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TURKIC ROOTS OF THE KAZAKH NATIONAL IDEA: HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

This paper examines the emergence of modern national identities among the late 19th – early 20th century Turkic people, discussing the complex interplay between pre-modern ethnic organization and modern national identity. The study investigates the rise of nationalist ideas among Turkic Muslim populations under Ottoman and Russian rule, particularly emphasizing the Kazan Tatars, the Ottoman Turks, and Central Asian communities. The historiographic analysis highlights the role of key intellectual figures in shaping these identities through linguistic, historical, and cultural reforms. The main focus is on the foreign influences on the development of Kazakh intelligentsia; while the classic academic literature praises Russian and European thought in that development, particularly through interactions with Jadid reformers and Russian ethnographers, this paper tackles that notion by examining previously unrecognized Turkic intellectual roots of Kazakh nationalism. The paper argues that the concept of a territorial nation was not adopted exclusively from European ideas, as assumed in Western-centric scholarship, but also had inner intellectual roots. With the example of the Kazakh national movement, the discourse of nation is exposed as instrumental in developing distinct modern national identities across the Turkic world.

Key words: nation-building, national identity, national idea, historical memory.

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Қазақтың ұлттық идеясының түркі тамыры: тарихнамалық талдау

Бұл мақалада XIX ғасырдың аяғы мен XX ғасырдың басындағы түркі халықтары арасында қазіргі ұлттық бірегейліктің қалыптасуы қарастырылады, қазіргі этникалық ұйым мен қазіргі ұлттық бірегейлік арасындағы күрделі өзара іс-қимыл талқыланады. Зерттеу Османлы және Ресей билігі кезеңінде түркітәлдіс мұсылман халқы арасындағы ұлтшыл идеялардың өсуін қарастырады, Қазан татарларына, Осман түріктеріне және Орталық Азия қауымдастықтарына ерекше назар аударады. Тарихнамалық талдау тілдік, тарихи және мәдени реформалар арқылы осы сәйкестіктерді қалыптастырудағы негізгі интеллектуалды тұлғалардың рөлін көрсетеді. Қазақ зиялыларының дамуына шетелдік ықпалға басты назар аударылады; классикалық ғылыми әдебиеттер бұл дамудағы орыс және еуропалық ойды, әсіресе джадидтік реформаторлармен және орыс этнографтарымен өзара іс-қимылдың арқасында мадақтаса да, бұл мақалада Қазақ ұлтшылдығының бұрын танылмаған түркі интеллектуалдық тамырларын зерттеу арқылы осы ұғым қарастырылады. Мақалада территориялық ұлт тұжырымдамасы Батыс центристік ғылымда болжанғандай тек еуропалық идеялардан алынған жоқ, сонымен қатар ішкі интеллектуалды тамыры бар деп тұжырымдайды. Қазақ ұлттық қозғалысының мысалында ұлт дискурсы бүкіл түркі әлемінде заманауи ұлттық бірегейлікті дамыту құралы ретінде ашылады.

Түйін сөздер: ұлттық құрылыс, ұлттық бірегейлік, ұлттық идея, тарихи жады.

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Тюркские корни казахской национальной идеи: историографический анализ

В этой статье рассматривается становление современной национальной идентичности у тюркских народов конца XIX-го – начала XX вв, обсуждается сложное взаимодействие между досовременной этнической организацией и современной национальной идентичностью. В иссле-

довании рассматривается рост националистических идей среди тюркоязычного мусульманского населения в период османского и российского правления, особое внимание уделяется казанским татарам, туркам-османам и общинам Центральной Азии. Историографический анализ подчеркивает роль ключевых интеллектуальных фигур в формировании этих идентичностей посредством языковых, исторических и культурных реформ. Основное внимание уделяется иностранному влиянию на развитие казахской интеллигенции; в то время как классическая научная литература восхваляет русскую и европейскую мысль в этом развитии, особенно благодаря взаимодействию с джадидскими реформаторами и российскими этнографами, в данной статье рассматривается это понятие путем изучения ранее непризнанных тюркских интеллектуальных корней казахского национализма. В статье утверждается, что концепция территориальной нации не была заимствована исключительно из европейских идей, как это предполагается в западнцентристской науке, но также имела внутренние интеллектуальные корни. На примере казахского национального движения дискурс нации раскрывается как инструмент развития современной национальной идентичности во всем тюркском мире.

