

U. Tuleshova 

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

e-mail: ULT1@pitt.edu

CHENGIZKHAN DESCENDANTS AND RUSSIAN NOBLE ESTATE: THE MULTI-IDENTICAL CHARACTER OF THE KAZAKH ELITE UNDER THE IMPERIAL RULE

It seems imperial biographies are significant aspects of researching the social history of empires, and the biographical approach to historical study increases if it draws real social pictures in borderlands. In researching Kazakh elite biographies within imperial time, it is crucial to study the influence of the epoch on the formation of personality and consider the features of sociocultural context. In this research, we focus on multiple identities of the Kazakh traditional elite, who, by changing the subject, tried to save advantageous positions on both sides: in imperial society and among Kazakh nomads. The paper's main argument is that Kazakh sultans, descendants of Chengizkhan, could successfully adapt to new imperial administrative and social order, accepting multiple identities, saving "sultan" status, and gaining privileged estate positions.

Moreover, we propose to demonstrate that Kazakh sultans identified themselves as aristocratic strata of Kazakh nomadic people, serving to Kazakh people, governing them, and at the same time, taking into account their noble title and high position in the imperial social structure. To better understand such a dynamic, this paper considers the example of Kazakh noble branches of the great Kazakh sultan family, particularly the Ualikhanovs. This paper aims to explore the formation and character of the multi-identity of Kazakh traditional aristocracy, the process and way of adapting to new orders in biographical and social history methodological perspectives.

Key words: the social history of the Kazakh Steppe, imperial period, imperial biographies, Kazakh noble estate.

У. Ж. Тулешова

Питтсбург университеті, Пенсильвания штаты, АҚШ, Питтсбург қ.

e-mail: ULT1@pitt.edu

Шыңғыс хан ұрпақтары мен дворяндық сословие: патша үкіметі тұсындағы қазақ элитасының көпидентикалық сипаты

Империя дәуіріндегі тұлғалардың өмірбаяндары империя әлеуметтік тарихын зерттеудің маңызды аспектісі болып табылады және шекаралық аймақтардағы шынайы әлеуметтік жағдайды сипаттауда ерекше құндылыққа ие болатыны анық. Ресей империясының билігі кезеңіндегі Қазақ элита өкілдерінің өмірбаянын зерделеу кезінде тұлғаның қалыптасуына дәуірдің ықпалын зерттеп, әлеуметтік-мәдени контексттің ерекшеліктерін ескеру аса маңызды. Бұл зерттеуде біз бағынышты болған субъектісін ауыстыра отырып, империялық қоғамда да, қазақ көшпелілерінің арасында да – екі жақта да қолайлы позицияларды сақтауға тырысқан дәстүрлі Қазақ элитасы тұлғаларының әлеуметтік сипатына тоқталамыз. Мақаланың негізгі тұжырымы Шыңғыс хан ұрпақтары болған Қазақ сұлтандары көп идентикалық бағытты қабылдап, «сұлтан» статусын сақтап, империя тарапынан берілген сословиелік артықшылықтарды да иелене отырып, жаңа империялық әкімшілік-әлеуметтік тәртіпке бейімделе алғанын дәлелдеу болып табылады. Оның үстіне, Қазақ сұлтандарының өздерін көшпелі қазақ халқының ақсүйек топтары ретінде қабылдауы, қазақ халқына қызмет етіп, оны билеген әлеуметтік топ ретінде, олардың дворян атағы мен империялық қоғамдық құрылымдағы жоғары орнын ескере отырып, көрсетуді ұсынамыз. Бұл динамиканы жақсы түсіну үшін бұл зерттеудің негізіне қазақ дворяндарының атақты өкілдері, Уәлихановтардың бірнеше әулеті мысалға алынады. Мақалада дәстүрлі Қазақ аристократиясының көп идентикалық тұлғасының қалыптасуы мен табиғатын, оның жаңа тәртіптерге бейімделу үрдісі мен жолдарын өмірбаяндық және әлеуметтік-тарихи әдіснамалық аспектіде зерттеу мақсаты қойылған.

