policies). It was precisely these factors that defined the character of national elite's involvement in politics, role in the national liberation movement and its impact on the concept of "Turkestan" as a symbol of unity and solidarity of Turkic peoples.

Materials and methods. To determine the meaning of the Turkestan concept as an ideology and cultural concept in the discourse of Kazakh intelligentsia in early 20th century we use the interdisciplinary approach including the historical, cultural, text-discursive and archivist documentary analysis of Turkestan concept. We proceeded from the assumption that for the Kazakh intelligentsia Turkestan represented an ideological and symbolic category, a symbol of cultural unity and approximation among the Turkic Muslim peoples in Central Asia. Hence, Turkestan meant not just a geographical territory but a complex cultural-ideological and symbolic phenomenon, reflecting unity of Turkic peoples, mutual understanding on spiritual and moral levels, modernization mission of intelligentsia.

Sources of the study included various types of documents. Of particular importance were archival materials kept at the Central State Archives of the Republic of Kazakhstan: biographical data, correspondence, administrative-investigation files and other papers on the lives and activities of representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia, materials related to the activities of the Jadid organizations and publishing enterprises in the Turkestan region [5, pp. 4-5]. These sources allowed to reconstruct the ideological discourse, intellectual activity and socio-political practices where the concept of Turkestan penetrated into the Kazakh intellectual context.

At present the concept "Turkestan" in the historiographical works is considered as an ideological and cultural phenomenon, developed as part of universal transformational processes in the Muslim and Turkic worlds at the end of 19th – beginning of 20th century. For R.F. Mukhammeddinov, Turkestan appears within the evolution of pan-Turkic idea, initially having the status of an intellectual-cultural movement, oriented toward the consolidation of Turkic peoples via the modernization of education, the renewal of religious consciousness, and the creation of common historical and cultural space [6, pp. 19-21]. The author states that, "It was not the idea of Turkic unification that caused radical political actions, it was rather the project of their spiritual resurgence, the quest of common grounds and steady progress, founded upon the blend of the European system of education with Islam and national traditions". Turkestan, in this aspect, represents a symbolic place, integrating the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Central Asia, Volga region and Caucasus in a common civilizational paradigm oriented toward illumination, the modernization of social institutions, and the creation of a new layer of intellectuals. Such understanding is found in Sh. Lemerrier Quelquejay's writings, analyzing the redefinition of the Muslim minority groups in the period of revolution and civil war [7, pp. 72-75]. The author explains, it was the intellectual and cultural movement of Jadids and national intelligentsia based on the conception of Turkestan that became a fundamental factor, leading to the rise of new collective identities and offering viable alternative to both imperial frameworks and narrowly understood national identity projects. Within this context, Turkestan is not perceived as a utopian political scheme but rather as an intellectual sphere for collaboration of programs of renewal and societal reform among the Muslim-Turkic population.

Foreign historiography treats the conception of Turkestan as a cultural and integrationist phenomenon in the sphere of forming of a new national and transnational consciousness. T. Martin in his work proves, that ideas of cultural and regional autonomy, including Turkestan, were not destroyed within the framework of Soviet national policies, but evolved into institutional models of educational reform and cultural autonomy [8, p. 56]. He shows that the Soviet notion of "affirmative

action" was deeply influenced by pre-revolutionary national projects of Jadids and Turkists and adapted within socialist ideology. Studies of E. I. Kempbell (Vorobyeva) dedicated to "inorodtsy question" and Russian perceptions of Muslims during the autocracy also brought substantial contribution into the historiography of Turkestan [9, pp. 205-207]. These studies illustrate the extent of suspicion regarding the process of cultural unification among the Turkic-Muslim communities for the territorial integrity of Russia, when ideas about Turkestan were identified with pan-Turkism and political radicalism. Comparative analysis of sources, however, demonstrates that, in the perception of the Kazakh and Turkic intellectuals, Turkestan signified a cultural synthesis, spiritual reform, social modernization, in other words, it stood not for a radical political scheme of unification, but for an intellectual community [10, pp. 133-152].

Special attention is given to M. Shokai and his ideas about Turkestan as a concept of Turkic peoples' unification. The Kazakh intellectuals widely adopted his concept which manifested in practices of cultural integration supported through educational projects, correspondence and public discussions [11, p. 59]. Archival sources prove that the members of the Kazakh intelligentsia did disseminate M. Shokai's ideas in their articles, journalistic work and pedagogy, thus building a common space for the unification of cultural and political ideas in Central Asia.