Ключевые слова: национальное строительство, национальная идентичность, национальная идея, историческая память.

Introduction

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked a transformative period for the Turkic world, as various communities began to articulate and develop modern national identities. This era witnessed a profound shift from traditional, pre-modern forms of ethnic and religious affiliations towards more cohesive and territorially defined national identities. This transformation was significantly influenced by the decline of the Ottoman and Russian empires and the subsequent rise of new state structures in the Republic of Turkey, the U.S.S.R., and later the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.).

The Turkic world, spanning across vast geographic and political landscapes, experienced these changes in markedly diverse ways. In the Ottoman Empire, the process of nationalism emerged against the backdrop of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious polity, where the concept of Turkishness evolved from a term denoting rural, "low" culture to a cornerstone of modern national identity. Concurrently, within the Russian Empire, particularly among the Kazan Tatars, a unique blend of local reformist ideologies and the pressures of Russian imperial policies influenced the rise of modern nationalism. The questions that arise here are: 1) what the various movements were of rising modern "national" identity or identities in the Turkic world before the state-driven projects of the 20th century, and 2) what ideas and knowledge did the leaders of the Alash movement borrow from representatives of the Russian and European intelligentsia, as well as religious reformers – Tatar and Central Asian Jadids, and Muslim modernists.

Materials and methods

This paper seeks to unravel the complex dynamics that shaped the rise of modern national identities in the Turkic world. It explores how pre-modern ethnic consciousness and regional identities were transformed into more structured and state-driven national identities through the contributions of key intellectuals and reformers. By examining the interactions between Turkic communities and external influences, including Russian and European thought, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these modern national identities emerged and evolved.

Major works in the Western academia on the early 20th century Kazakh intelligentsia were dissertations focused exclusively on the Alash movement: one was an overview of biographies and main ideas by Alash leaders (Sabol, 2003), while the others explored the origins of the Kazakh intelligentsia in the imperial context (Balgamis, 2000; Rottier, 2005). A lone topic-related monograph in English analyzed Alash's literary legacy in the context of the national awakening motives of 20th-century Kazakh literature (Kudaibergenova, 2017). Russian and Kazakh literature on Kazakh intellectuals also has a rich historiographic tradition.

Through a historical and historiographical analysis of these movements and their interactions with broader geopolitical and intellectual currents, this research illuminates the processes that led to the formation of distinct modern national identities in the Turkic world. This analysis includes an examination of the foreign and local historiography on the development of Turkic national movements, with special

regard to the works of Uli Schamiloglu (1990; 2001; 2006), who put forth the revolutionary proposition that the Tatar national thought introduced the concept of territorial nation, hitherto unknown to the Turkic people even in the rapidly europeanizing Ottoman Empire. This proposition tackles the foreign historiographic tradition that regarded exclusively the European and especially Russian influence on the development of Kazakh nationalism (Rottier, 2004; Rottier, 2005). A literature review of the scant scholarship on the history of early Kazakh nationalism broadens the horizons for future studies of Kazakh nation-building.

Results and discussion

Articulations of the nation among Turkic peoples

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Turkic world experienced the emergence of both pre-modern and modern national identities. This discussion aims to delineate the various nationalist movements within the Turkic world, particularly focusing on the evolution of modern national identities before the state-driven projects of the 20th century.

The rise of nationalism in the Turkic world, namely within the borders of two empires – Ottoman and Russian – happened much later than in Western Europe, with the articulations on national identity, including the promotion of vernaculars and the concept of homeland, i.e. territorial nation, taking place by the end of the late 19th century and becoming a dominant discourse of the ‘national’ elites by the second decade of 20th century. This process, however, did not go synchronically: we can claim that the articulations with the concept closest to modern nationalism take place among Turkic Muslim people of middle Volga, i.e. today’s Kazan Tatars.