Түйін сөздер: Қазақ даласының әлеуметтік тарихы, империялық кезең, империялық тұлғалардың өмірбаяндары, Қазақ дворяндығы.

У. Ж. Тулешова

Университет Питтсбург, Штат Пенсильвания, США, Питтсбург
e-mail: ULT1@pitt.edu

Потомки Чингизхана и русское дворянское сословие: полиидентичность Казахской элиты в условиях имперского правления

Имперские биографии являются важным аспектом исследования социальной истории империй, и ценность биографического подхода к историческим исследованиям усиливается, если он представляет реальные социальные картины в приграничных районах. При исследовании биографий казахской элиты имперского времени крайне важно изучить влияние эпохи на формирование личности и учесть особенности социокультурного контекста. В данном исследовании мы акцентируем внимание на полиидентичности казахской традиционной элиты, которая, путем смены субъекта, пыталась сохранить выгодные позиции с обеих сторон: в имперском обществе и среди казахского кочевого общества. Основной аргумент статьи заключается в том, что казахские султаны, потомки Чингизхана, смогли успешно адаптироваться к новому имперскому административному и социальному порядку, принимая полиидентичность, сохраняя «султанский» статус и занимая привилегированные имперские сословные положения. Более того, мы постараемся показать, что казахские султаны идентифицировали себя как аристократические слои кочевого казахского народа, служившие казахскому народу, управлявшие им, и в то же время, учитывали свой дворянский титул и высокое положение в имперской социальной структуре. Чтобы лучше понять эту динамику, в данной статье рассматривается пример казахских дворянских ветвей великого казахского султанского рода Уалихановых. В статье ставится задача исследовать формирование и характер полиидентичности казахской традиционной аристократии, процесс и пути ее адаптации к новым порядкам в биографическом и социально-историческом методологических аспектах.

Ключевые слова: социальная история Казахской степи, имперский период, биографии имперских личностей, казахское дворянское сословие.

Introduction

It seems imperial biographies are significant aspects of researching the social history of empires, and the biographical approach to historical study increases if it draws real social pictures in borderlands. With expanding imperial political and social rules in regions, all members of these regional societies, including local elites and ordinary people, had to change their social life and try to keep their position. In some cases, they tried to improve their social state. In the case of Kazakh people under Russian imperial rule, such changeable and multisector identities among Kazakhs can be highlighted. In this research, we focus on multiple identities of the Kazakh traditional elite, who, by changing subjects, tried to save advantageous positions on both sides: in imperial society and among Kazakh nomads.

The paper's main argument is that Kazakh sultans, descendants of Chengizkhan, could successfully adapt to new imperial administrative and social order, accepting multiple identities, saving “sultan” status, and gaining imperial privileged estate title. Moreover, we propose to demonstrate that Kazakh sultans identified themselves as aristocratic strata of Kazakh nomadic people, serving to Kazakh people, governing them, and at the same time, taking into

account their noble title and high position in the imperial social structure. To better understand such a dynamic, this paper considers the example of Kazakh noble branches of the great Kazakh sultan family, particularly the Ualikhanovs.

Relevance of the topic. The personalities of the Kazakh steppe during imperial rule have interesting and dual biographies. In researching Kazakh elite biographies within the tsarist period, it is crucial to study the influence of the epoch on the formation of personality and consider the features of socio-cultural context. It should be noted that, since the beginning of the 19th century, as a result of imperial political events, significant changes occurred in all life aspects, especially beginning to build a new social stratification of Kazakh society according to the model of imperial estate structure. Representatives of the Kazakh population, participating in the political and social system of the Russian Empire, became part of it. However, they tried to preserve traditional features of life and culture. These circumstances created an exceptional, interestingly complex biography of the Kazakh nobleman – the line of the fate of a loyal official of the empire and a national figure, which can be seen in many political lives of outstanding personalities of the Kazakh people in the 19th century.