The adopted methodology is a historical systemic analysis, considering the notion of Turkestan as a dynamic system characterized by an interaction of political, cultural, religious, educational and socio-political spheres. This allows the conception to be studied not only as a symbol of unification, but also as a process, conditioned by socio-political environment and response of the empire. As a result, several distinctive features in the understanding of Turkestan by the Kazakh intelligentsia, which differentiate from those in Russian historiography, are revealed; namely, an emphasis on the cultural identity, common religion and educational modernization.

Russian historiography of the beginning of 20th century identified pan-Turkic unification idea among the Turkic peoples with aggressive political activity capable of destabilization of the empire, which was demonstrated in analyses of unification projects from the standpoint of threat to the territorial integrity of Russia, and interpretations of Jadids' and Kazakh intellectuals' activity as preparing for political struggle [12, pp. 161-163; 13, p. 48]. A comprehensive analysis of archives and periodics proves that the real tendency of Kazakh intelligentsia was a cultural unification in order to strengthening of the Turkic-Muslim identity and to create a literate and cultural nation [14, p. 219].

For the study of ideological and cultural characteristics of Turkestan, methods of textual and discursive analysis were used. In the texts of M. Dulatov, Zh. Aimaurov, A. Bokeikhanov the concept of Turkestan is used as symbol of unity and culture [15, p. 11-16]. Textual analysis helped to trace how Turkestan was used in literature and journalism for the creation of common identity, political goals and reformatory ideas within the nationalistic movement. Comparative discursive analysis highlighted considerable divergence of the interpretation of Turkestan among Kazakh intellectuals from those found in Russian scholarly texts.

The comparison and analysis of historical data on different national movements enabled to state that the unifying Turkic idea of Turkestan also had common aspects with other Turkic peoples in the region, which distinguished it from pan-Turkic programs and oriented itself to cultural integration, spreading education and enlightening work.

Archival materials also included administrative and investigative documents reflecting the response of the Russian administration to the activities of the Kazakh intelligentsia and the Jadids. These sources made it possible to reconstruct the actual strategy of cultural integration aimed at spreading education and enlightenment among the Turkic Muslim population rather than pursuing political confrontation. A comparison of archival and printed sources demonstrates that the concept of Turkestan functioned as a cultural and ideological code that united diverse groups and fostered a collective sense of belonging to a shared civilizational and cultural tradition within Central Asia.

The comprehensive use of these methodological approaches demonstrates that for the Kazakh intelligentsia the concept of Turkestan served as a unifying factor for the Turkic Muslim peoples, reflecting aspirations toward cultural solidarity, educational modernization, and integration. At the same time, it functioned as a counterbalance to imperial interpretations that equated ideas of unity with pan Turkism and perceived them as a threat to political stability. In this sense the concept of Turkestan reveals key aspects of the cultural, ideological, and educational policies pursued by the Kazakh intelligentsia and contributes to a deeper understanding of the early stages in the formation of national identity and regional cultural integration in Central Asia.

Results. Considering all the analyzed materials: journalistic materials of the early twentieth century, archival documents and works on history, we can say, that the notion "Turkestan" has become a quite essential ideological and cultural part of the Kazakh intelligency at the early twentieth century and has become a powerful intellectual device for interpreting the past, national culture and the region's political future [16, p. 243]. Turkestan, from the perspective of the Kazakh intelligentsia, is not an administrative or geographical category but a symbolic center of historical memory and spiritual heritage. To the Kazakh intellectuals, Turkestan represented the centuries-long tradition of Islamic scholarship, the evolution of Turkic written culture and the history and cultural formation of the civilizational space of Central Asia [17, pp. 17-24]. Through engaging with Turkestan as a concept, the Kazakh intelligentsia found their place in the socio-cultural system of connections of the Turkic world, and proposed new patterns of social development in the context of the colonial policy of the Russian Empire and political developments that occurred in early twentieth-century Turkestan.

The findings of the study show that the formation of ideological discourse with Turkestan as a central concept was closely linked with the rise of a new segment of Kazakh intelligentsia. By the end of the 19 th-early 20 th centuries a relatively small yet intellectual segment of educated individuals emerged in the Kazakh steppe: this group received education in both Russian educational institutions in the Russian Empire and Muslim centers of education in Central Asia and on the Volga River [18, pp. 29-34]. However, an important discovery of the research lies in the fact that during both the administrative practice of the Russian Empire and the Soviet system of accounting, representatives of the Muslim school tradition were rarely considered part of the intelligentsia. In official reports educated individuals were mainly those who graduated from Russian gymnasiums, colleges and universities, however a large number of educated Kazakhs studied at madrasas: there students were trained in theology, philosophy, logic, rhetoric, Arabic and Persian literature, history and foundations of law. In spite of a relatively high level of humanities training received by graduates of madrasas this system of education did not receive full recognition as legitimate by the colonial administration, thus the educated segment of Kazakh society was excluded from official statistics and subsequently, from Soviet historiography of the Kazakh intelligentsia [19, pp. 141-165].