Russians used the ‘Tatar’ term to categorize people that would later be labeled under the group of inorodtsy. In the first half of the 19th century, Karl Fuks referred to ‘Kazan Tatars’ as the Tatar middle class of Kazan City, while Qayyum Nasiri, the founder of the modern Kazan Tatar language, referred to Kazan as one of the dialects of the Turkic language, a part of its Middle, or Tatar, group, spoken by the ‘Turks’ of the Russian Empire. Kazani, according to him, is one of the ‘Tatar’ dialects along with Mishar, Bashkir, Crimean, and Azerbaijani (Schamiloglu, 2006). Other major Tatar thinkers debated on topics such as the re-opening of the *ijtihad*, or the interpretation of the religious norms (Qursavi), and the critique of the habitus of the Bukharan clergy (Utiz Imani), thus degrading Transoxianian

centers of traditional religious knowledge as the centers of pilgrimage for the future Kazan Tatar students (Schamiloglu, 2001: 349-353).

Before Marjani, Kazan Tatars referred to themselves as Muslims, Kazan (locality), or Bulgars (descent); Shihabaddin Marjani instilled pride in being called ‘Tatar’, proposing it as a national designation (Schamiloglu, 2006). He created a chain of identities from Volga Bulgaria, to Muslim, Tatar, and finally Kazan Tatar, sometimes using manipulation of historical symbols, and therefore could be treated as a father of modern Kazan Tatar identity (Schamiloglu, 1990: 39). His opus magnum, *Mustafad-ul Ahbar fi Ahwal Qazan va Bulgar*, in the Kazan Tatar language, which is among later Tatar scholarship is a competent historical scholarship that challenges many sources unknown in the Western academia (Schamiloglu, 1990: 41-42). He establishes historical continuity in readers’ consciousness by tracing the Tatar ethnonym back to ancient times, anachronically using modern toponyms and bureaucratic terminology, establishing the longevity of the rivalry with Russians, and Islam as a symbol of unity and continuity from the ancient Bulgar. By claiming the legacy of the Golden Horde and the historical continuity of the polities of the Middle Volga, he established the concept of territorial nation, previously unseen among Turkic peoples. His disciples, sometimes disagreeing with him, continued the propagation of the nation through the press, while some like Nasiri developed literary language (Schamiloglu, 2001: 365). One such, Rizaeddin Fakhretdin, proposed Kazan or Bulgar Turk terms to refer to an already established territorial community, while others debated on language (whether Turkic Muslims should use a shared language or not), lack of bonding between the local Tatar language and the national pride, and the regional association of the ‘Tatar’ term – contrary to Gaspirali’s ‘Turk’ (Schamiloglu, 2006).

The latter Ismail Gaspirali advocated for the rapprochement of Muslim Turkic peoples and their literary languages, the spread of literacy, and the integration of Muslims into the Russian Empire via national cultural autonomy. His cause in Crimea was undermined by the *Young Tatar* movement that raised awareness of Tatar identity centered around his homeland – the Crimea. In response, Gaspirali introduced nationalist notions into his pan-Islamic second newspaper *Millat*; however, the early 20th century saw the win of the territorial concept of a nation by Marjani over the inclusive Muslim Turkic nation within the Russian Empire by Gaspirali (Schamiloglu, 2001: 366).