In this article, we shall explore how Kazakh traditional elite members adapted to the imperial order, saved their nomadic aristocratic position, and had multiple identities.

Materials and methods.

Personalities in imperial histories are still an essential part of imperial studies. Many researchers of empires pay distinguished attention to people in imperial political, social, and cultural relations. We suppose vital to consider approaches of microhistories and biographical method in contemporary history. As writes Hans Renders, current affairs remain a reason to pose new questions about lives which have already been described. Old lives raise new questions. For that reason, the need continues to exist for new biographies of lives from long ago (Hans Renders and Haan Binne De, 2014: 101). In base of this statement, we will use approaches microhistories and “following the threads” in them presenting in the Ottoman imperial progress by Constanta Vintila (Vintila, 2021) in the Kazakh case. Indeed, there are some critical differences in imperial tools and ruling systems between the Russian and Ottoman empires. However, people's lives in changing circumstances and their approaches to adapting to new social orders triggered by imperial policies are very similar.

As part of the Russian estate order, the Kazakh nobles were included in the administrative order of the Steppe as imperial officials, had attributes of Russian officials, were introduced into the military and civil service, and used class privileges available to them. At the same time, Kazakh nobles did not deny their belonging to Kazakh nomadic society as a governing part of this social structure. On the contrary, they self-identified themselves in both social systems. It is eligible to use Brubaker's notice in describing that ‘self-identification and the identification of the other are fundamentally linked to situations and contexts’ (Brubaker, 2000: 21). In addition, as truly remarks Matsushita Bailey, individuals who were living under times of transition or colonial encounter present fascinating subjects for the historian, although they also arrive embedded in additional layers of complexity, particularly when the individual exhibits tie both to the colonizer and the colonized and when the setting for the person's life is a place amid a minefield of potential problems (Scot, 2009: 165-166). In the context of this two-sided influence (old and new), we will consider the vital activity of Kazakh nobles, who also had complex, stratified biographies.

Thus, this paper aims to explore the formation and character of the multi-identity of Kazakh traditional aristocracy and their adaptation to new orders from biographical microhistorical, and social history methodological perspectives.

The paper is based on primary sources from several state archives of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, and most archival materials are new to the imperial study area.

Literature review

To trace imperial biographies of familiar Kazakh noblemen in Kazakh society during the tsarist period, we have to pay attention to research on biographical studies in historical science. The biographical method is one of the most popular among contemporary historians, on the other hand, the most critical one. The biographical method has very subjective and ideological sources for writing history, and Life Writing is less conceptualized now than other historical studies. Despite all these characteristics biographical method and its relation with microhistory are vital for historical research. Concerning this issue, “Theoretical Discussions on Biography: approaches from history, microhistory and life writing” is a reasonable investigation for introducing the conceptualization of Biography study in historical science (Hans Renders and Haan Binne De, 2014). As rightly argued by the American historian Jill Lepore: “If a biography is largely founded on a belief in the singularity and significance of an individual's life and his contribution to history, microhistory is founded almost the opposite assumption: however singular a person's life may be, the value of examining it lies not in its uniqueness, but in its exemplariness, in how that individual's life serves as an allegory for broader issues affecting the culture as a whole” (Jill Lepore, 2001). Thus, investigating Kazakh nobility as a vital social phenomenon using biographical methods and microhistory expands our understanding of administrative and scientific practices in integrating territories.

Although the personal history of imperial people is one of the perspective branches in researching histories of empires (Sunderland, 2014; Luidi imperii, 2021), there are a few works about the lives of apparent social groups in the imperial history of Central Asia. Studies in Central Asian history under the rule of the Russian empire mainly demonstrate political transformation, cultural influence, and social or everyday life (Everyday life in Central Asia, 2007). Only some focus on changes in individual

social groups during imperial state-building (Sultangalieva, 2015; Sultangalieva, Tuleshova, 2019). This paper is one of the initial attempts to fill this lack in Central Asian study, in general, and particularly in Kazakh history.