The findings also show that Kazakh intellectuals of the early 20th century were well versed in several languages that provided them with intellectual horizons that broadened their perception and allowed them to operate in various Eurasian cultural circles. Besides the Kazakh language many of them were well-versed in Arabic and Persian, which were the languages of the Islamic academic and literary tradition and provided Kazakh intellectuals with access to Islamic philosophical, historical, literary and theological heritage. However, the Kazakh intelligentsia's fluency was not limited to these two languages, with many of them knowing Russian language, which enabled them to actively participate in political life of the Russian Empire, publish in the press and conduct heated debates. Some of them even had knowledge of the Chinese language as a result of long trade and cultural ties with Xinjiang [20, pp. 57-61]. Thus, the Kazakh intelligentsia was multilingual which enabled its successful integration into the Eurasian cultural context and complex ideological conceptualization of the cultural and historical destiny of Turkestan.

From studying publicistic articles and political programs of the early twentieth century we may observe that in the ideological framework of the Kazakh intelligentsia Turkestan had several interlinked

components. First of all, Turkestan was considered a spiritual center of the Turkic world and was strongly connected to Islamic religious tradition [21]. In this regard, the city of Turkestan with the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasavi held a significant status being one of the spiritual centers of the Islamic world in Central Asia, by referring to this cultural site Kazakh intelligentsia referred to the historical depth of Islamic culture and the contribution it made to the spiritual foundations of Kazakh society. As such Turkestan was consistently presented in publicistic texts as a place of spiritual gravitation.

The second component of Turkestan included the idea of cultural unity of Turkic peoples. The problem of their cultural solidarity turned out to be especially relevant given the intensified colonial policy by the Russian Empire. Kazakh intellectuals saw Turkestan as a space of mutual cultural interaction between the Turkic peoples whose traditions and history were united by similar language, religion and cultural background. It was on the basis of this common cultural heritage and necessity for development of national education, that Akhmet Baitursynov and Mirzhakyp Dulatov formulated their articles: Akhmet Baitursynov in his numerous articles wrote that progress of a nation could not take place without language and cultural memory, the foundations of which were laid in the broader context of the historical space of the region [22, pp. 9-12].

The third dimension of the Turkestan concept included political implications. During the turbulent years of early 20 th-century revolutions, representatives of the national intelligentsia perceived Turkestan as the political space where it would be possible to politically unite all Central Asian peoples. This idea was widely represented during the revolutionary upheaval of 1917: Mustafa Shokai, a leader of the Turkestan Autonomy regarded Turkestan as a historical region, where, it was necessary to build up a political space that would unify diverse peoples through cultural interaction and unity [23, pp. 98-102].

Furthermore, periodicals published in the early twentieth century played a crucial role in the discourse on Turkestan. They represented the most important tool to convey ideas concerning the national identity, cultural progress and historical memory. Publicistic writings published on pages of periodicals helped to disseminate the ideas about Turkestan as the center of the Turkic world, and a cultural center. One of the most prominent publications of that time was the periodical *Kazakh* edited by Akhmet Baitursynov. In this paper various issues related to the linguistic and cultural heritage, national education were discussed. In its pages Turkestan was widely represented as the historically formed nucleus of the Turkic civilization and the cultural link between the Turkic peoples of Central Asia [24].

Historiographical analysis indicates that during the Soviet period the concept of Turkestan underwent significant ideological transformation. Within the framework of Soviet national policy, ideas concerning the cultural unity of Turkic peoples were frequently interpreted as manifestations of pan Turkism and bourgeois nationalism. As a result, a considerable portion of the intellectual legacy of the Kazakh intelligentsia of the early twentieth century was excluded from scholarly circulation or presented in a distorted form. The national territorial delimitation of 1924 established new administrative borders in Central Asia, fundamentally reshaping perceptions of regional identity and the role of Turkestan in public consciousness.

Thus, based on the research results, the author can put forward a number of important scholarly conclusions:

First, the Turkestan idea became an integral part of the ideological and cultural discourse of the early 20th century Kazakh intelligentsia and acted as a symbolic space of historical memory and cultural self-identification.