Turkish thinkers of the late Ottoman Empire, on contrary, had no such concept, having a variety of definitions of the ‘homeland’. The empire was centered around the system of the autonomous religious communities, *millets*, with the ruling confession of Muslims having no such autonomy; instead, there was a duality of recognition of ‘Turk’ as a) outside of empire – as a synonym of Muslim, and b) inside empire – as a bearer of ‘low’ culture (rural population of Anatolia) as juxtaposed to ‘higher’ Ottoman culture and ruling class. The disintegration of the millet system and the idea of the Muslim community (*ummet*), and later – the Muslim state (*din-u-devlet*), fueled the rise of Turkish nationalism. Foreign Turcologist scholarship stimulated nationalist ideas in Turkey. Ahmed Vefik-pasha established the notion that the Ottoman is just a dialect of a bigger Turkish language spread through Asia; Mustafa Celaleddin-pasha promoted the imminence of Turkish Westernization based on his racial theory. Prominent nationalist Young Turks were: Ziya-pasha, which noted the living poetry and language of the common folk; Ali Suavi, which stressed the unrecognized contribution of Turks to Islamic civilization; Suleyman-pasha, which included Turkish history into world history. Namik Kemal identified his people as “Sunni Hanefi Muslims speaking Ottoman language” (Berkes, 1998: 318). Kemal advocated for developing the vernacular. His idea of the Ottoman nation was based on the concept of fatherland, as well as innovations of the Tanzimat reforms that equalized citizens of the empire before Islamic law, and the notion of national unity based on both religion and language (therefore he advocated for linguistic erasure of other languages) (Arai, 1992: 48). Vizier Tefvik-pasha embraced scholastic and aesthetic Turkism. Husnu Suleyman-pasha distinguished Ottoman as a name of the state from Turkish as a name of nation, language, and literature; therefore, these two men, according to Gokalp, are fathers of Turkism. Huseyinzade Ali-bey’s *Turan* poem was the first manifestation of pan-Turanism. A new era of revolutionary Turkism started with Mehmed Emin-bey’s *Ben bir Turkum* poem in 1897 (Gokalp, 1968: 5). This movement, led by Tanriover, was inspired by national upheaval in Russia, as well as the Muslim reformist movement that appealed to patriotism, with the likes of Fakhretdin and al-Afghani. Fuat Raif-bey started a movement of linguistic purification from Arabic and Persian, while Azerbaijani emigres advocated for overcoming the Sunni-Shi’a debacle in favor of Turkish-Islamic unity (Gokalp, 1968: 7-10).

Yusuf Akcura was the first of the Young Turks who fully abandoned the idea of Ottomanism in his 1904 influential article *Three Principles of Politics* (Ottomanism, pan-Islamism, and Turkism). He replaced that idea with Turkish nationalism, demanding to purge minorities who didn’t support the idea of a national state. Turkish nationalism searched for a lost Turkish identity among Ottomans and social unity among Turks (Arai, 1992: 48). Akcura and other emigrants from Russia became more influential in creating a national history in the republican era because they were familiar with both Turkism and the Tatar concept of territorial nation (Schamiloglu, 2006). With the fall of Muslim unity (as a result of Albanian and later Arabic revolts) and the political hostility of the West, both Islamism and Westernism faced fierce competition from growing Turkism. At this early stage, Turkism as a notion of a territorial nation was interconnected with competing ideologies of pan-Turkism (unity of Turkic-speaking people) and pan-Turanism (Turkic/Altaic plus Uralic-speaking people). Unlike Russian-born pan-Turkism which aimed at the Tsar, and Hungary-born pan-Turanism aimed at pan-Slavism, Turkism originates from Turkey and initially was focused on local problems. It was influenced by emigrant pan-Turkists from Russia (Akcura, Agaoglu, Halim Sabit) and originates from the debates among members of New Life society, who divided into socialist and nationalist groups. Pan-Turkists viewed nationality as a race and Turkists – as a culture (Berkes, 1998: 344). The Great War saw Turkists adopting the ‘to the People’ slogan, fueling the patriotic propaganda of nationalism to the masses (Akcura understood ‘the People’ as the peasantry, artisans, and laborers), while the three-Pasha regime turned its interests toward romanticized Turan: Turkism shifted to pan-Turkism and the interest in the pre-Islamic Turkic mythology and epic (Berkes, 1998: 427-428). Turkists demanded Turkification of the empire, which competed with the officially favored pan-Turkism aimed at the liberation of Turkic people in Russia (Arai, 1992: 96).

Opposing notions of a nation as an economy-driven community of individuals, a religious community, or a custom-driven ethnic community, Ziya Gokalp established a transcendental notion of a nation that aspired to objectives called national ideas (Berkes, 1998: 346). Initially, he advocated for the interdependency of Ottomanism and pan-Turkism (*Turan Nedir*, 1918) (Arai, 1992: 96), but later rejected pan-Islamist (*ummet*), Ottomanist (political unity), and pan-Turkist (ethnic unity) concepts of