Results and Discussion

The life of the Kazakh official and nobleman took place in the context of colonial actions of Imperial Russia towards the Steppe and in the process of adaptation and change of the Kazakh nomadic society to new orders. The tsarist government initially maintained traditional social and political features in many of its newly acquired regions, gradually introducing imperial order. Considering the Kazakh Steppe's political and social structure of the 19th century, our main findings can be summarized as follows. The first reforms of the imperial government eliminated "khan" power in the territory, nevertheless maintaining the privileged positions of the traditional elite – sultans. The latter gradually began to be introduced into local government, became officials, and were included in privileged imperial estates. In addition to the traditional elite, representatives of the non-aristocratic social groups *biis*, *aul* rulers, and representatives of ordinary nomadic Kazakhs – became mediators. All of them were involved in imperial colonial activities in the Kazakh Steppe and became part of new classes formed and evolved in the 19th century.

Every Kazakh official or nobleman included traditional Kazakh upbringing and duties to imperial power, which provided them with a salary, high status before compatriots, preservation by the elite of their privileges, granting a new privileged position at the general imperial level (noble title). Becoming part of the supreme imperial society and being a conduit of Russian power in the Steppe, were Kazakh nobles only agents of the imperial government, or could their activities be seen as successful adaptations to new conditions? On what principles were their activities based? What were the forms of loyalty inherent to the Kazakh official and noblemen? Did the Kazakh nobles identify themselves with the noble estate of the empire if there was no identity they had? The answer to these critical questions will be possible by identifying the characteristics of Kazakh noble estates and clarifying the essence of their imperial activities.

Kazakh nobles were included in the provincial nobility of Orenburg, Samara, Astrakhan, Omsk, and Ufa provinces. Information about noble persons

from Kazakhs is presented in records (mainly in formulaic lists), memories of individuals familiar with Kazakh nobles, and Kazakh literature of the 19th century (Sultangalieva, Tuleshova, Werth, 2022).

Kazakh nobles differed regarding acquiring a noble title, origin, and differences in using privileges. Consideration of individuals, due to the peculiarities of their acquisition of nobility, enjoyment of class rights, and level of education, will allow revealing the specificity of Kazakh nobility. Kazakh nobility generally had the same division as the empire's typical noble class: hereditary and personal, titled and untitled. It should be noted that all Kazakh nobles gained their noble title for "loyal service" as imperial servants, and the elite origin of Kazakh aristocracy was not considered as a base and suitable for obtaining the noble status of the Russian empire (Sultangalieva, Tuleshova, Werth, 2022:). In addition to such differentiations, we would notice two generations of Kazakh nobles according to their activities and loyal service: 1-officials of the first half of the 19th century; and 2- Kazakh officials of the second half of the 19th century -the beginning of the 20th century. Among the first generations of Kazakh officials, imperial loyalty was not so clearly visible, but the subsequent generation, most of whom received secular Russian education, considered themselves in the same way as the representative of the Kazakh people and part of the imperial component. Moreover, the origin of a certain Kazakh nobleman could not but affect his complex identity, as Genghizids, besides Kazakh patriotism and loyalty to the throne, had no right to forget about aristocratic roots.

The vast majority of Kazakh nobility were originally sultans. 10 of the 15 Kazakh noble families were sultans. There is a simple explanation for this – at the beginning of its political actions in the Steppe, the royal government tried to create social support from the local elite. A feature of this part of the Kazakh nobles was the presence of a substantial stimulating force to penetrate the new structure; it was to preserve privileges and power in the Kazakh nomadic society, which led to the rapid and effective adaptation of this part of the population to the imperial order. Descendants of the Kazakh Khans, having lost hereditary power with the liquidation of the Khan rule (Statutes of 1822 and 1824), the same legislative acts were recognized as the principal applicants for the position in the middle link of local government. Representatives of influential Sultan families of Baimuhamedov, Ualihanov, Bukeev, Janturina, Tayukin, Genghis, and Khudaymendin, through service to the Russian

throne, gained the noble title and had some privileges of this status.