Second, the formulation of the Turkestan idea was closely associated with the activity of the polyglot Kazakh intelligentsia with broad cultural contacts and with direct participation in the intellectual life of the Islamic and Turkic worlds.

Third, the official statistics of the Russian Empire and the Soviet period substantially underestimated the degree of education of the Kazakhs because the representatives of the Muslim system of education were not included as full representatives of the intelligentsia.

Fourth, in the ideological discourse of the Kazakh intelligentsia, the concept of Turkestan had three interdependent aspects—a spiritual aspect, a cultural civilizational aspect, and a political aspect.

Fifth, through the concept of Turkestan, the representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia sought to express their idea of the cultural unity of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

Sixth, in the Soviet historiography, the Turkestan idea underwent significant re-interpretation and partial withdrawal from scholarly circulation under the impact of new ideologies.

Seventh, the Turkestan idea was an important component of the formation of the consciousness of the Kazakh intelligentsia and was a reflection of their attempts to protect the region's cultural legacy under conditions of colonial modernity.

In conclusion, the findings confirm that the Turkestan idea was of particular importance in shaping the ideological and cultural discourse of the early 20th century Kazakh intelligentsia. Through the Turkestan idea they understood the past, articulated their cultural identity and searches for new ways of social development. The investigation into this phenomenon has provided the researcher with a better understanding of the intellectual history of Kazakhstan and of the intellectual function of the Kazakh intelligentsia.

Discussion. The idea of "Turkestan" at the turn of the century in the consciousness of the Kazakh intelligentsia was the multidimensional notion arising from the interplay of ideational, cultural, religious and political processes, characteristic for the transformation of imperial system, and later, for Soviet state construction. Its meaning went far beyond the geographic and administrative designation of the region and reflected profound aspirations regarding cultural unification of Turkic-Muslim peoples, continuity of history, civilizational closeness and a common historical destiny [25, p. 361]. In a situation when colonial policies of the Russian empire gained pace, and after when ideological pressure was exerted from the Bolshevik center, the concept of "Turkestan" gradually transformed into a symbol of alternative social model of development based on the principles of cultural autonomy, spiritual renaissance and political self-organization. This caused such an indifferent or overtly hostile stance of the authorities toward this concept which was considered a place where mobilization based on united action could be organized among fragmented ethnic groups.

Russian policy toward the Muslim peripheries in the last stage of empire was two-faced. On the one hand, official ideologists stressed the necessity of incorporating the non-Russian populations into the system of state relations, on the other hand the practical governance of the regions was carried out through the mechanisms of strong administrative pressure, cultural assimilation, marginalization at social and economic levels. Amid this context there formed an intellectual urge to present Turkestan as a distinct historical-cultural space in opposition to colonial interpretation of the region [26, pp. 501-505]. Being an implementer of modernization ideas, the Kazakh intelligentsia conceived of Turkestan as a symbol not only of a region but first and foremost as a symbol of Turkic-Muslim cohesion, cultural merging and civilizational renaissance. In the works of A. Bukeikhanov, M. Shokai, M. Dulatov, A. Baitursynov, H. Dosmukhamedov and other representatives of the national elite, the concept of Turkestan was inevitably connected with the need to unify Turkic peoples, organize their self-governance institutions, protect religious and cultural rights, and to stand up to colonial exploitation [27, pp. 179-181].

The Jadid movement was particularly influential in forging the idea of Turkestan. It advocated a modernization of Muslim society via enlightenment, update of education system, new forms of cultural communication and political mentality. According to the Jadid idea, the main ground for the modernization process was to be Turkic consolidation, which they considered a necessary element of development in the field of science, language, literature, public affairs. The concept of Turkestan represented an intellectual synthesis of Islamic reformism, Turkism and national conscience [28, pp. 840-853]. Unlike simplistic interpretation within the Russian historiography the Turkic solidarity concept advanced by Kazakh intelligentsia and Jadids never meant aggressive Turkism, but instead focused on the cultural consolidation and civilizational revitalization.

Still, the Russian Empire administrative authorities viewed the supra ethnic unity of Muslim people as a threat to state territorial integrity and political stability. The analysis of the Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russian Empire conducted by D.Yu. Arapov and T.V. Kotyukova reveals an organized system of controlling the activity of the Muslim movements, of leaders of national parties and of spread of ideas of Turkic unity [29, pp. 58-69]. Official reports stated that in face of development of a united Muslim political space there is a danger for state sovereignty in the region. Due to this a negative connotation was given to the word "Turkestan" which was interpreted as an element of separatism and anti-state mood and subjected to explicit attempts at exclusion from social and political vocabulary and its substitution by neutral territorial designators with fragmented local ethnic units [30, pp. 117-120].