nationality, calling the nation a product of the dissolution Empire and ‘umamah (Berkes, 1998: 377). Gokalp replaced *Uc Tarz* with three principles of Turkism, namely *Turkiyacilik* (nation of Anatolia), *Oguzculuk* (unity of Turkmen people), and *Turan-cilik* (unity of Turkic people). Contrary to the future concept of the territorial nation of Anatolia, he saw the fatherland as a national culture built on national solidarity and division of labor (Gokalp, 1968). With the death of Ottomanism, pan-Turkism, and pan-Islamism as a result of the Mondros treaty, Turkism re-emerged as a self-proclaimed ‘golden ratio’ between Islamist and Westernist ideologies. The lethal danger for Turks was aspirations of expansion by Greeks and Armenians. Turkish entity, mostly rural peasantry, had to be organized into a national movement under conditions of anti-imperialist struggle, the enmity of the Sultan, and growing Bolshevik influence. The fall of the empire and the rise of the republic saw the victory of the new ideology, *Milliyetçilik*, that nurtured the proud Anatolian Turkish identity (Arai, 1992: 96).

Finally, the region of Central Asia saw the influence of both Tatar and Turkish articulations on the nation; however, the most influential were the ideas of the Jadid movement coming from the Tatar press, namely *Tarjiman* and *Waqit*. Jadidism was a cultural movement reform that aimed to reconcile Islam with modernity and challenged traditional intellectual elites, associated with clergy, over the possession and redefinition of cultural capital (Khalid, 1998: 5). Their notions of identity were influenced by the ethnographic knowledge and romantic nationalism of Tatars and Turks, with the contextualization within the political landscape of Turkestan. Secular Muslim nationalism arose from Jadidi objectification of Islam, i.e. viewing Islam as a set of beliefs and practices separate from global knowledge (Khalid, 1998: 11). The first generation of Jadid publishers was centered around the main source of information in the region, the official *Turkistan Walayatynyng Gazeti*, the addendum to the Russian-published TOG, which was a mouthpiece of conservative propaganda against Tatar reformism and foreign constitutionalism. While the first generation of Jadids consisted of poets who underlined the decline of Muslim fortunes and advocated for print development and education reform based on *usul-i Jadid*, the second generation blamed ulama for the flaws of the old order and cried for the backwardness of Turkestan. They were fluent in European thought and came with an idea of secular modernization; Jadids and Russian-educated intellectuals maintained a coalition pursuing political leadership after 1917, but

“Russianates” overtook Jadids due to the knowledge of Russian required for big politics (Khalid, 1998: 107). During the early Bolshevik era, they participated in creating the Uzbek identity developed upon Chagatai literary legacy, and surrounding republics of Central Asia mostly were created as juxtaposed to Uzbekistan (Khalid, 2015).

Overall, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were a formative period for the development of modern national identities within the Turkic world, marked by diverse and evolving conceptions of nationality, influenced by regional, cultural, and political dynamics.

Inspirations of the Kazakh national movement

The main trop of academic literature on Kazakh intelligentsia is the overwhelming influence of Russian intelligentsia that not only brought the traditional debates between Westernists and Slavophiles to the Steppe but also created a window to European thought. The first generation of Kazakh intelligentsia either studied in Russian schools with prominent Russian thinkers as teachers or befriended the exiles or visiting ethnographers, while the second generation was mostly products of the imperial educational system and some even obtained exclusive education in the metropole. This approach, however, disregards the circulation of ideas of religious revivalism, reform of religious curriculum, and articulations of Turkic nationalism, developing among intellectual elites of the Turkic world. The influence of Russian ethnographers is at least viable in the scholarly interest of early intelligentsia in history and geography as a means of knowing the nation, while their linguistic concern for language shows the notion of nation as language-constructed identity as it was formulated by 19th-century European diplomacy. The most important idea for developing Kazakh national intelligentsia was the modern concept of a nation previously unknown in Inner Asia.