The most popular sultans among Kazakh people during the imperial period were from the Ualikhanovs family, and their noble imperial status has yet to be mentioned. The Ualikhanovs were noble families that presented three branches of noble genera from Chigen, Chingiz, and Ghazi-Bulat Ualikhanovs. All of these sultans were descendants of Ablai khan, khan of the Middle Zhus. Thus, one of the most outstanding personalities from Kazakhs in the imperial period, a first-generation Kazakh intellectual and enlightener, Shokan Ualikhanov, was a member of the nobility of the Russian Empire.

The ancestor of the first branch of the Ualikhanov noble family was Chigen Ualikhanov. He applied for nobility to the Government Senate in 1866 with his brothers, Sultans Ablai, Hangozha, and Aljan, presenting all the required documents (RGIA. F. 1343. Op. 18. D.126. L. 1-3.). In this petition, the Ualikhanov brothers indicated their origin from Ablai Khan and the rank of Captain of Chigen Ualikhanov; at the same time, they asked to include their descendants in the noble group. About obtaining the rank of Captain Chigen Ualikhanov, the Governor-General of Western Siberia, Velyaminov wrote to his mother and khan's wife, Aiganym Ualikhanova. In the letter, the Governor pointed out that the promotion of Chigen in captains was a tsar's grace for "the dignity of the famous kind for the benefit of Russia." He also noted that he hoped for an even greater effort to prevent Kazakhs from allowing barymta and looting, to keep silence between them (RGIA. F. 1343. Op. 18. D.126. L. 29.). However, the applications of the Ualikhanov brothers were rejected, except for Chigen. In a report to the Government Senate, the Chairman of the Council of the General Directorate of Western Siberia explained that Kazakh sultans could not be recognized as noble of the Russian empire. They could only gain a noble title with service and imperial rank. Nevertheless, Captain Chigen had a right to apply for noble status to his military rank as captain (RGIA. F. I. 1343. Op. 18. D.126. L.30.).

The problem was that Chigen was neither in the military nor the civil service, but in 1832 he got a captain rank under the special Supreme Command. In this regard, the Chief of the Main Staff reported to the Government Senate that. In conclusion, he believed it fair to present the right to descendant nobility to Sultan Chigen Ualiev (Ualikhanov). Eventually, Chigen Ualikhanov was confirmed in the hereditary nobility with his children, and a de-

crete followed to prepare the diploma for the nobility (RGIA. F. 1343. Op. 18. A .126. L. 42-44). So, in the case of Chigen Ualikhanov, we can argue about the prominent role of his origin. According to archive documents, there were many discussions about granting the noble title to the sultan, who was barely introduced to the military and civil service of the Russian empire. However, "for Chigen's origin," the decision was favorable for Chigen Ualikhanov. In addition, the political and cultural circumstances in the Steppe in the first half of the 19th century played a crucial role in the favorable decision of the Government of Senate. During this period, sultans had an influential position in Kazakh society. It would be wrong for the tsarist rule to lose pressing power to Kazakhs because of rejecting the "high award."

The second noble branch of the Ualikhanovs was closer to the representative example of acquiring a serving nobility (*sluzhiloe dvoryanstvo*). This family consisted of the ancestor Genghis Ualikhanov and his descendants. Kazakh adviser, Colonel Sultan Genghis Ualikhanov acquired the noble dignity for rank of Major in 1838, and received a hereditary nobility with his sons Mahijan, Shokan, Yakub, Mahmud, and daughters Badygul -Jamaliya, Rahiya, and Nuridiya in 1858 (RGIA. F. 1343. Op. 18. D.125. L .38.). In order to prove his rights to the hereditary nobility, Genghis Ualikhanov submitted to the Government Senate the news of the Governor-General of Western Siberia about the award of his rank of Major. The reason why Genghis Ualikhanov got a high award was "for prudent ruling and diligent assistance in the detachment of the stalking rebel sultan Kenesary" (RGIA . F. 1343. Op. 18. D .125. L .1.). It is essential to notice, that Kenesary was another descendant of Chenghiskhan, the last Kazakh khan, and the leader of one of the prominent rebels in the Kazakh Steppe within the tsarist rule. So, controverting another Chengizid and protecting the imperial government's interests in the rebellion Steppe seemed proof of imperial loyalty. In addition, Chenghis Ualikhanov had a brilliant career, Russian primary education, and talent in governing the Steppe.