The Bolshevik takeover did not divest the concept of Turkestan of its mobilization significance, but gave it a completely new ideological underpinning. Soviet nationalities policy, although having the Right of Self-Determination as a motto in reality strived to create a highly centralized administration system where supra ethnic solidarity would be seen as a threat for ruling party's monopoly. M.K. Kozybaev's work, based on a solid analysis, demonstrates how the Soviet political circles and historiography always created a negative picture of Turkestan as an outdated, retrogressive, reactionary, anti-state, or counter-revolutionary notion not compatible with the Socialist modernization project. The author insists that the artificially created fragment of Turkestan history and culture into separate nations' territorial regions aimed at demolition of their unity and of prerequisites of forming supra ethnic identity and institutionalization of national elites who would depend on Moscow [31, pp. 21-24].

A Special place in the conceptualisation of Turkestan idea belongs to the figure of M. Shokai whose political and journalistic work is believed to represent a quintessence of Turkic-Muslim solidarity. M. Shokai presented in his writings a wide analysis of the mechanisms of Soviet colonial policy exposing discrepancy between stated slogans about peoples equality and the reality of political repression, economic exploitation and cultural homogenization. He also saw Turkestan as a model of alternative political structuring through federation, autonomy and cultural pluralism. The ideas of M. Shokai were widely approved among Kazakh intelligentsia, as is confirmed by numerous archival materials and periodicals of the turn of the century [32, pp. 19-22]. Nevertheless, Russian and Soviet historiography has tried to present the activities of M. Shokai as elements of bourgeois nationalism disregarding the liberating, modernizing content of his activity.

Illustrative example can be taken from the analysis carried out by T. Zhurtbai, who mentioned about the speech by A.F. Kerensky comparing Turkestan to the colonies of European powers and calling for use of the same methods for governing of Muslim peripheries. The reaction on such statement by A. Bukeikhanov that led him to abandon the Cadet party formally meant a break from liberal imperialist ideology and move towards more revolutionary concepts of national liberation. Such episode clearly illustrates the extent of Turkestan idea in the political agenda of Kazakh elite as marking a border line between colonial and national liberation project [33].

In the Soviet period the fears regarding Turkestan notion were institutionalised. The policy of National Territorial Delimitation of the 1920s was carried out not so much to grant peoples with a right of self-determination, but with the aim of abolishing historical ties of Turkic people. The creation of separate Republics were accompanied by the intensive propaganda campaign, according to which Turkestan was a residue of feudalism devoid of political and scientific meaning. The term "Turkestan" ceased to be used in the official political discourse, remained only in some publications in emigration, and among opposition intelligentsia [34].

Historiographical studies by foreign scholars such as A. Bennigsen and S. Wimbush offer a new perspective on this policy within the broader framework of the colonial character of Soviet modernization. In their work *Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union* it is demonstrated that attempts to integrate Muslim elites into the Soviet system were accompanied by the systematic

suppression of alternative forms of identity, including the concept of Turkestan [35]. Similar conclusions are found in the research of J. Anderson, who emphasizes that Soviet strategy in Central Asia was directed toward preventing the emergence of regional centers of political agency capable of challenging Moscow's hegemonic position.

Domestic scholars have also made a significant contribution to the analysis of this problem. In their monograph devoted to the socio-political views of Mukhamedzhan Seralin, S.Z. Zimanov and K. Z. Idrisov trace the evolution of ideas concerning Turkic unity, demonstrating that for the Kazakh intelligentsia this concept functioned not merely as an ideological slogan but as an instrument of cultural consolidation and social modernization [36, pp. 29-31]. A similar interpretation is advanced by Gayaz Iskhaki, who emphasizes that the idea of Turkestan served as a platform for developing collective strategies of resistance to colonialism and for preserving the spiritual autonomy of Muslim peoples [37].

Overall, within the intellectual discourse of the Kazakh intelligentsia the concept of Turkestan functioned as an integrative model of historical development that offered an alternative both to the imperial and to the Soviet projects. Its marginalization in official historiography was determined not so much by scholarly considerations as by political and ideological motivations aimed at neutralizing the potential of regional solidarity. In this context Turkestan effectively became a kind of "forbidden symbol," possessing considerable mobilizing power and therefore subject to systematic exclusion from the public sphere.