As per mainstream literature, Kazakhs inherited the notion of a territorial nation from the works of Nikolay Karamzin that placed the origins of the Russian nation within the realms of Muscovy and by the inertia of its centralizing policies to accommodate the expanding state. The term ‘fatherland’ (*Otechestvo*), appearing in his histories, was further developed by Decembrists with a romantic appeal (Rottier, 2005: 13). Russian military-trained Valikhanov, e.g., emphasized the territorial continuity of Kazakhs inhabiting lands from Ural to Altai, and Bokeikhan later introduced the concept of ‘Ata Meken’ as the historical homeland of Kazakh (Rottier,

2004). Uli Schamiloglu argues that Kazan Tatars created a notion of territorial and nation with historical continuity from ancient Bulgar to modernity by the 1880s in the works of Shihabaddin Marjani (Schamiloglu, 1990: 39). While Schamiloglu also accepts the influence of Karamzin's *Istoriya* to the development of national history by Marjani and his disciples, it is remarkable that this concept was brought by Russian Turkic emigres, such as Yusuf Akchura, to Ottoman Turkey and was prominent in the creation of Anatolian Turk concept of homeland. Like Turks, Kazakhs had no concrete concept of what *Watan*, an Arabic imported word, is; the territorial concept of a nation is therefore brought from elsewhere, be it Russian curriculum or Tatar print like *Shura* or *Waqit*, to which many Kazakhs were subscribed. E.g., Seralin celebrated Marjani's works in the *Aiqap* journal (Sabol, 2003: 121). The problem of the historical rights of Kazakhs over their homeland was not only a matter of statehood dreams but more alarmingly of a land issue, the major concern of the early Kazakh publicism.

Siberian regionalist intelligentsia, developed from *zemlyachestva* in major imperial universities, and inspired by Shchapov, who criticized the centralizing nature of aristocracy, contributed to the facilitation of a regionally-based identity. Valikhanov, e.g., loved Kazakh, then Siberia, then Russia, as per Potanin (Rottier, 2005: 54, 80). The latter himself envisioned Kazakh autonomism based on his view of Siberian autonomy within the federalist project and inspired the generation of Kazakh students in Omsk, including Bokeikhan. The idea of cultural autonomy was juxtaposed with a more 'dangerous' idea of political autonomy by Russian liberals: Slavinskiy advocated for the developing of national consciousness within the multinational state, while Miliukov promoted the celebration of national cultures within the empire (Rottier, 2005: 151-152), the ideas which favored future Alash aspirations. For Tatar activists of the Revolution of 1905 that dominated pan-Muslim organizations, one of the overarching demands was unlimited recruitment to the civil services (Rottier, 2005: 122-123); that is one lacking point in the Qarqaraly Petition of 1905 that appears later.

Altynsarin had a major influence from Grigoryev, who believed in Russian superiority over nomads who needed to be supervised for cultural advancement and was the first to alarm Tatar proselytic influence on Kazakhs; other was Ilminskiy who promoted Russian education using Arabic script (Rottier, 2005: 85-86). While Altynsarin proposed the

development of the Cyrillic alphabet for Kazakh, Baitursynuly adopted the reformed Arabic orthography of Jadids and further developed it according to the phonetics of Kazakh in 1912; hence the massive influence of Tatar literary revivalism. Another inspiration for alphabet reform came from Azerbaijani Akhundzada – many among Kazakh intelligentsia were subscribers to Azeri *Molla Nasreddin* journal along with Jadidic *Tarjiman* (Rottier, 2005: 229). Along with script reform, the strong aspiration was for language purification from Arabic and Persian vocabulary (and later from Tatar and Chagatai as well). The call for purism was strong in Ottoman Empire from the late 19th century starting with Fuat Rauf-bey and developed by Ziya Gokalp in 1912, condemning the usage of Arabic grammar but advocating for keeping 'naturalized' Arabo-Persian vocabulary (Gokalp, 1968: 7). E.g., *Aiqap* was heavily criticized for overusing the 'foreign' vocabulary (Sabol, 2003: 69).