Genghis Ualikhanov went a long way as an imperial official before receiving the rank of lieutenant colonel and then major. Genghis Ualikhanov graduated from the School of Siberian Linear Kazakh Troops (then named Siberian Cadet Corps). In 1834 he was elected and confirmed as a senior sultan of the Aman-Karagay Order. In this position served six three years (until 1853, after which

he was dismissed), which, already under imperial laws, gave him the right to petition the hereditary nobility. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1853 and got the rank of Colonel in 1855 (RGIA. F. 1343. Op. 18. D.125. L.12.). As can be seen from Chenghis Ualikhanov's record, he was an imperial official who held an administrative position in the local government. Therefore, he had the trust and honor of both sides: the imperial administration and the local Kazakh people.

In the case of sultan Chenghis, it is vital to notice the noble title-gaining process, specifically to pay attention to presenting documents, which were also proof of personal identity. So, among the documents submitted for approval in the nobility of the family Chenghis Ualikhanov, the doubt of the Government Senate caused certificates of the legal birth of the children of Sultan Chenghis not to be entered in metric books issued from the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly. In this regard, the Senate of the Government was taken as a basis for the review of the Governor-General of Western Siberia, who claimed that "these certificates are signed by the parish governors and honorary Kazakhs and approved by the seal and signature of the *ahun* (*a religious service in a mosque*) must have the force of metric evidence, and therefore serve as a reliable document of origin, especially since the lack in the Kyrgyz (Kazakh) Steppe of spiritual persons of Muslim confession, and the nomadic life of still foreign people make it challenging to maintain metric books properly. Given the confusion with evidence instead of metric, more than once would be presented in other cases, the Kazakh nobleman's assertion of the rights of the descendant nobility of his children (Berkimbayev, Bekmohamedov, Baymukhamedov). Nevertheless, in all cases, the Government Senate accepted certificates of honorary Kazakhs for evidence of the legal birth of children of Kazakh nobles. Interestingly, the tsarist rule tried to eliminate Kazakh's Muslim identity, highlining imperial administrators' role in all aspects of Kazakh society.

It is necessary to note the bright representative of this noble Kazakh noble family, Shokan Ualihanov, who until then did not mention him as a nobleman of the Russian empire anywhere. The documents indicate that Shokan Ualihanov was confirmed in nobility with his father and other family members in 1858. The biography of Shokan Ualihanov, perhaps one of the most famous in the history of Kazakhs in the 19th century. As Scot notes, in approaching a study of his biography, it is hard to overstate the complexity of "understanding" Shokan Ualikha-

nov. It seems appropriate to portray him as a unique amalgamation of multiple political dimensions. Including that of the colonizing Russians who wished in part to advance Russian "civilization" in Kazakh territories, that of the colonized Central Eurasians whom Ualikhanov hoped would advance in some way from their involvement with Russia, and that of the Chengizid nobility, who operated in a kind of intermediate position of power between the two other groups. A question emerges of agency and of who was in control of whom in this situation (Scot, 2009: 167). To all these identities, according to our research, we can add the nobility of Shokan Ualikhanov. Shokan Ualikhanov's biography should be considered within the colonial system and as a Russian scholar of the time. He was a brilliant example of multi-identity and had dual subjectivity in his service. We agree with Matsushita Bailey that Ualikhanov's biography can and should be reinterpreted to emphasize his geographic mobility and the fluidity of his identity. He was not a strictly colonial agent. Ualikhanov was often on the move, navigated through, and adapted to multiple cultural worlds in times of tremendous change (Scot, 2009: 188).