Conclusion. The present study has made it possible to examine the concept of "Turkestan" as an important element of the ideological and cultural discourse of the Kazakh intelligentsia in the early twentieth century and to demonstrate its role in shaping the intellectual worldview of Kazakh society during a period of profound historical transformation. An analysis of journalistic sources, political programs, and historiographical studies indicates that the appeal to the image of Turkestan was not an accidental phenomenon but rather the result of a conscious intellectual search aimed at reinterpreting historical experience and defining cultural orientations in the context of colonial modernization. For the Kazakh intelligentsia, Turkestan functioned as a distinctive symbolic space through which ideas of spiritual continuity, historical commonality, and cultural interconnectedness among the peoples of the region were articulated.

One of the key conclusions of the study lies in the recognition that the concept of Turkestan performed an important integrative function by bringing together diverse elements of historical memory into a unified system of cultural representations. In a context marked by rapid social change and increasing external political influence, the invocation of the image of Turkestan enabled the Kazakh intelligentsia to construct a stable model of historical consciousness in which the past was interpreted as a source of spiritual orientation and cultural legitimacy. Within this framework, Turkestan was perceived not simply as a geographical space but as a distinct intellectual category that reflected ideas of cultural continuity and civilizational succession.

Particularly significant in the formation of this discourse was the activity of the Kazakh intelligentsia, which acted as an intermediary between the traditional steppe society and emerging forms of modern social life. Representatives of the intellectual elite of the early twentieth century sought to synthesize a variety of cultural traditions, including Islamic scholarship, Turkic historical memory, and elements of European political culture. This synthesis enabled them to formulate a more complex understanding of regional identity, within which Turkestan was viewed as an important cultural and spiritual reference point. As a result, the concept of Turkestan became part of a broader system of ideas associated with the preservation of language, cultural heritage, and spiritual values.

An equally important aspect concerns the fact that the intellectual environment of the Kazakh steppe was characterized by a high level of cultural and linguistic mobility. The multilingualism of representatives of the Kazakh intelligentsia provided access to diverse intellectual traditions and enabled them to interpret regional processes within a broader Eurasian context. Through their knowledge of Arabic, Persian, and Russian, Kazakh intellectuals were able to engage both with the

classical heritage of Islamic thought and with the contemporary political and philosophical concepts of their time. Such a combination of cultural influences contributed to the formation of a distinctive type of intellectual thinking in which ideas of regional solidarity and cultural interconnectedness occupied a prominent place.

The research also demonstrates that within the social thought of the early twentieth century the concept of Turkestan functioned as a symbolic space through which the role of the Kazakh people within the network of regional relations in Central Asia was reconsidered. In conditions of political uncertainty and the transformation of traditional structures of authority, the appeal to the historical image of Turkestan enabled the Kazakh intelligentsia to formulate ideas concerning possible forms of cultural interaction among the peoples of the region. These ideas reflected the aspiration of the intellectual elite to identify new models of social development capable of reconciling historical traditions with the demands of the modern era.

It should be noted that in subsequent decades the interpretation of the concept of Turkestan underwent significant changes. Under the conditions of Soviet national policy, many ideas associated with the cultural unity of the Turkic peoples were reinterpreted within the framework of a new ideological paradigm. As a result, a considerable portion of the intellectual legacy of the early twentieth century remained insufficiently studied for a long time or was interpreted through the prism of political expediency. In the contemporary period, however, there has been a gradual return to a more comprehensive analysis of the intellectual history of the region, which allows scholars to reassess the role of the Kazakh intelligentsia in shaping cultural and political discourse.

In a broader historical context, the appeal to the concept of Turkestan reflects the effort of the Kazakh intelligentsia to develop its own language for describing historical reality. The use of this concept made it possible to integrate different levels of historical experience, including religious tradition, cultural memory, and political visions of the future. In this way, a distinctive intellectual strategy emerged that was aimed at preserving cultural identity under conditions of external pressure and social transformation.

The significance of the concept of Turkestan is also evident in the fact that it became one of the elements in the formation of regional self-awareness grounded in the idea of cultural interconnectedness among the peoples of Central Asia. Such an understanding of the region contributed to the development of the perception of Turkestan as a space of historical dialogue in which diverse cultural traditions interacted over long periods of time. In this sense, the concept of Turkestan transcended the narrow confines of political or geographical meaning and became an important component of the intellectual heritage of Kazakh social thought.

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