Otherring Tatar, famously in works of Valikhanov and Bokeikhan, further developed from the anticlerical position to the question of national demarcation in linguistics, literature, and education. These two also adopted the secularist idea that included typical Orientalist disregard of Islam as 'Muslim fanaticism'. Altynsarin on the other hand had a dubious position regarding Muslim education: while Isabelle Kreindler emphasized his critical attitude (Sabol, 2003: 95), this also could be a legacy of Soviet propaganda that famously censored the Muslim-manifested opening line of *Kel Balalar, Oqylyq*. Another source of anticlerical propaganda was *Molla Nasreddin* which also could provide the secularist notions from Ottoman publicistics. Its contributors like Agaoglu already moved to Turkey; debates heated there included calls for Westernizing the lifestyle (Yalcin), adopting materialism (Besir Fuad), Darwinism (Cevdet), condemning pan-Islamism (Akcura), as well as autonomist decentralization (Sabahaddin Celebi), and including the Turkic history into a course of world history (Suleyman-pasha). Namik Kemal's identification of Turks as "Sunni Hanefi Muslims speaking Ottoman language" (Berkes, 1998: 318) even rhymes with the 2010s articulation of Kazakhs as Sunni Hanafi Muslims of Maturidian School. The undoubtful interest of the Kazakh audience and publishers in the late Ottoman Empire is detectable by the fact that until the start of the Great War, Turkey obtained a bigger chunk of the 'News of the World' sections of *Qazaq* newspaper (even more than the news of Russia).

Propagating literacy and enlightenment of the masses originates within both Russian and Tatar publications. The trope of nomadic backwardness, patronizing at best, was an Orientalist disregard; however, it was crucial in developing a generation of Kazakh publicists raising concerns over the future and survival of the nation. Nikolay Yadrintsev saw the major problem in a nomadic economy and was the earliest to call out the colonial decontamination of Kazakhs in 1891 (Yadrintsev, 2000, 154). The advantages of sedentarism, undoubtedly an Orientalist vision, were later propagated by *Aiqap*. Another source for advocating sedentarism was the pro-Muslim preferences of *Aiqap* contributors: they thought that sedentarization would help Kazakhs to develop religion, i.e. nomadic lifestyle does not help with introducing Muslim education and implication of shari'a law, which they thought would bring peace to the Steppe. The advocacy for shari'a and the return of Steppe under the jurisdiction of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly (Kendirbaeva, 1999: 13-15) imply Tatar influence over Kazakh elites.

A strong influence on Alash was the literature of classic liberalism, most probably engraved in Russian books. These ideas included concepts of liberty, equality, separation of powers, political engagement and representation, and rights of minorities (Aqmaghanbet, 2023). Other views indoctrinated in Alash's political program mirror the agenda of socialist movements of that time, including the women question and national self-determination. At least Potanin is known for the heavy interest in Marxism as early as the 1890s.

Conclusion

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were pivotal in the evolution of modern national identities within the Turkic world, as communities transitioned from traditional affiliations to state-defined national identities. This transformation was intricately shaped by the decline of the Ottoman and Russian empires and the emergence of new state structures. The analysis reveals that nationalism in the Turkic world emerged in diverse and complex ways, reflecting regional contexts and historical processes. In the Ottoman Empire, the evolution of Turkishness from a rural, "low" cultural identity to a cornerstone of modern nationalism was influenced by the disintegration of the millet system and the intellectual contributions of figures like Ziya Gökalp. Concurrently, in the Russian Empire, the Kazan Ta-

tars, under the intellectual leadership of Shihabaddin Marjani, developed a modern concept of territorial nationalism that traced its roots back to ancient Bulgar, thereby establishing a historical continuity that had profound implications for the rise of Kazan Tatar identity. Central Asia's Jadidism sought to reconcile Islam with modernity and challenge traditional structures through secular modernization. The Jadids' focus on educational and linguistic reforms contributed significantly to the rise of secular Muslim nationalism in the region.

The Kazakh national movement, while initially perceived as heavily influenced by Russian and European thought, also drew from the rich tapestry of Turkic intellectual reform, including the Tatar (and to some extent Azerbaijani) print media and the Jadid movement. Kazakh intelligentsia, despite its diverse influences, adapted these ideas to the Kazakh context, integrating them into a unique vision of national identity, being the first in the region to propose a cultural and political distinction based on the concept of a territorial nation.

This study raises more questions for further discussion. Which influences played a key role in gathering the native intelligentsia around the idea that stood behind the Kazakh autonomist movement? Which educational and cultural background weighed more in that process – those receiving an imperial Russian education, or the audience of Tatar and other Muslim educational institutions/print media? To address these issues, we have to delve deeper into narrative analysis, comparison of the nationalist agendas within Turkic peoples, and contextualizing these agendas within the broad imperial history of the turbulent era.

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