Ghazi Bulat Ualikhanov, the grandson of Sultan Gubaidullah, the eldest son of Vali Khan, represented the next noble branch of the Ualikhanovs. The petition for his approval in the hereditary nobility was filed in 1883 on December 20, based on the rank of Colonel of the Guard received by him in 1882 (RGI A. F. 1343. Op. 18. D. 127. L.1.). If we consider his biography in more detail, the nine-year-old Ghazi by his father, Sultan Bulat, was sent with his uncle Khan-Khoja and 80 Kazakhs to Omsk, where he entered the Siberian Cadet Corps. Sultan Ghazi Bulat graduated from the corps for 16 years, was made a cornet, and was appointed to be at the disposal of the Governor-General of Western Siberia (Niva, 1891). According to the anonymous author in his article in the newspaper "Niva" about Ghazi-Bulat, he tried by all measures to influence the disobedient tribes of Kazakhs Semiz-Naiman and other genera to join the nationality of Russia. Due to his origin, which could not but act charming to the Kazakh, Sultan Ghazi quite managed in his mission and deserved even more location and attention from the Governor-General. As a result, Ghazi-Bulat was assigned to the Tobol Mounted Regiment in 1861. According to the anonymous author, this circumstance resulted from hostile relations between Ghazi-Bulat's relatives, Shokan, and his father, Genghis Ualikhanov, to him (Niva, 1891). After Ghazi-Bulat went to St. Petersburg, he was introduced to the military minis-

ter Milutin and asked him to report to the tsar about his desire to serve in the capital. Under the highest command, Sultan Ghazi-Bulat was assigned to the Leib-Guard of his Majesty's Cossack Regiment and participated with this regiment in the march against the Polish rebels. Then, Sultan Gazi-Bulat returned to his native regions with the beginning of the 10th Regiment of the Russian Empire in 1863. The sultan was sick for several years on vacation. He returned to the Service in Leib-Guard in his country and served as chief in the Society Officers court (1873-1875). Sultan Ghazi-Bulat was appointed commander of different squadrons of the Leib-Guard of his Majesty's Ataman Regiment. He was on several practical training (RGIA. F. I. 1343. Op. 18. D.127. L.2.). In 1884, the Senate recognized Ghazi-Bulat Valikhanov in the hereditary nobility with the right to introduce into the second part of the noble genealogy of the book (RGIA. F.1343. Op. 18. D.127. L.6.).

In brief, unlike previous Ualikhanovs' noble ancestors, Ghazi-Bulat was more integrated into the imperial military and social life. Undoubtedly, nobleman Ghazi-Bulat was a citizen of the Russian empire, and his presentation on international relations with other countries as a high imperial military and diplomatic official proves it. Moreover, the case of Sultan Ghazi-Bulat was an exception because he was one of the very few Kazakh officers in active service of the imperial army and participated in the battles. As an imperial officer, he considered it a duty to serve the homeland represented by the empire and Steppe. Sultan Ghazi-Bulat also actively participated in the social and cultural life of St. Pe-

tersburg and his "small homeland": he was a pre-candidate for public assistance to Muslims of the city of St. Petersburg. He built mosques and schools in his village.

Conclusion

The case of the Ualikhanovs noble family helps us to take the pulse of social changes in the Kazakh steppe, showing the multi-identical character of the social possessing of Kazakh nobles. Kazakh sultans were the last group who could integrate into the imperial estate system in central Asia, and they gradually adapted and adopted imperial social and cultural order. On the other hand, due to such processes, the Kazakh traditional elite and their descendants could keep their position and elite character in political, social, and cultural lives among Kazakhs up to the early years of Soviet rule.

As a result of successfully navigating the deeds of Kazakh elites between imperial rule and the local population, this historical period created unusual people with complex biographies and outstanding patriots of "the empire and homeland."

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